

Buyers' Guide



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8 STEPS To Finding the Right Home

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STEP 1

Deciding Where and What to Buy

Congratulations on taking this first step towards buying a home. Pride of home-ownership is indeed one of life's greatest joys and biggest accomplishments. It is an exciting time and my hope is that this guide will bring clarity and peace of mind during your home buying journey.

Let's get started! The first step is deciding where you want to live, what type of home you are looking for and what features are "must haves" or "would be nice to have" in a home. Invariably, there will be trade offs, but rest assured we are here to help sort through the options to find you the best house, at the best price and with as many of your wants and needs as possible!



Some Key Questions To Help You Get Started

- What type of home are you looking for? Single family, semi-detached? What style of home is best for you? Bungalow, split level, two storey, duplex?
- What about the age of the home?
- How many bedrooms and bathrooms do you need?
- What are you looking for in a kitchen, family room? Do you want a separate dining room? What is your preferred layout?
- What are your high priority features? Appliances, en-suite, fireplace?
- What other types of rooms do you need? Main floor laundry room, home office?
- 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 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, hospitals?
- Are there any important location factors? Backing on to parks, road traffic?
- What size of yard are you looking for? Is the backyard important? Or is a side yard okay? What about the front yard?
- What other landscaping features are important? A fenced yard, play areas, pool, gardens?
- Is it important what direction the house faces?
- Who are you sharing this home with and what are their needs? For example, pets might need a fenced yard or extended family wants a separate entrance.
- How much do you want to invest beyond the purchase price of the home in terms of financial or sweat equity, if you can't find all the features that you want?
- How long do you plan to live here? This can impact the type of home you want, the location and how much you will spend.



STEP 2

Getting Pre-Approved for a Mortgage

The mortgage industry is a highly competitive field and it is important to understand that interest rates can change at any time. Partnering with a mortgage broker or financial institution to help you find the right mortgage product at the best rate is key to your home buying process.

5 Easy Steps to Get You Pre-Approved For a Mortgage

1. Talk with a mortgage specialist. There are hundreds of options to choose from when it comes to lenders. Independent mortgage brokers tend to offer the most options because they do not just work with one bank. However, if you have a good relationship with your bank or financial institution, contact them as your first step towards finding the right mortgage for you. But be sure to compare rates.
2. Complete and submit your application with the mortgage broker. They will collect your financial and personal information in order to find out how much mortgage you can carry.
3. Gather all the necessary documents. The mortgage broker will give you a list of documents that the banks/lenders need to finalize the mortgage.
4. Verification of your details. They will do their checks and balances to make sure that you are not getting in over your head.
5. Obtain a copy of your pre-approval. This is a powerful negotiating tool. The seller of your dream home will feel more confident that you are the right person.

Having Pre-Approval Documentation Can Offer You Several Benefits

- Saves you time by only looking at properties that you can afford.
- Saves you money. Rate guarantees and mortgage terms can save you money for years to come.
- Less stress throughout the process. You will know that you are ready and capable of buying a home.
- Get a better deal on the home that you want. Sellers like to know that buyers already have financing in place.



STEP 3

Choosing the Right Realtor®

First, it is important that you understand whose interests Realtors® are legally bound to serve in a real estate transaction.

The Listing Agent

The Listing Agent is under contract with the seller to market and sell their property for the best possible price. Working with a listing agent means that they can:

- Arrange a showing of the property.
- Assist with financing the property.
- Provide details about the property.
- Explain all the forms and agreements related to buying the property.

The Buyer Agent

When you engage the services of your own personal Buyer Agent—someone who is under contract to work solely in your best interest—you get all of the same services listed above plus your personal Realtor® provides:

- Confidential assistance that addresses your needs first.
- Honest, loyal and diligent care, free from any conflicts of interest.
- Access to all listings including MLS, estate sales and even homes that were previously on the market where the seller might still be interested in selling.
- Expert advice on useful clauses such as home inspections and financing to fully protect you.
- Expert negotiation of the offer to purchase, to achieve the best possible price and terms.
- Expert advice on market value, inclusions, location, as well as help you decide when you should walk away.
- Discovery and disclosure of all information about the property including liens, warranties, disclosures, seller's purchase price, and market and planning activity in the area.



WHY...

Choose The Elaine Jones Team?

Our Buyers Know...

- The current fair market value of the home that they want to purchase so they do not overpay.
- Everything available on the market now within their criteria, as well as what is potentially coming to market soon, so they can compare.
- They receive the most relevant and up-to-date market information available.
- When they have found a great home at a great price.
- They get the best financing options: rates and terms.
- How comforting it feels to know we have their interests protected.
- They are in a strong negotiating position with us in their corner.
- How wonderful it feels to have a stress-free and enjoyable home buying experience!

When you choose The Elaine Jones Team at RLP Real Estate Associates as your personal Buyer Agent, you are choosing:

- Trusted professional Realtors® dedicated to serving your personal real estate needs first and foremost.
- A team with over 95% of their business coming from happy repeat clients and their referrals.
- A team with a wealth of knowledge and expertise in your market area
- Highly-skilled negotiators working on your behalf.
- Representatives whose primary goal is to help you find the right home, at the right price, with little to no stress or inconvenience to you.



Seniors Real Estate Specialist

SRES®

Elaine is proud to share that she has completed her Seniors Real Estate Specialist Designation! This achievement allows Elaine to specialize in supporting seniors during their moving journey. Our Team understands that the challenges and processes involved can vary significantly for this demographic and we are committed to highlighting the home features that matter most to them and their communities. This is truly important to The Elaine Jones Team.

Our Plan to Help

- ✓ Assess your home's value
- ✓ Declutter and downsize
- ✓ Recommend home modifications
- ✓ Market your home effectively
- ✓ Explore financial options
- ✓ Offer a network for professional guidance
- ✓ Highlight the benefits of retirement communities, such as social activities, amenities and support service
- ✓ Prioritize your physical, emotional and mental well-being during the transition
- ✓ Continued support and new friendship
- ✓ We're available to answer any questions with real estate matters



OUR TEAM



Elaine is a dedicated Realtor who primarily serves the West Greater Toronto Area and has lived in Georgetown for many years. Strong people skills, integrity and the motivation to help people be happy are the cornerstones of her success. Elaine's primary goals are to exceed your real estate needs and to get you the most for your investment.

As a child, Elaine immigrated to three different countries and has moved a total of 13 times, which helps her understand all of the emotions involved in moving between homes.

Elaine is a graduate of Ryerson University with a BBMD in Business Management and Enterprise Development. She has always been passionate about business and understands the importance of consumer patterns, trends, demographics, marketing and business strategies. Elaine believes in the importance of providing personalized service and she delivers the highest degree of attention to each and every client.



Caitlin Caspar is a driven and enthusiastic realtor who focuses on best serving the West Greater Toronto Area. Caitlin was born and raised in Mississauga and is proud to call Meadowvale her home. With a unique background in the restaurant industry, her experience in customer service and hospitality has honed her skills in communication, building relationships and attention to detail, which she brings to her role as an agent.

Caitlin is eager to utilize her skills and knowledge to help clients on their real estate journey. She has a strong passion for helping people and is committed to providing the top level of service to her clients.

In her free time, Caitlin enjoys traveling, trying new restaurants and spending time with her family.



Kim Stubberfield is the Executive Assistant and Transaction Coordinator to The Elaine Jones Team. Her strong organizational skills, attention to detail and ability to multi-task, assists Elaine in her ever-growing business.

Kim is from the Windsor area and moved to Georgetown in 2005 for her husband's job. Kim is the mom of two sons and a breast cancer survivor. She enjoys travelling, going to live music events and enjoying time with her family.

A graduate of the University of Windsor, she has both a Bachelor of Commerce and Education Degrees. Over the years, Kim has worked in both the accounting and education fields, including as a self-employed bookkeeper.

STEP 4

Becoming an Educated Buyer

The Elaine Jones Team Home Buyer Service Program

Our exclusive Home Buyer Service Program will empower you with key market information and every possible advantage to ensure you become an educated buyer. Educated buyers are able to make informed decisions creating a stress free and enjoyable home buying experience.

Here's what you can expect from us when you enroll in our program:

- Absolutely no fees or costs to you as a buyer.
- Property listings from a variety of advanced property search programs.
- A database of expired listings with sellers who may reconsider selling.
- Proactive prospecting within your desired area to locate potential sellers with homes that match your criteria that are not actively for sale now but may be considering to sell.
- For Sale By Owner homes that match your criteria.
- Up-to-the-minute access to the best deals on the market, including brand new MLS listings, newly price reduced properties, current bank power of sales, new home options, private sales and deals under contract that have fallen through.
- The most current real estate market information that may impact your buying decision, including mortgage changes, statistical sales data on median house prices, sales and months of inventory, local area market changes, trends and much more.



THE EDUCATION PROCESS

The Elaine Jones Team Home Buyer Process Keeps You Informed EVERY Step of the Way

1. After our initial fact gathering meeting, we will enter a detailed summary of your wants and needs for a home into our database and a variety of property search programs. This information is instantly shared with our entire team, other agents within our company and worldwide and with potential sellers to begin the property match process.
2. We will not bombard your email with information that is not relevant to you. We will provide daily update emails on all the homes that are new to the market or have had a recent price change and that match a broadened scope of what you are looking for.
3. As market area specialists with a pulse on local and national real estate market trends and changes, we also ensure you remain informed of all relevant industry changes that may impact your buying decision, including price trends and mortgage rates.
4. We personally inspect all potential properties in your desired area as well as give you the opportunity to view our new listings prior to them being exposed to the public on the MLS website.
5. When you find a home that peaks your interest, simply contact us and we will arrange a convenient time to view.

Remember, when selecting what homes to view...

- Choose different styles and types of homes that meet your needs.
- Drive by the home and area for your first impression.
- Select a maximum of 5 homes to visit in one day (3 to 4 is best).
- Schedule time after the showings to sit down and discuss the homes' merits.



STEP 5

Making an Educated Offer

The ongoing communication and education you will receive from our team will empower you to get the best possible deal on the home that you desire.

You've found 'The One'. Fantastic! Here's what happens next:

1. We will conduct a detailed CMA (Comprehensive Market Analysis) complete with comparable active and expired listings, recent solds and historical data relevant to determining the market value of the home. This will empower you to make an informed decision.
2. We will prepare an offer that protects you, follow your instructions and matches your schedule and needs.
3. We will explain the details of the offer, the terms and suggest options for specialty clauses ensuring you know exactly what you are agreeing to.
4. We will present and negotiate the offer on your behalf to get you the home that you want at the price and terms you want.

What happens after this:

- The seller may accept your offer – congratulations!
- The seller may reject your offer – not common, but it can happen and we would endeavor to find out why.
- The seller may decide to change the terms of the offer and present the offer to back to you.
- Our negotiations continue until agreeable terms between the seller and yourself are reached, or until we know an agreement cannot be reached and it is in your best interest to walk away.



STEP 6

Making a Deposit

Normally within **24 hours** of an offer being accepted, you must make a deposit towards the purchase of the home, unless otherwise stated within the offer. The deposit amount is the agreed upon amount on the accepted offer.

When you submit an offer to buy a home, the deposit demonstrates your commitment to the seller to complete the purchase.

Keep in mind, there is no minimum or standard amount for a deposit. It's something that can be negotiated between you and the seller. Some sellers may see a larger deposit as more desirable and as an indicator of a stronger level of commitment from the buyer.

We will guide you on a suitable deposit amount to offer based on the value of the home you are buying and the market conditions . It must be an amount that you are comfortable providing in a 24-hour time frame.

It's also important to remember that once the deal does close, the deposit will be applied towards the purchase price or down payment of your home.

What if the deal does not firm up?

When the offer is conditional and one of those conditions was not fulfilled to move forward (i.e., you are not satisfied with the home inspector's report), the buyer's deposit will be returned in full.



Deposit Instructions

Our team will send you deposit instructions from the listing brokerage detailing the listing brokerage's banking information and acceptable methods of payment, which you will then bring with you to your personal financial institution. Your banking staff will be able to guide you through this process once there.

The deposit can be paid through your financial institution via:

- Wire Transfer (generally a wire transfer fee must be added to the deposit total, in order to cover bank service charges)
- Bank Draft
- Certified Cheque
- Direct Deposit
 - Once the bank draft/certified cheque is obtained from your bank, you can bring this to any location of the Listing Brokerage's financial institution (e.g. TD Canada Trust) to deposit directly into their bank account

It is important to have the bank write the property address on these documents for tracking purposes.

You will need to send copies of all wire transfer confirmations, bank draft, certified cheques and bank receipts to our team once completed as proof the deposit has been made. We will then forward this on to the listing brokerage.

Once the deposit has been received in the brokerage's trust account, they will provide a Brokerage Deposit Receipt, which can take a couple of business days depending on the method of payment.



STEP 7

Conditions, Home Inspections and Waivers

The offer has been accepted. Now we need to satisfy the conditions.

This usually involves performing a home inspection, getting the rest of your personal information and the property information to your mortgage broker or bank, and arranging for the other information that might be necessary, like surveys, water tests and condominium documents. We will help you make the necessary arrangements to ensure that the entire process runs smoothly before the deadline.

Next, you will need to add some people to your team.

Finding a Home Inspector

Home inspections allow you to scrutinize the details of the home and save you from some unpleasant surprises. We would be happy to recommend reputable home inspectors.

We will ensure:

- The home inspector is a qualified professional. Being a member of an Association can reassure you are getting an experienced, knowledgeable professional.
- The home inspector checks for visible issues with plumbing, electrical systems, the roof, insulation, walls, ceilings, floors and windows, and the condition of the foundation. They can also check that included chattels, like furnaces and air conditioners, are in working order.
- Your home inspector gives you an up close and personal look at your new home. It takes about 3 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.
- In the end, you will receive a detailed report that summarizes the condition of your home.



Choosing a Lawyer

Lawyers are an invaluable member of your team whose job is to ensure that you get what you are paying for and in accordance with the terms of your agreement of purchase. Your lawyer will ensure:



- There is nothing on title that is not supposed to be there.
- The property taxes, utilities and condo fees, if applicable, are up to date.
- You have all the information that you need about your new home.
- Your mortgage lender is satisfied and that your mortgage is secured on property title as required by your mortgage agreement.
- You know exactly how much money you will need in order to complete the transaction on closing day.
- They also ensure that the seller gets paid the purchase price.



STEP 8

Preparing to Move

Typically you will have anywhere from 30 to 90 days to get everything ready for your home. It could be shorter or longer, depending on what you need and have agreed upon with the seller. The closing date is usually the same as your move-in date.

It is a good idea to get things organized well in advance of the closing date to reduce the stress of the move.

- **Lawyers:** We will send your lawyer the information about your purchase. You will need to provide the lawyer with some additional information: insurance, down payment information, fee payments, adjustment payments and possibly other signed documents that they ask you for. You will meet with the lawyer about a week before the closing to finalize everything.
- **Down Payment and Closing Costs:** Make the necessary arrangements to have the funds available when the lawyer asks for it. Liquidating some assets can require some additional time.
- **Movers:** Whether you are using professional movers, renting a truck or getting a bunch of friends together, plan and organize it early.
- **Insurance:** The lawyers will need a copy of your home insurance before closing so that the financial institution will release the money to them. Call your insurance broker with the listing information. They might also want to know the age of the house, the condition of the roof, furnace, electrical system, as well as other general information.
- **Change of Address:** It's time to start giving out your new address to everyone..
- **Utilities:** It is important that you call the local utilities to get their services changed into your name. These include phone, internet, television, gas, electricity, water, and any rental agreements. Remember, too, to cancel the services at your old address.



STEP 9

Move In – and Enjoy!



Remember... You're Not Alone

What Our Clients Are Saying

"We decided to list at Christmas because we found our dream home. Not an opportune time but Elaine was so positive for us , she said you're not going to lose the house you love. She sold it Christmas Eve and we are so happy in our new home. I think Elaine's team screams Magic, that is just their way! I think the way they bring it to life is that they truly believe it's going to get done and that's what they did for us. I would highly recommend them and I have to many happy people buying and selling and they in return have referred The Elaine Jones Team"

- **Meghan**

"The Elaine Jones Team is extremely passionate about providing a great customer experience for their clients. With Elaine's vision and her teams' creativity , we felt the Staging, Photos and Marketing of our home was far superior than what we had seen in the market. Elaine's knowledge of the market in Oakville was strong and she guided us in order to make data driven decisions on the fair market value of our home. Our favourite part of working with The Elaine Jones Team was their professionalism, passion and positivity was on display at all times. The whole process was Magical , genuine and a positive experience. We feel Elaine is the best in the business."

- **John & Vanessa**

"They found our first home, five years later found us another perfect home. Elaine made us feel comfortable ,especially when we were first time buyers and showing us lots of properties for our next home. She feels like a friend even though she's very professional , so easy to connect with and we didn't feel like a bother to her and always quick to respond . Absolutely, not even a question that we would recommend The Elaine Jones Team "

• **Michelle & Cory**

"We didn't want to move unless we found the perfect home which they did and Elaine said she would be us every step of the way. She went above and beyond as I had some personal issues and for two days they helped get my house ready for the market. It was really special and appreciated , not something you would think a Real Estate Agent would ever do. When I got stressed she walked me through it and calmed me down, this is Magic to feel at home. I highly recommend The Elaine Jones Team to anyone."

- **Andria**



Remember... You're Not Alone

What Our Clients Are Saying

"We decided to go with Elaine and her team from what we saw online; Facebook. It was wonderful and very Magical how smoothly the transition of one part of selling our house to the next part of buying went. She said don't worry, our team is always here to help which they were. She had our house on the market in three days with a cleaner and stager who made our house look amazing and it sold in 24 hours! We did find the home of our dreams!"

- **Becky & Ryan**

"We were getting nervous because our house was sold but we couldn't find anything so my husband and I were panicking, but Elaine never did! She has that Magical calming ability and refocused us back and said just wait, it's going to happen even though we were overwhelmed. She told us not to settle because we were worried about having two mortgages, that we would find our Dream Home and we did!!"

- **Yvette & Michael**

"We struggled to find a property that was Magical until we worked with Elaine. She found us the perfect home that we fell in love with. It doesn't feel like she's in it from a business perspective, she's all about the people. It felt like we were working with a friend. Magic is that Spark when you first see a property and you can see yourself living there making memories"

- **Priya**

"We bought and sold a house with The Elaine Jones Team in record breaking time, it was a great experience. She helped us quickly with an offer on our current house and then we had to get ready to sell. She helped us with staging tips and it was only on the market for a couple of days and then we had it sold. She treats her clients like they're friends and she truly cares about them. She was there with us every step of the way, every minute of the day whether it was at night and you had a question she was always happy to help. She is constantly reaching out to see how we are doing, she just really cares about her clients. I know she was working so hard behind the scenes it just seemed effortless to us, she just made everything come together, to me that is Magic!"

- **Melanie & Hugh**



Common Closing Costs for Buyers

Funds to cover your down payment and closing costs will most likely have to be in the form of a bank draft or wire transfer to your lawyer's trust account. Your lawyer will detail the exact amounts required for:

- Balance of down payment after initial deposit with offer.
- Mortgage Loan Administration and/or Appraisal Fees, if applicable.
- Credit report fees.
- Mortgage insurance premiums if applicable (CMHC).
- Land Transfer Tax and Title Registration Fees.
- Title insurance policy premiums.
- Legal fees.
- Pro-rated amounts for your share of any prepaid costs, such as utility bills and property taxes.



TIPS

For Packing Like a Pro

1. Develop a master “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 charity, or recycle.
3. Before throwing something out remember to ask yourself how frequently you use an item and how you would feel if you no longer had it.
4. Pack like items together. Put toys with toys, kitchen utensils with kitchen utensils.
5. Decide what, if anything, you plan to move yourself. Precious items, such as family photos, valuable breakables, or must-haves during the move, should probably stay with you.
6. Use the right box for the item and do not over-pack boxes. Loose items encourage breakage.
7. Put heavy items in small boxes so they are easier to lift. Keep weight under 50lbs. if possible.
8. Wrap every fragile item separately and pad the bottom and sides of boxes.
9. 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 there.
10. Use colour-coded labels to indicate which room each item should go in. Colour-code a floor plan for your new house to help movers.
11. Keep your moving documents together, including phone numbers, driver’s name and van number.
12. Inspect each box and all furniture for damage as soon as it arrives. Remember, most movers won’t take plants.

