

Buying your first home



Your step-by-step guide to the home-buying process applicable in England & Wales only.

There's a lot to think about when buying a home, especially your first one. So whether you've just set up your savings account to get the ball rolling, or you've found a home you can't stop thinking about, here's a step-by-step guide to help you through the home-buying process.

If you want to find out more about the tools and services we offer or to view our mortgage range, visit skipton.co.uk/mortgages/first-time-buyers.

If you need to, you can also use our Mortgage Jargon Buster, which explains some of the terminology and abbreviations used during the home buying process. Visit skipton.co.uk/mortgages/mortgage-hub/jargon-buster

Start your home-buying journey today...

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Save

There are things you can do to boost your deposit and choosing a savings account that is right for you is a good place to start.

Lifetime ISA is a savings account designed to help people aged 18 to 39 save towards their first home or retirement. You can save up to £4,000 tax-free each year up to the age of 50. The government pays a 25% bonus on top of your contributions, up to a maximum of £1,000 a year. Any withdrawals within the first 12 months of your first payment into a Lifetime ISA will incur a 25% government withdrawal charge, which would mean you'd get back less than you paid in. After that, you can withdraw money to buy your first home, but for any other withdrawals before the age of 60, the government withdrawal charge will apply (unless you're diagnosed with a terminal illness). Tax rules may change in future.

How to open a Lifetime ISA with Skipton: visit your local branch or go to skipton.co.uk/lifetime-isa

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Calculate

There are a number of government-backed schemes available to help you on your journey to home-ownership. Take a look and see if there's a scheme that suits your needs.

skipton.co.uk/mortgages/government-schemes

The affordability check (check you can afford to repay a mortgage)

Before you get a mortgage, you need to check you can afford to pay it back. We can take you through an affordability check for a Skipton mortgage – this is based on your income and outgoings.

When and how to do it: before you start your property search, go to skipton.co.uk/mortgages/mortgage-hub/applying-for-a-mortgage/getting-a-decision-in-principle or call us on: **0345 607 9825**.

The Decision in Principle (DIP) (find out how much you could borrow)

A DIP will show how much you might be able to borrow on a mortgage, but it won't be a figure set in stone. As part of the DIP for a Skipton mortgage we'll check your credit rating (our check won't affect your credit score).

When and how to do it: when you've found a house and are ready to make an offer. Visit skipton.co.uk/dip or call us on **0345 607 9825**.

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Make an offer

You make an offer directly to the estate agent selling the house. They might want to see your DIP as proof you could get the finance in place.

When to do it: once you've got a DIP and found a house.

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Choose a conveyancer

A conveyancer (also known as a solicitor or licensed conveyancer) is a type of property lawyer who takes care of the legal aspects of buying your house. If you're using a Lifetime ISA towards your deposit, you'll also need them to help you withdraw the money from it.

The conveyancer will act for the buyer and the lender, so the conveyancer's firm needs to be on the lender's conveyancing panel.

We have a panel of conveyancing firms who are eligible to act on our behalf. If you know that your chosen firm is not on our panel, they can apply for membership on our conveyancing panel, however, this may cause delays.

When and how to do it: before you complete your mortgage application, find a conveyancer at the Council for Licensed Conveyancers at clc-uk.org. Or, ask your friends and family for reliable recommendations. You can call **0345 600 1469** to check if your conveyancer is on our Conveyancing panel.

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Find a mortgage

Not all mortgages are the same, so with Skipton you'll get your own personal mortgage adviser who will be with you from day one right up until completion. They'll take you through an appointment and recommend a mortgage from our range that suits your needs. This could be a fixed or variable rate and might include cashback. They'll also discuss buildings and life insurance with you. If you're happy with our recommendation and you'd like to proceed, we'll start to assess your mortgage application.

When and how to do it: after you've made an offer on a house, call us on **0345 607 9825** to arrange your advised appointment by **telephone** or **Skipton Link video**.

Your loan will be secured against your home

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Conveyancing process starts

At this point your conveyancer could start handling the legal elements of buying your house. We'll give our instructions to the conveyancer when we've completed all of our checks, we're satisfied with the valuation (see next step) and we subsequently make a mortgage offer.

When it happens: once your offer has been accepted.

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Lender valuation and independent surveys

If you choose a Skipton mortgage, we instruct our own mortgage valuation for mortgage purposes only. For properties up to the value of £1.5m there is no charge for this. You can also arrange for a more detailed survey of your own if you want to. A survey is an inspection of a property's condition which is carried out by a qualified RICS assessor. The type you choose depends on the home you're buying and how much detail you want. If faults are found, you might be able to negotiate a lower price or even ask for them to be put right before you buy the property.

A RICS Home Survey Level 2 (formally know as Home Buyer Report) gives you general information about the condition of the property inside and out, while a Full Building Survey will give you a complete review of the property's structure and pinpoint any defects. These are just a few of the types of surveys available.

When and how it happens: once your offer has been accepted, search the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors website to find a local surveyor. Alternatively, you can call Connells, a Skipton Group company, who can provide a RICS survey. Call **01525 218619** for more details.

Extra fee alert

Extra fee alert

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Exchange contracts

Once you've received your mortgage offer and the conveyancer has completed the legal work, they'll arrange the exchange of contracts and give your initial deposit to the seller's conveyancer. When you've signed and exchanged, you're committed to the purchase, so make sure you're happy with it before putting pen to paper.

Buildings insurance

From exchange of contracts, it's your responsibility to ensure that you have buildings insurance in place, which you may need to get straight away.

When it happens: this will happen once the initial conveyancing process is complete.



Extra fee alert

Did you know we also offer insurance?

You can't prevent the worst from happening, but you could get the protection you need to help prepare for if it does. We offer:

Life Insurance

We offer two levels of cover, Critical 3 with Life Insurance (which covers you against the 3 most common critical illnesses) and Life Insurance. Both underwritten and provided by AIG, a multi-award-winning life insurance provider.

Home Insurance

So that you can give your home the protection it deserves, we offer Skipton Home Insurance underwritten and provided by LV=. Our Gold Policy has been 5 star rated by Defaqto.



Ask us in branch, call our mortgage team or visit [skipton.co.uk/insurance](https://www.skipton.co.uk/insurance) to find out how we could help.

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Get the keys and move in

Once the seller's conveyancer has the purchase money they'll instruct the estate agent to give you the keys. Congratulations! You're officially a homeowner. Now it's time to make it your own.

Now you have your mortgage with Skipton you become a 'member'. Being a member means you have access to our exclusive member offers.

To find out more about all our exclusive member benefits, visit [skipton.co.uk/about-us/member-benefits](https://www.skipton.co.uk/about-us/member-benefits)