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# Do's and Don'ts Before Applying For A Home Loan

Written by TAWANNA VEROCK / Associate Publisher

When it comes to applying for a home loan, there are a lot of things you need to consider. The process can be confusing and overwhelming, especially if you're not familiar with the it. That's why it's important to know the do's and don'ts when applying for a home loan so that you can make the best decisions and get the best rate on your mortgage. In this article, we will cover everything you need to know before applying for a home loan, including what lenders look for in borrowers, how to prepare your finances, and other tips to ensure your application goes smoothly.

Before you even start the process of applying for a home loan, it's important to be aware of the different types of mortgages available and the requirements that lenders have in order to qualify. The most common type of mortgage is a fixed-rate mortgage, which offers a set interest rate for a predetermined period of time. Adjustable-rate mortgages (ARMs) allow borrowers to adjust their interest rate over time, depending on economic conditions. Other types of loans such as jumbo loans and government-backed programs like FHA and VA may also be available depending on your financial situation. Knowing the different types of mortgages can help you determine which loan product best fits your needs.

It's also important to understand what lenders look for in potential borrowers before applying for a home loan. Most lenders will pull your credit report to assess your financial history and creditworthiness, including any debt obligations, payment history and asset information. In addition, some lenders may require additional documentation such as proof of income or employment verification before approving the loan application. Understanding the requirements ahead of time can help you prepare the necessary documents and information needed for approval.

Finally, it's important to know how to properly compare rates when applying for a home loan. Shop around and compare rates from multiple lenders to find the best one for you. Additionally, consider factors like closing costs, fees and other terms when comparing loans to make sure you're getting the best rate possible.

By following these do's and don'ts when applying for a home loan, you can be sure you're making an informed decision that will give you the best chance at securing a loan with favorable terms.

### Applying for a Home Loan: The Do's

There are a few things you can do to make sure the process goes as smoothly as possible.

- 1. Do your research
  - There are a lot of different lenders out there, so it's important to shop around and compare rates and terms before you choose one.
- 2. Get your finances in order
  - Lenders will want to see that you have a good credit history and a steady income before they approve your loan.
- 3. Know what you can afford
  - Don't get in over your head by taking out a loan that's more than you can realistically afford to repay.
- 4. Be prepared to answer questions about your employment, finances and credit history
- Lenders will want to know all about your financial situation before they approve your loan.
- 5. Read the fine print
  - Make sure you understand all the terms and conditions of your loan before you sign on the dotted line. Ask questions if you don't understand something
- Get pre-approved before you start house hunting
   This will help you know exactly how much of a loan you're eligible for, so you can narrow down your search to homes in your budget.
- 7. Get help from a REALTOR!

### Applying for a Home Loan: The Don'ts

When you're applying for a home loan, there are a few things you definitely don't want to do. Here are a few of the biggest don'ts:

Don't spend more than you can afford
 You're no doubt eager to buy a house, but you don't want to fall short of success or set yourself up for less than what you could have achieved.

Do's and Don'ts: Continued on page 16

# Constraint Districtions On your Promotions Stewart Title congratulates Becca Reid on her promotion to Escrow Officer at our Lake Travis location.

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# Get Ready for RentSpree!



ASHLEY JACKSON 2023 PRESIDENT

RentSpree is coming to ACTRIS MLS!

With Austin being a bustling rental market, I am thrilled that we'll have one more tool in our toolbelt to help streamline the rental application process — and your future tenants will love it too!

To give you a bit of insight, RentSpree is a fully integrated MLS product that helps landlords and property managers quickly and easily screen potential tenants. It streamlines the rental process by allowing applicants to submit their rental application, background check, and other documentation—all in one place. The platform can provide applicants' rental history, credit scores, and more, so landlords and property managers can make informed decisions about potential tenants.

With RentSpree, members will be able to:

•Sign up and start screening your first tenant in as little as five minutes. Screening reports and rental applications are available 24/7, and you can access RentSpree on the go from any mobile device

- Reduce liability by allowing RentSpree to manage the screening process. Stop needlessly handling sensitive information or collecting screening fees from clients
- Receive a clean and professional application package from each applicant. Your clients will thank you for giving them an easy and efficient way to make an informed decision





This addition of RentSpree was all thanks to the hard work of last year's Leasing Management Services (LMS) Task Force. I appreciate the time and effort they put into finding a valuable rental solution for our LMS Subscribers, and I know you will find it very useful for your business.

LMS Subscribers can claim their account by visiting www.rentspree.com/partner/abor and then simply opt-in to RentSpree on any Residential Lease listing to begin using the product. For subscribers interested in adding the LMS subscription to gain access to rentals and use RentSpree within ACTRIS MLS, simply go to your ABoR member portal and manage your MLS subscriptions.

You can also sign up for the upcoming MLS Power Hour on Tuesday, April 4th, where we'll have RentSpree's Senior Client Success Manager Steven Pastores give a deep dive into the benefits and features of the product integration within ACTRIS. Register for the MLS Power Hour at ABoR.com/Events.

### Get Ready for the 24K Gold Gala!

I want to personally invite you to the 2022 Industry Awards Celebration on Friday, March 31 at the Fairmont Austin Hotel. This year's theme is 24K Gold Gala, and the gilded and glamorous evening will begin at 6 p.m., with the unveiling of the winners of our 2022 Industry Awards starting at 7 p.m.

Attendees can look forward to an incredible dinner, a vacation raffle to a luxurious destination and surprise entertainment that will leave you on the edge of your seat.

After dinner and cocktails, we'll hit the dance floor for an epic afterparty from 9 to 11 p.m. with music from a live band. Most importantly, make sure to dress in your best gold attire and accessories to capture the fun and savor the memories at our 360° photo booth.

Purchase your tickets at ABoR.com/Celebrate today. I can't wait to see you there!







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You represent the best of our community, and we want to show our gratitude for making our lives better. As a special thank you from the KB family to yours, we're offering 1% off the base price of a new KB home to eligible active-duty military personnel, police officers and firefighters in the Austin area.

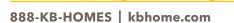
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# The REALTOR® Difference: More Than Just Another Industry



TUCKER-NEELY 2023 PRESIDENT

I recently heard something from a speaker who has been in the real estate industry for decades, and I believe that it is an important statement to make to set REALTORS® apart. Every day, we as REALTORS® learn to navigate the real estate industry, but at the end of the day the word industry is lackluster and frankly is not an accurate term for the work that we do.

You see, by definition, the word industry means a group of companies and organizations that all work on similar things. Is this all we are as REALTORS®? Are we a collection of companies and organizations that all work on house-related products? NO! We are professionals who have industry partners to assist in making the homebuying process a rewarding and enjoyable experience for our clients.

By definition, a profession is a group of qualified people who practice a particular set of skills. A profession requires specialized education and training in order to provide a service to others. Doesn't that fall more in line with what we do? We have formal qualifications based on continuing education, completed exams and professional standards through recognized bodies with the power to deem competence and establish a professional code of ethics.

Referring to the work that we do as simply an industry strips the title REALTOR® of everything that sets us apart. In our profession we as REALTORS® strive to educate ourselves on the communities around us, by attending city/ISD meetings, being active in our communities, the communities around us and within our Associations. We work to be a book of knowledge for our clients who are moving to a new area and must keep current with all of the changes going on around us.

In our profession, we advocate to promote home ownership, to protect real property rights and increase political awareness. We invest in our profession to keep it thriving. We work to give objective information and opinions to our clients, we network with other professionals for our marketing toolkit, we are expert negotiators, we keep current with all the endless transaction paperwork and new forms, we serve as a rock for our clients during the homebuying process. We do this all while maintaining ethical throughout the whole process.

REALTORS® who master their profession find ways to volunteer by serving their local, state and national Associations. For new REALTORS®, the Association is the best way to learn the ropes and become a professional. Here at WCREALTORS, we have all the tools needed to keep current with your community, advocate for our profession and gain real world experience from seasoned professionals.

So the next time you catch yourself talking about the real estate industry, make sure to take a step back and make it about the REALTOR® profession.











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Founded in 1995, RealtyLine is a trade publication for real estate professionals. As a non-subscription publication, it is distributed by the US Postal Service to over 18k+ members of the Austin Board of REALTORS® (ABOR), over 1,800+ members of the Williamson County Association of REALTORS® (WCREALTORS) and the Home Builders Association of Greater Austin, as well as those involved in the real estate industry.

It is our pleasure to be a member of ABoR, WCREALTORS, HBA, and have been designated as an honorary member of the WCR Austin Chapter. We are equally proud to be a Major Investor in TREPAC (2019, 2020).

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# Transparent Leadership Can Benefit Membership



KACEY TAYLOR 2023 PRESIDENT

This has been an incredible year for the Women's Council of REALTORS Austin Chapter and it is *only* the beginning.

We have worked diligently to understand the unique needs of each board member and chair, and we have been learning how to work together effectively. Despite our differences, I believe that we have achieved success because we are starting to understand that each of us brings something very valuable and unique to the table. There is no one better at being me than me, and we should all be true to who we are. If I attempt to be someone I am not, I am doing the world a disservice. Being true to yourself and sharing it with our members and the rest of the world has the

potential to change lives.

It is my goal to create an environment of transparency during my year as president. There is no doubt that this is not an easy and glamorous position. While it is a challenging position, it is also very rewarding. This experience is helping me to grow both personally and professionally as a leader and a person.

As a result of my networking efforts, I have met a number of influential individuals who want to help me catapult my career forward. Having access to the network has allowed me to meet key real estate professionals who I can call my "tribe."

Our last and most recent event, the "Winter White Party," held at the Kinningham House in Round Rock was an enormous success. We had at least 100 attendees and it was a night full of networking, laughter, food, photography and fun!

Women's Council of REALTORS Austin Chapter presents

# MARCH MARKET UPDATE

This event will cover the current market, market predictions, seasonality in our market and what factors to look for to see those shifts before they happen. We will also talk about opportunities in this market and have a Q & A session at the end.

Where: SouthStar Bank Leander 10737 E. Crystal Falls Pkwy

When: Thursday, March 23 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Presentation by: Chris Jacob

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TREC LEGAL UPDATE 1

This class is required for license renewals as four of the eight (8) legal hours. This class covers recent cases as well as topics including changes in the Real Estate License Act and TREC rules, do-not-call rules, anti-spam rules, home equity, mold, assessment and remediation, title insurance endorsements, mortgage fraud and new TREC forms.

Where: 9606 N. Mopac Expy, 9th floor
When: Wednesday, March 29

10:45 a.m. - Networking & Lunch 11 a.m. to 3 p.m - CE Course

Cost: \$10.00 paid at door

Hosted by: Frontier Title

Affiliated Partner Event: Women's Council of REALTORS

Instructor: Dan Hamilton

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### FEATURED ADVERTISER

by Rachel Arterberry

# Austin Real Pros

Austin Real Pros is a small boutique real estate company formed on April Fools Day in the year 2000, ironically, by two experienced real estate professionals, Bill Evans and Carrie York. Offering services in sales, leasing, and property management, Austin Real Pros is "large enough to offer great service to our clients, but small enough to know all of our clients' names too—that's one thing our clients find attractive about us," says Bill Evans. He continues, saying, "Much of our business comes from referrals. We have high-tech capabilities, but we also offer a personal touch that our clients appreciate."

In his 28 years in the industry, Bill has only been associated with three brokerages. Teaming up with Carrie, who has more than 35 years in real estate, was the beginning of what is now one of Austin's well-known real estate companies, relying heavily on their reputation for doing the right thing—even when no one is looking!

Austin Real Pros and their team of agents strive to create a positive real estate experience with each client, delivering quality service and value they have learned to expect. Bill and Carrie did not intend to do property management when this little company started, although they both had experience in this area. Because of their expertise and willingness to share their knowledge, clients continually asked them to help with their leasing and property management needs.

Being in the industry for a combined 50+ years, Carrie and Bill have developed connections and nurtured relationships within the community that have helped them navigate the many peaks and valleys of the market. Property management, seemingly recession and inflation-proof, keeps the business going, even as the bangs and busts of the real estate market take a toll on others. As the pandemic threatened the lives and livelihoods of so many, there was always a need for leasing and property management.

As Bill explains, there are two pieces to the leasing and property management puzzle. First, there is finding the most qualified applicant to lease a property. Then, to manage a property, it is essential to ensure the tenants conform to the terms and conditions of the lease while maintaining the value of the landlord's asset. "It is our commitment to those standards that has helped keep our clients out of eviction court," Bill says.

Believing in the value of nurturing relationships, Carrie and Bill see every conversation as an opportunity for education and development. In fact, Bill believes that every negative reaction from a client or partner is nothing more than a request for more information. That being said, Austin Real Pros unselfishly shares with its real estate agents, clients, and associates, anything it has to offer. From educational classes to office space and wifi to information, Bill and Carrie believe strongly in the preamble of the code of ethics, which says that we will cooperate and help our colleagues become better REALTORS.

Bill Evans, defining himself as "a pretty good real estate broker," believes it is his job to let his clients tell other people he is pretty good and let them be the judge. Collaboration, building relationships with the community, and giving back are cornerstones of the Austin Real Pros culture, positioning this team's values well with the clients they serve.

Austin Real Pros—Real professionals making an impact on the real estate market, one relationship at a time.





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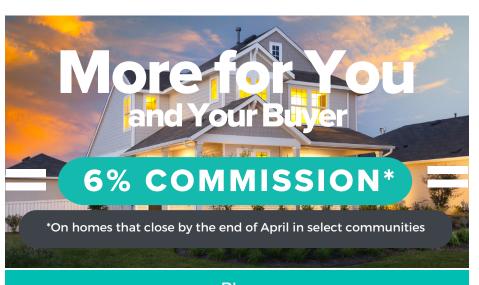


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Do's and Don'ts: Continued from front page

- 2. Don't make any major financial changes before applying for a home loan

  This includes things like changing jobs, increasing your credit card debt or taking out any new loans. These changes can all negatively impact your ability to get approval.
- Don't apply for multiple loans at once
   Applying for multiple loans at the same time will only hurt your credit score and make
   it harder to get approved for any of the loans.
- 3. Don't neglect your credit score
  Your credit score is one of the most important factors in getting approved for a home loan, so make sure you check it before you apply and take steps to improve it, if needed.
- 4. Don't completely pay off your debts
  Although it may seem counterintuitive, you should not pay off your debts in their entirety
  or close any accounts unless your mortgage advisor specifically recommends that you
  do so. Avoid opening new lines of credit as well. All of these actions can negatively
  impact your credit score, which you do not want when applying for a mortgage.
- 5. Don't forget to budget for closing costs and other fees

  Make sure you account for closing costs and other fees that may be associated with the loan. That way, you won't be surprised when it comes time to actually pay for the loan.

Applying for a home loan can be an intimidating process, but it doesn't have to be! Knowing what documents you need and understanding the dos and don'ts of the application process is key to getting your dream home sooner. Building a good credit score, researching different lenders and making sure you are financially responsible will help ensure you receive a competitive rate on your loan. So take some time to do your research, understand the process and before long, you'll find yourself in that perfect new home.





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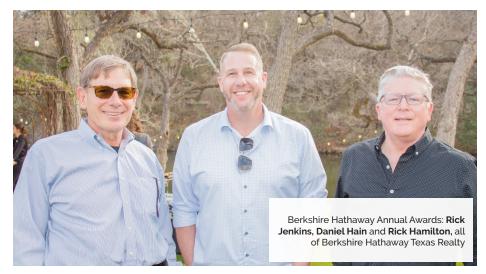
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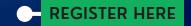
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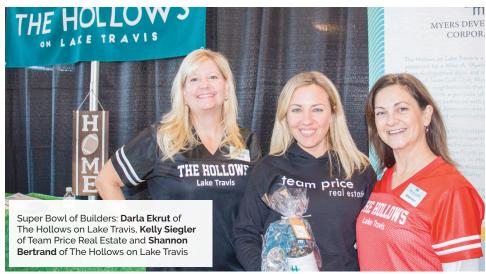
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