BOSTON • SOUTH SHORE • RHODE ISLAND

The homebuyer guide

A practical guide to planning your purchase, choosing a home, and getting to closing.



SOUTH END, BOSTON / ILLUSTRATIVE IMAGE

Start with the way you want to live.

Think about your daily routine, the space you need, and the monthly payment you would feel comfortable carrying. Bring those priorities to your first conversation with Gabby.

Gabby Hanley

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INSIDE / Budget and search • Offer and due diligence • Closing • Homeownership and taxes

01 / BEFORE YOU TOUR

Set your buying budget

Decide what you’re comfortable spending and what you’ll need to bring to closing.

Price the full monthly cost

Start with principal and interest, property taxes, homeowners insurance, and mortgage insurance if applicable. Add condo fees, utilities, maintenance, and any flood insurance you may need.

Plan for cash up front

Ask your lender for an estimate of your down payment, closing costs, and prepaid expenses. Leave room for inspections, moving, and immediate repairs. Track when each deposit is due and ask how it will be credited at closing.

Compare financing and representation

Speak with lenders about preapproval and compare Loan Estimates once available. Review the scope, term, and compensation in your buyer representation agreement with Gabby.

Tour with a short list

Choose three must-haves and three trade-offs. Look at the layout, signs of deferred maintenance, noise, parking, and your commute. For condos, ask for the budget, reserves, master insurance, rules, and any planned assessments.

Comfortable monthly budget and cash available

Must-haves and preferred towns

02 / YOUR PURCHASE

From offer to agreement

Write down your dates as soon as you have a signed agreement. Steps and timing can vary by contract and state.

- [ ] **Make an offer**
  Review comparable sales with Gabby and agree on price, deposits, contingencies, and your proposed closing date before submitting.
- [ ] **Confirm acceptance**
  Save the signed offer and put every deadline on your calendar. Ask Gabby to walk through what comes due first.
- [ ] **Deliver your first deposit**
  Follow the signed agreement for the amount, due date, and designated escrow holder. Keep a receipt.
- [ ] **Apply for your mortgage**
  Send your lender the signed documents and provide any requested records promptly. Track your financing deadline.
- [ ] **Schedule your home inspection**
  Book a qualified inspector within the time your agreement allows. Review the report before your response deadline.
- [ ] **Address inspection findings**
  Discuss major findings with Gabby and your attorney. If your contract allows, decide whether to request repairs or credits, proceed, or withdraw.
- [ ] **Review the purchase and sale agreement**
  Have your attorney review the agreement and contingency deadlines. Confirm whether an additional deposit is due at signing.

Massachusetts home inspection guidance

My next deadline and who to contact

03 / THE FINAL STRETCH

From agreement to keys

Keep your lender and closing team in the loop as you work through the remaining items.

- [ ] **Track the appraisal and title work**
  Your lender typically orders the appraisal for a financed purchase. Ask your closing team about title review and flag any issues early.
- [ ] **Arrange homeowners insurance**
  Compare quotes and confirm the effective date and coverage with your lender. For a condo, ask how your policy fits with the association’s master policy.
- [ ] **Clear remaining loan conditions**
  Respond to underwriting requests and ask your lender to confirm when you’re clear to close. Check with them before taking on new debt or moving large sums.
- [ ] **Review your closing figures**
  Compare the Closing Disclosure with your Loan Estimate if applicable. Confirm cash to close and call your closing team using a trusted number before wiring money.
- [ ] **Do the final walkthrough**
  Confirm the property is in the agreed condition, agreed repairs are complete, and items included in the sale are still there.
- [ ] **Sign and get the keys**
  Bring the identification and payment your closing team requests. Confirm when the deed will be recorded and when you’ll receive the keys.

CFPB guidance on closing documents

My next deadline and who to contact

04 / HOMEOWNERSHIP

Could buying affect my taxes?

A conversation to have with your tax professional as you plan your purchase.

Can I deduct mortgage interest or property taxes?

Qualifying mortgage interest and eligible real estate taxes may be deductible on your federal return if you itemize on Schedule A. Mortgage interest and state and local tax deductions are subject to separate eligibility rules and limits.

What might I actually save?

Ask your tax professional to compare your total eligible itemized deductions with your standard deduction for the tax year. Your filing status, income, and other deductions can change the result.

What should I budget each month?

Use the full payment your lender quotes and add any ownership costs you pay separately. A deduction can reduce taxable income if you qualify. Your scheduled mortgage payment stays the same because the tax deduction is handled separately.

What records should I keep?

Keep your Closing Disclosure, settlement paperwork, property tax statements, and Form 1098 if issued. Ask your tax professional which records to retain and which expenses may apply to your return.

IRS Publication 530 · Tax Information for Homeowners
IRS Publication 936 · Home Mortgage Interest Deduction

Open the interactive offer-to-closing checklist

THE FOUNDER BEHIND GCH REALTY

Meet Gabby Hanley

Real Estate Broker & Founder / Massachusetts and Rhode Island



Boston roots. Quincy home.

Gabby grew up in South Boston and has worked in Massachusetts real estate since 2011. She is based in Quincy and helps clients buy and sell across Boston and the South Shore. She holds broker licenses in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

What working together looks like

Gabby works with you directly. She helps you compare homes, think through costs and offer terms, and coordinate the next steps with your lender, inspector, and attorney.

Let’s talk about your next home.

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Meet Gabby at gchrealty.com