

First-Time Home Buyer Checklist

Surprise Costs

Below is a list of costs that can take unprepared home buyers by surprise- whether they are unexpected, or unexpectedly large. Investigate, shop around, and plan and you will minimize surprises that otherwise throw off your spending plan.

Purchase & Sale	Guidelines	Spending Plan
Property Appraisal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often required by lenders, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHCI) • Cost - up to \$300 	\$
Property Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchasers typically expect this to be available, and it generally already exists. If not, title insurance may be sufficient. 	\$
Home Inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good investment - costs \$300-\$400 • Even if home is in good condition, it should identify maintenance expenses to expect in the coming 10 years (furnace, roof, windows). 	\$
CMHC Premium & Application Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If down payment is less than 20% of purchase price, you must insure with CMHC. • Premium is typically added to mortgage principal, but HST on premium amount must be paid in cash. 	\$
Real Estate Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid by seller, range from 3% to 6%, and is due on closing. • Amount is negotiable- be creative! 	\$

Closing	Guidelines	Spending Plan
Land Transfer Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charged on all sales, paid by purchaser • 1% - 2% of purchase price • This may be rebated for first-time buyers- ask your lawyer! 	\$
Legal Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get a quote and insist it include "disbursements" - the flow-through costs to be added (copying, courier). They add up. 	\$
Home Inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get quotes before you buy, especially if it's an old home or in an under-serviced area. You may be required to make upgrades in order to obtain home insurance. 	\$
Moving Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do it yourself can be expensive in time and back trouble, but is a great way to save money. Is it right for you? 	\$
Urgent Repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did your home inspection point out anything urgent? Remember these expenses and factor into offering price. 	\$
Utility Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilities charge to set up or transfer accounts. • If you're a first-time customer, you may have to provide a deposit of up to \$300 per utility. Adds up fast! 	\$

The First Year	Guidelines	Spending Plan
Property Taxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a surprise, but adjusting to the expense can be. • Research equal-bidding options in your municipality. 	\$
Utilities - monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas, hydro, water, telephone, cable, internet • Pay as you go, or sign up for equal-billing to minimize seasonal fluctuations. 	\$
Home Renovations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What plans do you have? Do it yourself? Priorities? 	\$
Decorating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New blinds, some paint, and clean floors make a house a home . 	\$
Home Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What equipment and tools do you require - inside and out? 	\$
Appliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are they included? What do you already own? • How long will existing appliances last you? 	\$
Furniture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you need? What are you willing to purchase used? • Many people spend a lifetime collecting pieces, others just want a comfortable place to sit - who are you? 	\$

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