

# Understanding the Mortgage Documents

*Completing the Mortgage Documents  
Required for Home Purchase*



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# Understanding the Mortgage Documents



Many families feel overwhelmed by the homebuying process because of the amount of paperwork they must complete. But, with the right information and support from a housing professional — such as a housing counselor, real estate agent, or lender — you can be better equipped to understand what you are signing.

## Mortgage Documents

Understanding the purpose and function of the primary documents used in the mortgage process will help you navigate more confidently from application to closing.

## Uniform Residential Loan Application

There are a number of important steps involved in purchasing a home, and one of the most important is completing your mortgage loan application. It includes several important sections that capture information about you, your finances, and details of your potential mortgage.

In providing information about yourself and any co-borrowers, be prepared to furnish your Social Security number, date of birth, marital status, and contact information. Be prepared to provide documentation on your income, expenses, assets (what you own), and liabilities (what you owe). If you have pending legal problems or factors that influence your financial situation, you will be asked to provide that information. This, in combination with your credit report, will help the lender assess your ability to pay your mortgage.

You will also give your lender information about the house you wish to purchase (e.g., address, year built, etc.). The lender will include the potential details of the loan transaction including the loan amount, purchase price of your home, and total cost of your loan.

## Pre-Approval Letter

Once the application is complete and your loan is approved, your loan officer will provide you with a pre-approval letter stating the potential amount of your loan. The letter is the lender's conditional commitment to lend you a specific amount of money for the purchase of your home. While this is helpful

information, you need to decide for yourself if you can live comfortably with the amount of your suggested monthly mortgage payment.

## Good Faith Estimate

Once you have completed your loan application, the Good Faith Estimate will provide you with an outline of the costs associated with your loan. For example, you'll need to pay a credit report fee, which is the cost of pulling your report. You'll also need to pay for a home appraisal so you can see how much your home is valued at the time of your purchase. You will also be responsible for a title search fee so the title company can research past records of the property's title to ensure that there are no outstanding liens or debts recorded against the property and a recording fee so you can register the property under your name. Finally, the Good Faith Estimate will outline how much you are required to have in reserve at closing, including your down payment and closing costs.

## Truth-in-Lending Disclosure Statement

The Truth-in-Lending form will explain the total cost of your mortgage. This disclosure is required by law to provide information on the amount being financed, the finance charge, the payment schedule, and your annual percentage rate (APR). The APR includes the interest rate, points, broker fee, and any other charges you're required to pay.

## HUD-1 Settlement Statement

Your lender will also provide you with a HUD-1 Settlement Statement. This will disclose the fees and services associated with closing your loan. Closing costs can typically range from 3 to 7 percent of the loan amount. Ask your lender for a HUD-1 Settlement



Statement when you set the closing date. The statement lists the time and date of the closing as well as the final costs of the mortgage transaction.

## The Note

The final stage in the homebuying process is closing, which is sometimes called settlement. This is the meeting where you sign your name to paperwork that legally transfers the home to you. You will be asked to sign the note. This is a document that promises you will repay the loan according to the terms to which you agreed. It also explains what can happen if you fail to make a payment on time.

## Mortgage or Deed of Trust

The Mortgage or Deed of Trust is a legal document in which the borrower transfers the title to a third party (trustee) to hold as security for the lender. When the loan is paid in full the trustee transfers the title back to the borrower. Since the lender is providing you with money to purchase the house, they will use the house as security to ensure repayment of the loan. By signing this document, you are giving the lender the right to take back the property should you fail to repay your loan as agreed. If the borrower defaults on the loan, the property can be sold to pay off the mortgage debt. It also states you must keep the house in good repair and maintain insurance on the property.

## Deed

The seller will sign the deed to transfer ownership over to you, and it will have the names of all the buyers on it. Your title will be held with a third-party trustee until you have paid for the house in full. You will, however, receive a copy of the deed at closing.

## Affidavits and Declarations

These are statements declaring all the information you provide is true, including that the property will be your primary residence and all repairs needed on the property were made prior to closing.

## Get Help Before You Sign

From the moment you decide to pursue homeownership until the day you receive the keys to your new home, you will take part in a series of meetings and will be asked to sign many documents. It may be intimidating, but remember to work closely with a housing professional to ensure you understand the documents before you sign.

## For More Information

- Contact a reputable lender or other housing professional to help you learn more about the homebuying process.
- The Freddie Mac CreditSmart® curriculum is a consumer guide to better credit, money management, and responsible homeownership. Visit [FreddieMac.com/creditsmart](http://FreddieMac.com/creditsmart) to download consumer resources, available in five languages.
- "About Homeownership" is the Freddie Mac online guide to the homebuying process and successful homeownership. Visit [FreddieMac.com/homeownership](http://FreddieMac.com/homeownership).
- Avoid scam artists! Learn more about common scams in your area, and get advice before you enter into your next loan agreement. Visit [DontBorrowTrouble.com](http://DontBorrowTrouble.com) to find a local Don't Borrow Trouble® campaign near you.
- To find a HUD-approved housing counseling agency near you, visit [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov) or call 800-569-4287.
- Speak to your loan officer for more details on each of the loan documents and the terms outlined.

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### Source

Content adapted from Freddie Mac's Mi Casa Propia, a bilingual guide that helps borrowers navigate the mortgage process from application to closing.



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