FIRST-TIME BUYER'S TOOLKIT

Your Complete Guide to Buying Your First Home in South Africa

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PAGE 1: COVER

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Inside this toolkit:

- ✅ Bond Pre-Approval Checklist
- ✅ Property Viewing Scorecard (25-point checklist)
- ✅ Monthly Budget Planner
- ✅ FLISP Eligibility Quick-Check
- ✅ Transfer Duty Table 2026
- ✅ Offer to Purchase — Key Clauses Explained
- ✅ Contact Sheet: Who to Call and When
- ✅ Timeline: From Offer to Keys

PAGE 2: INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Your Home Buying Journey

Buying your first home is one of the most exciting — and overwhelming — experiences of your life. This toolkit is designed to help you navigate every step of the process with confidence.

What's inside:

Section	What You'll Find
Bond Pre-Approval Checklist	Everything you need to get pre-approved before you start viewing
Property Viewing Scorecard	25 things to check during a viewing to avoid costly surprises
Monthly Budget Planner	Calculate exactly what you can afford
FLISP Eligibility Quick-Check	Find out if you qualify for up to R169,264 in government subsidy
Transfer Duty Table 2026	Know exactly what you'll pay to SARS
Offer to Purchase — Key Clauses	Understand what you're signing before you commit
Contact Sheet	Who to call and when
Timeline	From offer to keys — what to expect

Let's get started.

PAGE 3: BOND PRE-APPROVAL CHECKLIST

Bond Pre-Approval Checklist

Get Pre-Approved Before You View a Single Property

Getting pre-approved is the single most important step in the home-buying process. It tells you exactly what you can afford and makes your offers more credible to sellers.

Documents You'll Need

Document	Details
✅ South African ID	Certified copy
✅ Latest payslips	3–6 months consecutive
✅ Bank statements	3 months
✅ Employment history	Employer details, job title, length of employment
✅ Debt information	Credit cards, personal loans, vehicle finance
✅ Offer to Purchase	Once you've found a property

Step-by-Step Process

Step	Action
1	Check your credit score (minimum 610 required)
2	Calculate your debt-to-income ratio (should be under 30%)
3	Gather all required documents
4	Approach a bank OR use a bond originator (ooba, BetterBond)
5	Submit your application
6	Receive your pre-approval letter

What Pre-Approval Tells You

Element	What It Means
Loan Amount	The maximum the bank will lend you
Interest Rate	The rate you'll be offered (based on your credit score)
Monthly Repayment	What you'll pay every month
Deposit Required	How much you'll need upfront (if any)

PAGE 4: PROPERTY VIEWING SCORECARD

Property Viewing Scorecard

25 Things to Check Before You Make an Offer

Exterior

#	Item	Good	Fair	Poor	Notes
1	Roof condition (no missing tiles, no sagging)	☐	☐	☐	
2	Gutters and downpipes	☐	☐	☐	
3	Walls (no cracks or damp)	☐	☐	☐	
4	Windows (frames, seals, glass)	☐	☐	☐	
5	Doors (front, back, garage)	☐	☐	☐	
6	Garden (size, condition, maintenance)	☐	☐	☐	
7	Driveway and paving	☐	☐	☐	
8	Boundary walls and fencing	☐	☐	☐	

Interior

#	Item	Good	Fair	Poor	Notes
9	Flooring (tiles, carpets, wood)	☐	☐	☐	
10	Ceilings (no cracks or stains)	☐	☐	☐	
11	Walls (no cracks or damp)	☐	☐	☐	
12	Built-in cupboards	☐	☐	☐	
13	Kitchen (countertops, cabinets, space)	☐	☐	☐	

#	Item	Good	Fair	Poor	Notes
14	Bathrooms (tiles, fittings, leaks)	☐	☐	☐	
15	Geyser (age and condition)	☐	☐	☐	
16	Natural light	☐	☐	☐	
17	Layout and flow	☐	☐	☐	

Electrical & Plumbing

#	Item	Good	Fair	Poor	Notes
18	Electrical wiring	☐	☐	☐	
19	Light fittings and switches	☐	☐	☐	
20	Plumbing (taps, pipes, water pressure)	☐	☐	☐	
21	Water drainage	☐	☐	☐	

Security & Practical

#	Item	Good	Fair	Poor	Notes
22	Security gates and burglar bars	☐	☐	☐	
23	Alarm system	☐	☐	☐	
24	Parking (garage, carport, off-street)	☐	☐	☐	
25	Fibre/Internet availability	☐	☐	☐	

Overall Score

Total Score	Verdict
20–25 ✅	Good — consider making an offer
15–19 ⚠	Fair — budget for repairs
Below 15 ❌	Poor — proceed with caution

PAGE 5: MONTHLY BUDGET PLANNER

Monthly Budget Planner

Calculate Exactly What You Can Afford

Step 1: Calculate Your Gross Monthly Income

Income Source	Amount (R)
Salary (you)	
Salary (partner)	
Bonus/Commission (average)	
Other income	

Income Source	Amount (R)
Total Gross Monthly Income	**R**

Step 2: Calculate Your Monthly Expenses

Expense	Amount (R)
Bond repayment (estimate)	
Municipal rates & taxes	
Home insurance	
Levies (if sectional title/estate)	
Electricity	
Water	
Gas (if applicable)	
Refuse removal	
Housing Total	**R**

Other Expenses	Amount (R)
Food and groceries	
Transport (petrol, car repayment, insurance)	
School fees	

Expense	Amount (R)
Medical aid	
Life insurance	
Credit card repayments	
Personal loan repayments	
Entertainment and dining out	
Clothing	
Cell phone and internet	
Savings	
Other Total	**R**

Step 3: Calculate Your Affordability

Calculation	Amount (R)
Total Gross Monthly Income	
Minus Total Monthly Expenses	
Equals Disposable Income	
Minus 10% Emergency Buffer	
Equals Maximum Affordable Bond	

PAGE 6: FLISP ELIGIBILITY QUICK-CHECK

FLISP Eligibility Quick-Check

Could You Qualify for Up to R169,264 in Government Subsidy?

FLISP (First Home Finance) is a government subsidy for first-time buyers earning between R3,501 and R22,000 per month.

Quick Eligibility Checklist

Criteria	Yes / No
Gross household income is between R3,501 – R22,000/month	☐
I am a South African citizen or permanent resident	☐
I am 18 years or older	☐
I have never owned property before	☐
I have never received a government housing subsidy before (like an RDP house)	☐
I am married, living with a partner, or single with dependents	☐
I have approved finance (home loan, pension-backed loan, etc.)	☐

Estimated Subsidy Amount

Monthly Household Income	Estimated Subsidy
R3,501 – R7,000	**R121,000 – R169,000**
R7,001 – R10,000	**R88,000 – R101,000**
R10,001 – R14,000	**R66,000 – R87,000**
R14,001 – R18,000	**R43,000 – R65,000**
R18,001 – R22,000	**R27,000 – R46,000**

How to Apply

Step	Action
1	Get pre-approved for a home loan
2	Find a qualifying property
3	Sign an Offer to Purchase
4	Apply through the NHFC (www.nhfc.co.za)
5	Submit required documents
6	Wait for approval (approx. 7 working days)

PAGE 7: TRANSFER DUTY TABLE 2026

Transfer Duty Table 2026

What You'll Pay to SARS

Property Value	Rate	What You Pay
Up to R1,100,000	**0%**	**R0**
R1,100,001 – R1,512,500	3% on excess	**Up to R12,375**
R1,512,501 – R2,117,500	6% on excess	**Up to R48,675**
R2,117,501 – R2,722,500	8% on excess	**Up to R97,075**
R2,722,501 – R3,327,500	11% on excess	**Up to R163,375**
R3,327,501 – R3,932,500	13% on excess	**Up to R234,775**
R3,932,501+	15% on excess	**Calculated on excess**

Transfer Duty Examples

Purchase Price	Transfer Duty Due
R800,000	**R0** (under R1.1M)
R1,200,000	**R3,000** (3% on R100,000)
R1,500,000	**R12,000** (3% on R400,000)
R1,800,000	**R21,000** (R13,500 + 6% on R125,000)

Purchase Price	Transfer Duty Due
R2,200,000	**R51,000** (R13,500 + 6% on R300,000 + 8% on R50,000)

PAGE 8: OFFER TO PURCHASE — KEY CLAUSES

Offer to Purchase — Key Clauses Explained

Understand What You're Signing Before You Commit

Critical Clauses

Clause	What It Means
Suspensive Conditions	Conditions that must be met for the contract to become binding (e.g., bond approval). If they're not met, you get your deposit back.
Purchase Price & Deposit	The total price you're paying and the deposit you'll pay upfront (typically 10%).
Occupation Date	When you can take possession of the property (not always the same as transfer d
Fixtures & Fittings	What stays and what goes (e.g., curtains, light fittings, built-in appliances).
Compliance Certificates	The seller must provide certificates for electrical, gas, and other installations.

Clause	What It Means
Voetstoots Clause	The property is sold "as is." Sellers must disclose known defects, but hidden defe may be your responsibility after transfer.
Costs & Fees	Who pays what (e.g., transfer duty, bond registration, conveyancing fees).

Before You Sign

Item	Check
Read the entire document carefully	☐
Understand every clause	☐
Ensure suspensive conditions are included	☐
Get legal advice if unsure	☐
Keep a signed copy for your records	☐

PAGE 9: CONTACT SHEET

Contact Sheet

Who to Call and When

Who	Why You Need Them	When to Contact
Bond Originator (ooba, BetterBond)	Submits your application to multiple banks to secure the best rate	Before you start viewing
Bank (your bank)	Direct application or for your pre-approval	Before you start viewing
Estate Agent	Finds properties, arranges viewings, negotiates on your behalf	Throughout the process
Conveyancer/Transfer Attorney	Handles the legal transfer of property from seller to you	After the OTP is si
Bond Registration Attorney	Registers the mortgage bond over the property	After the OTP is si
Home Inspector	Conducts a professional inspection before you buy	Before signing the OTP
Insurance Broker	Arranges home insurance (required by the bank)	Before bond registration
Moving Company	Transports your belongings to your new home	2–4 weeks before occupation

Quick Reference

Service	Recommended Contacts
Bond Originator	ooba, BetterBond, SA Home Loans
Banks	Standard Bank, FNB, Nedbank, Absa
Conveyancers	Your estate agent can recommend a reputable firm

PAGE 10: TIMELINE

Your Home Buying Timeline

From Offer to Keys

Week	Milestone	What Happens
Before You Start	**Get Pre-Approved**	Contact a bond originator or bank. Get your pre-approval let
Week 1	**Start Viewing**	Attend property viewings. Use the Viewing Scorecard to eval each property.
Week 2	**Find The One**	You've found your home. Time to make an offer.
Week 2–3	**Sign the OTP**	Your offer is accepted. You sign the Offer to Purchase with suspensive conditions.
Week 3	**Bond Application**	Your bond originator submits your application to multiple ba
Week 3–4	**Bond Approval**	Your bond is approved. All suspensive conditions are met. Th sale becomes unconditional.
Week 4–5	**Sign Legal Documents**	You sign bond and transfer documents at the respective attorneys.
Week 5–6	**Lodge at Deeds Office**	All documents are lodged at the Deeds Office simultaneousl

Week	Milestone	What Happens
Week 6–8	**Deeds Office Examination**	The Deeds Office examines the documents (10–14 working d
Week 8–10	**Registration**	Transfer and bond are simultaneously registered. You are no the legal owner.
Week 8–10	**Keys Handed Over**	You receive the keys to your new home!

Total Timeline: 6–10 Weeks

PAGE 11: QUICK REFERENCE

Quick Reference

Key Numbers & Deadlines

Item	Amount/Value
Minimum credit score	**610**
Debt-to-income ratio maximum	**30%**
Transfer duty exemption	**Up to R1.1M**
FLISP subsidy maximum	**R169,264**

Item	Amount/Value
Bond approval timeline	**5–10 working days**
Deeds Office examination	**10–14 working days**
Total transfer timeline	**6–10 weeks**
Occupational rent (if moving in before transfer)	Negotiated with seller

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Your Action Plan

Priority	Action	Completed?
● High	Check your credit score	☐
● High	Get pre-approved	☐
▯ Medium	Start viewing properties	☐
▯ Medium	Download and use the Viewing Scorecard	☐
▯ Low	Check FLISP eligibility	☐
▯ Low	Book a home inspection	☐

Notes

Use this space to jot down questions, contacts, or property details.

Thank You!

You're now equipped to buy your first home with confidence.

This toolkit is provided by Property Ownership — South Africa's independent property intelligence hub.

Visit us at propertyownership.co.za for more guides, market data, and property insights.