

Get mortgage-ready (start 3 months before you apply)

Tick off each step in the 3 months before you apply. Lenders look at your credit file, income and bank statements, so this is the time to tidy them up.

3 months before

- ☐ Register to vote at my current address
- ☐ Get my free statutory credit report from Experian
- ☐ Get my free statutory credit report from Equifax
- ☐ Get my free statutory credit report from TransUnion
- ☐ (Optional) Check Crediva too
- ☐ Ask the agencies to fix any mistakes or old addresses
- ☐ Set up Direct Debits so no payment is missed
- ☐ Stop applying for new credit
- ☐ Start paying down card balances
- ☐ Read my bank statements as a lender would

Photo ID and address

- ☐ Passport or driving licence (in date)
- ☐ Proof of address dated in the last 3 months
- ☐ My address history for the last 3 years, with dates

Income (employed)

- ☐ Last 3 months' payslips
- ☐ Latest P60
- ☐ Proof of bonus, overtime or commission (if counted)
- ☐ Proof of benefits (if part of my income)

Income (self-employed)

- ☐ SA302s for the last 2 years (or 3 if asked)
- ☐ Tax year overviews for the same years
- ☐ Accountant's accounts (2 to 3 years)
- ☐ Business bank statements

Every lender's list is slightly different, so ask yours what they need. Full guide: moneysavvyuk.com/first-time-buyer-mortgage-checklist/

Apply and complete

Gather these before your full application, then follow the steps from offer accepted to collecting your keys.

Bank statements and deposit

- ☐ Last 3 months' current account statements (up to 6 if asked)
- ☐ Statements for any other account that receives income
- ☐ Savings statements showing my deposit
- ☐ Lifetime ISA statements (home £450,000 or less, first payment 12+ months ago)
- ☐ Gifted deposit letter signed by the giver
- ☐ Giver's ID and proof of funds ready for the conveyancer
- ☐ Notes explaining any large payments in

Debts and outgoings

- ☐ Credit card balances and limits
- ☐ Loans, car finance and buy now pay later
- ☐ Student loan repayments
- ☐ Childcare and maintenance costs
- ☐ Monthly budget: council tax, insurance, travel, food

Mortgage in principle

- ☐ Ask: soft or hard credit check?
- ☐ Get my mortgage in principle (valid about 30 to 90 days)
- ☐ Decide: go direct or use a broker
- ☐ Broker: how are you paid? Whole of market or restricted?
- ☐ Broker: checked on the FCA register

Offer to completion

- ☐ Offer accepted
- ☐ Solicitor or conveyancer instructed
- ☐ Full mortgage application sent with documents
- ☐ Valuation done / survey booked
- ☐ Searches and legal work done
- ☐ Mortgage offer received (valid about 6 months)
- ☐ Buildings insurance ready for exchange
- ☐ Exchange of contracts and deposit paid
- ☐ Completion: keys collected
- ☐ Stamp duty paid within 14 days (0% to £300,000 for first-time buyers; no relief over £500,000)

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Timeline: England, Wales and Northern Ireland. SDLT: England and NI only.