

FIRST-TIME BUYER'S GUIDE

Your First Home in Toronto

We're the Michael Ouzas Real Estate Team (MORE Team). This guide covers your buying power, the accounts that fund it, and every step to your keys.

EIGHT STEPS TO YOUR KEYS

01
Know your buying power
Income, debts, savings and credit score.

02
Get pre-approved
A mortgage broker or your bank confirms your budget.

03
Save your deposit and down payment
Plus 2% to 3% for closing costs.

04
Decide what you want
Condo or freehold, neighbourhoods, must-haves and deal breakers.

05
Search and view
We set up your search and bring comparable sales to every showing.

06
Make an offer
Price, deposit, conditions and closing date.

07
Firm up
Financing, home inspection and, for a condo, the status certificate review.

08
Close and claim your rebates
Your lawyer registers the purchase and applies the rebates.

READ THE MARKET

Before you offer, we check months of inventory for your price range and neighbourhood: how long it would take to sell every home for sale if no new listings came on.

Homes for sale today ÷ Homes sold last month = **Months of inventory**

Example: 400 homes for sale ÷ 100 sales last month = 4 months of inventory

SELLER'S MARKET
0 to 2 months

- Offer dates are common
- Less choice, more competition
- Homes sell fast
- Generally higher prices
- Harder for buyers to negotiate

BALANCED MARKET
3 to 5 months

- Balance between buyers and sellers
- Terms can favour either side
- Homes still sell, at a steadier pace
- Great homes in great areas still sell quickly

BUYER'S MARKET
6+ months

- Buyers have choice and leverage
- Easier to negotiate price and conditions
- Homes take longer to sell
- Generally lower prices
- The best homes still sell quickly

HOW MUCH DO YOU NEED?

YOUR BUYING POWER

Lenders check you could handle your rate plus 2%, or 5.25%, whichever is higher.

MINIMUM DOWN PAYMENT

5%	5% + 10%	20%
Up to $500,000	$500,000 to $1.5 million: 5% of the first $500,000, 10% of the rest	$1.5 million or more

PURCHASE PRICE	MINIMUM DOWN	20% DOWN
$500,000	$25,000	$100,000
$600,000	$35,000	$120,000
$700,000	$45,000	$140,000
$800,000	$55,000	$160,000
$900,000	$65,000	$180,000
$1,000,000	$75,000	$200,000
$1,200,000	$95,000	$240,000
$1,499,999	$124,999	$299,999
$1,500,000	$300,000 (20%)	$300,000

Values are approximate.

Under 20% down?

Your mortgage needs mortgage insurance (CMHC or a private insurer): about 0.6% to 4% of the mortgage, added to the mortgage.

First-time buyer perks

30 years to pay off an insured mortgage instead of 25. Insured mortgages are available on homes up to $1.5 million.

HOW THE THREE ACCOUNTS COMPARE

	TFSA	RRSP (HBP)	FHSA
Annual limit	$7,000	Income-based (18% of earned income, to a yearly max)	$8,000
Lifetime / max	$109,000 cumulative (since 2009)	$60,000 HBP withdrawal / person	$40,000 lifetime
Tax on contributions	After-tax, no deduction	Tax-deductible	Tax-deductible
Tax on withdrawal	Always tax-free	Tax-free under HBP	Tax-free (qualifying)
Repayment?	None	Yes. 15 yrs, starts yr 2	None
Best used for	**DEPOSIT**	**DOWN PAYMENT**	**DOWN PAYMENT**

THE PLAY TFSA for the deposit, RRSP + FHSA for the down payment

HOW FAR IT GOES FOR A COUPLE

FHSA $40,000 + HBP $60,000 = $100,000 per person × 2 **$200,000**

Two first-time buyers, before investment growth and before TFSAs. The FHSA and HBP can be used on the same home.

Sources: CRA (canada.ca), TD Canada Trust, Questrade, H&R Block, Scotiabank. Figures current for the 2026 tax year. Not financial advice. Confirm personal limits via CRA My Account.

REBATES FOR FIRST-TIME BUYERS

$4,000	$4,475	$1,500	Varies
Ontario land transfer tax refund	Toronto land transfer tax rebate (inside the city)	First-time home buyers' tax credit (federal)	New-home GST/HST rebates

Land transfer tax rebates: you and your spouse must never have owned a home anywhere, and you must move in within nine months of closing. Your lawyer applies them on closing. Rules as of October 2026.

BUYER TOOLS

Affordability
michaelouzas.com/affordability-calculator

Mortgage Payment
michaelouzas.com/mortgage-calculator

Land Transfer Tax
michaelouzas.com/land-transfer-tax-calculator

Closing Costs
michaelouzas.com/closing-cost-calculator

Cost to Own
michaelouzas.com/cost-to-own-calculator

Rent vs Buy
michaelouzas.com/rent-vs-buy-calculator

All tools: michaelouzas.com/tools

Ready to start your search?

Book a Discovery call here: **michaelouzas.com/book**



Michael Ouzas, REALTOR®
Team Lead, MORE Team · Red Diamond, National Top 2% (2025) | $40M+ closed, 2025 and 2026 | 200+ transactions

*Not intended to solicit those under contract with another agent.