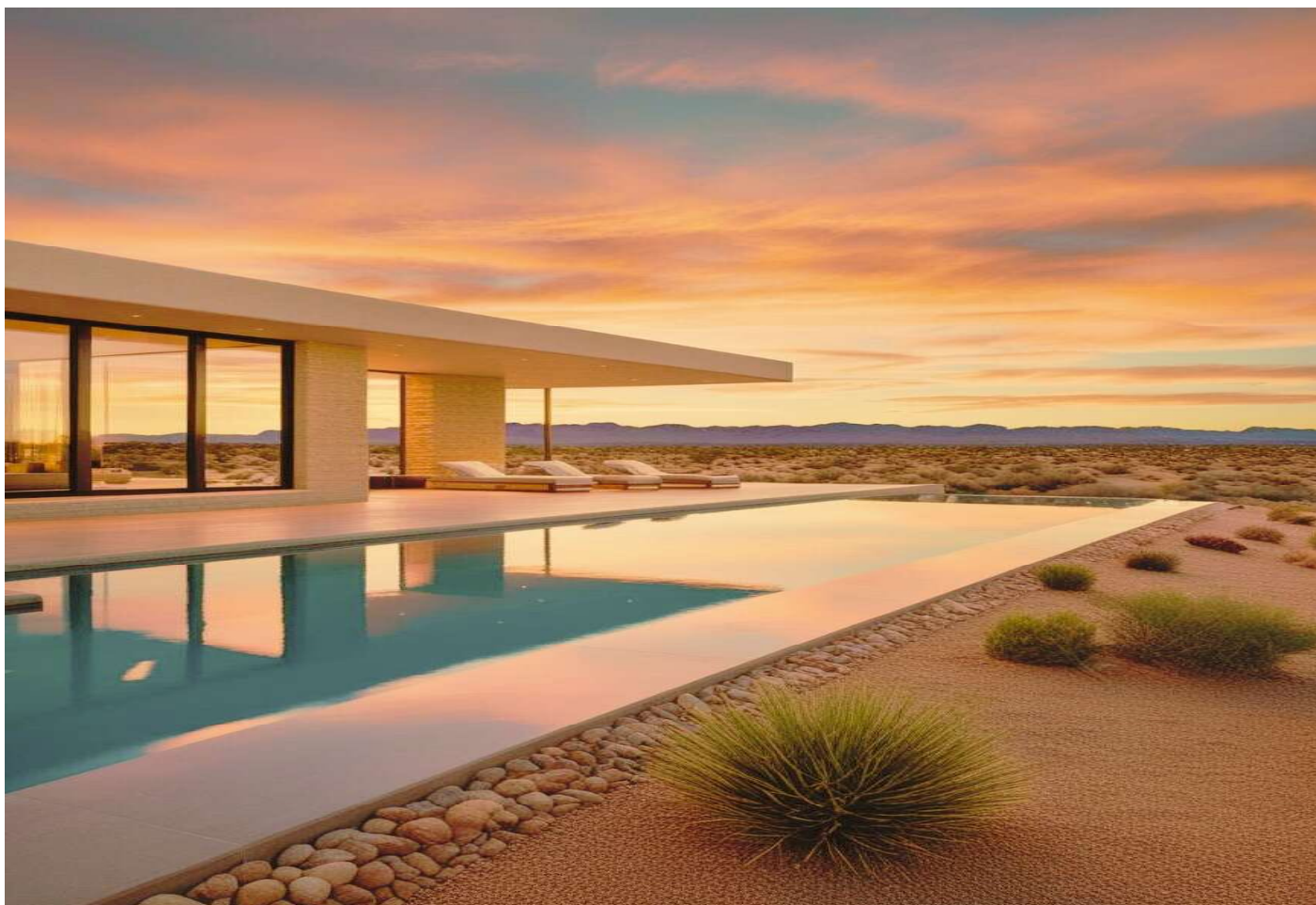




LAS VEGAS & HENDERSON HOME BUYER'S GUIDE

A practical roadmap for buying with clarity, protecting your interests, and making confident decisions in Southern Nevada.

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Welcome to Your Home-Buying Journey

Buying a home is both a financial decision and a life decision. Whether you are purchasing your first home, relocating to Southern Nevada, moving up, downsizing, using VA benefits, or adding real estate to an investment strategy, the process is easier when you understand what happens next - and why.

My role is to help you move through each step with information, strategy, and careful attention to the contract. I draw on 40 years in the real estate industry, including experience in escrow, 1031 tax-deferred exchanges, real estate education, contract preparation, negotiation, and residential sales.

What this guide will help you do

Prepare financially, define your search, understand representation, compare homes, structure a competitive offer, complete inspections and due diligence, navigate appraisal and financing, review title and HOA information, and prepare for closing.



Your story is my story. The goal is not simply to get you to closing. It is to help you make a purchase that fits your needs, priorities, budget, and plans.

Your Home-Buying Roadmap

Every transaction is different, but most purchases follow this general path.

- 1** Prepare & Plan
Clarify your goals, preferred areas, timing, monthly comfort level, and must-have features.
- 2** Financing
Speak with a qualified lender, review loan options, and obtain a current preapproval before serious home shopping.
- 3** Buyer Representation
Understand agency, representation, compensation, and how your agent will advocate for you.
- 4** Search & Compare
Evaluate homes, neighborhoods, property condition, ownership costs, HOA considerations, and resale factors.
- 5** Offer Strategy
Choose price and terms based on the property, competition, market evidence, financing, and your risk tolerance.
- 6** Due Diligence
Complete inspections and investigate the property, disclosures, title, HOA documents, insurance, and other material concerns.
- 7** Loan & Appraisal
Work closely with your lender while underwriting and appraisal move forward.
- 8** Final Review & Closing
Complete the final walkthrough, sign closing documents, fund, record, receive keys, and transition into ownership.

A key principle

Do not make a major home-buying decision based on one number alone. Price, payment, condition, location, future maintenance, insurance, HOA costs, financing terms, and resale potential all matter.

1. Start With the Financial Picture

A lender preapproval gives you a working purchase range, but your personal comfort level matters just as much. Before touring homes, understand the estimated cash needed and the ongoing cost of ownership.

Questions to discuss with your lender

- What loan programs may fit my circumstances - conventional, FHA, VA, jumbo, down-payment assistance, or another option?
- What is my estimated principal, interest, taxes, homeowners insurance, mortgage insurance, and HOA payment?
- How much cash should I plan for down payment, earnest money, inspections, appraisal, closing costs, reserves, and moving expenses?
- How could interest-rate changes affect my payment or qualification?
- Are there lender, property-type, condominium, solar, or HOA requirements I should know before making an offer?

Protect your preapproval

Until your purchase closes, avoid opening new credit, financing furniture or a vehicle, moving large amounts of money without documentation, changing employment without discussing it with your lender, or missing payments. Even a seemingly small financial change can affect underwriting.

Need a lender referral?

I work with lending professionals who can explain financing options and help you compare the numbers. Ask me for a referral based on your purchase goals.

2. Understand Buyer Representation

Your real estate agent should do more than unlock doors. Representation includes helping you evaluate properties, interpret market information, structure offers, manage contract deadlines, coordinate with the lender and escrow, and protect your interests throughout the transaction.

Before you begin touring homes, discuss:

- The scope of the agent's representation and responsibilities.
- How the agent is compensated and what the written buyer representation agreement provides.
- Your goals, preferred communities, timing, budget, property type, and non-negotiables.
- How quickly you can respond when the right property becomes available.
- How you want to balance price, condition, concessions, closing timing, and other terms.

Teresa's approach

I combine a REALTOR®'s market perspective with an escrow-trained eye for the details that can affect earnest money, title, timelines, contingencies, closing, and your overall risk.



3. Search Smarter: Compare More Than the House

A beautiful home can still be the wrong purchase if the location, ownership costs, condition, or future resale considerations do not fit your goals. As you compare properties in Las Vegas, Henderson, North Las Vegas, and Boulder City, look at the complete picture.

PROPERTY	LOCATION & LIFESTYLE
Floor plan and functional layout	Commute routes and access
Age of roof, HVAC, water heater and major systems	Nearby shopping, recreation and services
Renovations and apparent workmanship	Noise, traffic and surrounding uses
Lot orientation, sun exposure and outdoor space	Community amenities and neighborhood feel
Pool, landscaping and maintenance needs	School information when relevant to your search
Solar system status and documentation	Future development and resale considerations
HOA/CIC fees, rules and assessments	Insurance availability and property-specific risks

For new construction buyers

The builder's sales representative represents the builder. Having your own real estate representation can help you compare communities, incentives, financing, lot premiums, upgrades, timelines, inspections, and resale considerations.

4. Writing a Strong Offer

The highest price is not always the strongest offer. Sellers evaluate the entire package. The right strategy depends on the home, competing interest, market conditions, your financing, and the terms you are comfortable accepting.

Offer terms we may evaluate together

- Purchase price: supported by comparable sales, current competition, property condition, and your goals.
- Earnest money: the deposit showing your good-faith intent to perform under the contract.
- Financing: loan type, down payment, lender readiness, and financing-related terms.
- Appraisal: how appraisal risk is addressed in the contract and offer strategy.
- Inspections and due diligence: time to investigate the property and determine how you want to proceed.
- Seller concessions: whether you request assistance with allowable closing costs or other negotiated items.
- Closing and possession: timing that works for you while considering the seller's needs.
- Personal property or inclusions: items that should be clearly addressed rather than assumed.

Earnest money deserves careful attention

Your contract establishes deadlines and conditions that may affect your earnest money. I emphasize calendar management, written documentation, and timely decisions so you understand the consequences before a deadline passes.

5. Inspections & Buyer Due Diligence

A professional home inspection is one of the most useful tools available to a buyer. The inspector evaluates visible and accessible components of the property and can identify conditions that deserve further investigation. A general inspection is not a guarantee and may lead to recommendations for specialized inspections.

Depending on the property, buyers may consider:

- General home inspection and reinspection, when appropriate.
- Roof, HVAC, plumbing, electrical, pool/spa, sewer line, structural, mold/moisture, pest, or other specialty evaluations when concerns arise.
- Permits and records for additions, conversions, major renovations, pools, solar, or other improvements.
- Seller disclosures and any known repair history.
- Insurance availability, coverage, deductibles, and claims-related questions.
- Utility costs, service providers, and solar obligations or agreements.
- Boundaries, easements, title exceptions, and survey matters when relevant.

Your inspection decision is also a negotiation decision.

After reviewing inspection findings, you may decide to proceed as-is, request repairs or other consideration where permitted by the contract, obtain additional evaluations, or exercise a contractual right to cancel when available. The best response depends on the seriousness of the condition, the home's price and competition, your budget, and your tolerance for future repairs.

Think beyond cosmetic items

Focus first on safety, structure, water intrusion, major systems, costly deferred maintenance, insurability, and conditions that could materially affect your ownership experience.

6. HOA, Condominium & Solar Considerations

Southern Nevada includes many common-interest communities. If a property is governed by an HOA or condominium association, the documents and financial information can be an important part of your due diligence.

HOA / common-interest community review

- Current assessments and recurring fees.
- Rules, architectural restrictions, parking, pets, leasing, and use restrictions.
- Financial statements, budgets, reserves, insurance, pending litigation, and special assessments when provided.
- For condominiums, lender project eligibility and insurance requirements can affect financing.

Homes with solar

Do not assume that 'solar' automatically means low utility costs or that the equipment transfers without conditions. Determine whether the system is owned, financed, leased, or subject to another agreement. Review available contracts, payoff or transfer requirements, equipment details, warranties, utility information, and any lender/title implications before you are committed beyond your contractual protections.

Ask early

HOA, condominium, and solar questions can affect financing, insurance, affordability, and closing. Identifying them early gives you more time to investigate and make an informed decision.

7. Appraisal, Title & Escrow

Once you are under contract, several important processes happen at the same time. Staying responsive helps keep the transaction on schedule.

Appraisal

When required by the lender, an appraisal provides an independent opinion of value for lending purposes. The appraised value, contract terms, loan program, and any appraisal-related protections in your agreement determine the next steps if value becomes an issue.

Title

Title work identifies the ownership interest being conveyed and exceptions that may affect the property. Review title information carefully and ask questions about liens, easements, restrictions, or other matters you do not understand.

Escrow

Escrow acts as a neutral holder of documents and funds and coordinates the closing process according to the transaction instructions. You will receive instructions for deposits, signing, funding, and closing.

Wire-fraud protection

Treat any change to wiring instructions as suspicious. Independently verify instructions using a trusted telephone number before sending funds. Do not rely solely on an email containing wiring information.

My prior escrow experience helps me anticipate the practical details that can become important between contract acceptance and recording.

8. The Final Stretch: From Loan Approval to Keys

As closing approaches, keep your finances stable, respond promptly to lender and escrow requests, and avoid making assumptions about the property or closing date until the required steps are complete.

Before closing

- Confirm your lender has what is needed for final loan approval.
- Review your closing figures and ask questions about anything you do not understand.
- Arrange homeowners insurance as required.
- Verify your final funds and wiring instructions safely.
- Complete the final walkthrough to confirm the property's condition and any agreed-upon items.
- Bring required identification and follow escrow's signing instructions.

After signing

Signing documents does not always mean you immediately own the property. Funding and recording must occur as required for the transaction. Once recording is confirmed and possession is available under the contract, you can receive keys and begin your next chapter.

Final walkthrough is not a new inspection

Its purpose is generally to confirm that the property is in the expected condition before closing and that negotiated items have been addressed as applicable.

9. After Closing: Protect Your Investment

Homeownership continues after you receive the keys. A simple maintenance plan can help you protect the property, manage costs, and reduce surprises.

Your first-month checklist

- Change or rekey exterior locks and update access codes.
- Locate the main water shutoff, electrical panel, gas shutoff if applicable, and HVAC filters.
- Save appliance, solar, pool, HVAC, and home-system manuals and warranties.
- Update mailing, utilities, insurance, and HOA contact information.
- Create a maintenance calendar for HVAC service, filters, roof checks, plumbing, irrigation, pool equipment, exterior caulking, and other systems.
- Keep your closing documents, title policy, improvement records, permits, invoices, and major repair receipts together.
- Budget for routine maintenance and future replacement of major components.

Las Vegas desert ownership

Heat, intense sun, hard water, irrigation, pools, roofing materials, HVAC systems, and desert landscaping can create maintenance needs that are different from other markets. Learning the home's systems early can help you plan rather than react.



Buyer Readiness Checklist

Use this page before you begin serious home shopping.

- ☐ Define my preferred purchase timeline.
- ☐ Set a monthly housing-payment comfort range.
- ☐ Identify funds available for down payment and closing.
- ☐ Speak with a lender and obtain a current preapproval.
- ☐ Understand my estimated cash-to-close and reserve needs.
- ☐ Discuss buyer representation and compensation.
- ☐ Identify preferred areas and acceptable commute/location factors.
- ☐ Separate must-haves from nice-to-haves.
- ☐ Consider HOA, condominium, solar, pool, and maintenance preferences.
- ☐ Plan for inspection and appraisal expenses.
- ☐ Avoid new credit or major financial changes during the purchase.
- ☐ Know how quickly I can make a decision when the right home appears.

Ready to begin?

Contact Teresa to talk through your goals, timeline, financing questions, and the type of home that would fit your next chapter.

Questions to Ask Before You Make an Offer

Use these prompts to slow the decision down just enough to see the whole picture.

1. Does this home fit the way I actually live - not just how it photographs?
2. What are the likely near-term maintenance or replacement costs?
3. How does the asking price compare with relevant recent sales and current competition?
4. What would my estimated monthly ownership cost be, including HOA and insurance?
5. Are there solar, HOA, condominium, title, permit, or insurance issues I need to investigate?
6. What matters most in my offer: price, payment, seller concessions, timing, condition, or certainty?
7. If the inspection reveals a major issue, what is my financial and practical tolerance for repairs?
8. Could I comfortably own this home if expenses rise or an unexpected repair occurs?
9. Does the location still work for me during normal commute, traffic, and lifestyle patterns?
10. If I needed to sell in several years, what features might help or limit resale appeal?

Notes

Meet Teresa Story



Teresa Story, REALTOR®

Teresa has worked in the real estate industry for 40 years, beginning in escrow in 1986 and becoming a Nevada real estate licensee in 2001. Her background includes escrow, 1031 tax-deferred exchanges, real estate education, contract preparation, negotiation, and residential sales.

She serves buyers and sellers throughout Southern Nevada, including Henderson, Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, and Boulder City. Her buyer clients include first-time purchasers, Veterans, move-up buyers, relocating households, investors, and buyers navigating HOA and condominium communities.

Teresa's approach is educational and strategic: understand the numbers, understand the contract, investigate the property, and make decisions with a clear view of both opportunity and risk.

Let's talk about your next move

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Important: This guide is for general educational purposes and is not legal, tax, lending, insurance, inspection, or financial advice. Real estate contracts, loan programs, HOA requirements, property conditions, and transaction circumstances vary. Buyers should consult the appropriate qualified professionals for advice within their areas of expertise.