



FREE HOME BUYER'S GUIDE

# Everything You Need to Know Before You Buy a Home in El Paso

Your step-by-step guide to buying smarter, avoiding costly mistakes, and feeling confident every step of the way.

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## WELCOME

# You're Closer Than You Think.

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I created this guide because buying a home is one of the biggest financial decisions you'll ever make — and most people go into it without the information they need. I've helped over 250 families buy homes right here in El Paso, and the ones who felt most confident were the ones who understood the process before they started.

This guide will walk you through everything — loans, down payments, closing costs, credit scores, and the exact steps I take every client through from day one to closing day. No fluff. No confusing jargon. Just the real information you need to make a smart decision.

**250+ Families Helped**

SECTION 01

# Understanding Your Loan Options

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Before you look at a single home, you need to know what loan makes sense for your situation. Here are the four most common options in El Paso:

<p><b>FHA Loan</b></p>	<p>3.5% down payment required. Credit scores as low as 620 qualify. Great for first-time buyers who don't have a large down payment saved up. Requires mortgage insurance (MIP) which adds to your monthly payment.</p>
<p><b>Conventional Loan</b></p>	<p>Typically requires 3–20% down. Best for buyers with stronger credit (620+). No mortgage insurance required if you put 20% down. More flexibility with property types.</p>
<p><b>VA Loan</b></p>	<p>For active duty military, veterans, and eligible spouses. Zero down payment required. No PMI. One of the best loan products available — if you qualify, you should almost always use it.</p>
<p><b>USDA Loan</b></p>	<p>Zero down payment for properties in eligible rural or suburban areas outside El Paso city limits. Income limits apply. Great option if you're open to living in areas like Horizon City or Anthony.</p>

## SECTION 02

# The Real Numbers — What You'll Actually Need

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One of the biggest mistakes buyers make is not knowing how much cash they actually need upfront. Here's what to plan for:

### Down Payment

3.5% – 20% of the purchase price depending on your loan type. On a \$250,000 home that's \$8,750 (FHA) to \$50,000 (Conventional 20%).

### Closing Costs

Typically 2–4% of the loan amount. On a \$250,000 home expect \$5,000–\$10,000. This covers title fees, lender fees, appraisal, and more. In some cases, I can negotiate for the seller to cover these.

### Earnest Money

Usually 1% of the purchase price paid upfront to show you're serious. This goes toward your down payment or closing costs at closing.

### Home Inspection

Roughly \$300–\$500. Always recommended — never skip this.

### Reserves

Most lenders want to see 2–3 months of mortgage payments in savings after closing. Plan for this in your budget.

## Monthly Payment Example

### SECTION 03

## Credit Score & Debt-to-Income Explained

### Credit Score

Your credit score directly impacts your interest rate and whether you qualify at all. Here's a simple breakdown:

Score Range	Loan Impact
760+	Best rates available — you're in great shape
720–759	Very good — most loan products available to you
680–719	Good — competitive rates, most loans accessible
620–679	Fair — conventional loans possible, slightly higher rates
580–619	Limited options — work on improving score to 620+ first
Below 620	Does not meet minimum for most loan programs — focus on improvement

### Debt-to-Income Ratio (DTI)

Your DTI is the percentage of your monthly income that goes toward debt payments. Lenders use this to determine how much house you can afford.

**Formula:** Monthly debt payments ÷ Gross monthly income = DTI%

Most lenders prefer a DTI under 43%. Some loan programs allow up to 50% with compensating factors. The lower your DTI, the better your options.

## SECTION 04

## The Step-by-Step Home Buying Process

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### Get Pre-Approved

Before you look at a single home, talk to a lender. Pre-approval tells you exactly what you qualify for and shows sellers you're serious. I can connect you with trusted local lenders who know how to move fast.

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### Define Your Goals

What neighborhoods? What school districts? What must-haves vs. nice-to-haves? We'll sit down and build a clear picture of exactly what you're looking for so we don't waste your time.

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### Start Your Home Search

I'll set up a personalized home search that matches your criteria and alerts you the moment something new hits the market. We'll tour homes together and I'll tell you what to look for — and what to watch out for.

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### Make a Strategic Offer

When you find the right home, I'll run a full market analysis to make sure you're not overpaying. Then we craft a strategic offer designed to win — whether it's a competitive market or there's room to negotiate.

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### Inspection & Negotiation

After the offer is accepted, we schedule a home inspection. I'll review the results with you and negotiate any repairs or credits with the seller. This step protects you from expensive surprises after closing.

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### Close With Confidence

Your lender finalizes the loan, we do a final walkthrough, and you sign the papers. I'll be with you every step of the way to make sure closing day is smooth, clear, and stress-free.

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## SECTION 05

## First-Time Buyer Mistakes to Avoid

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- X Looking at homes before getting pre-approved**

You'll fall in love with a home you can't afford or lose it to someone who came prepared. Always get pre-approved first.
- X Skipping the home inspection**

A home inspection costs \$300–\$500 and can save you tens of thousands. Never skip it, no matter how perfect the home looks.
- X Making large purchases before closing**

Buying a car, furniture, or anything on credit before closing can change your DTI and blow up your loan approval at the last minute.
- X Choosing the wrong loan type**

Not every loan is right for every buyer. VA loans, FHA, USDA, Conventional — each has pros and cons depending on your situation. I'll help you choose correctly.
- X Letting emotions drive the decision**

Falling in love with a home can lead to overpaying or overlooking red flags. I'm here to keep the process strategic so you never have regrets.
- X Not understanding the market**

El Paso is not a one-size-fits-all market. Different neighborhoods, different price points, different dynamics. Local knowledge matters — that's what I'm here for.



## Ready to Buy With Confidence?

**250+**  
Families Helped

**5 Yrs**  
El Paso Experience

**Millions**  
of Local Video Views

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