



Your Five-Step Journey

*To buying a home with **heart!***





Introduction

Welcome to **"Your Home Buying 5-Step Guide"** by Team Ballas, a comprehensive and invaluable resource designed to make your home buying journey as seamless and rewarding as possible. In collaboration with Royal LePage ProAlliance Realty, Brokerage, Team Ballas brings a wealth of expertise and commitment to ensuring you not only find the perfect property but also embark on a journey with a trusted partner who prioritizes your success and satisfaction. Here at Team Ballas our goal is to make home buying as easy and seamless as possible for our clients. For that reason we have split the buying process into a 5 stage program, meant to help prospective buyers understand and excel during the process.

This comprehensive guide, developed in collaboration with Team Ballas at Royal LePage ProAlliance Realty, Brokerage, takes you through five essential steps, each rooted in the philosophy that understanding your distinct requirements is key to achieving the best results. From building a solid foundation and navigating the financial landscape to finding your dream home, insuring your investment, and reaching the final steps, Team Ballas's insights and advice are infused with the genuine connection that sets Team Ballas apart in the realm of real estate.

- Team Ballas



Step 1:

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



Ask yourself this:

Where do I want to live? What communities or neighbourhoods do you want to consider? Is it important to be near schools, shopping centres, recreation facilities, places of worship, hospitals, or other amenities?

What type of home do I want? What style of home is best for you? It could be a detached, a semi-detached, a bungalow, a split-level, a two-storey, a duplex, a townhouse — the options are endless!

What are my must-haves and deal-breakers? What are the most important features for you in a home? A basement? A garage? A pool or a fireplace? How many bathrooms? Bedrooms? Do you have family members with special needs? What do you absolutely not want in a home?

Step 2:

LET'S TALK FINANCES

- 1) Saving for a down payment:** Saving for a down payment is not only a necessary step but also a critical one in your home purchase journey. The down payment represents your initial equity in the property and can influence the terms of your mortgage. The more you can put down, the less you'll need to borrow, which can lead to lower monthly payments and potentially help you avoid private mortgage insurance (PMI). PMI costs tend to be necessary for down payments which are less than 20% of the home value.

- 2) Getting pre-approved for a mortgage:** Mortgage pre-approval is like a golden ticket in the home buying process. It provides you with a clear understanding of your budget, streamlining your property search and making it easier to identify homes that match your price range. Additionally, it sends a strong signal to sellers that you are a serious and qualified buyer, enhancing your chances of having your offers accepted in a competitive market.





FINANCES CONTINUED



3) Understanding your budget and financial readiness:

Your budget is the backbone of your home purchase. It dictates what you can afford and what you can comfortably manage in terms of monthly payments. By understanding your budget, you avoid falling in love with homes that are out of your financial reach. It's also a fundamental step in securing a mortgage, as lenders will assess your financial readiness based on your budget and credit profile.



4) Budgeting for ongoing homeownership expenses:

The budget for your monthly mortgage payment is just one part of the financial picture. To be a successful homeowner, you need to account for ongoing expenses like property taxes, insurance, utilities, and maintenance. A realistic budget ensures you can comfortably manage all your homeownership costs and avoid financial strain.



5) Making informed financial decisions with Jason's guidance:

Working with an experienced real estate agent like Jason Ballas offers the significant advantage of making well informed financial decisions throughout the process. Jason's expertise can help you evaluate the financial implications of various choices, such as different properties, offers, and financing options. With expert guidance, you can confidently make the financial decisions that best align with your long-term goals and financial well-being.



Step 3:

WHY WE SHOULD WORK TOGETHER

1) It's free! In almost all cases, commission is paid by the seller so having an agent working for you is essentially free.

2) Avoid overpaying for a home: If you're like most buyers, you want to know, with certainty, that you are paying a fair price. Quite often, sellers overprice their homes to "see what happens." A great real estate professional will educate you on the price of current competitive properties as well as similar homes that have been recently sold to help you make an informed decision on how much to offer for your dream home.

3) Negotiate the best price and terms of your most valuable asset: Negotiating requires expertise and skill, period. A great real estate professional is a masterful communicator with expert negotiating skills whose job is to help you decide what to offer, what to include, what to give up and most importantly, when to walk away if reasonable terms cannot be reached.

4) Manage the countless details and mountainous paperwork: Ensuring the i's are dotted and t's are crossed and that no balls are dropped from start to finish (and after) is a heavy load off any buyer's plate. From the moment of engagement, your agent will ensure smooth sailing and guide you effortlessly through any obstacles along the way.



Finding your new home!

LET'S START THE SEARCH



Now the fun begins! Most searches begin online. In fact over 90% of buyers start their home buying process on the internet. The internet can be very helpful for you to get a sense of what's available but keep in mind, it's not a complete picture of the market or all potential properties available.

A great agent, working on your behalf, will do an in-depth needs analysis to find all the properties suitable for you, set up a time to view the homes and guide you through the selection process.



Step 4:

THE SEARCH BEGINS



1) Determining your must-haves and nice-to-haves: This step is essential because it streamlines your home search and saves you valuable time. By clearly defining your must-haves (non-negotiable features) and nice-to-haves (desirable but not essential), you avoid getting overwhelmed by countless property listings. Instead, you focus on homes that genuinely meet your core requirements, making the search more efficient and productive.



2) Researching neighbourhoods and schools: Conducting thorough research on neighbourhoods and schools is vital to ensure your new home aligns with your family's lifestyle and educational needs. A home's location can significantly impact your daily life, including commuting, access to amenities, and the quality of schools in the area. Understanding these factors before making a purchase decision helps you create a living environment that complements your preferences and long-term goals.





3) Attending open houses and viewings: Physical visits to properties provide you with a first-hand experience of what homes have to offer. It's during these visits that you can assess the property's condition, layout, and overall feel. This helps you verify that the property matches your expectations based on online listings and ensures that you're not making a decision solely based on pictures. Visiting open houses and viewings is the final step in narrowing down your options before making an offer, offering peace of mind and confidence in your choice.



4) Making competitive offers with Team Ballas expert advice: When it comes to making an offer on a property, having an experienced real estate agents like Team Ballas by your side is indispensable. Competitive markets often require strategic offers to stand out, and can provide expert advice on how to structure your offer, ensuring it's compelling to sellers. His guidance can be the difference between having your offer accepted or losing out in a bidding war, saving you money and stress in the process.



5) Navigating negotiations and inspections: Negotiations and inspections are crucial stages in the home buying process. Negotiations may arise when issues with the property or price need to be addressed. Navigating these discussions with expertise can help you secure a better deal and ensure your interests are protected. Inspections, on the other hand, are essential to uncover potential issues with the property. Team Ballas's guidance can help you understand inspection reports, negotiate repairs, and make informed decisions. This level of expertise is vital in safeguarding your investment and avoiding unexpected problems after the purchase.





Step 5:

MAKE A SMART OFFER & NEGOTIATE

*You have found a house you love. Fantastic news!
Here's how the offer process typically works:*

STEP 1 - Decide on price, terms and conditions

Your agent will conduct a Comprehensive Market Analysis (CMA), complete with comparable active and expired listings, recent solds, and other historical data to determine the market value of the home. This is extremely helpful when it comes to negotiating a fair price. You also need to decide on a closing date and if there will be any conditions of the offer such as home inspection, appraisal, water tests etc. Your agent will guide you.

STEP 2 - Prepare the offer

Your agent will create a legal document (Agreement of Purchase and Sale) that protects you, follows your instructions, and matches your schedule and needs. Of note, many tech savvy, eco-friendly agents today are using the convenience of paperless transactions. E-signatures are becoming more and more common today for their ease of use and online, secure document storage.

STEP 3 - Review the offer

Your agent explains the details and terms of the offer, and suggests options for specialty clauses so that you know exactly what you are agreeing to.

STEP 4 - Present the offer

Your agent will present and negotiate the offer on your behalf.



What happens next?

ONE OF THREE THINGS:



1) The seller accepts your offer: Congratulations!

2) The seller rejects your offer: This isn't common, but it can happen and your agent will work to find out why.

3) The seller countersigns: Changing the terms of the offer, and presents the offer to back to you. Your agent will continue to negotiate on your behalf to reach agreeable terms. Your agent will also advise you if it's clear that an agreement cannot be reached and it's time to walk away.



Step 6:

CONDITION REMOVAL & INSPECTION

Okay, you have agreed on the price and terms and now have a firm or a conditional offer in place! If you have conditions, now is the time to start the process of satisfying them in order to meet the deadline and firm up your purchase. One of the most common conditions of an offer today is home inspection. Home inspections allow you to scrutinize the details of the home and potentially save you from any unpleasant surprises.

Home Inspection Tips:

Choose a qualified professional. A member of an association can reassure you are getting an experienced, knowledgeable professional. Ensure the home inspector checks for visible issues with plumbing, electrical systems, roof, insulation, walls, ceilings, floors and windows, and the condition of the foundation. They can also check that the home includes chattels like furnaces and air conditioners, are in working order.

Ensure your home inspector gives you a close and personal look at your new home. It takes about three hours to go through all the systems, and if there are any problems, you will see them with your own eyes. They will also give you maintenance tips and easy fix-ups, if necessary. Ensure that in the end, you receive a detailed report that summarizes the condition of your home.





Step 7:



PREPARING FOR CLOSING DAY!

Typically you will have anywhere from 30 to 90 days before closing day. The closing date can be the same as your move-in date, however, this is not always possible. Check with your lawyer or agent to find out when your keys will be available on the closing date. It is normal that the exchange of money and title be complete before keys are released which could be late in the day. **Remember, this is an exciting time!** Being organized well in advance will pave the way for a much more enjoyable journey. Here are a few details to take care of before your closing date.

Legal Stuff and Paperwork You and your agent will need to provide your lawyer with all the necessary documentation for your purchase. Your agent usually takes care of the agreement, waivers, survey and any other purchase documents. However, you may need to provide your lawyer with some additional information:

- **Down Payment and Closing Costs** - Make the necessary arrangements to have these funds available a week prior to closing or when the lawyer has requested funds.
- **Moving Arrangements & Change of Address** - Whether you are using professional movers, renting a truck, or getting a bunch of friends together, plan and organize it early.
- **Property Insurance** - Arrange for home insurance before closing and request a proof of insurance at your financial institution in advance. Provide your insurance agent with the listing information and details such as age of the house, pool or no pool, type and condition of the roof, condition of the furnace, electrical and type of exterior.
- **Utilities** - Contact the local utilities to coordinate the change of billing on closing. Including phone, internet, cable, gas, electricity, water, and any rental agreements. Don't forget to cancel the services at your old address.
- **Schools** - Inform your children's old and new schools about the move and arrange any necessary record transfers.

TESTIMONIALS

“Just wanted to take the time to thank Team Ballas at Royal LePage ProAlliance Realty, Brokerage. Max , Janet and Jason were incredibly awesome to work with. They are without a doubt the best Realtors ever!!! Very professional. They are honest to a fault, always on top of any issues and react quickly to resolve any that may arise. They are excellent at communicating with the buyers and the sellers in a timely fashion. Special kudos to Max, you made this such a great experience...you Rock!!! Thank you Team Ballas you are the best!!! We will surely recommend Team Ballas to all of our friends and family.”

-Rick and Tracey

“Jason is extremely knowledgeable. He helped us learn what to look for, and what to avoid, while buying a home. He cared about the needs of our entire family during our search and found us the ideal home AND stayed within our budget. Thanks Jason and Janet. You guys are an incredible team!”

-Tom and Heather

“To Jason and The Team: Just want to say how grateful Jennie and I are for the exception job done in such a short time. It was an absolute pleasure working with you and your professional team. It will be my pleasure to pass your name and card along.”

-Milton and Family-

“Jason, Without your patience and understanding we would have never found our home. You are amazing!”

-Laura and Curtis-





Discover your dream home!

Here are a few key questions to help narrow down what you want in your home.

- What type of home are you looking for?
- Detached or semi-detached?
- What style of home is best for you? Two-storey, bungalow, split-level, duplex, townhouse?
- What about the age of the home? Does the home need to be brand new?
- How many bedrooms and bathrooms do you need?
- What are you looking for in a kitchen? How about a family room? Do you want a separate dining room? What is your preferred layout?
- What are your high-priority features? Appliances, ensuite, fireplace?
- What other rooms do you need? Main floor laundry room, home office, hobby room?
- What about storage space? Basements? Lockers?
- Do you need a garage or extra parking spaces?
- Is energy efficiency important? Newer windows or a high-efficiency furnace?
- How long is your daily commute? How easy is it to get to the places you need to go?
- How close do you need to be to transit, shopping, schools, places of worship, and hospitals?
- Are there any important location factors? Backing on to parks? How about road traffic? Do you need to be on a quiet street?
- What size of yard are you looking for? Is the backyard important, or is a side yard enough? What about the front yard?
- What other landscaping features are important? A fenced yard, play areas, a pool, gardens, a patio?
- Is it important that the house faces a certain direction?
- Who are you sharing this home with and what are their needs? For example, pets might need a fenced yard, or extended family may want a separate entrance.
- How long do you plan to live here? This decision can impact the type of home, the location, and how much you will spend.
- How much do you want to invest beyond the purchase price of the home—both in terms of money and effort—if you can't find all the features that you want?

Change of Address Checklist



Utilities, Bills, and Other Vendors

- Electricity Hydro
- Natural gas Cell
- phone Landline
- Cable Internet
- Water delivery/treatment

Legal and Identity Documents

- Driver's licence
- Passport
- Health card
- Insurance Tax documents (Income tax, Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security, etc.)

Professional Services

- Pool Lawn
- Housecleaning Physician
- Veterinarian
- Attorney
- Dentist
- Optometrist
- Other specialists

Financial Bank

- Credit card company
- Insurance (car, life, home, and health)
- Pension plan Car loan
- Other loans Reward programs

Miscellaneous

- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Professional associations
- Alumni associations
- Clubs Charities





Packing like a Pro

This may seem hard to believe, but many people thoroughly enjoy their moving day and the time leading up to it. **The secret? Being organized.** Make sure you have the right tools—packing tape, permanent markers, sticky notes, and lots of boxes on hand will make your move much easier. Start early and work steadily. Make progress every day with your packing instead of leaving it all until the last minute.

- 1) **Develop a master “packing/to do” list** so you won’t forget something critical.
- 2) **Purge!** Get rid of things you no longer want or need. Have a garage sale, donate to a charity, or recycle.
- 3) **Before throwing something out, remember to ask yourself how frequently you use that item** and how you would feel if you no longer had it.
- 4) **Pack like items together.** Put toys with toys and kitchen utensils with kitchen utensils.
- 5) **Decide what, if anything, you plan to move yourself.** Precious items, such as family photos, breakable valuables, or must-haves during the move, should probably stay with you.
- 6) **Use the right box for the item.** Items packed loosely are more likely to be damaged.
- 7) **Put heavy items in small boxes so they are easier to lift.** Keep the weight under 50 lbs., if possible.
- 8) **Do not over pack boxes** — boxes that are packed comfortably will be less likely to break.
- 9) **Wrap each fragile item separately** and pad the bottom and sides of boxes.
- 10) **Label every box on all sides.** You never know how they will be stacked and you do not want to have to move other boxes aside to find out what is inside.
- 11) **Use colour-coded labels** to indicate which room each item should go in. Colour-code a floor plan for your new house to help your movers.
- 12) **Keep your moving documents together**, including phone numbers, the driver’s name, and van number.
- 13) **Back up your computer files** before moving your computer.
- 14) **Inspect each box and all furniture for damage** as soon as it arrives. Remember, most movers won’t take plants.

General Contacts

SCHOOL PHONE

SCHOOL BOARD (HASTINGS & PRINCE EDWARD): 613-966-1170 or 1-800-267-4350

SCHOOL BOARD (KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE): 705-742-9773 or 1-877-741-4577

POST OFFICE PHONE

POST OFFICE - BELLEVILLE: 613-968-3599

POST OFFICE - BRIGHTON: 613-475-1644

POST OFFICE - TRENTON: 613-392-4402

GENERAL CONTACT

BELL CANADA - PHONE: 613-310-2355 or 1-800-668-6878

BELL CANADA - SATELLITE DISH: 1-888-759-3474

HYDRO ONE: 1-888-664-9376

ELEXICON (BELLEVILLE HYDRO): 1-888-445-2881

COGECO CABLE: 613-967-9751 or 1-888-626-4326

WATER AND SEWER - BELLEVILLE: 613-966-3651

WATER AND SEWER - BRIGHTON: 613-475-1162

WATER AND SEWER - TRENTON: 613-392-2841

CITY OF BELLEVILLE: 613-968-6481

CITY OF BRIGHTON: 613-475-0670

CITY OF TRENTON: 613-392-2841



General Contacts

GENERAL HOUSE CARE PHONE

RELIANCE (HOT WATER TANK RENTAL): 1-866-735-4262

ENERCARE (HOT WATER TANK RENTAL): 1-844-730-2784

ENBRIDGE: 1-877-362-7434

GEROW PROPANE: 613-475-2414

TYENDINAGA PROPANE: 613-967-7881

EARL ROSEBUSH FUELS (OIL): 613-966-1372

ULTRAMAR (OIL): 613-962-4504

BELLEVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL: 613-966-5511

TRENTON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL: 613-392-2540

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL: 613-476-1008

HITCHON PUMPS (WELL SYSTEMS): 613-966-1471

QLOGIC (WELL SYSTEMS): 613-922-7474

QUINTE SEPTIC: 613-475-0960

TRENTON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL: 613-392-2540

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL: 613-476-1008

HITCHON PUMPS (WELL SYSTEMS): 613-966-1471

QLOGIC (WELL SYSTEMS): 613-922-7474

QUINTE SEPTIC: 613-475-0960



General Contacts

HOME INSPECTORS PHONE

KAREN COFIELD: 613-847-4753

ELDEN LEE: 613-398-0184

GIL STRACHAN: 613-391-8515 or 1-888-394-6954

RICHARD HUTCHISON: 613-398-8556 or 1-866-559-5578

LAWYERS PHONE

MATTHEW WARD/KARINDA DOCKRILL: 613-966-7771

PETER MCCABE (BILINGUAL): 613-966-0924

PETER ELSTON: 613-392-5560

VAN TUCKEY: 613-392-1221

SAM BURGESS: 613-475-2421

DAN THOMPSON: 613-475-1175

BANK BROKERS CONTACT

COLIN SHEA – MORTGAGE ALLIANCE: 416-358-8522

JEFF ROBSON – DOMINION LENDING CENTRE: 613-849-5359

CHERYL HARTWICK – MORTGAGE EDGE: 613-969-7655

INSURANCE PHONE

ALLEN INSURANCE (LIAM): 1-877-924-2632 or 613-394-4888

STATE FARM – PETER WEBB: 613-394-5200

DESJARDINS (KIM JOICE): 866-383-4600





As always if you have any questions never hesitate to reach out by either clicking below to book a call with me or send me an email. I look forward to beginning this home buying journey with you!

When you work with Team Ballas, you're not just buying a home; you're securing your future. With their expertise, you'll not only find the perfect property but also embark on a journey with a trusted partner who prioritizes your success and satisfaction. Sail smoothly through the home buying process with Team Ballas as your real estate agent and discover the place you'll proudly call home.

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