

HOME

Buyer's

GUIDE



LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE

775.210.7788

BUYER'S GUIDE

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MEET THE TEAM LEADER



REALTOR® Samantha Mendoza is not just passionate about real estate; she's dedicated to helping her clients achieve their personal and financial goals. With a remarkable track record as a top-performing single agent, Samantha made a splash in the industry by earning the title of Rookie of The Year in 2022, after just 7 months in the field, and quickly ascended to the top 1% in her brokerage. Her success is built on a foundation of character and rigorous training, complemented by her deep roots and extensive knowledge of Northern Nevada, where she was born and raised.

Bringing 26 years of sales experience from running her own business, Samantha offers a unique blend of expertise and personal touch to every transaction. Her role as a TV host with American Dream TV further enhances the buying experience, providing clients with an unparalleled opportunity to showcase their homes to the entire nation and larger networks.

Outside of her professional life, Samantha is deeply involved in her community and personal interests. She actively participates in her kids' activities, leads a billiards pool team, and cherishes time spent traveling and time with her family. Samantha and her rapidly growing team, including bilingual members, are equipped to handle all types of property sales. With a wealth of experience in fix & flip properties, Samantha's network also includes investors ready to streamline the selling process for her clients. Whether you're buying or selling, Samantha Mendoza and her team offer comprehensive, personalized service to meet your real estate needs.

*Samantha
Mendoza*

REALTOR® S.0197125

Let's Connect



*Samantha Mendoza
& Home Girls*

REALTORS® & TV HOSTS
Team Number: 775.210.7788
TEAM LEAD S.0197125

homegirls1operations@gmail.com
www.samanthamendozaandhomegirls.com

Contact Us & See How We Can Help You Today!



RE/MAX
Professionals

7900 Rancharrah Parkway, Suite 210, Reno, NV 89511



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MEET THE TEAM



Andrea Villarreal

REALTOR® S.0203917

- Northern Nevada Native
- Bilingual
- Mom
- Dog Mom
- Car Enthusiasts
- Content Creator



Mia Garcia

REALTOR® S.0202524

- Bachelor Degree in Social Work
- Associates Degree in Psychology
- UNR Alumni
- Billiards Pool Player
- Awesome Auntie
- Northern Nevada Native



Brianna Metzler

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

- 14 Years of Real Estate Experience
- BS in Management & Marketing
- Beer Connoisseur
- Dog Mom
- Oregon Native



And There Is More

Partners in the Business

- We believe in partnering with high-level industry professionals who support our team and continue to serve our clients well beyond the close of escrow
- We are proud to be part of the #1 brokerage in Northern Nevada, a brokerage that is deeply committed to giving back to our community
- We work closely with trusted investors (fix-and-flip), contractors, and industry experts – just ask, and we're happy to connect you

LET'S FIND YOUR DREAM HOME!

We're here to guide you through the process, every step of the way.

*Please don't hesitate to reach out with any
& all questions or concerns!*



**WHAT YOU
CAN EXPECT
FROM US**

Honesty & Integrity
Loyalty & Respect
Responsive & Transparent
Expert Guidance
Timely & Straight Forward

THE HOME BUYING PROCESS



- MEET WITH YOUR AGENT
- GET PRE-APPROVED
- FIND YOUR HOME
- MAKE AN OFFER
- ORDER INSPECTION & APPRAISAL
- PREPARE FOR CLOSING
- GET YOUR KEYS!

PREPARING TO BUY

- » *Determine* **HOW MUCH YOU CAN SPEND**
- » *Save* **FOR A DOWN PAYMENT**
- » *Check* **YOUR CREDIT**
- » *Get Pre-Approved* **FOR A HOME LOAN**



BUT FIRST, GET PRE-APPROVED!

House Shopping is an Exciting Time!

**GET PRE-APPROVED FOR A LOAN FIRST SO YOU
CAN BE READY TO MAKE AN OFFER WHEN YOU
FIND A HOME THAT YOU LOVE.**



PRE-QUALIFIED VS PRE-APPROVED

What's the Difference

BETWEEN BEING PRE-QUALIFIED AND PRE-APPROVED?

PRE-QUALIFIED

In order to be pre-qualified, a lender may or may not check your credit score and won't require documentation, only going off what you tell them. This will give you an idea of what you could qualify for, but when you're serious about buying, you'll need to get pre-approved.

PRE-APPROVED

To be pre-approved, the lender will pull your credit and ask you for documentation to verify your finances. Before making an offer on a house, it is best to get pre-approved to show sellers your offer is serious and that a lender has already approved you for enough money to purchase the home.



WHICH LOAN IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

CONVENTIONAL LOAN

The most common type of home loan, which is offered through private lenders.

FHA LOAN

Loans designed for those with high debt-to-income ratios and low credit scores, and most commonly issued to first-time homebuyers. Offered by FHA-approved lenders only and backed by the Federal Housing Administration.

VA LOAN

Loans designated for veterans, spouses, and reservists, offered through private lenders and guaranteed by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

USDA LOAN

Loans for homebuyers in designated rural areas, backed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

TYPE OF LOAN	DOWN PAYMENT	TERMS	MORTGAGE INSURANCE	MINIMUM CREDIT SCORE
CONVENTIONAL	3.0% +	10 - 30 Years	On down payments under 20%	600
FHA	3.5% MIN	15 - 40 Years	For 11 years	540
VA	None	15 - 30 Years	None	540
USDA	None	30 Years	0.35 of the Loan Amount	620
NO LOAN CASH	None	0 Years	None	None

QUESTIONS TO ASK

When Choosing a Lender

INTERVIEWING LENDERS IS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN DETERMINING WHAT TYPE OF HOME LOAN IS BEST FOR YOU.

Not all lenders are the same, and the type of loans available, interest rates, and fees can vary. Here are some questions to consider when interviewing lenders:

- » Which types of home loans do you offer?
- » What will my interest and annual percentage rates be?
- » Do I qualify for any special programs or discounts?
- » What estimated closing costs can I expect to pay?
- » What is your average loan processing time?



HOME LOAN APPLICATION

Documents Checklist

TO DETERMINE LOAN ELIGIBILITY, LENDERS TYPICALLY REQUIRE THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF DOCUMENTS FROM EACH APPLICANT

INCOME

- Federal tax returns: last 2 years
- W-2's: last 2 years
- Pay stubs: for last 30 days
- Any additional income documentation: pension, retirement, child support, Social Security/disability income award letters, etc

ASSETS

- Bank statements: 2 most recent checking and savings account statements
- 401(k) or retirement account statement and summary
- Other assets: statements and summaries of IRAs, stocks, bonds, etc.

OTHER

- Documents relating to any of the following if applicable: divorce, bankruptcy, collections, judgements or pending lawsuits

Pro-Tip:

ASK YOUR LENDER IF THEY PUT YOU THROUGH UNDERWRITING IN ADVANCE TO SPEED UP THE PROCESS & GIVE YOU THE ADVANTAGE WHEN MAKING AN OFFER!

FINDING YOUR DREAM HOME

CREATE A LIST OF YOUR WANTS AND NEEDS IN YOUR NEW HOME. INCLUDE MUST-HAVES AS WELL AS WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE BUT AREN'T NECESSARILY DEAL BREAKERS.



HOUSE WANTS & NEEDS LIST

DETERMINE THE FEATURES YOU ARE LOOKING FOR IN YOUR IDEAL HOME AND PRIORITIZE WHICH ITEMS ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU.

No house is perfect, but this will help us find the best match for you.

TYPE OF HOME:

- Single Family Home Townhouse Condo Manufacture

CONDITION OF HOME:

- Move-In Ready Some Work Needed is OK Fixer Upper

DESIRED FEATURES:

____ Bedrooms ____ Bathrooms ____ Car Garage (Circle)
Small or Large Yard

Ideal Square Footage: _____

Desired Location/Neighborhood/School District: _____

MUST HAVE

WOULD LIKE TO HAVE

HOUSE HUNTING TIPS

When looking for a home...



INVESTIGATE THE AREA

Drive around neighborhoods that interest you to get a feel of the area, how the homes are cared for, what traffic is like, etc.



ASK AROUND

Talk to family, friends and co-workers to see if anyone might know of a house for sale in an area you're interested in. One of them may even know of someone that's thinking about selling but hasn't put the house on the market yet.



KEEP AN OPEN MIND

Finding your dream home isn't always an easy task! Have a priorities list but keep an open mind when viewing houses.



TAKE PICTURES & NOTES

When you visit multiple houses it gets difficult to remember specific details about each one. Take photos and notes while touring houses so that you can reference them later when comparing the properties that you've seen.



BE READY TO MAKE AN OFFER

When you find a home you want to buy, keep in mind there may be others interested in it as well. Be ready to make a solid offer quickly in order to have the best chance at getting that home.

MAKING AN OFFER

When We Have Found a Home

THAT YOU'RE INTERESTED IN BUYING, WE WILL QUICKLY AND STRATEGICALLY PLACE AN OFFER.

There are several factors to consider that can make your offer more enticing than other offers:

PUT IN A COMPETITIVE OFFER

We will decide on a reasonable offer price based on:

- > Current market conditions
- > Comparable properties recently sold in the area
- > The property value of the house
- > The current condition of the house

PAY IN CASH VS. LOAN

Paying in cash versus taking out a loan offers a faster closing timeline and less chances of issues arising, making it more appealing to sellers.

PUT DOWN A LARGER DEPOSIT

An offer that includes a larger earnest money deposit presents a more serious and competitive offer.

ADD A PERSONAL TOUCH*

Include a letter to the sellers with your offer, letting them know what you love about their home. Adding this personal touch can give you an advantage over other offers by making yours stand out from the rest.

OFFER A SHORTER CLOSING TIMELINE

An offer with a shorter timeframe for closing is generally more attractive to sellers over one with an extended time period with a house sale contingency. A typical closing timeframe is 30-45 days.

NEGOTIATIONS

Accept, Counter, or Decline

A seller can accept or decline your offer, or come back with a counter offer. If they send you a counter offer, be prepared to negotiate to come up with reasonable terms for both parties. This process can go back and forth until an agreement is made.



*To enhance your experience, our team includes a Transaction Coordinator to ensure your transaction progresses smoothly and efficiently. Keep an eye out for their emails, and should you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to reach out. We're here to assist you every step of the way!

UNDER CONTRACT & IN ESCROW

Once you and the Seller have agreed on terms, a sales agreement is signed and the house is officially under contract and in escrow. Here are the steps that follow:

PUT YOUR DEPOSIT INTO AN ESCROW ACCOUNT

Your earnest money deposit will be put into an escrow account that is managed by a neutral third party (typically a title company or bank) who holds the money for the duration of the escrow period. They will manage all the funds and documents required for closing, and your deposit will go towards your down payment which is paid at closing.

SCHEDULE A HOME INSPECTION

Home inspections are optional but highly recommended to make sure that the home is in the condition for which it appears. Inspections are typically completed within 10-14 days after signing the sales agreement.

RENEGOTIATE IF NECESSARY

The home inspection will tell you if there are any dangerous or costly defects in the home that need to be addressed. You can then choose to either back out of the deal completely, ask for the seller to make repairs, or negotiate a lower price and handle the repairs yourself.

COMPLETE YOUR MORTGAGE APPLICATION

Once you've come to an agreement on the final offer, it's time to finalize your loan application and lock in your interest rate if you haven't done so already. You may need to provide additional documentation to your lender upon request.

ORDER AN APPRAISAL

An appraisal will be required by your lender to confirm that the home is indeed worth the loan amount. The appraisal takes into account factors such as similar property values, the home's age, location, size and condition to determine the current value of the property.

WHAT NOT TO DO

During the Home Buying Process

IT'S EXTREMELY IMPORTANT NOT TO DO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING UNTIL AFTER THE HOME BUYING PROCESS IS COMPLETE:

- ⊗ BUY OR LEASE A CAR
- ⊗ CHANGE JOBS
- ⊗ MISS A BILL PAYMENT
- ⊗ OPEN A LINE OF CREDIT
- ⊗ MOVE MONEY AROUND
- ⊗ MAKE A MAJOR PURCHASE

➤ Any of these types of changes could jeopardize your loan approval. It's standard procedure for lenders to also do a final credit check before closing.



FINAL STEPS BEFORE CLOSING

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Most lenders require both homeowner's insurance and title insurance. See following pages for more detailed information on each of these. – Start This Process Early

CLOSING DISCLOSURE

At least 3 days before closing, lenders are required to provide you with a Closing Disclosure with your final loan terms and closing costs for you to review. Closing costs for the buyer typically range from 2-5% of the purchase price, which can include lender fees, lender's title insurance, and HOA dues if applicable.

FINAL WALK THROUGH

Within 48 hours of closing we will do a final walk through of the home before signing the final paperwork. This last step is to verify that no damage has been done to the property since the inspection, that any agreed upon repairs have been completed, and that nothing from the purchase agreement has been removed from the home.

Next Step - Closing!



HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE

WHY DO YOU NEED HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE?

Homeowners insurance protects your home and possessions against damage and theft and is required by lenders before finalizing your loan. Policies vary and are completely customizable, so it's recommended to get quotes from multiple companies to compare price, coverage and limits.

WHAT DOES THIS INSURANCE COVER?

Homeowners insurance typically covers destruction and damage to the interior and exterior of a home due to things like fire, hurricanes, lightning, or vandalism. It also covers loss or theft of possessions, and personal liability for harm to others.

WHAT DOESN'T IT COVER?

Most policies do not cover flood or earthquake damage, and you may need to purchase an additional policy for this type of coverage.

WHAT ARE POLICY RATES BASED ON?

Rates are mostly determined by the insurer's risk that you will file a claim. The risk is based on your personal history of claims, frequency and severity of claims, past history of claims on the home, as well as the neighborhood statistics and the home's condition.

HOW CAN YOU QUALIFY FOR DISCOUNTS?

Many insurance companies offer discounts to seniors, and also to customers who have multiple policies with them, like auto or health insurance. Having a security system, smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors can also lower annual premium rates. When getting quotes, be sure to ask each company about their discounts and cost savings options.

Pro

HOME WARRANTY IS NOT THE SAME AS

Tip:

HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE & YOU WANT BOTH!

TITLE INSURANCE

WHAT IS TITLE INSURANCE?

Title insurance protects the lender and/or homeowner from financial loss against claims regarding the legal ownership of a home.

HOW DOES TITLE INSURANCE COVERAGE WORK?

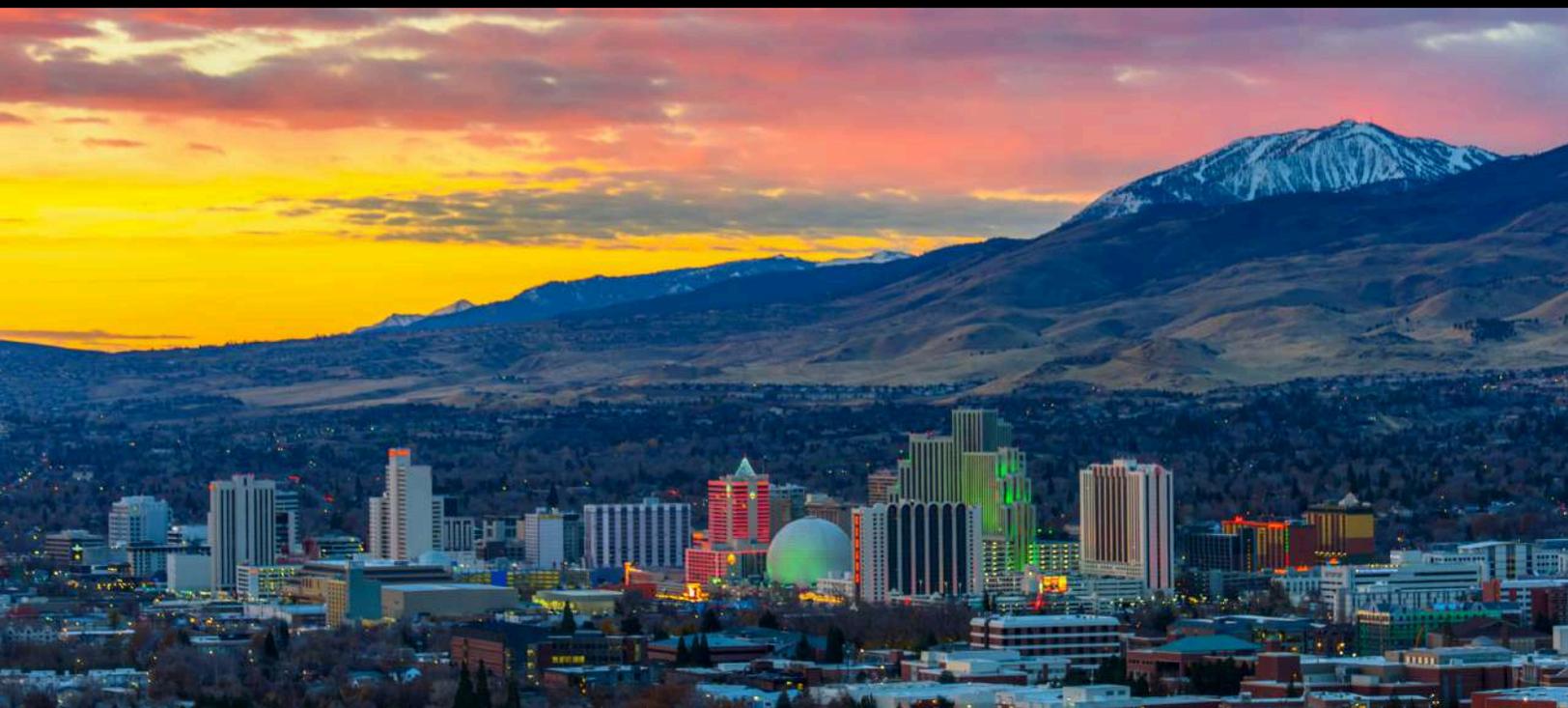
There are two types of title insurance: one for lenders and another for homeowners. Lender's title insurance is required by lenders but it does not cover you. A separate homeowners policy is needed to protect yourself from a claim on your home, and from being held financially responsible for possible unpaid property taxes from previous owners.

IS A TITLE SEARCH SUFFICIENT?

While most lenders require a title search, the title insurance ensures that if anything is missed during the search, those insured will be protected if any legal issues arise.

HOW MUCH DOES TITLE INSURANCE COST?

Title insurance is a one-time fee that is paid at closing, which costs between \$500-\$3,500 depending on the state, insurance provider and the purchase price of the home. Some companies will offer a discount if you bundle the lender's and owner's policies, but typically the buyer purchases the lender's policy and the seller pays for the owner's policy.



CLEARED TO CLOSE

Close

Closing is the FINAL step of the buying process. On the day of closing (or a day or so prior), both parties sign documents, funds are dispersed, and property ownership is formally transferred from the seller to the buyer.



CLOSING DAY

Congratulations, you made it to closing!

On the day of closing you'll be going over and signing the final paperwork, and submitting a cashier's check (or previously arranged wire transfer) to pay the remaining down payment and closing costs.

ITEMS TO BRING TO CLOSING:

- ✓ Government Issued Photo ID
- ✓ Homeowner's Insurance Certificate*
- ✓ Certified Funds or Cashier's Check
- ✓ Final Purchase Agreement*

**if your title company or lender require it*

Enjoy Your New Home!



SUCCESS STORIES

Samantha paid close attention to what we wanted. She is very professional but gets to know her clients. She treats them like family, she is very responsive and goes above and beyond. She worked with our schedule through the entire process and by our side the entire way. I couldn't imagine using anyone else. I will definitely recommend Samantha to anyone looking to buy or sell a house.

- *Sherri Angle* ★★★★★



Great experience
Samantha is a wonderful realtor who will do whatever she needs to for her clients! She'll do what is right and won't take advantage. She is super awesome!

- *Tera Miranda* ★★★★★

Best Agent in Reno!
If you are looking for someone who absolutely knows the market and caters to everything you are looking for in a house, then Samantha is the agent for you! She went above and beyond for us and well exceeded our expectations. We were very picky and specific in what we were looking for, but she was so determined to help us find the perfect house (which she did)!

- *Laura Botelle* ★★★★★



SUCCESS STORIES

We had the opportunity to work with Mia Garcia through our house hunting process all the way to closing. Mia is a blessing and truly amazing. Mia is there every step of the way and helps you understand everything in detail. Mia was able to answer every question and found an answer if she didn't know. I would recommend Mia and her team, the homegirls 100%. I am finally in a home I can call mine, thank you!

—*Viviana Llamas Garcia*



Andrea does such an amazing job, guiding us every step of the way and answering any questions we had. She is very professional, always polite and a personable person with a strong work ethic. If you are thinking about buying/selling I wouldn't think twice She's great I will always recommend her!

—*Briana Meza*



Brianna was generous with her time and helped me with a lot of essential preparatory details. She is organized and genuinely wanted to make sure that our goals matched our vision for our future home.

—*Jordan & Natalie*



Escrow Period & Appointments

Use This To Schedule Your Appointments During this Process!

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT

Each escrow is an average of 30-45 days. Each scenario is different.
It is VERY important to stay on track during your escrow period! Time is of the essence!

Buy with Confidence



*Samantha Mendoza
& Home Girls*

REALTORS® & TV HOSTS
Team Number: 775.210.7788
TEAM LEAD 5.0197125



RE/MAX
Professionals

7900 Rancharrah Parkway, Suite 210, Reno, NV 89511



Children's
Miracle Network
Hospitals



**The HOUSE
DETECTIVE**



Certified
Public Broker
Professional



nahrep
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF REALTORS



homegirlsoperations@gmail.com
www.samanthamendozaandhomegirls.com

Contact Us & See How We Can Help You Today!

