

# Guide to buying a property



## Step one: Looking for a property

Your first considerations are likely to be price, location and size. You should also think about the property's condition and the cost of any necessary work needed, proximity to local amenities, and how much Stamp Duty you will need to pay. Try listing your top three must-haves and what you're willing to compromise on. To search homes, head over to <https://www.knightfrank.co.uk/property-for-sale>.

## Step two: Registration

So we can fully understand what you need, we'll go through why you want to buy, what properties you have already seen, and what your funding options are. To keep track of your requirements, our agents will register you with the My Knight Frank portal. My Knight Frank makes it quick and easy to manage your property journey and gives you an up-to-date record of where you are in the buying process. You'll also get exclusive access to properties before they

are launched on our website. If you need to arrange a mortgage, our specialists at Knight Frank Finance are also on hand to help.

## Step three: Attend viewings

A member of our team will show you around, share relevant documents and answer any questions. Points to consider include service charges/ground rent, whether there's a sinking fund or any environmental risks, local parking and nearby transport links, school catchment areas, whether pets are allowed, the property's leasehold or freehold status, and lease extensions.

## Step four: Make an offer

Once you've got your mortgage offer, instructed a solicitor, and established your Stamp Duty, solicitors' and moving costs, you are ready to make an offer. We'll forward your offer to the seller, and once it has been accepted, we'll ask for your money laundering

(CDD) documents and confirm the sale details, and timescales. The transaction is now underway.

## Step five: Exchange of contracts

At this stage, you sign a legally binding contract to buy the property and pay a deposit (typically a minimum of 10% of the property price). You are now responsible for the property, so we recommend organising insurance. If you're planning to rent out your new home, our Lettings team can provide guidance on rental valuations, property management and furnishings.

## Step six: Completion

On the agreed date, the remainder of your payment for the property is transferred to the seller's solicitor. Once the payment has been received, you'll be given the keys, and the property will officially be yours.

# Glossary

## Chain

The sequence of people buying properties. Most sellers are also buyers (and vice versa).

## Cleared funds

Payment received in your solicitor's or Knight Frank's account.

## Completion date

The day the buyer officially becomes the new owner of a property and can move in.

## Commission

Our fee for property services, based on a percentage of the property's overall value.

## Conveyancer

A solicitor who manages the legal aspects of a property sale.

## Conveyancing

The legal process prior to transferring ownership.

## Client due diligence (CDD)

Checks carried out to comply with Money Laundering regulations.

## Closing date

The deadline for potential buyers to submit their best and final offer for a property.

## Deed

The legal document(s) that gives title to the property and can include a history of ownership.

## Deposit

A sum of money, normally 10% of a property's price, to be paid on exchange of contracts. We advise confirming if this payment is refundable should the sale fall through.

## EPC

Documentation showing a property's energy efficiency and carbon emissions, as well as giving an indication of the fuel bills you can expect.

## Equity

The percentage of the property you own – the difference between the value of your home and the mortgage you owe.

## Exchange of contracts/ exchange of letters/ conclusion of missives

Once contracts have been exchanged between the buyer and seller, the terms are legally binding and both parties are committed to the transaction.

## Fixtures and fittings

The units, furnishings, floor, ceiling or wall coverings installed in a property.

## Freehold

The outright ownership of a property and its land. See also 'Share of freehold'.

## Fixed price

A set figure that, if offered, is likely to be accepted (although this could change if there are multiple interested parties).

## Gazumping

When the seller accepts a higher offer despite having already accepted one from another buyer.

## Gazundering

This happens if the buyer offers a lower price after the original offer has been accepted by the seller.

## Home Condition Survey

A basic inspection by a mortgage company to confirm a property's value.

## Homebuyers report

A thorough inspection examining a property's interior and exteriors.

## Building or structural survey

An in-depth inspection of all aspects of a building, frequently used for older homes or those with thatched or timber roofs.

## Jointly and severally liable

All parties are responsible for complying with obligations and paying all charges, both individually and together.

## Land Registry

A government office that stores records of land ownership and any charges against the property, such as a mortgage.

## Launch

The start of advertising the property to customers, via online channels, such as Rightmove, OnTheMarket and social media, in newspapers and magazines or in brochures.

## Leasehold

The right to live in a property and occupy the land it's on for a fixed period of time, commonly 99, 125 or 999 years.

## Legal fee

The charge made by a solicitor or licensed conveyancer for carrying out the legal work connected with buying and selling a property.

## Local Authority Research

A search conducted by a solicitor before exchanging contracts to check for anything that could affect a property's value.

## Mortgage deposit

The upfront payment towards the property purchase price – typically around 20% but can be more, or less. It is also known as a Down Payment, or Home Loan Deposit.

## Offers Over

A statement sometimes added to a purchase price when the seller is expecting more than a specified sum. Successful bids are typically 10%-20% above guide price.

## Property

Any part of the building, boundaries, fences, gardens and outbuildings belonging to the landlord/leaseholder (unless specifically excluded from the tenancy/lease agreement). If a tenancy/leasehold is part of a larger building, this also includes the use of common access ways and facilities. Share of freehold This is when the freehold of the property is owned by a limited company and the shareholders are the owners of the property, usually the owners of flats within that building.

## Stamp Duty

A tax on every home sold costing more than £125,000. For full breakdown see <https://www.gov.uk/stamp-duty-land-tax/residential-property-rates>.

## Structural survey

Conducted by a qualified building surveyor to check for structural faults. There are three main types of this survey.

## Subject to contract

Terms are not legally binding until the exchange of contracts.

## Subject to survey

Terms are not legally binding until any relevant surveys provide acceptable findings.

## Title deeds

The ownership documents describing the property and land owned, as well as any rights and conditions attached to it.