



**HAWKINS**  
AGENCY

# Buyer's Guide

*A Brief Overview of the Home Buying Process*

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317-679-9211

# Thank You!

## Our Clients Come First

Our clients are busy professionals who make carefully thought-out decisions and they chose to work with us because we know how to get the job done right. We provide a direct, proactive approach to buying and selling that combines unparalleled personal communication with modern technology and world-class marketing.

We listen to our clients' needs and identify what is most important to them, whether buying their first home or moving across the country for a job relocation. Our out-of-the-box thinking, networking and years of experience combine to deliver the highest quality service, knowledge and resources to every client so they get the outcome they hoped for and beyond.

The Hawkins Agency is proud to share:

- First Vice President designation received from F.C. Tucker Company
- 95% referral-based business
- More than \$65M sold since 2015
- Consistently a top producer within the F.C. Tucker Company (a 800-agent company)
- Multi-year Top 10 in Sales Volume within the F.C. Tucker Company
- Recognized as a top agent with Indianapolis Monthly and the Indianapolis Business Journal (IBJ) since 1998
- Recognized as a member of both the President's Club and Executive Club

## The Hawkins Agency Approach

With the Hawkins Agency approach, you benefit from years of experience across our entire group. We take a vested interest not only helping with the sales process, but also making certain that you have a positive experience. From the moment we find your new home until we sit down at the closing table, we want to meet and exceed expectations.

The Hawkins Agency is a firm believer that a positive attitude plus positive actions yield positive results. With cutting edge technology and an experienced, efficient support staff, Sam and his team provide their busy clients with a streamlined, stress-free experience that meets their individual needs.

Simply stated, our objective is to provide a great real estate experience with superior service. We strive to ensure you are so pleased with our service that you will gladly refer us to your closest friends, family, colleagues and neighbors.

Full-Circle Service and Real Estate Guidance for Life

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# What to Expect as a Buyer

1. **Financial Planning** and getting **Pre-Approved** for the purchase of your new home
2. **Starting the search** by previewing homes and learning about your desired community
3. Writing a **Purchase Agreement** and countering, if necessary
4. Completing and responding to the **Home Inspections**
5. **Closing** on your new home

# Financial Planning

## *How to get Pre-Approved*

What is the pre-approval process?

A lender will most likely request your Social Security number and permission to pull your credit report. If the information you provide and the information obtained from your credit report satisfies the lender's guidelines, the lender will make a preliminary determination in writing stating that you would qualify for a particular loan amount subject to the conditions outlined in your pre-approval letter.

Who can get you pre-approved?

The Hawkins Agency recommends working with one of our highly qualified and skilled contacts to get pre-approved:

Tucker Mortgage

Mike Holl, Senior Loan Officer

317-809-5067

[mholl@tuckermortgage.com](mailto:mholl@tuckermortgage.com)

Chase Bank

Brent C. Carr, Private Client Mortgage Banker

317-581-1022

[brent.c.carr@chase.com](mailto:brent.c.carr@chase.com)

National Bank of Indianapolis

Susan Strapulos, Assistant Vice President

317-261-9757

[SusanStrapulos@nbofi.com](mailto:SusanStrapulos@nbofi.com)

# Starting Your Search

## *Previewing Homes*

### **Our First Meeting**

As your trusted adviser, it is our job to make this real estate experience simple and efficient for you. We start with a meeting that will feel like an interview as we learn your priorities for your future home, your family's interests and preferred lifestyle. Together, we are not only finding your next home, but your new neighborhood or side of town. Listening to and getting to know you will ensure we are creating an efficient process. Our initial meeting is also a great opportunity for you to learn more about Sam Hawkins and the Hawkins Agency.

### **Seeing the Homes**

As I learn more about you and the qualities you value most, I am able to begin planning and creating a list of home to preview. For the first group of showings, we recommend looking at around 6-10 homes. These homes will be broken down into different categories such as year built, neighborhood or style. Rarely do we come across your ideal home during our first outing. It is not likely to see many, if any, good prospects. But, as we tour the first set of homes, we are more focused on evaluating your feedback to better identify your preferences and dislikes.

As we gather a better idea of what you're looking for, we will strategically target and map out the homes most suitable for you. Moving forward we will begin to see more homes that meet your needs and desires.

### **Scheduling Showings**

You'll receive an itinerary via email before our scheduled showings. It will include addresses, times and brief listing information.

### **Property Details**

At every showing, you will receive full details of the homes we are seeing for that day/outing. The intent of this detailed information is for you to review as we are going through the homes, take notes, keep the information accessible for later review and to help you evaluate each home against all of the homes we are seeing. Details will include photos, tax information, property history, plat map and neighborhood statistics.

## *Tools to Use*

## Personalized Email Reports

Rather than having to research websites regarding new listings in the areas of your search, you will receive real-time updates sent straight to your inbox. The Hawkins Agency creates personalized listing reports of homes matching your search criteria that are newly listed, pending or sold. This allows you to closely monitor the neighborhoods you are interested in by evaluating trends, pricing and other activity. These reports also keep you ahead of the game in a competitive market.

## Homes that are Not Yet on the Market

Networking through both client and agent relationships allows the Hawkins Agency to stay attuned to the activity in Indianapolis and surrounding area neighborhoods on which our clients focus. Many times, a home will be for sale, but not formally listed on the market for public access. An estimated 15% of all of our sales take place without being on the open public market. We work hard to research all avenues to provide you with the best opportunities and outcomes possible.

## Online Tools & Resources

The Hawkins Agency recommends making MIBOR your primary search tool and resource. Through [www.MIBOR.com](http://www.MIBOR.com) and the MIBOR app, you will have access to the most up-to-date information on area listings. Additionally, the Hawkins Agency can take a more active role in your home search by highlighting homes that qualify per your search parameters. Our team can interact with you through MIBOR's online tools.

New to the market, [Homesnap](#) is a new MIBOR partnership that allows you to obtain listing details on a home by simply snapping a photo. You will receive a text invitation to download the app. When taking a photo of a listing, the details are then available to you in Homesnap. You can create a list of favorites, share the listing via text or email and communicate through the app with the Hawkins Agency regarding a specific listing or your favorites list.

## *Experience Indy and Surrounding Areas*

The Circle City is drawing national attention in many areas – now more than ever. From the local foodie scene to the arts, we are a community of proud residents committed to making Indy great. Launched in 2016, Indianapolis is [No Mean City](#): Real [stories](#) of what it means to call Indy [home](#); a citizens' [guide](#) to [community](#), [culture](#), [schools](#), and [housing](#).

*We're proud to be home to:*

- No. 1 Easiest Place to Buy a Home by [Realtor.com](#)

- No. 1 Airport in North America by [Airports Council International](#)
- Named Best in the U.S. 2015 by [Lonely Planet](#).
- Named a 2017 Best Places to Travel by [Travel + Leisure](#)
- No. 9 on the Forbes 2015 Most Affordable Cities
- The Indianapolis 500 – which will celebrate the 102<sup>nd</sup> running in 2016
- The shrimp cocktail at St. Elmo Steak House, recognized as an ‘American Classic’ by the James Beard Foundation.
- The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis, the largest children’s museum in the world.
- Plus other [top family attractions](#).
- Shapiro’s, which USA Today called one of America’s greatest delis
- A bustling local restaurant scene. [Use this guide](#).
- Several growing suburbs with award-winning school districts, arts and cultural attractions and unique neighborhoods.

# Making an Offer

## *From Offer to Earnest Money*

**Writing the Purchase Agreement** | Consider the following when putting together an offer:

- Items you'd like to be included in the sale (drapes, washer/dryer, etc.)
- How much you want to put down for your down payment
- Amount of earnest money you'd like to submit with your offer
- Preferred closing dates

We request proof of funds or pre-approval, specific to this sale, ready to be submitted with the offer.

**Determining Price** | The Hawkins Agency uses four approaches to evaluating price:

- Neighborhood comparables
- Surrounding home comparables
- Past sales price and history of the home
- Market trends

This information will be provided to you to create a clear picture of the market and value range for the home we're looking at. We will work together on determining an offer priced based on this research.

**Counter Offers** | Managing counter offers

- Most Sellers counter a Purchase Agreement with changes to terms and/or price
- Typically the buyer and seller will counter back and forth three to five times
- All terms and conditions of the Purchase Agreement and all previous Counter Offers remain in effect except as modified by another Counter Offer.

**How are Counter Offers Accepted?** If the seller issues the Counter Offer, the buyer can simply accept the counter and deliver it back to the party designated to receive it. Counter Offers contain expiration dates and times just like Purchase Agreements, which means the seller can accept another offer while the buyer is deciding whether or not to sign the Counter Offer. Time is always of the essence.

**Reesio** | Electronic Signature Service

The Hawkins Agency provides an easy-to-use system for signing all paperwork. Reesio prepares contracts to be signed electronically from any device, whether you use a desktop, laptop or mobile device, you are able to sign documents sent to you with just a click of a button. Through your Reesio

account, documents use Adobe for the signatures.

You will receive an email requesting a signature via Reesio when necessary in our process. Follow the simple instructions to review, initial and sign documents.

## *Earnest Money FAQ*

**Earnest Money | Frequently Asked Questions:**

### How Much?

The amount of earnest money you'll pay is up to you. The recommended amount is 1% of the sale price.

### Who do I write the check to?

The earnest money check is written out to the listing brokerage. The listing brokerage is the name of the real estate company associated with the listing. Unless the home is listed with an agent of F.C. Tucker, it will not be written out to F.C. Tucker Company.

### Where do I take the payment?

The earnest money check can be dropped off at the the F.C. Tucker Company office located at 9279 N. Meridian Street, or we will coordinate a time and place to meet to receive the check from you. From there, a Hawkins Agency member can deliver it to the listing broker. Another option is to have the monies transferred to the listing broker's account. Please contact a member of the team for more details.

### Make a copy:

F.C. Tucker Company, Inc. has taken steps to protect your private information. As a company policy, the Hawkins Agency is not allowed to make copies of the earnest money check. Before submitting your earnest money, make a copy of the check. If you're obtaining financing, the lender will likely request a copy of the check.

The law requires the listing broker to deposit the check into an escrow account within two banking days of accepting agreement. There, it's held until the time of closing the transaction or termination of the contract. If the contract is terminated for any reason, the earnest money will only be released by court order or with a signed mutual release by all parties stating whom the money is going to.

FACTS:

- If the buyer fails to submit earnest money, seller may terminate the agreement
- Earnest money will be applied to closing costs and down payments
- If a deal falls through, a refund for the earnest money payment is not guaranteed

Wire Transfer

Pursuant to Indiana HEA 1374 effective July 1, 2009, all funds for real estate closings, at least \$10,000.00 in the aggregate, are to be wired funds and must be unconditionally held and irrevocably credited to the escrow account of the closing agent before they can be disbursed. *In other words, you must wire transfer funds to the title company's escrow account to be delivered to the seller. Our team will provide you with the instructions on how to do so.*

# Inspections

## *Inspection FAQ*

Inspections | Frequently Asked Questions:

### When do you call a home inspector?

A home inspector is contacted immediately after the purchase agreement is accepted. After the home inspector is scheduled and the inspection is completed, you have the option to respond to the report in an Inspection Response.

### How long do you have to respond?

Refer to the accepted Purchase Agreement to determine how long you have to respond to the inspection report. Ten to fifteen days, beginning the day following the accepted purchase agreement, is most common.

### Who does the inspection?

We highly recommend Mike Germain at Germain Property Inspection Services to complete your home inspection. Mike has over 20 years of experience in home inspections and has completed well over 6,000 inspections during this time.

### Do you have to be there?

It is not required that you be present for the inspection, but it is very much encouraged. By attending the inspection, you are able to learn more about the condition of the home before following through with the purchase.

### What's Inspected?

The main reason to do an inspection is to ensure no major defects are present. A major defect is one that is likely to create failure of the unit for its intended purpose. It could also be that it is deemed to be hazardous or unsafe. In such cases, we will respond to the inspection report accordingly.

## *Radon & Mold*

### **Radon**

#### What is it?

Radon is a cancer-causing radioactive gas. You cannot see, smell or taste radon. The Surgeon General has warned that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States today.

#### How does the test work?

The quickest way to test is with short-term tests. Short-term tests remain in the home for two to three days. An inspector will place the test kit in the lowest livable level of your home. The test will take a sample of the air quality. Two to three days later, the inspector will pick up the radon testing kit and determine the level of radon present.

#### How are high levels of radon treated?

A variety of methods can be used to reduce radon. Most approaches consider sealing cracks and other openings in the foundations. Using a system of vent pipes and fans is another alternative to reduce radon. Radon mitigation contractors may use other methods that may also work in your home. The right system depends on the design of your home and other factors.

#### How much does it cost to fix high radon?

The average cost to lower radon levels is commonly \$900 to \$1,200. However, this amount can vary considerably and range anywhere between \$700 and \$2,500. Your costs may vary depending on the size and design of your home and which radon reduction methods are needed.

### **Mold**

A regular inspection will not include an inspection for moisture and mold. This must be done separately.

#### Type of Mold Tests:

Air Testing: Air sampling tests the concentration of mold spores in your home's air. Samples are taken from the air and are later examined under a microscope. Air tests can tell you if you have a mold problem even if you cannot find the mold growth. However, the amount of mold spores in the air can change drastically in a small amount of time, giving varying results at different times.

Surface Testing: Surface testing takes samples from household surfaces to find the amount of mold growth and spores deposited around the home. Samples are collected by swabbing, tape, lifting and other methods. The samples are then examined in a laboratory. Like with air testing, the results can vary because mold growth and spores aren't spread evenly across surfaces in the home and can change over time. Unlike air testing, surface tests can't identify the exact concentration of mold spores in the air.

# Summary

I hope you find, through this information and our [website](#), that we provide superior service in all aspects of the buying process and want to ensure you are comfortable in the process. We will continue to share important next steps and tasks with you as we move from searching to purchasing, but hope this overview is helpful to present the big picture of what lies ahead.

I look forward to the opportunity to work with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sam Hawkins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Sam Hawkins

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