

Pre-Settlement Checklist for Buyers

To help prepare for settlement and ensure a smooth transaction, you can use our pre-settlement checklist for some important reminders:

- Bring a driver's license and one other form of identification.
- Bring the original Termite Inspection Report to settlement.
- Advise Halstead Title if either buyer or seller is out of the area and will require a power of attorney. All lenders must approve a buyer's Power of Attorney prior to settlement.
- If applicable, provide a Homeowner's Warranty application to Halstead Title for inclusion on the settlement statement. Notify Halstead Title if the buyer(s) is a first time homebuyer(s).
- If a Homeowner's Warranty is being purchased either for you by a builder or seller or if you are purchasing it directly you will want to make sure this is paid for at closing. An invoice should be supplied to the title company prior to closing.
- Notify Halstead Title of any fee changes or modifications to the purchase contract.
- Make Halstead Title aware if any of the buyers are newly married.
- Walk Through: Your attorney or realtor should make arrangements for a pre-settlement walk through. At this time the water and gas meters should be read so the proper adjustments can be made at closing by the title insurance company. Both gas and water are lienable in many municipalities.
- Funds: Any proceeds owed at closing should be brought in the form of a bank check or wire. Please be sure to check with the title company prior to closing to be sure you know the correct amount still owed. Often times buyers will be moving money from a investment accounts which may take a few days. Please consider this when approaching the settlement date.
- Homeowner's Insurance Policy: Obtain a homeowners insurance policy in favor of your Lender using their mortgagee clause. This is usually requested by your lenders underwriter well prior to settlement, but at times this can be an item which delays settlement if not properly accounted for. Bring a paid receipt if it is paid for already, otherwise the lender may insist that the title insurance company collect for the annual fee upfront on the HUD-1.
- When you are selling a home and then purchasing another home back to back, most lenders will require a copy of the deed and HUD-1 Settlement Statement from the initial sale, if need be please make sure you have copies brought to your purchase settlement.
- Contact the postal service to change your address. www.usps.com
- Arrange to have all utilities changed over to your name on the day of settlement. This includes, water, electric and gas.
- GFE: Although the 2010 Regulations require the HUD-1 to clearly decipher what was disclosed to you versus what you are actually being charged with at settlement, it is always a good idea to actually bring a copy of the GFE (Good Faith Estimate) that was mailed to you. This way you can confirm that you are being properly charged.
- Last but not least, be happy! The closing process is somewhat a formality but in many ways can be grueling if not properly prepared for. Either way, be happy, you are about to be a new home owner! Whether it is your first home, a new start, your dream home or your retirement home, it is the start of a new chapter in your life. Embrace it and it will embrace you!

Pre-Settlement Checklist For Sellers

To help prepare for settlement and ensure a smooth transaction, you can use our pre-settlement checklist for some important reminders:

- Complete and return any questionnaires or requests for information from your lender, title company, and/or Realtor as close to time of receipt as possible. Usually this information is needed in order to prepare your settlement documents, so the requestor will need the information in a timely manner.
- Confirm with your Realtor that the title company has all contract addendums, especially pertaining to changes in sales price or any credits.
- Review your sales contract again to ensure that you have done everything required per the contract prior to closing.
- If Powers of Attorney are needed, make sure they have been requested, received, and executed prior to settlement. If they have been prepared by an outside party, please make sure they have been sent to the title company for review prior to settlement. Each jurisdiction has different statutory requirements for the form of the Power of Attorney, so it is important that the title company has a copy prior to settlement. Make sure you bring the original to settlement.
- Confirm with your Realtor who will be attending closing with you (i.e. real estate agent, loan officer, seller, etc.) as often not all participants in the process attend closing at the same time or at all.
- Confirm what documents, ID (government-issued photo ID such as driver's license), or other paperwork you need to bring with you (as requested by your lender, title company, the other party, etc.) and who needs to be present at settlement based on title and loan paperwork.
- Make Halstead Title aware of any loans or mortgages related to the property, including home equity loans.
- Make Halstead Title aware of the proper spelling of the seller's name.
- Make Halstead Title aware if any owner of the property is newly married, deceased, divorced or separated.
- If applicable, provide a Homeowner's Warranty application to Halstead Title for inclusion on the settlement statement.
- If you want to review documents in advance, make sure you let your lender and title company know at your earliest convenience. Loan documents are prepared by your lender, so you may need to request those directly. Most title companies will provide advance copies of any documents they have.
- If you would like to have your proceeds wired, make sure you bring accurate wiring instructions with you to settlement.
- Notify Halstead Title if any of the sellers are not citizens of the United States due to additional withholding requirements.
- Give yourself enough time after the final walk-through to resolve any issues. While it's nice to do the walk-through right before closing, it is also helpful to have time to address problems discovered at the walk-through. This will make the settlement less time consuming and proceed more smoothly. Keep in mind that holding funds in escrow is rarely an available option these days. Let the settlement agent know of any walk-through issues as soon as possible so they may help you and your agent craft an acceptable solution.
- Remember that settlement is an important financial and legal transaction. Early preparation will help you focus on signing documents at settlement to make sure that everything is accurate.