

Budgeting for Your New Home

Buying a home is exciting, but it's also one of the biggest financial decisions you'll ever make. While most buyers focus on the down payment and monthly mortgage payment, there are several additional costs to plan for before you receive the keys.

The good news? Most of these costs are predictable. We'll help you understand what to expect so you can budget with confidence and avoid surprises on closing day.

Common Costs to Budget For

1. Deposit

Once your offer is accepted, you'll typically provide a deposit within a few days. This demonstrates your commitment to purchasing the home. The deposit forms part of your down payment and is applied toward the purchase price when the sale completes. The amount varies depending on the property and current market conditions.

2. Home Inspection

Although not required, a professional home inspection is highly recommended. A qualified home inspector can identify potential issues with the property, helping you make an informed decision before removing your subjects.

3. Property Appraisal

Your mortgage lender may require an appraisal to confirm the home's market value. If an appraisal is needed, the cost is usually the buyer's responsibility.

4. Property Survey or Title Review

In British Columbia, updated property surveys are less common than in some other provinces. However, depending on the property, your lender, lawyer, or notary may recommend a survey or additional title review to confirm property boundaries or identify registered easements, rights-of-way, or encroachments. If a survey is required, the cost is typically the buyer's responsibility.

5. Mortgage Fees

Some lenders may charge fees for arranging your mortgage or completing the financing process. Your mortgage broker or lender will explain any costs that may apply.

6. GST

GST may apply to newly built homes, substantially renovated homes, and certain other types of properties. Depending on the property and your individual circumstances, GST rebates or exemptions may be available.

We'll help point you in the right direction and recommend confirming any tax-related questions with your accountant, lawyer, or notary.

7. Legal or Notary Fees

In British Columbia, buyers typically hire either a lawyer or a notary public to complete the legal transfer of ownership, register the mortgage, and handle the closing process. Fees vary, so it's worth obtaining a few quotes.

8. Home Insurance

Before your lender will release your mortgage funds, you'll need homeowner's insurance effective on your possession date. If you're purchasing a strata property, you'll also want to understand what the strata's insurance covers and what you'll need to insure personally.

9. Property Transfer Tax (PTT)

Most home purchases in British Columbia are subject to the Property Transfer Tax (PTT), which is based on the purchase price of the property.

Some buyers, including eligible first-time home buyers and purchasers of qualifying newly built homes, may qualify for exemptions or reductions. We'll help identify programs that may apply to your purchase and direct you to the appropriate professionals for tax advice.

10. Property Taxes

Property taxes are adjusted between the buyer and seller on completion. Depending on the time of year you purchase, you may reimburse the seller for taxes they've already paid or receive a credit if they have not yet been paid.

11. Adjustments

On completion, there may be adjustments for items such as property taxes, strata fees, utilities, or prepaid expenses. Your lawyer or notary will provide a detailed statement outlining these adjustments before closing.

Other Costs to Consider

- Moving company or truck rental
- Utility connection or transfer fees
- Internet installation
- New furniture or appliances
- Window coverings
- Immediate repairs or maintenance
- Professional cleaning
- Changing the locks
- Landscaping or gardening supplies
- An emergency fund for unexpected repairs

If You're Buying a Strata Property

- Monthly strata fees
- Possible special assessments
- Move-in or move-out fees (charged by some strata corporations)

Planning Ahead Pays Off

Closing costs can vary depending on the purchase price, financing, taxes, and the type of property you're buying. Before you write an offer, we'll help you estimate the costs specific to your purchase so you have a clear understanding of what to expect.

Our Promise to You

Buying a home should be exciting—not stressful.

One of the things we hear most often from buyers is:

"I didn't realize that was another cost."

Our goal is to make sure you never have to say that.

We'll walk you through the expected costs before you write an offer, explain what applies to your situation, and help you build a realistic budget so you can move forward with confidence.

Whether you're buying your first home or your forever home, there are no silly questions. We'll take the time to answer each one honestly, explain the process in plain language, and connect you with trusted professionals—including mortgage brokers, accountants, lawyers, notaries, inspectors, and insurance providers—whenever specialized advice is needed.

At Pacific Roots Real Estate Group, we believe informed buyers make confident buyers. We're here to guide you every step of the way, so you can focus less on the paperwork and more on the excitement of finding your new home.