



SA Home Buyer's Guide 2026

Every step from first budget to getting the keys — tick each box as you complete it.

Prime rate: 10.50% (SARB, May 2026) · Transfer duty threshold: R1,210,000 (SARS)

Step 1 — Work Out What You Can Really Afford

- 1. Calculate your maximum affordable bond**
Base this on your gross income and existing debt repayments — banks apply National Credit Act affordability rules, but your own realistic budget matters more than their ceiling.
- 2. Budget for a deposit and model the difference**
A 10% deposit on a R1,500,000 bond cuts the monthly repayment from about R14,976 to about R13,478 at prime (10.50%, SARB May 2026).
- 3. Stress-test your repayment at prime + 1% to +2%**
Most bonds are variable-rate. Confirm your budget still works if the SARB raises rates a point or two from today's level.
- 4. Budget bond and transfer costs separately from your deposit**
These are paid in cash before registration and usually cannot be added to the bond — do not assume your deposit covers them too.

Step 2 — Get Pre-Qualified Before You House-Hunt

- 1. Obtain a free pre-qualification certificate**
Get this from a bank or bond originator before house-hunting — sellers take pre-qualified buyers far more seriously.
- 2. Resolve any credit issues it surfaces**
An old default or forgotten store account shows up here. Fix it now, while there's time, not after you've signed an offer.
- 3. Check FLISP First Home Finance eligibility**
First-time buyers earning R3,501–R22,000/month may qualify for a subsidy of R38,911–R169,265 (NHFC, 2026).
- 4. Confirm the certificate's validity period**
Pre-qualifications are typically valid for around 3 months — know your window before you start viewing.

Step 3 — The Offer to Purchase (OTP)

- 1. Read every clause before signing**
Once both parties sign, the OTP is legally binding — there is no general cooling-off right above R250,000.



- 2. Include a suspensive bond-approval clause**
Make the sale conditional on bond approval of a stated amount by a stated date, so the contract lapses if finance is declined.

- 3. Get a written fixtures and fittings list**
Light fittings, blinds, pool equipment — put exactly what stays in writing. Verbal promises don't survive transfer.

- 4. Understand voetstoets and inspect thoroughly**
Resale property is sold "as is." Inspect carefully yourself or pay for a professional inspection before signing.

- 5. Agree occupational rent terms in writing, if applicable**
If you move in before registration (or the seller stays after), state the monthly rate both ways in the OTP.

- 6. Confirm the compliance certificate clause is included**
The seller must deliver a valid electrical certificate, and gas/electric fence/beetle certificates where applicable, before transfer.

Step 4 — Bond Application and Final Approval

- 1. Apply through a bond originator to multiple banks**
This costs you nothing and lets banks compete on interest rate — even half a percent below prime saves significantly over 20 years.

- 2. Gather your documents**
ID, proof of income (payslips or 6 months of statements if self-employed), 3 months of bank statements, and the signed OTP.

- 3. Wait for the bank's valuation and confirm it matches your offer**
If the valuation comes in under your offer price, expect a lower approved amount and a shortfall to cover.

- 4. Accept the final grant and sign the loan agreement**
This fulfils the OTP's suspensive condition and makes the sale unconditional.

Step 5 — Conveyancing and Transfer (8–12 Weeks)

- 1. Respond quickly when attorneys call you in to sign**
Three attorneys typically work in parallel: transferring, bond, and (if applicable) cancellation — delays on your side delay all three.

- 2. Deliver FICA documents immediately when requested**
ID and proof of address, submitted promptly, keep the process moving.

- 3. Pay transfer costs, bond costs and transfer duty when requested**
Lodgement at the Deeds Office cannot happen until every cost is paid and every certificate is in.



- 4. Track compliance certificate and rates clearance progress**
These are the most common causes of delay — check in with your attorney if you haven't heard anything in a while.

Step 6 — Registration Day and Moving In

- 1. Confirm homeowner's insurance is in force from registration date**
Risk in the property passes to you on registration day — cover must already be active, not arranged after the fact.
- 2. Wait for Deeds Office registration**
Typically 7–10 working days once every document is lodged and every cost is paid.
- 3. Set up municipal accounts in your name immediately**
Do this straight after registration to avoid billing gaps or account disputes.
- 4. Confirm your bond repayments have started correctly**
Check the first debit order matches what you agreed with the bank.

Cost Summary Reference

Cost	Charged by	When paid
Deposit	Agreed in OTP, held in trust	Days after OTP acceptance
Transfer duty (above R1,210,000 only)	SARS	Before lodgement
Transfer (conveyancing) fees	Transferring attorney	Before lodgement
Bond registration fees	Bond attorney	Before lodgement
Bank initiation fee	Your bank	Usually added to bond
Rates / levy advance	Municipality or body corporate	Before clearance issued

■ ■ Disclaimer

Costs, timeframes and lending criteria in this guide are typical figures for standard residential transfers and vary by bank, attorney, municipality and transaction. Transfer duty and interest rates are current as at July 2026 and change with SARS tables and SARB decisions. This document is provided for general information only and does not constitute financial, legal or tax advice. Always consult a qualified professional before making a property purchase decision.