

# First-Time Homebuyer Checklist

Step-by-step from saving to signing — [wyzfin.com](https://wyzfin.com)

## Financial Preparation

- Check and improve your credit score (aim for 680+)
- Calculate your budget — use the 28% front-end rule
- Save for down payment (3.5%–20% depending on loan type)
- Build 3–6 month emergency fund separate from down payment
- Get pre-approved for a mortgage before house hunting

## Finding a Home

- Research neighbourhoods — schools, commute, amenities
- Hire a buyer's agent (their fee is paid by the seller)
- Attend open houses and note must-haves vs nice-to-haves
- Run a comparative market analysis before making an offer
- Factor in HOA fees, property taxes, and insurance costs

## The Buying Process

- Submit your offer with an earnest money deposit
- Negotiate contingencies: inspection, financing, appraisal
- Schedule a professional home inspection
- Review appraisal report and confirm it meets loan requirements
- Lock in your mortgage interest rate before closing

## Closing Day

- Do a final walkthrough the day before or morning of closing
- Bring valid ID and certified/cashier's check for closing costs
- Review the Closing Disclosure (you get it 3 days before)
- Sign all documents — take your time, ask questions
- Receive your keys and celebrate — you're a homeowner!