



# 6 Mistakes Even Real Estate Agents Make When Buying Their First Home

The home-buying process is a complicated one, and it's rife with potential pitfalls. With jargon, credit scores, cash, and inspections galore (among other things!), it can be especially confusing for those going through it for the first time. And while you may think real estate agents are too clever (and qualified!) to make rookie mistakes in the process themselves, they're not safe from the excitement that can cloud a homebuyer's rationality, either.

But you don't have to listen to me when you can hear it straight from these experts. Here, five mistakes so common for first-time homebuyers, even real estate agents say they've made them:

## 1. Getting too emotionally attached to a listing

Just like falling in love, many times when you walk into your dream home, you just *know*. While finding your home can be a fairy tale experience, closing on it can be a horror show. So many roadblocks can happen after an offer is accepted. While some of them are inevitable (a low appraisal or bad inspection, for example), others result from potential buyers letting their feelings get in the way. Always keep your emotional distance from a property before closing, not only to protect your pride, but also to ensure you're making good business decisions along the way.

But this isn't just a first-time buyer problem: Christopher Arienti, a real estate agent with RE/MAX Executive Realty in Franklin, Massachusetts, says that while he warns his clients not to fall into the emotional trap that is homebuying, he totally did this himself when buying his first home.

"We all get tied to things we shouldn't, clouding our judgment, and potentially ruining our chances to get the closing done," Arienti says.



## 2. Not paying attention to the home's surroundings

You've heard this before: You can change a lot about a home, but the one thing you can't change is its location (unless your home is on wheels, of course!). Unfortunately, many first-time homebuyers can get so excited about the home itself that they forget to look at the home in context of its neighborhood and community. Just take [Sophia Weeks](#), an agent with RE/MAX Synergy in Bedford, New Hampshire, for example. She says that though she always helps her buyers look around and assess the area when they're viewing a home, she forgot to do this herself:

"I loved the first house I bought so much that I didn't notice it was across the street from a funeral home," Weeks says. "I didn't even realize it until we moved in and saw all the cars across the street! I guess I was so excited about the house that I forgot to pay any attention to the surroundings."

## 3. Skipping necessary inspections

Buyers may want to skip over or skimp on cautionary due diligence during the [home inspection process](#) to (finally) get to closing. While something might be less-than-ideal now, buyers may think it's something they can fix themselves down the line rather than [risk closing](#). However, this almost always backfires. Take it from Tami Halton Pardee, CEO of [Halton Pardee and Partners](#) in Los Angeles, California, who skipped over a sewer line check in her first Oregon home:

"I ended up having river rats coming up from my toilet!" Halton Pardee says. "It was shocking and a sight to see."

## 4. Not asking for seller concessions

And even if you do get those inspections (you *really* should!), don't be afraid to ask the seller to compensate for any imperfections. Many first-time homebuyers won't speak up about minor concerns before entering into contract, thinking it's not worth stalling closing.

James McGrath, co-founder of Yoreevo, a real estate brokerage in New York City, says that when he bought his apartment six years ago, he noticed the floors were sloped in one area but didn't say anything. After moving in, he called in a flooring professional to get a second opinion. While it wasn't the sign of a major issue, it was a cosmetic imperfection. The expert said that had McGrath mentioned it before closing, he could have easily gotten a few thousand dollars knocked off the purchase price as a concession. Instead, if he now wants to fix it, it'll have to come out of his own pocket.

## 5. Making large purchases before move-in

It's recommended that you live in a space a bit before making big purchases, since it's all too easy (and expensive!) to get swept up by ideas of all your new space could be (and who you could be in it). However, even real estate agents get caught up in the emotional haze of homebuying.

While some people splurge on expensive furniture and chef-level appliances before closing, Emily Jones, an agent with Keller Williams Edge Realty in Ontario, Canada, chose to go with another aspirational lifestyle change: an adopted puppy for her new large yard. Unfortunately, move-in day came a lot later than planned as, like with many new builds, the closing was delayed.

"Like anyone buying a home, it was tough for me to separate out emotions from logic," Jones says. "I knew there was a strong possibility [for delays], but I still let myself get carried away with the excitement and, inevitably, was disappointed when things kept getting pushed back."



## 6. Rushing the move-in process

Buying a home is really, really exciting. And even if you're *totally* on top of everything, it's still going to take a while to get to closing day, and then a bit longer to move in—probably even longer than you would like. While you may be eager to just get it all over with, it's important to take it slow. Rushing the process can cause expensive and/or annoying mistakes down the line.

McGrath says he was so eager to live in his first apartment, he moved the same day he closed. However, this prevented him from completing the projects that would have been easy in a completely empty space, like stripping the walls and repainting.

"I should have kept my rental for another month," McGrath says. "Once I started moving in, there was just too much furniture."