

Home Buyer Welcome Packet



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WELCOME
home

Congratulations!

You are now one step closer to crossing the threshold to your new home. We thank you for selecting Mortgage Atlanta as your mortgage lender. It is truly an honor for me and my team to be part of your homebuying journey. Rest assured that you are in exceptionally good hands! We will make every effort to deliver a smooth, transparent and enjoyable homebuying experience. After all, our goal is to be your mortgage consultants for life.

We deeply appreciate your business and are so excited to set off on this journey with you! We will never take your trust for granted.

In this “Loan Sweet Loan” welcome packet, you will find helpful information that will guide you throughout the loan process as we make our way to your closing day:

Steps to Buying a Home – whether this is your first home or you’re a seasoned homeowner, this guide will outline the steps that lead to your new home.

Dos & Don’ts – you’ll want to review this list carefully in order to avoid any hiccups during your homebuying journey.

The Loan Process – consider this your financing roadmap to homeownership as we highlight the various elements of our process that starts with prequalification for your loan and ends with you being handed the keys to your new home!

Guarantee – we don’t just believe we’re great at what we do... we guarantee it. At Mortgage Atlanta, we are fully committed to you and your homebuying journey, and we want you to know that we have your back.

Meet the Team – while you will be assigned a dedicated mortgage consultant, at any point during your homebuying journey, you may encounter one of our other staff members. We are truly a team at Mortgage Atlanta.

Testimonials – we strive to be the best at our jobs, but don’t take our word for it! Several of our clients share their experiences with Mortgage Atlanta.

Referral Cards – if you enjoy your experience with our team as much as we think you will, please don’t keep us a secret! We’d love for you to refer us to your friends, family members, co-workers. If you know someone who is planning a move or home refinance, please hand them one of the enclosed referral cards. Or you can simply send us an email sharing who you would like us to contact and we will take it from there!

We deeply appreciate your business and are so excited to set off on this journey with you! We will never take your trust for granted. If we can help answer any questions or make the process easier for you in any way, please let us know!

Sincerely,



Brian Berman
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Your Homebuying Journey Starts HERE!

10 Steps to Buying a New Home

At Mortgage Atlanta, we believe home buying is a journey – an exciting, occasionally overwhelming journey. To avoid becoming overwhelmed, as with any journey, you’ll want to become familiar with your route from start to finish. In this 10-step guide, we’ve created a roadmap of sorts to help make the home buying process as seamless as possible for you so you can make informed decisions all along the way.

#1 Determine Your **Credit Score**

Low interest rates can significantly lower your monthly mortgage payments. The higher your credit score is, the more likely you are to qualify for a lower interest rate. We recommend you check your credit score with all three main credit bureaus - Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. If you discover that your credit score could use some help, you might want to delay your purchase until you’ve had a chance to improve your credit. Give us a call and discuss your score and we can offer you advice.

#2 Learn How Much House You Can Afford

Create a sample budget to learn how much you can commit to spending on monthly mortgage payments. When determining your budget, be sure to account for potential changes to your utility payments (a larger home may be more expensive to heat/cool) and gas expenditures for longer commute times, as well as additional expenses, such as moving costs and new furniture. Don't forget things like insurance, property taxes, home inspection fees, closing costs, maintenance fees and all the hidden costs that come with home ownership.

#3 Begin Saving for a Down Payment

Having funds ready for a down payment is an important step on your purchase journey. There are many different loan types that require various down payments; from as little as 3% down you can get a great loan as first-time buyer. The more you put down the better your loan terms are. A common misconception is that you need 20% down payment for a conventional loan, not true, as a first-time buyer you can get a conventional loan with as little as 3% down. Best thing to do is talk to your loan officer to figure out the right down payment for you.

#4 Get Pre-qualified for a Mortgage Loan

Before you begin your new home search, you'll want to know how much home you can afford. The best way to do this is to find a good mortgage lender – like you have in Mortgage Atlanta – and get pre-qualified for a mortgage loan. We will review your finances, including your income, investments, savings and credit score to help us determine how much you'll be able to borrow. Getting pre-qualified will help you narrow down your home search within a price range. We'll even provide you with a pre-qualification letter, which is often required by sellers when entering into a contract on a home.



Determine Your
Credit Score



Learn How Much
House You Can
Afford



Begin Saving for a
Down Payment



Get Pre-Qualified
for a Mortgage
Loan

#5 Get Connected to a Great Real Estate Agent

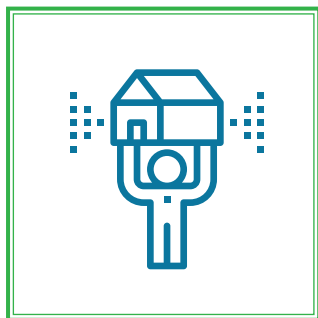
While it's great to connect with a real estate agent who proves a good fit for your personality, it's most important that you find someone who has a stellar reputation, is well-informed, has solid communication skills and is knowledgeable about the area of town where you are hoping to move. It's also crucial that he or she is committed to helping you throughout your homebuying journey – a lot like your mortgage consultant at Mortgage Atlanta. If you don't have a real estate agent don't worry, just let your loan officer know and we will put you in touch with one of our top-notch agents.

#6 Find Your Ideal Neighborhood and Ultimately Your New Home

With price range in mind, prequalification letter in hand and a great real estate agent by your side, it's time to find the home of your dreams. Your agent can help narrow your search based on budget and desired location. Feel free to do a little of your own research online. Whether you're planning to buy a new construction home or a resale, once you've found some prospects, start visiting neighborhoods and get a lay of the land of the surrounding community. If you have children (or plan to have them soon), pay attention to schools in the area, as well as local parks, shops, restaurants, churches and more. Also do a practice run to your place of business to get a read on your daily drive and commute times. Equally important, make sure the home you're selecting is the right fit for your family's unique needs and tastes.

#7 Make an Offer

Once you believe you've found the neighborhood and home of your dreams, it's time to make an offer. Your agent will help assess the value of the home based on comparable properties in the area. Based on those values, he or she will consult with you to determine the offer you want to present to the seller. Be prepared to negotiate. Once you and the seller reach an agreement, you'll sign a contract and the home will go into escrow.



Get Connected
to a Great Real
Estate Agent



Find Your Ideal
Neighborhood
and New Home



Make an
Offer



Finalize Your
Purchase



Closing
Day



Welcome
Home!

#8 Finalize Your Purchase

If you are building from the ground up, the construction process could take months. If you are purchasing a resale, closing could come quickly. But before you get to the closing table in either circumstance, you'll want to pay close attention to our Dos and Don'ts so you don't risk losing your mortgage approval and subsequently your new home. You'll also want to get the home inspected and appraised. Your real estate agent should be able to recommend several reputable home inspectors. Based on the findings of the inspector, you may be able to renegotiate the price of the home to offset any required repairs. As for the appraisal, Mortgage Atlanta will make those arrangements to verify the value of the home.

#9 Closing Day

This is the moment you've worked so hard to achieve. There will be a lot of paperwork to sign and some closing fees to cover, but in the end, you'll be handed the keys to your new home! Your real estate agent should review all closing costs with you before you get to the table so there are no surprises. They will often include attorney fees, title insurance, property transfer taxes and more. If you're lucky, the seller will cover these costs – or a portion of these costs – for you.

#10 Welcome Home!

Let Mortgage Atlanta be among the first to congratulate you! As a result of all your research, visits to different communities, months of waiting and stacks of paperwork, you're officially a homeowner. It's time to call the movers, start unpacking and make this home your own!

Mortgage Dos



BUILD A FOLDER. Keep your financial records close at hand in case updates are requested.



INCOME. Be aware that underwriters typically verify your income and tax documents through your employer(s), CPA, and/or IRS tax transcripts. Place new paystubs in your financial folder.



ASSETS. Save incoming account summary statements. Keep all numbered pages of each statement. Ex. 8 of 8



GIFTS. If you're receiving any monetary gifts from relatives, they'll need to sign a gift letter that we'll supply and provide an account statement evidencing the source, which must be "seasoned" funds.



CURRENT RESIDENCE. If you're renting, continue paying your rent on time and save proof of payment. If you're selling, be prepared to show your HUD-1 Settlement Statement. If you'll be renting your home, you may need to show sufficient equity, a lease and receipt of the first month's rent and security deposit.



PROTECT YOUR CREDIT SCORE. Continue making payments on time. Your credit report may be pulled again. Any negative change to your score may result in the loss of your loan approval and new home.



BE PATIENT AND FLEXIBLE. Underwriters require more documentation than in the past. Even if requests seem silly, intrusive, or unnecessary, please remember that if they didn't need it, they wouldn't ask. Stay calm and focused.



CALL YOUR MORTGAGE PROFESSIONAL FIRST. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact your Mortgage Atlanta loan consultant.



STAY CURRENT ON EXISTING ACCOUNTS. One 30-day late notice can compromise your ability to be approved.



REALITY CHECK. Understand your financial obligations when determining how much house you can afford.



PROTECTION. Get homeowners insurance that is equal to the mortgage or replacement value of your new home. Have your new home inspected for termites, defects & major foundation issues.

Mortgage Don'ts



DON'T APPLY FOR NEW CREDIT. Changes in credit can cause delays, change the terms of your financing or even prevent closing. If you must open a new account (or even borrow against retirement funds), please consult with Mortgage Atlanta first.



DON'T CHANGE JOBS DURING THE PROCESS. Probationary periods, career or even status changes (such as from a salaried to a contract position, leave of absence or new bonus structure) can be subject to strict rules that may opt you out of your loan.



DON'T MAKE UNDOCUMENTED DEPOSITS. Primarily large, but sometimes even small, deposits must be sourced unless they are identified. Make copies of checks and deposit slips. Keep your deposits separate and small. Avoid depositing cash, which could be



DON'T WAIT TO LIQUIDATE FUNDS FROM STOCK OR RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS. If you need to sell investments, do it now and document the transaction. Don't take the risk that the market could move against you, leaving you short of funds to close.



DON'T EVER BE AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS. If you're uncertain about what you need or what you should do, your Mortgage Atlanta loan consultant is here to help you through the process, even long before you intend to buy.



DON'T CHANGE YOUR SPENDING HABITS. If it appears you are diverting from your normal spending patterns, it could cause your score to drop. For example, if your internet access has been billed monthly to the same credit card for the past three years, there's no reason to drop it now. Make your changes after the loan is finalized.



DON'T LARGE PURCHASES. Making major purchases during or prior to closing, such as a new car, furniture, appliances, etc. as this may impact your qualification ratios.



DON'T HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE PAY FOR ANYTHING RELATED TO THE PURCHASE OF THE HOME. Gifts are only allowed under specific lending guidelines and must be documented. This includes your appraisal, earnest money, down payment, etc.



DON'T GIVE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION TO ANYONE WHO MIGHT RUN YOUR CREDIT REPORT. Be protective of your credit while purchasing or refinancing your home. Additional credit inquiries will hurt your credit scores.



DON'T TAKE OUT NEW LOANS. Refrain from signing for a new loan or even cosigning for another loan, regardless of the loan type, e.g. auto loan.



Race to the Finish Line: The Loan Process at Mortgage Atlanta

Whether buying a home or refinancing your current home, we realized that undergoing any loan process can seem daunting at first. At Mortgage Atlanta, we have your back and want this “race” to the finish line to go as smoothly as possible. Instead of envisioning yourself going it alone, imagine this as a relay race. There will be parts of this race where you will be the one running with the baton, then others where you hand that baton off to us so you can catch your breath before the next leg of the race. To help you game plan, we’ve broken our process out into 12 easy steps – each one bringing you that much closer to the finish line... CLOSING DAY!

STEP

1

PREQUALIFICATION

You will complete and submit an application with information allowing Mortgage Atlanta to determine whether your stated debt-to-income ratio is within the qualifying limit. We will also pull your credit to see where your credit score falls. The higher the score, the more likely you will be able to qualify for a lower interest rate. We may begin exploring your best loan options at this stage, as well.

STEP

2

COMPLETION OF PRE-APPROVAL

You will submit your necessary income documents – such as paystub(s) from the last 30 consecutive day, W-2 Forms for the last 2 years, personal federal income tax returns for the last 2 years and more. If applying for a conventional loan, Mortgage Atlanta will run your loan through Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac's Automated Approval System in order to receive an automated approval. If buying, you will receive a copy of your pre-approval letter to share with potential sellers.

STEP

3

GOING UNDER CONTRACT

If buying, once you've signed a contract, we will provide you with our document checklist outlining a full list of documents required to get your loan into underwriting. Included among these items are bank statements, asset statements for your 401(k) or IRA, mortgage statements (if refinancing or you own other properties) and more. If refinancing, you'll need a lot of these same documents.

STEP

4

UNDERWRITING

Once all your documents have been collected, the lender will review your file. This process typically takes 5 business days. During the underwriting process, the lender will perform a title search on the property you are buying or refinancing to ensure that there are no liens on the title. After that hurdle has been cleared, the lender will order an appraisal on either the home you are buying or refinancing. This will be a third-party appraiser to inspect the property and provide an unbiased fair market value on the home.

STEP

5

CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

This step represents the halfway mark! It means your loan has been reviewed and the underwriter has issued a conditional approval. It basically means that you're approved but there are a few outstanding documents or questions that need to be answered before you can enter into a final approval. If anything more is needed from you, your Mortgage Atlanta Loan Consultant will let you know as soon as we can.

STEP

6

DOCUMENT COLLECTION FOR FINAL APPROVAL

If we determine more information is needed from you, we need you to respond as quickly as possible with either the answers to our questions or all the remaining documents requested. Once we have them, we can submit your loan into underwriting for final approval.

STEP

7

INITIAL CLOSING DISCLOSURES

We are required by law to send you the initial Closing Disclosures and have you sign and return them at least 3 business days prior to your scheduled closing date. If they are NOT received within the allotted 3 days, your closing date will need to be moved. Bear in mind that the numbers on your Closing Disclosures may not reflect the final numbers you will see at closing.

STEP

8

CLEAR TO CLOSE

Once your documents have been reviewed and approved, your lender will issue an official clear to close. Once we receive the clear to close, we will be in touch to set an exact closing time.

STEP

9

FINALIZATION OF CLOSING DISCLOSURES

Once we've received the clear to close, the lender will put your file into closing and prepare all the paperwork required to close your loan. They will then send this closing package to the attorney to generate the final numbers for your closing.

STEP

10

SENDING THE MONEY

At this time, we will provide you with breakdown of your closing costs and fees, so you can prepare your cash to close. You must wire these fees to the attorney. Many attorney's do not accept checks so wiring is crucial.

STEP

11

CLOSING DAY!

Closing day will take place in an attorney's office. In addition to you and your co-borrower (if any), in attendance at your closing will typically be a Closing Attorney. Be prepared to review and sign a LOT of documents. You will receive information about your new monthly payments and – if you need one – an escrow account will be set up at this time. Lastly, your closing costs and fees will be collected.

STEP

12

POST-CLOSING

Congratulations you are a new home owner! There are a few things you need to do... please note if you receive any documents in the mail that may even look official, please always check with Mortgage Atlanta.

Also make sure, if this is your primary home, to go to the county and city property tax website and file your homestead exemption



Your Satisfaction Is So Important to the Mortgage Atlanta Team That One Guarantee Simply Isn't Enough!

...That's Why We Have FOUR!

BEST RATE GUARANTEE

We are committed to taking the guesswork out of choosing the ideal lending partner. **To ensure you that Mortgage Atlanta is the right fit for you, we offer our Best Rate Guarantee on all Conventional Conforming and VA Loans.** If you believe another lender can offer you a better rate, simply send us their Loan Estimate or Itemized Fee Worksheet dated for the same day. If we can't beat the rate by .125% or match the rate and better the costs, we will send you \$250 CASH!¹

LOWEST COST GUARANTEE

The same goes for our cost! **If you believe another lender can offer you a more competitive price on a Conventional Conforming or VA Loan, send us their Loan Estimate or Itemized Fee Worksheet dated for the same day.** If we can't match the rate and beat the costs by \$500 at closing, we will send you \$250 CASH!¹ If we fail to beat BOTH rate and cost, that's \$500 in your pocket for you to spend however you like! That money would go a long way in stocking the fridge, pantry and bar in your new home!



ON-TIME CLOSING GUARANTEE

It's important to us that you believe we have your back! **Our On-Time Closing Guarantee was created to give our clients peace of mind, so you can focus on the excitement of moving into your new home.** If Mortgage Atlanta is unable to close your home purchase on the scheduled closing date, we will credit you and the seller \$250 EACH!¹

OUR BEST EXPERIENCE GUARANTEE

At Mortgage Atlanta, the most important aspect of the transaction is that you have a positive experience. **We want you to be so thrilled with our process and service that you will recommend us to your friends, family members and co-workers as soon as you hear them talking about buying a home.** If at any time you feel as though you are not 100% happy, please let us know. We promise we will do everything in our power to make it right!

¹\$250 Cash sent once borrower sends closing disclosure confirming that the loan closed with the rate and costs that Mortgage Atlanta was unable to beat! Down payment assistance programs, FHA, USDA, NON-QM and new construction not eligible.

²\$500 Credit is \$250 to the buyer and \$250 to the seller. The delay in closing may not be due to a delay in receiving documents from borrower, seller, agent or law firm. Once Mortgage Atlanta requests a document or signature, if it is not sent back within 24 hours, this would constitute a delay. Mortgage Atlanta must be given the contract, and applicable addendums within 24 hours of signing. Must be a purchase transaction. Seller may not be a corporation. Contract must be written for 21-day closing.



Meet the Mortgage Atlanta Team!

Launched in 2009 by a team of financial experts who are passionate about helping people realize their dreams, Mortgage Atlanta understands that no two homebuyers or homeowners are exactly the same.

That's why we seek first to get to know you and your needs on a granular level. Rather than merely meeting those needs, we exceed expectations through customized, client-focused home finance experiences. Whether you're a first-time homebuyers eager to understand the loan process or a current homeowner seeking financing for a spectacular renovation to create the home of your dreams (or anyone in between), Mortgage Atlanta welcomes the opportunity to assist you – no matter your vision or place in your homeownership journey. With extensive knowledge of a wide variety of loan products and down payment assistance programs, the Mortgage Atlanta team offers the innovation, flexibility and accessibility that only a boutique agency can provide. To that end, every Mortgage Atlanta loan specialist is available to address your questions and needs 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Brian Berman

President & Senior Loan Specialist

bberman@mortgage-atlanta.com

678.564.1522

Believe it or not, but it all began with the word “NO!” Having served as a mortgage loan specialist for a large regional home loan provider, “no” was a word that Brian Berman had to tell prospective clients all too often. Turning people away went against everything for which he stands. So, Brian began to envision a place where “yes” was the common call as he helped people achieve their dreams of home ownership on a daily basis. Armed with a degree in Economics and Finance – with a minor in Law – from Bentley University, several years of mortgage

loan experience and a vision, Brian struck out on his own in 2009 to launch Mortgage Atlanta, LLC. In the years since, he has surrounded himself with a team that shares his passion for helping others and together they have steadily grown a client list that spans the gap from first-time homebuyers to empty nesters seeking their forever home. Committed to never becoming like the “other guys” – merely passing clients through a confusing and convoluted series of loan processors, coordinators and closers, Brian endeavors to build authentic, personal relationships with the people he serves, guiding them every step of the way throughout the loan process – from application to closing. He strives to stay ahead in his industry and is a big believer in continuing education for the benefit of his clients. A true master of his craft, Brian regularly employs innovation and explores every available avenue to customize loan options that will transform a client’s dream to a beautiful, life-changing reality.



Joshua Josef
Loan Processor/Office Manager

Joshua has been with Mortgage Atlanta since April 2015. He is the Loan Processor/Office Manager and your point person during the loan process. His job is to make things as easy as possible for you while you work together to collect, review, and submit your documents throughout the loan process. He also gathers items as needed from realtors, insurance agents, law firms, etc. He sees his job as putting together your personal puzzle to make sure each piece fits correctly so you get to see your beautiful

new home and/or amazing financial savings at the end of the process. Before making his entrance into the mortgage industry, he serves his country for 9 years as a Staff Sergeant in the United States Air Force. He was also a youth pastor, worked as an educator at a high school, and was a correctional officer. When he is not working, he is focusing on his faith, family, and doing various outdoor activities when able.



John Walsh
Closing Specialist

John has been handling the closings at Mortgage Atlanta since 2018. You’ll be introduced to him as your loan nears the finish line, when he works closely with you and your closing attorney to make sure your loan closes smoothly and on time. He brings 15+ years of mortgage and customer service experience to the team and will use every bit of it to make sure your closing goes perfectly! When not at work he likes to visit breweries with

his wife, Lindsey, and try new craft beers. He also gets out and plays team sports a few days a week, particularly curling and softball.



Testimonials

Brian and his team are excellent to work with. They know the mortgage business. They are responsive, thorough and very helpful. By far, the best experience I've ever had dealing with mortgages. I'm self-employed. That can be challenging but Brian's team made it easy! Highly recommend them!

Kelly Castor ★★★★★

Brian Berman was exceptional to work with. As a young buyer, much of the process can be confusing. Brian took the time to really help me financially plan and more so understand all avenues and options available to me. Highly recommend working with him and his team!

Keaton Russell ★★★★★

Brian and his team at Mortgage Atlanta were so easy to work with and made the process of refinancing my home for a better rate seamless!

Lisa Hawk ★★★★★

Brian and the team were able to guide us through our refinancing process. They were readily available to help answer questions when needed and made this as smooth as possible. This is the second time using Brian and Mortgage Atlanta and both times have been rather painless.

Kritesh Patel ★★★★★

Brian and his team are exceptionally knowledgeable and fast! I am beyond impressed!

Tsveta Karuleva ★★★★★

Brian was AMAZING! He was definitely a “numbers guy” which we loved. Whenever he called, he was ready with options, and suggestions to the best use of our money. We ALWAYS felt he had our best interests at heart, and cared about us as clients. He may love numbers, but we were definitely not just another number to him.

Jennifer Behrens ★★★★★

Great team. Always professional and courteous. They got me a great interest rate. I loved the fact they answer the phone every time I called. The team at Mortgage Atlanta walked me through the process. Absolutely the best!

Ed Vilbig ★★★★★



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GRMA #24383 • Georgia Residential Mortgage Licensee #24081 • NMLS Company License #184273 • NMLS Loan Originators License #184320
Subject to credit approval. Subject to change without notice. One Discount per loan transaction, discount cannot be combined with any other offer.
Offer not available on FHA Loans, loans with down payment assistance, community lending loans or brokered loans.