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[alicia fahey](#)

As Realtors, we are the first stop for homebuyers and sellers because of the services we provide. We do more than sell houses, we are part of the community and are knowledgeable about our neighborhoods and the needs of consumers. Art is involved in our community, he has recently been elected Board Member of the Chatsworth Neighborhood Council and is also serving on the board of directors of the Chatsworth Business Improvement District



On the Look Out

When purchasing a newly constructed home, there are several stages of inspection leading up to the final walk through. However, the final inspection, usually held right before your closing date, is your last chance to examine every part of the home and identify potential problems, from misaligned cabinet doors to unsightly seams in the carpet. Take your time during this inspection. What you discover and bring to the builder's attention can have many implications, including repairs to be made and even what may or may not be covered by a home warranty down the road. Don't be afraid to ask questions and take notes. Here are some additional guidelines to help you during this final once-over.



- Bring all the paperwork you have related to the sale, including layouts, contracts, notes from previous inspections and correspondence with the builder.
- Create a checklist of things to review during the inspection. Your Realtor® may have a version for your use, or you can seek to locate one online.
- Put together a kit of tools you might need the day of the inspection: flashlight, tape measure, level, camera and film, and a small nightlight to check outlets.
- Consider this tour a test-drive of the home. Do all the things you will do once you are living there. For instance, ring the doorbell, open the garage door, open and close windows, doors, drawers and cabinets, flush the toilets, run the faucets, cycle the appliances

Mortgage Pointers

When you are shopping for a mortgage to finance the purchase of your next home, you are likely to come across the term "points." When applied to mortgages the word can have two different meanings.

- Origination points are fees charged to the borrower to cover some costs of the loan process. Depending on the lender, these fees may be negotiable.
- Discount points are interest paid up front and allow the buyer to lower or "buy down" the interest rate by paying a one-time fee. Many times, these points are also tax deductible. In both cases, the cost of the fee is typically one percent of the loan amount. So on a \$200,000 loan, a point would cost \$2,000.

When you are shopping for a loan, it is important to discuss points with your loan officer. Ask if the institution charges origination points and determine if there is any flexibility in these charges.



Next, discuss discount points. If it is in your budget, using points to lower an interest rate can be an effective long-term strategy. Although discount points are an added expense to be paid when you close the loan, they can help reduce monthly payments and allow a homeowner to save thousands of dollars during the life of the loan. Most Realtors® and mortgage professionals would recommend opting for discount points only if you plan to stay in the home long enough to recoup the up-front costs and reap the continuing benefits of a reduced interest rate.



PROPERTY TAX BILL - If you're a homeowner & have not received your tax bill by November 5th, call the County Tax Collector to request a substitute bill. This year's payments should be postmarked by Dec. 10th & April 12th. L.A. (213) 974-3211, Ventura (805) 654-3744.

and turn on the ceiling fan. In each case, look for potential problems.

• In addition to the living space, inspect often-overlooked areas, such as the attic, basement and exterior of the home, as well.

As things come to your attention, point them out to the building representative. He or she will keep a record and be able to explain the timetable for repairs and if any problems, although unlikely, are not covered by the contract or warranty.

Seeing Red?



Spill red wine on your favorite outfit? You may have the remedy in you! If it is a washable fabric, quickly absorb as much of the stain as possible with a clean, dry cloth. Next, immediately blot the stained area with carbonated soda water. Repeat until the stain has disappeared.

CENTURY 21 All Properties, Inc.
21037 Devonshire St. • Chatsworth, CA 91311 • (818) 341-9545
alicia@century21.com • artandalicia.com

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