

# COMOX VALLEY HOME BUYER'S GUIDE

A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO HELPING YOU PURCHASE A HOME IN THE COMOX VALLEY



## INCLUDED IN THIS GUIDE:

- THE ROLE OF A BUYING AGENT
- TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR REALTOR
- HOW TO MAKE AN OFFER ON A HOME, PROCESS, & TIMELINE
- COMMON MISTAKES IN THE PROCESS OF PURCHASING A HOME
- ROLE OF A LAWYER IN BUYING A HOME
- EXPENSES TO EXPECT IN BUYING A HOME
- BUYING TIPS FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROPERTIES
- AN INTRODUCTION TO THE COMOX VALLEY

Welcome!

My name is Mason Walker. I've been working in the Comox Valley real estate market for over 10 years. Whether buying or selling, my clients benefit from my knowledge and experience in investing, marketing, home renovation, and house staging.

I love what I do for a living. The passion and dedication that I have for working in real estate gives me both patience and enthusiasm. You can expect from me a positive attitude, sense of humour, and an overall enjoyable and professional experience from start to finish. As your realtor I promise to work hard on your behalf. I'll be readily available to use my strong market knowledge to help find the best home for you and your family.

My young family and I love the Comox Valley and we know you will too.

Let's get started!  
Sincerely,

250-702-7061  
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[www.masonwalker.ca](http://www.masonwalker.ca)



**RE/MAX**

Ocean Pacific Realty

MASON WALKER PERSONAL REAL ESTATE CORPORATION

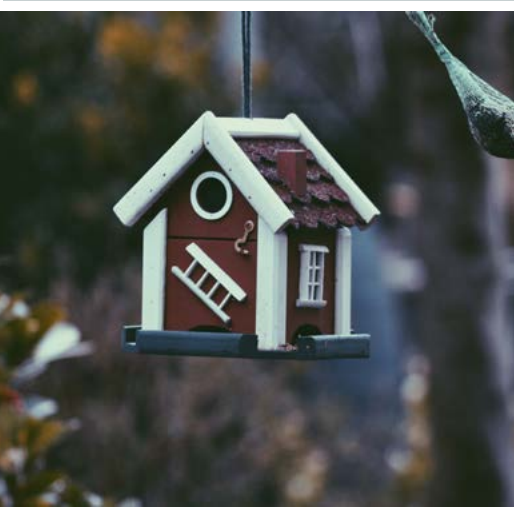


# THE ROLE OF A HOME BUYER'S REAL ESTATE AGENT

Working with a buying agent is a completely free service with no formal commitment.

There are many advantages to using a buyer's agent. Here are some things I can help you with:

- Listen to your needs and wish list in a home or property.
  - Find, suggest, and arrange viewings of homes that meet your criteria from all local real estate brokerages.
  - Provide you with objective information and the history of each home we look at and detailed market information relating specifically to the areas you choose to look in.
  - Point out potential problems or maintenance concerns before you make an offer.
  - Provide you with comparable homes sold information.
  - Negotiate with the sellers on your behalf and help save you thousands of dollars.
  - Protect your interests and always ensure that you are entering into a safe and legal transaction.
  - Once your offer is accepted, I help you with lining up inspections, title searches and fulfilling the buyer's subjects.
- [See my list of recommended inspectors on my website.](#)
- When possession day arrives I ensure a smooth transition into your new home and keep you smiling throughout!



*"Mason is pretty easy going. He knows his stuff and he isn't pushy in any way. After all the work he has done for us, our siblings, and parents I can say every one of us ended up with the right purchase for us. Happy house hunting!"*

*- Vivian Vaillant*

***As your realtor I will work hard on your behalf. I am always accessible, respond quickly, and am available to answer any of your questions.***

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# TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR REALTOR

Effective communication between us is one of the best ways to make your home buying experience pleasant and stress-free.

Throughout our search consider these questions:

- What is your motivation for purchasing a home? life events such as a pregnancy, a child leaving for college, or a job change can help inform our process.
- What sort of lifestyle are you looking for? Do you want neighbours? Be close to shops and restaurants? Near a particular school?
- What size of mortgage are you comfortable with? And how much have you qualified for?
- Are you planning to live in this home long-term, or are you looking at it as an investment?
- Are you looking for a home that is move-in ready? Are you comfortable with managing renovations?

## WANTS AND NEEDS

Your needs should be a list of what you absolutely cannot live without in a house. Your wants should include perks but not deal breakers. If you have a clear picture of your wants and needs our work together can be much more effective. You may find that these lists evolve over the period of your home search. That's a-okay! It's all part of the process.

With a comprehensive list of wants and needs we can create a personalized search for properties that match your desires. You can receive notifications when new listings are posted that match your criteria. [Visit my website to learn more.](#)

I want to hear from you!  
Call, text, or email me any time  
with questions, thoughts,  
or just to touch base  
throughout our home search!  
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# HOW TO MAKE AN OFFER ON A HOME

*"My husband and I cannot say enough about Mason's professionalism, patience and extensive knowledge. He assisted us in purchasing our new home in Comox, and helped us navigate new and potentially stressful situations with kindness and patience. We appreciated Mason's even-tempered care and knew that we could trust him with all our concerns. Having moved from Vancouver, Mason gave us valuable information about the community and was able to answer all of our questions. We also were impressed with Mason's charity program. We felt great about being able to give back a little to the community. Our experience at each stage of the purchase of our new home was superior. You can be sure that Mason will handle all tasks, interpersonal or business related, with a level of competence and integrity."*

*- Tschessy & Galen Rigter*

When we have found you a home that you are interested in buying, I am able to walk you through the process of writing an offer to purchase. I will communicate the offer to the seller or the seller's real estate agent on your behalf.

As always, I will assist you in generating an offer that is reasonable and protects your interests using specified terms and conditions. We will also go through various negotiating strategies and decide on an approach that best suits your situation.

Almost every offer is drafted with conditions which will vary according to the property and situation. Some of these conditions could be "subject to approval of financing" or "subject to approving a home inspection", among many others. Each type of property may require its own specific "subjects". For example, most rural properties should have their well water tested; condo sales should be subject to reviewing the strata minutes.

The seller may accept or reject your initial offer, or present a counter-offer. The counter-offer may differ from your original offer in respect to price, conditions, the closing date or any other items. Offers can be countered back and forth until one of the parties accepts or rejects, ending the negotiations.

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# TIMELINE OF A REAL ESTATE TRANSACTION

THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW A TYPICAL REAL ESTATE TRANSACTION CAN PROCEED.

## **FEBRUARY 1 - OFFER IS ACCEPTED**

Usually there are approx 10-14 days from the day the offer is accepted to allow time for the Buyer to satisfy their conditions. These conditions usually include securing financing and having a home inspection performed. Conditions (or subjects as they are called) must be removed by the subject removal date which will be written into the offer when presented.

## **FEBRUARY 10 - SUBJECTS ARE REMOVED**

The offer is now unconditional and is thus binding for both the Seller and Buyer. The lawyers will require at least a week or two after subject removal for conveyancing and getting the paper work in order for the transaction.

## **MARCH 31 - COMPLETION AND ADJUSTMENT DATE**

This is the day that the money changes hands. Typically the completion date will be one day before possession day. The completion and possession dates are often a month or two after the date of the original accepted offer, allowing for both the Seller and Buyer to organize their relocation and moving details. If there are tenants in place, the residential tenancy rules regarding notice to tenants applies.

## **APRIL 1 - POSSESSION DATE**

The keys are yours!



# COMMON MISTAKES IN THE PROCESS OF PURCHASING A HOME

Here are 10 common mistakes that buyers can make when purchasing a home.

1. Making an offer on a home without being pre-qualified for financing
2. Not having a home or septic inspection done
3. Limiting your search to open houses, print ads, or the MLS website.
4. Choosing a real estate agent who is not committed to forming a strong business relationship with you
5. Thinking there is only one perfect house out there
6. Not considering long-term needs
7. Not examining comparable solds in the area
8. Not examining insurance issues
9. Not knowing the total costs involved
10. Not following through on due diligence

*My husband and I bought our first house with Mason in 2013. We really enjoyed his laid-back approach and no-pressure style. He was always on-time and available anytime we needed him. He was always listening to what we did and didn't like about each place and altering what he showed us accordingly. He gave us useful information to inform the value of our first ever real estate offer. Since we purchased our home, Mason has kept in touch with market info and listings of homes we requested as we watch for our next home to come available. We recommend his services without hesitation.*

*- Sheila Fetter*



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# ROLE OF A LAWYER IN BUYING A HOME

Purchasing a home involves a lot of paperwork. It is important to have a good lawyer or notary public acting for you - someone to protect your rights and interests. You do not need to line up a lawyer or notary prior to making an offer on a home.

## LAWYER'S/NOTARY PUBLIC'S FUNCTION

1. Ensure the correct property is purchased
2. Transfer title to your name(s)
3. Ensure title is free and clear of prior owner's encumbrances
4. Your mortgage is registered properly on title

The lawyer/notary public will prepare a "Statement of Adjustments" outlining all the financial aspects of your sale.

## FINDING A LAWYER/NOTARY PUBLIC

I highly recommend working with someone who has real estate experience. And be sure to *discuss their fee scales prior to hiring them.*

Dale Roberts, Notary Public - 250-871-7737  
Kate Greening, Notary Public - 250-338-1445  
Dennis Schaffrick, Lawyer - 250-339-3363



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# EXPENSES INCLUDED IN BUYING A HOME

There are many costs that home buyers incur that you should be aware of. Some of the expenses related to buying a home are one-time costs, while others are continuing or monthly costs. I can provide you with a very specific list that matches your purchasing situation.

Below is a list of common expenses, not all will be applicable.

	<b>Property or Land Transfer Tax (PTT)</b> (1% of first 200K of purchase price + 2% on remainder, unless qualify for an exemption under the 1st time home buyer program)
	<b>Legal Fees &amp; Disbursements</b> (lawyer fees can range \$800-\$1200)
	<b>GST</b> (only applicable to purchase of newly constructed homes)
	<b>Home Inspection</b> (usually between \$400-\$450)
	<b>Water Quality &amp; Quantity Test</b> (properties not on municipal water, \$50-\$300)
	<b>Septic Inspection</b> (properties not on municipal sewer, \$300-\$450)
	<b>Appraisal Fee</b> (if required by your financial lender, \$200-\$300)
	<b>Title Insurance</b> (if deemed necessary, one-time fee of \$150-250)
	<b>Mortgage Loan Insurance Premium</b> (if less than a 20% down payment) See CMHC at <a href="http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca">www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca</a> for more info
	<b>Adjustments</b> (reimbursed to or from the vendor, ex. prepaid property taxes)
	<b>Yearly Property Taxes</b> After applicable rebates (home owners grant etc.)
	<b>Yearly Home Insurance</b>
	<b>Monthly Strata Fees</b>
	<b>Moving Expenses</b>
	<b>Any Immediately Necessary Renovations and Repairs</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>



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# BUYING TIPS FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROPERTIES



*"My experience with Mason as my agent was fantastic. I was a first time home buyer and had virtually no knowledge of the process ahead. Mason walked me through every step of the way from start to finish. He was patient, honest and enjoyable to work with and truly went above and beyond my expectations. I cannot thank him enough for helping me find the perfect home! I would recommend him in a heart beat to anyone who asked."*

*- Rachel Davidson*

## SINGLE FAMILY HOMES

Ensure that the home you are buying is a solid, structurally sound home. Look into any potential water and foundation issues. Be aware of any upcoming expenses and maintenance. Get a good home inspection!

## DUPLEXES

Who is your direct neighbour? Don't hesitate to knock on their door and find out. Condition of the roof and siding can be important as these are often shared maintenance costs.

## STRATA PROPERTIES/CONDOS

A well run strata council and well maintained complex can be key. Ensure any necessary building remediations have been taken care of. Read through the last 2 years of council meeting minutes. Find out how much is in the strata's contingency fund and if there are any upcoming "cash calls".

## MOBILES

Financing can be tricky if there is no concrete foundation. The age of the mobile is also important as most mortgage lenders will only offer an amortization length of 40 minus the age of the mobile. Have a talk with your mortgage broker about the lending rules.

## RURAL PROPERTIES

Be sure to test the quality of the well water. A septic inspection is also necessary. If you are viewing the property in the summer try to investigate any potential flooding issues. If you plan on growing produce consider a soil sample test. Also be aware of what the specific zoning allows and doesn't allow.

*There are many more things to be aware of when buying each type of property and I will happily share more along the way.*

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# INTRODUCTION TO THE COMOX VALLEY

## THE BASICS

The Comox Valley includes the City of Courtenay, the Town of Comox, the Village of Cumberland, and the unincorporated settlements of Royston, Union Bay, Fanny Bay, Black Creek and Merville. The Valley, as the locals call it, is a fantastic region for all-season outdoor recreation opportunities, an exciting arts and culture scene, a growing local food and beverage industry, and so much more! . Whether you're looking to resettle in the Valley to raise a family, start a business, or retire, the Valley is an incredible place to live.



### CITY OF COURTENAY

Courtenay is the bustling metropolis of the Valley but with its low-rise buildings and overall friendliness there's no big-city stress. Courtenay has the largest population in the Valley and also hosts galleries, theaters, shops and restaurants that serve the whole Comox Valley.



### TOWN OF COMOX

Comox sits on a peninsula with panoramic mountain views and sandy beaches on the Strait of Georgia. It's also home to the Comox Valley's Airport and CFB Comox. It's a quieter area of the Valley but boasts unique shops, restaurants, and amenities in its downtown.



### VILLAGE OF CUMBERLAND

Cumberland is the baby bear of the Valley. It's a quickly evolving, tightly knit, walkable community with deep roots in its mining history. Cumberland is world-renowned for its mountain biking but is also a hub for cultural history and events.



BLACK CREEK, MERVILLE, ROYSTON, UNION BAY, FANNY BAY  
These communities make up the rural areas of the Valley. Each has a small community hub and unique identity. You'll find plenty of agricultural activity and wildlife, along with peace and quiet in these areas.

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# INTRODUCTION TO THE COMOX VALLEY

## PLACES TO VISIT



### PUNTLEDGE PARK

1111 1st St, Courtenay

Relax on the river bank on a hot summer day. Shallow water for swimming or bring a tube and launch it here to float down the Puntledge River. There's a playground for kids too.



### CUMBERLAND COMMUNITY FOREST

Comox Lake Road, Cumberland

60 hectares of community park, just southwest of the historic village, it's the gateway to Cumberland's legendary trail system for hiking, mountain biking, and mining history.



### GOOSE SPIT

Hawkins Rd, Comox

Coastal strip with sandy shores, walking trails, interpretive programs, wildlife, picnic tables and fire pits. It is a popular swimming spot in the summer.



### RIVERWAY HERITAGE WALK

2475 Mansfield Dr, Courtenay

A paved loop trail featuring an estuary, lagoon, tidal flats, salt marsh. View plenty of wildlife and small prop planes taking off and landing at the airport. Trail connects to downtown Courtenay.



### KYE BAY

476 Windslow Rd, Comox

Beautiful sandy beaches and many shallow tidal pools perfect for the kids. A great place to pack a picnic, bring the kids and the dog, and spend the day at the beach.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE COMOX VALLEY PLACES TO EAT



## ATLAS CAFE

250 6th St, Courtenay [www.atlascafe.ca](http://www.atlascafe.ca)

Easygoing breakfast-to-dinner cafe serving global dishes along with beer & wine. One of the best in the Valley.



## BLACKFIN PUB

132 Port Augusta St, Comox [www.blackfinpub.com](http://www.blackfinpub.com)

Informal, waterfront pub featuring cocktails, brews, and a variety of local dishes plus patio seating.



## CUMBERLAND BREWING COMPANY

2732 Dunsmuir Ave, Cumberland

[www.cumberlandbrewing.com](http://www.cumberlandbrewing.com)

In-house brewed craft beer, casual food, large patio.



## DELICADO'S DELI

180 5th St, Courtenay [www.delicados-deli.com](http://www.delicados-deli.com)

Funky southwestern restaurant/deli featuring wholesome, fresh meals, and quick service.



## NIKKEI RAMEN-YA

320 5th St, Courtenay [www.nikkeiramenya.com](http://www.nikkeiramenya.com)

Made from scratch, authentic ramen noodles.



## GLADSTONE BREWING COMPANY

244 4th St, Courtenay [www.gladstonebrewing.ca](http://www.gladstonebrewing.ca)

In-house brewed craft beer, beer hall style long tables, large patio, and thin crust pizzas.

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# INTRODUCTION TO THE COMOX VALLEY THINGS TO DO



## COMOX VALLEY FARMERS' MARKET

[www.comoxvalleyfarmersmarket.com](http://www.comoxvalleyfarmersmarket.com)

Buy from local farmers and food producers all year long. Every Saturday with extra markets in the summer.



## MOUNT WASHINGTON

[www.mountwashington.ca](http://www.mountwashington.ca)

The Island's largest year round family resort for skiing, snowboarding, mountain biking, hiking, scenic chair rides.



## FILBERG HERITAGE LODGE AND PARK

[www.filberg.com](http://www.filberg.com)

Waterfront green space, gardens and heritage buildings, cultural events throughout the year.



## SID WILLIAMS THEATRE

[www.sidwilliamstheatre.com](http://www.sidwilliamstheatre.com)

Major performance theatre consistently offering live music, theatre, film and more.



## VANCOUVER ISLAND MUSIC FEST

[www.islandmusicfest.com](http://www.islandmusicfest.com)

3 days and 6 stages of music, July.



## NAUTICAL DAYS

[www.comoxnauticaldays.com](http://www.comoxnauticaldays.com)

3 days of free family fun with music, craft sales, fireworks, a parade, and more at the Comox Harbour, August.

If you like to plan ahead, or if you like being spontaneous, the [What's On Digest](http://comoxvalley.whatsondigest.com/) is a great source for events going on in the Valley.  
<http://comoxvalley.whatsondigest.com/>

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