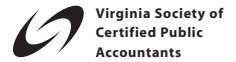


# Five Key Steps to Home Ownership



Fallen in love with a charming colonial? Have your eyes on an ultra-hip downtown loft? Virginia CPAs offer these smart steps to owning the roof over your head.

## 1. Determine what you can afford.

Generally, your monthly mortgage payment (principal, interest, taxes, and insurance) should not exceed 28 percent of your gross monthly income.

## 2. Shop carefully and get a professional realtor's help.

## 3. Make an offer and negotiate.

Avoid losing sight of what you can afford or offering more than the property is worth.

## 4. Choose a mortgage.

## 5. Prepare for the closing and beyond.

Build up an emergency fund to pay for burst pipes, leaky roofs and other unanticipated home repairs.

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