

## Congratulations on your decision to pursue "home" ownership!

Please allow me to recommend the following steps to think on/do in the order they should be completed.

1. Obtain financing approval for an amount and interest rate through your bank.  
(Do not spend more than **25%** of your monthly income on a house payment, including property taxes and mortgage insurance which will be required of you)
2. Find out the amount of the down-payment for the loan type you are pursuing, make sure you have this set aside in savings!
3. Find out the average closing costs and set this aside in savings!
4. Look online for homes in your price range and look up the average utility costs.  
These can increase with the age of a home for many reasons, poor insulation, older windows, drafty windows/doors, larger square footage, it is important to calculate any added extra costs above what you are paying now!
5. Call service provider companies for their fees for "turning on" the following in your new home.  
Water transfer of name and or turn on.  
Trash transfer of name and or turn on.  
Turn on transfer of electric  
Cable/internet.  
These all have fees to turn on and or transfer the name upon move in, most people do not inquire about these from the companies, they can be **hundreds** of dollars, set these amounts aside in savings!
6. Assess/Approximate the average monthly cost of "home repair/maintenance".  
Average is 1-4 % of the purchase price of the home per year divided by 12 months: Example: 180,000 home with 1% would be 1800 per year and \$150 a month, this would be to maintain or repair.  
This would not include decorating, furnishing, painting or improving your property in any way inside or out!
7. Assess the approximate amount you would need for moving costs and set that in savings.  
In addition to a move you will find yourself going to "Walmart" for things such as a shower curtain, trashcan, and many little items, bug spray...etc. when moving into a home, this generally amounts to about \$200 on avg.
8. Assess the cost of any needed repairs or replacements in the homes you are looking at that you would need during your first year, such as an appliance that is very old and "on its last leg", a new roof, etc...
9. Assess the cost of yard maintenance, hiring a company or purchasing equipment and the time involved for all these maintenance and or repair areas both inside and outside a home, it is important to decide not only how much money you can spend on these things but how much time you wish to also! And your level of skill to do things yourself or if you need to hire them out!  
Get a one year home warranty!
10. Get a realtor, the seller pays them but they work for you! They will save you time and money and a great deal of pain!  
Purchasing a home is a joy but an extreme challenge in many ways!
11. Consider a condo verses a home, the monthly homeowners dues are less than the avg. amount people spend on their free standing homes each month, they are a good fit for people who do not have the cash, time or skills for weekend yard, home, pool maintenance! They generally have lovely playgrounds and pools for the kids along with a security and they do all your yard-work and exterior maintenance for you! This is a great option for a young family who was never experienced home ownership and needs to get their "feet wet" in the least stressful way while being able to enjoy the right amount of square footage, family amenities.
12. After carefully researching your options, obtaining a realtor, financing approval, pray out your choices, God will lead you.  
More faith will be needed for the "monthly maintenance" of this adventure than the actual acquiring of it;  
don't use all your faith for the acquisition part!

ps. Pinterest has some great family budget sheets to print for free, so you can do some fun "mock-ups" on some homes!

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