



## **Guide to Buying a Home**

Search the MLS on my website:

[Spinwayhomes.com](http://Spinwayhomes.com)

Contact me today to start your search!

(469) 371-4537

## About Spinway Homes

Spinway Homes is a small boutique Real Estate company located in the Dallas/Fort Worth area serving anyone from local residents, first time home buyers, to those relocating to and from the area. We assist our clients with all their Residential Real Estate needs, including buying, selling, investing, and leasing. We know how, and where, to locate the perfect properties, and negotiate the best deals for our clients.

Here at Spinway Homes, we understand that the home buying/selling process can be intimidating and seem overwhelming at times. We believe it's more than a home. It's your life, and often one of the greatest financial investments you'll ever make. That's why we work hard to always be positive and professional, putting our client's needs first. Over 80% of Spinway Homes overall business is generated from referrals, or previous clients. Without this repeat and referral business, Spinway Homes would not exist today!

With experience in Commercial leasing and property management, Spinway Homes can support the leasing and management needs of business operators, whether it be retail, office, or industrial.

Allison Stapleton, owner and Realtor® at Spinway Homes, is a native Texan, born in Austin, grew up in Plano. She graduated from Southern Methodist University in 2009 with a Bachelor's degree in Real Estate Finance, with a Minor in Economics. Her real estate career began in March 2009 when she joined Twinrose Investments managing various commercial properties, such as Hillside Village Shopping Center, 2555 & 2611 Regent Blvd, and 152-160 Continental Ave. In April 2011, Allison teamed up with seven different dog adoption centers, including Operation Kindness, Dallas Animal Services, Metroplex Mutts, DFW Rescue Me and coordinated a dog adoption event at the Hillside Village Shopping Center. During the 4-hour event, 17 dogs were adopted and over \$1,100 was raised for the White Rock Lake Dog Park!

In June 2011, Allison decided to further her Real Estate career and joined the Cushman & Wakefield team (formerly known as DTZ, formerly known as Cassidy Turley) managing commercial properties, which included Mockingbird Station, Greenhill Park, Sherry Lane Place, Park Center, Dallas DEA Office, and the Dallas DEA Lab. October 2011, Allison was nominated for the Outstanding New Member Award at CREW (Commercial Real Estate for Women) for her assistance in obtaining sponsorships, prizes, player gifts, and silent auction donations for the annual CREW Classic golf tournament.

Allison obtained her license and started selling Real Estate in March 2014. She quickly realized that Residential Real Estate was her passion and knew that joining Keller Williams Realty, one of the world's leading Real Estate agencies, was the best place for her to increase her knowledge and experience in the residential community.

In her past time, Allison enjoys spending time with her family, watching the Texas Rangers with her fiancé Michael, playing with her Boxer dog named Daisy and Great Dane puppy named Biscuits, running and training for half-marathons, and traveling the world.



## Home Buying Process

### STEP 1

Hire a Spinway Homes Agent

### STEP 2

Obtain Mortgage Pre-Approval/Pre-  
Qualified Letter

### STEP 3

Start your Home Search

### STEP 4

Making an Offer/Offer Accepted

### STEP 5

Obtain Funds for Closing/Closing Day

### STEP 6

Homeownership!

## **STEP 1 - HIRE A SPINWAY HOMES AGENT**

### **Why Hire a Spinway Homes Realtor® When Purchasing a Home?**

There are so many reasons why you should always hire a realtor® when purchasing a home! Here are just a few of the top reasons why:

1. IT'S **FREE!!** NO COST TO THE BUYER!!

Did you know that it is an expense to the Seller to pay the commissions for not just the real estate agent that is representing them in the sale of their home, but they also pay for the real estate agent that is representing the buyer! That's right! You not only can hire a Spinway Homes real estate agent to represent you in locating the perfect home, but you don't even have to pay them!

2. REALTOR® FIDUCIARY RESPONSIBILITIES

When you hire a Spinway Homes real estate agent to represent you during your home buying process, it is our fiduciary responsibility to not only protect you during this process, but to also look out for your best interests. Your Spinway Homes agent will be loyal, obey all lawful requests of our clients, disclose all relevant information that pertains to the transaction, keep information about you, the Buyer, confidential, use reasonable care and diligence while representing you the Buyer, along with keeping account for all money that belongs to you the Buyer.

3. WE WORK FOR YOU

Now that you have hired a Spinway Homes agent, the search for locating your perfect home can begin! Your agent will start sending you homes that are currently on the market and fit the criteria that you are looking for. We will schedule all showings for every property that you would like to see. Once we locate the perfect home, your Spinway Homes agent will show you comparable properties that have recently sold in the area and what they sold for to help you determine the best offer price. Your agent will also handle the contracts along with negotiating all terms.

4. ACCESS TO SALES DATA

Most people don't know this, but Texas is a non-disclosure state, meaning the sales price cannot be disclosed to third parties. The sales price will be updated on the MLS (Multiple Listing Service), which is where real estate agents go to list current properties for sale. Real estate agents and appraisers have access to the MLS, which assist them in determining the value of a property using comparable properties in the neighboring areas. Once you and your Spinway Homes have located your perfect home, your agent will use the sales data listed on the MLS to help advise you on the estimated value of the property.

5. HANDLE CONTRACTS AND NEGOTIATIONS

Contracts can definitely be hard to handle at times. That's why you should hire a Spinway Homes real estate agent to help navigate you through the contract and craft attractive offers that not only make sense to you, but will also protect you.



6. WE KNOW CONTRACTORS, TITLE COMPANIES, AND MORE!

Your Spinway Homes agent now only knows the market, but also knows people and companies that can assist with just about anything! If repairs are needed your Spinway Homes agent can assist with locating the best contractor to correct these repairs and provide estimates. The Title Companies that our agents work with know exactly what is needed to keep the process going and ensure closing will happen on time!

## **STEP 2 – OBTAIN MORTGAGE PRE-APPROVAL/PRE-QUALIFIED LETTER**

Before your Spinway Homes agent will start showing you properties you will need to obtain pre-approval/pre-qualification letter from a mortgage lender, preferably a local mortgage lender. This will help your Spinway Homes agent know what type of loan you are approved/qualified for, along with the price range of homes you can afford. In today's market many Dallas/Fort Worth Area Seller's are requiring a copy of the pre-approved/pre-qualification letter to be submitted with all offers. This helps prove that not only are you serious about purchasing the property, but are financially able as well.

There are Several different mortgage loans you can apply for. Four of the most common loans are FHA, VA, Conventional, and Jumbo. Some additional loans that may be available are USDA, Home Renovation, and First Time Home Buyer (Down Payment Assistance). Not all buyers qualify for these loans, but your mortgage lender can help you determine the best loan.

### FHA Loans

- 3.5% down payment
- 580 to 640 Credit Score\*
- Mortgage Insurance Required
- Maximum Loan Amount of \$344,650\*\*

### VA Loans

- 0% down payment
- 600 Credit Score\*
- No Mortgage Insurance Required
- Maximum Loan Amount of \$417,000

### Conventional Loans

- Minimum of 5% down payment
- 580 to 640 Credit Score\*
- Mortgage Insurance Required (Not required with 20% down)
- Maximum Loan Amount of \$417,000

### Jumbo Loans

- 20% down payment
- Loans over \$417,000
- No Mortgage Insurance Required

Once you have been pre-approved/pre-qualified for a loan, your mortgage loan officer will be able to provide you with an estimate of what you can expect to bring to the closing table. Please keep in mind that until you locate your perfect home and have an offer that is accepted, the estimates the loan officer provide may vary. The funds that will be needed at closing are the down payment, closing costs, and prepaid expenses, which will be explained in a little more detail in Step 5. Please remember DO NOT take



out any other lines of credit during this home buying process, which includes purchasing a new car! This can delay the loan application, closing, or even worse you may no longer qualify for a loan!

\*Credit Scores may vary between mortgage lenders

\*\*Maximum loan amounts may change each year

## **STEP 3 – START YOURS HOME SEARCH**

Before you and your Spinway Homes agent start driving around town looking at homes, the below forms will need to be executed:

- Information About Brokerage Services (IABS)
- Residential Buyer/Tenant Representation Agreement (allows me to work on your behalf)
- General Information and Notice to Buyer
- Disclosure of Marketing Service Agreement
- Inspector Information
- Authorization to Furnish TILA-RESPA Integrated Disclosure

\*\*Please keep in mind that per Texas State Law, all of these documents are for the use of Realtors® or attorney's and cannot be used by anyone else\*\*

Your Spinway Homes agent will also want to carefully assessing all your values, wants, and needs, not just for the short term, but the long term too. This will better assist your Spinway Homes agent so you're not driving around for weeks without finding what you're really looking for because let's face it, this can get old pretty fast.

Here are some questions to ask yourself:

1. Do you want or need your home to be close to work, school, transportation, etc?
2. How much space do you need, and why? (# of beds & bath, square footage, etc.)
3. Which is more important: location or size?
4. Are you be interested in a fixer-upper?
5. How important is home value appreciation?
6. Is neighborhood stability a priority?
7. Are you be interested in a single family, condo, townhome, duplex?
8. Would you prefer new home construction?
9. What features and amenities do you want, and which do you really need? (Pool, large back yard, 1 or 2 story, garage/carport, etc.)

Once your Spinway Homes agent has a better understanding of your needs and wants they will start sending your listings that best fit the criteria you provided as soon as they hit the market. Please keep in mind that 3<sup>rd</sup> Party real estate search engines, such as Zillow, Trulia, Realtor.com, Homes.com, and many more, can take several days to post new listings and aren't always updated when a property has been sold or taken off the market. Also, Texas is a non-disclosure state, meaning that the home sales prices are not



publicly disclosed. Only Realtors® and appraisers have access to the actual price a home sold for, so don't fully rely on the estimated home values of properties listed on these 3<sup>rd</sup> party search engines.

As soon as you see any listings that you are interested in and would like to preview, notify your Spinway Homes agent and they will schedule a showing that fits not only in your schedule, but the schedule of the Seller as well. This can be tricky at times as the Seller might have certain times blocked off that may be some of your more available times. There also might be one, two, or multiple agents previewing the property at the same time as your scheduled showing, so don't be alarmed.

## **STEP 4 – MAKING AN OFFER/OFFER ACCEPTED**

### **Making an Offer**

Once your Spinway Homes agent has helped you locate the perfect home, it is now time to make an offer! Before you started looking at homes, your agent already reviewed with you the contract that you will be completing when you make an offer purchase a property. Depending on the property (single family, condo/townhome, new construction, etc.) these contracts can vary slightly, and your agent would have reviewed the one that is for the property type you are interested in purchasing. When submitting an offer, the following forms will need to be executed and submitted.

- One to Four Family Residential Contract (Resale) (will be different for new construction, condo, etc.)
- Third Party Financing Addendum for Credit Approval (not required for cash transactions)
- Intermediary Relationship Notice (only required if the same Brokerage firm has an agent representing the buyer and the seller, which can at times be the same agent)

The following additional forms may be required depending on where the property is located, the age of the property, and if another property sells:

- Addendum for Property Subject to Mandatory Membership in an Owners Association (HOA)
- Addendum for Lead Base Paint (property's built prior to 1978)
- Addendum for Sale of Other Property by Buyer
- Seller Temporary Lease Back (if Seller needs to lease the property for a certain time period after closing)
- Buyer Temporary Lease Bank (if Buyer needs to lease the property for a certain time period before closing)

\*\*Please keep in mind that per Texas State Law, all of these documents are for the use of Realtors® or attorney's and cannot be used by anyone else. That means if you decide to buy a house without hiring an agent, you will NOT be able to use any of these forms to submit an offer (or any other Texas Real Estate Commission or Texas Association of Realtor® forms). The Seller's agent will need to complete them for you which means you will be hiring that agent, or another from their office\*\*

There may be several rounds of negotiations and counter-offers that can take place before an offer is accepted. Below is a list of some things that can be negotiated in the contract, including items in the house:



- Title Company and where the closing will take place
- New Survey (if needed)
- Residential Service Contract (Home Warranty)
- Closing Date
- If Seller will pay for any or all of the Buyers closing costs
- Option period and option fee
- Non-reality items (i.e. refrigerator, washer, dryer, mirror, etc.)

Please remember to ask your Spinway Homes real estate agent any and all questions you may have, especially about any of the documents you are signing. It is our responsibility to assist and educate you during the home buying process, including all the forms involved.

### **OFFER ACCEPTED**

Once your offer has been accepted there are still several things that need to take place before you own your new home. Your Spinway Homes agent will send you a list of some important dates. These dates will include:

- Contract Effective Date
- Option Fee due to Seller (within 3 days from effective date)
- Earnest Money due to Title Company (within 3 days from effective date)
- Survey is due to Buyer
- Seller's Disclosure due to Buyer (Buyer will need to review and sign)
- Option Period Deadline
- HOA Documents due to Buyer (if applicable)
- HOA Objections Deadline (if applicable)
- Title Commitment (Insurance) due to Buyer
- Title & Survey Objection Period
- Finance Approval Deadline for Buyer (if applicable)
- Closing Date
- Seller Lease Back Expiration (if applicable)
- Buyer Lease Back Start Date (if applicable)

Now that your offer has been accepted, the clock will start ticking on the above referenced important date. The Earnest Money will need to be deposited with the Title Company, and the Option Fee will need to be paid directly to the Seller, both within 3 days from the Effective Date. Both of these payments will take the house off the market. The buyer can terminate the contract for any reason whatsoever during the Option Period, the only thing is they will lose the option fee, the earnest money will be returned to the Buyer.

The first thing you will want to do is call and schedule a home inspector to come out and inspect the property. As the buyer, you will want to immediately order and schedule a home inspection. This will be an out of pocket expense for the Buyer, and can vary depending on the house size, pool, terminate inspection, etc., but the cost is typically around \$300. The inspector will go through and examine the entire house such as the roof, plumbing, electrical, appliances, foundation, etc. They will note and send you a





report of all minor and major repairs that should be addressed prior to closing. The Buyer may want to have a specialist come out to further access any items that appeared on the inspection report.

The Buyer does have the right to amend the current contract to address anything that has come up during the home inspection, including reducing the sale price, request certain items to be repaired by the Seller, or even request an allowance so the Buyer can make necessary repairs. Please remember the Option Period will expire at 5 PM on the last day of the option period, so both parties will need to have come to an agreement by then. If the Buyer and Seller cannot agree to the Amendment, then the contract is terminated and the earnest money is returned to the Buyer, but not the option fee.

Upon full execution, the contract is sent to the Title Company that was specified. The Title Company will then start a title search to ensure the title to your property is clear. If it is not clear, this may mean that any outstanding liens must be paid, or any other monetary claims that are against your property (i.e. unpaid state and federal taxes, mechanic's liens, probate considerations (if co-owner has passed away), and court judgements). The Title Company will also order a new survey, if needed, work with the mortgage lender and file all the paperwork with the county offices

Once the title is clear, the Title Company will issue the Buyer a commitment for title insurance. This protects the Buyer's title to the property they just purchased from the Seller, which include:

- Any mistakes in the recording of all legal documents
- Undisclosed/unknown heirs to the property
- Fraudulent/forged deeds or wills
- Liens for any unpaid property taxes, taxes, assessments, or homeowner's association dues
- Deeds executed by minors, a person of unsound mind, expired/invalid power of attorney

Once the Option Period has expired the appraisal will be ordered by the mortgage lender, which is an expense to the Buyer. The appraisal is the valuation of property by a licensed appraiser. They will review the property itself, along with several other comparable properties in the area. They will issue their report which will list what they value the property. This value is important as it is the maximum amount the mortgage lender will lend to the Buyer for this property. If the appraised value is equal to or greater than the offer sales price, then the contract moves forward. If the appraised value is less than the offer sales price the following options are available:

- Buyer can back out of the contract. The Buyer will receive their Earnest Money back, but they will lose their Option Fee.
- Buyer can pay the difference between the appraised value and the offer sales price in cash.
- Buyer and Seller can agree to share a portion of the difference between the appraised value and the offer sales price.
- Buyer and Seller can agree to amend the offer sales price to the appraised value, or a price between the offer sales price and the appraised value.

## **STEP 5 – OBTAIN FUNDS FOR CLOSING/CLOSING DAY**



By this point the Title Company should have provided the Title Commitment (Title Insurance) to the Buyer. As long as the Buyer doesn't have any objections the contract will continue to move forward. The Buyer will also need to make sure that their new home owner's insurance policy is setup. The mortgage lender will require this before sending everything to their underwriter for approval.

The only thing we are waiting on now is for the mortgage lender to process and finalize the Buyer's loan application, and preparing it for underwriting. The Buyer's lender will let you know if there is anything additional needed during this time. As soon as everything has been approved by underwriting, we are clear to close! The mortgage lender will provide The Buyer with the total amount they will need to bring, in the form of a Cashier's Check or wire, to the closing table. They will also send all the closing documents to the Title Company. Your Spinway Homes agent will coordinate with the Buyer and the Title Company on the time and location the closing will take place.

Once the Title Company has received all fully executed legal documents, from both the Buyer and Seller, funding will start to take place and the keys will be handed to the new Buyer, unless possession will occur at a different time.

Here are some things that you can expect on Closing Day:

- Bring proper Identification
- Cashier's Check or wired funds, in the amount the mortgage lender specified
- Checkbook (just in case)
- Buyer and Seller's signing can take place at different times
- The actual closing can take anywhere from 45 minutes to a couple of hours

Your Spinway Homes agent will be with the Buyer at the closing table to assist and answer any additional questions you may have.

## **STEP 6 – HOMEOWNERSHIP**

Now that you own your home, your Spinway Homes agent will still like to keep in touch with you and your family. There's no reason to end the relationship now just because the deal has closed. Your Spinway Homes agent can be a useful resource in locating contractors to help with any home maintenance or remodeling that may be needed, or required. We would also love to assist your friends, family, or co-workers with their real estate needs (buying/selling/leasing/investing in real estate). We will also keep track of your home's current market value and send you updates upon request.

As a homeowner, paying attention to your home's maintenance needs is essential in protecting the long-term value of your investment. This can be done by performing routine maintenance on all of your home's systems (i.e. heating air conditioning unit, water heater, etc.). You will also want to watch for signs of leaks, damage, and wear. Fixing small problems like these early can save you a lot of money later! Your Spinway Homes agent would be happy to provide you with a contact to any vendor trade you may need throughout your home ownership.

