



ELEVATING THE REAL ESTATE EXPERIENCE,
One Relationship At a Time

Buyer Guide

SIMIENPROPERTIES.COM

A MESSAGE FROM

Our Owner

welcome

"People first, transactions second."

This mantra is the driving force behind everything we do at Simien Properties. It inspires us to transform the deeply personal, thrilling, and significant journey of purchasing a home into the unforgettable experience you've always envisioned.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to guide you through the buying process. We look forward to cultivating a relationship to last a lifetime.

Jimmy Simien

Broker/Owner
Simien Properties
jimmy@simienrproperties.com



WHAT MAKES US *Stand Out*

Welcome to Simien Properties, a charming boutique firm nestled near Clear Lake, where each client is enveloped in personalized care.

Guided by the skilled hands of Jimmy Simien, our seasoned team dedicates itself to grasping the essence of every property and neighborhood, crafting a truly bespoke buying experience. We place your aspirations at the forefront, offering trusted counsel that makes you feel like our most cherished priority, empowering you to make decisions with unwavering confidence.



SCAN HERE

TABLE OF Contents

- 1 The Process At a Glance
- 2 Step 1: Get Pre-Approved
- 3 Step 2: Finding Your Home
- 4 Step 2 Continued
- 5 Step 3: Making an Offer
- 6 Step 4: Home Inspection
- 7 Step 5: Choose Home Insurance
- 8 Step 6: Appraisal
- 9 Step 7: Confirm Completed Repairs
- 10 Step 8: Loan Approval
- 11 Step 9: Closing Day!
- 12 What Happens After Closing?
- 13 We Love Our Clients

THE PROCESS *at a glance*

1

PRE-APPROVAL

2

THE SEARCH

3

MAKE
AN OFFER

4

HOME
INSPECTION

5

CHOOSE
HOME
INSURANCE

6

APPRAISAL

7

CONFIRM
COMPLETED
REPAIRS
(IF APPLICABLE)

8

LOAN
APPROVAL

9

CLOSING
DAY!

STEP ONE GET PRE-APPROVED *financing*

Unless you're planning to pay for your home with cash, the first step to homeownership is getting pre-approved for a loan.

WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

Getting pre-approved for a home loan is a crucial first step in the home-buying process. It gives you a clear understanding of your budget, so you can confidently look at homes within your price range. Pre-approval also strengthens your offer, showing sellers that you're a serious buyer who's financially prepared to close the deal. By streamlining the process and providing you with realistic options, pre-approval makes your home search more focused, efficient, and likely to succeed.

Our agents are connected to some of the best mortgage lenders in the business!



Laura Haines
832-205-6510



Amy Witherspoon
832-860-2323



STEP TWO FINDING YOUR HOME

the search

Here are some of the best resources to find your new home.

1



Houston
Association of
REALTORS®

MULTIPLE LISTING SERVICE (MLS)

Each regional MLS has its listings, and agents pay fees to view and list properties on each MLS. Home sellers cannot directly list their homes on the MLS as access is restricted to licensed agents and brokers who are members. Your agent's MLS access enables you to view new listings as soon as they are available, making it the primary method to discover and secure a home.



You can show your interest in properties by 'hearting' them in your MLS portal, signaling to your agent that you are keen on those homes.

2



HIDDEN INVENTORY AND OFF MARKET PROPERTIES

In this market, your agent needs to excel at searching for hidden inventory and discovering off-market properties and homes that may not be readily accessible to buyers. It is crucial to collaborate with an agent who is dedicated to exploring every possible option to find your ideal home.





BUILDERS AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

TIP: When planning a visit to a builder, it is advisable not to go without your agent. If you enter without us, they may not permit us to act on your behalf.

Remember, representatives you encounter at a builder's office represent the builder's interests. Your agent is dedicated to looking out for your best interests and will support you throughout the process to ensure your well-being. Your agent can often identify opportunities to negotiate important incentives.



ZILLOW, REALTOR.COM, ETC.

TIP: Avoid submitting the inquiry form, or else you might receive numerous calls from other agents in the area.

If you are considering a property listed on a leading consumer search site, kindly provide your agent with the address, and they will gladly conduct the research for you.



FOR SALE BY OWNER PROPERTIES (FSBO)

TIP: If you come across a FSBO property that catches your eye, reach out to your agent. Your agent can communicate with the seller, schedule a viewing, and safeguard your interests if you choose to buy the property.

Kindly inform your agent if you wish to have FSBO properties included in your searches. In some cases, the buyer might be responsible for paying the commission.



Once you have identified your ideal home and are ready to make an offer, your agent will assist you in navigating the contract process. It is essential to ensure that your offer is competitive; otherwise, you risk not receiving a response from the seller or losing the property to another prospective buyer.

Presenting an offer does not guarantee that the seller will accept your terms or proposal. Work closely with your agent to create an enticing offer that enhances your likelihood of being selected.

YOU CAN NEGOTIATE MANY TERMS WITHIN AN OFFER, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO...

- Sale Price
- Financing Terms
- Option Money Amount
- Earnest Money Amount
- Title Policy
- Repairs
- Any Exclusions
- Home Warranty
- Exclusions
- Closing Date
- Possession Terms
- Closing Costs

STEP FOUR

HOME INSPECTION

Should I have One?

A home inspection is a detailed evaluation of a property's condition conducted by a professional inspector, aimed at identifying potential issues before a sale. Key components include:

Structural Components: Assessment of the foundation, walls, roof, and integrity.

Exterior Inspection: Evaluation of siding, windows, doors, and yard features.

Roofing: Inspection of shingles, flashing, and gutters for leaks or damage.

Plumbing: Review of pipes, fixtures, and any water damage.

Electrical Systems: Assessment of wiring and safety standards.

HVAC: Examination of heating and cooling systems for functionality.

Interior Inspection: Check of walls, ceilings, floors, and appliances.

Insulation and Ventilation: Ensuring energy efficiency and moisture prevention.

Crawl Spaces: Inspection for water intrusion or structural issues.

After the inspection, the inspector provides a detailed report outlining their findings, including any defects or areas of concern. This report helps buyers make informed decisions about the property's condition and negotiate repairs or price adjustments with the seller if necessary.



STEP FIVE

HOME

INSURANCE

Policy

Choosing home insurance during the option period is essential for a smooth and financially clear closing process. Here's how it works:

Research Providers: Compare quotes from reputable insurance providers to find the best coverage at a competitive price.

Understand Coverage Needs: Ensure the policy covers potential risks specific to the home's location, such as fire, flood, or hurricane protection.

Review Policy Terms: Look at deductible amounts, liability coverage, and replacement costs to choose a policy that fits your needs and budget.

Securing insurance during the option period is important because lenders require proof of coverage before closing, and the monthly insurance cost directly affects your monthly mortgage payment. Choosing the right policy early helps avoid unexpected costs and ensures you're protected from day one.





STEP SIX

APPRAISAL

What is it?

The appraisal guarantees that you won't pay more than the fair market value for the home you're buying, providing protection for both the buyer and the lender.

What is an appraisal?

A home appraisal is an unbiased professional assessment of a property's market value. This process is conducted by a licensed or certified appraiser and is typically required by lenders during the mortgage approval process to ensure that the loan amount is appropriate for the property's value.

Your lender will arrange the appraisal for you. The appraisal results belong to you. It's important to note that the seller does not receive a copy of the appraisal; they only need to be informed if the property appraises at the agreed contract price.



STEP SEVEN CONFIRM

Home Repairs

During the home buying process, there's an important step dedicated to ensuring that any agreed-upon repairs by the seller have been properly completed. Buyers typically request receipts or documentation from the seller to verify that the repairs were carried out by qualified, licensed professionals.

This confirmation helps assure buyers that the work meets professional standards and reduces the risk of future issues that could result from unlicensed or improper repairs. Having a documented repair history provides peace of mind and adds transparency to the transaction, protecting both parties.

A couple is shown from the chest up, smiling and looking at a laptop. The man is on the left, wearing glasses and a dark shirt. The woman is on the right, wearing a light blue sweater. They are both looking at the laptop screen. There are gold confetti streamers falling around them. The background is a bright, out-of-focus indoor setting.

8 STEP EIGHT LOAN

Approval

In the home buying journey, receiving loan approval or a "clear to close" is a significant milestone. This step signifies that the lender has thoroughly reviewed and approved all financial documentation, and you're fully qualified for the mortgage. Reaching "clear to close" means the lender has finalized underwriting, and all conditions have been met, paving the way for the closing process.

For buyers, this moment brings relief and excitement—it confirms that the financing is officially secured, and you're one step closer to homeownership. At this point, you can focus on scheduling the final walk through, a time to sign paperwork on closing day, and prepare for the transition into your new home.



THREE THINGS YOU'LL NEED TO DO BEFORE CLOSING

Before long, you'll successfully navigate the challenges of inspection and appraisal, leading to the moment of signing the papers and rejoicing in becoming a new homeowner!

- ☐ Approximately three days prior to closing you will be **provided with closing documents (CD)** to review and the final dollar amount you need for closing.

You should wire the closing funds directly to the title company. Unfortunately, there has been an increase in online banking fraud over time. We strongly recommend contacting your escrow officer before transferring funds to confirm the transfer details.

- ☐ A **final walk-through** of the home will typically take place within 24 hours of final closing. Your agent will take care of scheduling this with the necessary parties. The closing will typically take place at a title company. Your agent will attend both the walk-through and closing with you.

- ☐ **At closing**, it's essential for all signers to be present and prepared to sign multiple times. All parties need to bring a copy of their driver's license. By the end of the closing, you will walk away with a bundle of documents (remember to keep them safe) and the keys to your new home.

*Simien Properties will also electronically store all documents.



what happens **AFTER CLOSING?**

Here are five essential steps to take after closing on your new home:

Secure Important Documents: Store your closing documents, such as the deed, mortgage papers, and title insurance, in a safe place. You may also want digital copies for easy access.

Change the Locks and Update Security: For peace of mind, replace the locks and update any security codes or smart home devices. You'll feel more secure knowing you have full control over access to your home.

File for a Homestead Exemption: In many states, including Texas, filing for a homestead exemption can help reduce your property taxes. Be sure to file promptly, as some areas have deadlines to qualify for the exemption in the current tax year.

Set Up Utilities and Services: Confirm that all essential utilities (electricity, gas, water, internet) are in your name and set up for the start of your occupancy. Don't forget services like waste removal and, if needed, a home warranty plan.

Get to Know Your Home: Locate the main water shut-off valve, circuit breaker box, and any essential home systems. It's a good time to check smoke detectors and plan for routine maintenance to keep your home in great shape.

WE LOVE OUR *Clients*



"ALL of the realtors I have encountered at Simien are such a delight. They are sunny, happy and truly want to help you. In particular, working with Amie Burns has been such a positive experience. I will recommend Jimmy Simien Realtors anytime."

"Joe did an outstanding job looking after us throughout our buying process. Negotiated well for us and was always attentive to our questions. Worked hard in getting us into our new home. Highly recommend Joe and the rest of The Simien Team."



Jimmy and his team went above and beyond from start to finish in the selling of our old home and the buying process of a new home. Jimmy's vast knowledge and negotiating skills helped tremendously in navigating today's challenging market. Jimmy stayed encouraging and patient and found a home I'm thrilled to raise my growing family in. Look no further and go to Jimmy the next time you're in the market to buy or sell."



Houston
Association of
REALTORS®



More Reviews!



Top 25 Team in Houston
2018 - 2024
Houston Business Journal