

Hot off the press!

October Newsletter



PSL (or pumpkin spice latte for the unfamiliar) season is in full swing and love it or hate it, a 20-million-latte-strong annual sales figure (for Starbucks alone!) is a cultural phenomenon. It's undeniably the flavour of fall in North America, supporting a billion-dollar plus industry and blanketing a massive cross-section of products. Heck, if there was a PSL mortgage, I'd be selling it. Whether you're picking up that pumpkin party-in-your-mouth beverage to get you through a house hunting expedition, to power you up to replace an appliance at home, or just to enjoy while reading this newsletter – you're not alone. My question to you is – are you a PSL purist, a seasonal treat sampler, or immune to the pull of the pumpkin altogether?!

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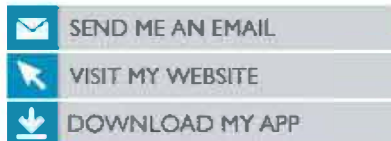
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Don't Get Spooked! First-Time Homebuyer Tips for a Smooth Process



Buying your first home – no matter what your age – is a significant life event. It can bring up all kinds of stresses, both financially and emotionally. Being prepared for what's to come can put your mind at ease. So, as an expert in the process, here are my best tips to minimize stress, and avoid hiccups and surprises throughout the process.

- **Set Limits:** Allot a maximum amount of time for house shopping and scrolling on socials, websites, etc. per day. Don't get overwhelmed by browsing homes for hours on end, listening to everything you hear on social media, etc.
- **Build Your Team:** You'll need a real estate agent you're comfortable working with, a lawyer to review documents, a thorough home inspector, and a mortgage broker to get your financing in order. It's okay to meet a few of each profession and make sure you get the right team lined up. Asking for a referral is a great way to find that perfect someone.
- **Get Pre-Qualified & Pre-Approved:** Using a mortgage calculator ([or downloading my app](#)) will help you determine what mortgage payments and subsequent home shopping budget you'd qualify for. A pre-approval looks more carefully at your credit score and income, giving you an estimate what a bank would lend YOU. A mortgage broker is the perfect person to help you get it.
- **Create a Budget – And Stick to It:** Once you know what your downpayment and ongoing mortgage payments will be, you've got to also consider the other costs of buying a home (like an inspection, moving, closing fees, legal fees, etc.). Know how much cash upfront you'll need and don't overspend leading up to a home purchase.
- **Spend Time in Prospective Neighbourhoods:** It'll minimize surprises about the neighbours and habits of the residents, plus you'll get familiar with routines like school buses, playground zones, garbage days and more.
- **Lower Your Expectations:** Thinking you'll a home that's 100% perfect, at the price you want, with no one else bidding on it... well that's not very realistic. So set out the absolute must-haves, consider what you can compromise on, and don't get too

wrapped up in just one house. Take your time and wait for one that fits your budget and your (lowered) expectations.

- **Monotask:** If you're trying to choose between houses, calculate expenses, hire a mover, rent a carpet cleaner, and declutter your home all at once, you'll become scattered and ineffective. Instead of multitasking and trying to get everything done at once, pick just one task at a time and work on that exclusively.
- **Try a Daily Affirmation:** Choose something "I am making good financial decisions every day to support buying a home" or "I remain optimistic about finding my future home" or "I trust that my realtor is working in my best interest" and repeat it when you feel stress over the purchase, process, or whatever else is bothering you.
- **Enlist a Support System:** If you're feeling overwhelmed, lean on someone for support. That might be your broker if you're confused about a process or requirement or a friend who recently bought a house to confirm their experience. It might even be your family or friends to vent or a gym buddy to get a stress-relieving workout in. Don't ignore the stress as it can build throughout the process.

I hope these tips help you with your next home purchase – and please share them if you know someone who's going through it too!



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The key to your next home is just a click away!

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Go Green: Home Appliance Upgrades to Save Money and Energy



Did you know that appliances and electronics account for up to 23% of the average monthly electricity bill? The biggest culprits are your fridge (coming in at around 4% of the total bill), and your washer and dryer (coming in at around 3.5% of the total bill). We're all

looking to save some cash where we can, so let's look at some ways to reduce that monthly energy bill from our appliances and electronics.

Option 1: Use Existing Appliances Smarter

Now I don't recommend unplugging your fridge or wearing filthy clothes – but there are a few ways to get your appliance and electronics energy use down. First up, in warmer months, line dry your clothes to skip the dryer altogether. Next, clean your existing appliances – from the fridge coils to the lint traps, a clean machine is an efficient machine.

For your electronics, turn off your TV and computer when you're not using them or use a smart power bar to plug them in. I know there's plenty of us who just close the laptop at 5pm but taking that extra second to turn it off every day adds up. You can also turn down screen brightness and turn off standby modes.

Option 2: Upgrading Appliances

Looking to replace an old appliance with an energy efficient one this year? It's a great investment in your home, even if you plan to sell in the next few years. The ROI on new appliances is 60-80% - and that doesn't even include the cost savings you get each month on your bill. If you're serious about an appliance upgrade, [here are the best of the best](#) Energy Star certified products in each appliance category for 2025.

One thing to look for in a new appliance is that Energy Star logo and certification. The logo is that light blue (or black) box with a white star and cursive 'energy'. The certification is the manufacturer's assurance that the product meets Federal Government standards for minimum energy performance standards, typically defined as 10-65% more efficient than traditional models (depending on the appliance and scenario). The program is run by Natural Resources Canada and has been in place since 2001.

What About Other Improvements?

Of course, there are many improvements you could make to your home to improve energy efficiency – from upgrading the HVAC system to installing energy efficient windows and doors. In fact, a bigger investment in these areas might be even more cost effective since heating your home accounts for the biggest portion of the average energy bill by far. For those of you who've gotten a CMHC insured mortgage in the past 2 years there's an even bigger incentive to take the plunge. If you've upgraded your appliances in that mortgaged home, you can submit an application to the CMHC to get up to 25% of your CHMC insurance fees back! [Read more details on that program](#) or give me a call to discuss.

And that's a wrap for October! I hope you all have a candy-filled spooky season and manage to sort out your costumes before the 31st. Happy Halloween and see you back here in November.

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