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# *Metro Atlanta* REAL ESTATE GUIDES



 Buyers

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# The Homebuyer's Guide

## Your Step-by-Step Guide to Buying a Home

With Shernitha Martin | Servicing Metro Atlanta

Buying a home is one of the most exciting financial decisions you'll make. Whether you're a first-time buyer or purchasing your next property, this guide will walk you through the entire process — from preparing financially to receiving the keys to your new home.

My goal is to make the experience smooth, strategic, and stress-free.

### Step 1: Determine Your Goals

Before starting your home search, it's important to understand what you want and what works for your lifestyle.

Ask yourself:

- Why am I buying a home?
- Where do I want to live?
- What type of home fits my needs?
- What features are must-haves vs nice-to-haves?

Common goals buyers have:

- More space for family
- Upgrading from renting
- Investing in real estate
- Relocating to Metro Atlanta
- Buying new construction

## Step 2: Check Your Financial Readiness

Understanding your finances helps determine your purchasing power.

Important factors lenders evaluate:

### Credit Score

A higher score helps secure better loan terms.

General ranges:

- 740+ Excellent
- 700+ Good
- 620+ Minimum for many loans

### Debt-to-Income Ratio

Lenders review how much debt you carry compared to your income.

### Savings

Funds are needed for:

- Down payment
- Closing costs
- Moving expenses
- Emergency reserves

## Step 3: Get Pre-Approved

Getting pre-approved is one of the most important steps in the buying process.

A lender will review:

- Income
- Credit history
- Employment

- Assets
- Debt

Benefits of pre-approval:

- ✓ Shows sellers you are a serious buyer
- ✓ Determines your budget
- ✓ Makes offers stronger
- ✓ Speeds up the closing process

Step 4: Start Your Home Search

Now the fun begins — finding the perfect home.

When searching for homes, consider:

- Location and commute
- School districts
- Property taxes
- HOA fees
- Future resale value
- Nearby amenities

As your agent, I will:

- ✓ Set up a custom home search
- ✓ Schedule showings
- ✓ Identify strong investment opportunities
- ✓ Help evaluate property value

## Step 5: Make an Offer

Once you find the right home, we will submit a competitive offer.

An offer includes:

- Purchase price
- Earnest money deposit
- Financing terms
- Closing timeline
- Contingencies

Negotiations may involve:

- Price adjustments
- Repairs
- Closing costs
- Move-in timeline

My job is to protect your interests and negotiate the best terms possible.

## Step 6: Home Inspection

After your offer is accepted, the inspection period begins.

A professional inspector will evaluate:

- Roof
- Electrical systems
- Plumbing
- Foundation
- HVAC systems
- Structural issues

This step helps ensure there are no major surprises.

If issues arise, we may:

- Request repairs
- Request seller credits
- Renegotiate terms

#### Step 7: Home Appraisal

Your lender will order an appraisal to determine the home's value.

This protects the lender by ensuring the home is worth the purchase price.

Possible outcomes:

- Appraisal matches purchase price
- Appraisal comes in higher
- Appraisal comes in lower (may require renegotiation)

#### Step 8: Final Loan Approval

During underwriting, your lender will finalize the loan.

They may request:

- Updated bank statements
- Employment verification
- Additional documentation

Important tip:

Avoid making major financial changes during this time.

Do NOT:

- Open new credit accounts
- Make large purchases

- Change jobs
- Miss bill payments

### Step 9: Closing Day

Closing day is when ownership officially transfers to you.

At closing you will:

- Sign mortgage documents
- Pay closing costs
- Receive your keys

Typical closing costs range from 2% – 5% of the purchase price.

### Step 10: Welcome Home

Congratulations — you are now a homeowner!

After closing, remember to:

- Change utilities
- Update your address
- Set up home maintenance schedules
- Keep important home documents organized

Owning a home is an incredible way to build long-term wealth and stability.

## Why Work With Shernitha Martin

Buying a home is more than a transaction — it's a strategy.

When you work with me, you get:

- ✓ Expert negotiation
- ✓ Local Metro Atlanta market knowledge
- ✓ Access to off-market opportunities
- ✓ Guidance through every step of the process
- ✓ Support from contract to closing

My mission is to ensure every client feels confident, informed, and empowered throughout their home buying journey.

Ready to Start Your Home Search?


Whether you're buying your first home, upgrading, or investing, I'm here to guide you every step of the way.

Schedule a consultation today.

Shernitha Martin

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