

We have compiled a list of frequently asked questions here to help you. If you don't find the information you are looking for, please contact your local branch who will be happy to assist you and answer any other questions you may have

I want to buy a property. What do I do first?

Before you begin your property search you need to work out what your budget is. To do this you will need to understand how much the move is likely to cost in terms of conveyancing, moving and stamp duty fees. You will also need to work out what kind of mortgage deposit you can afford and how much of a mortgage you are able to borrow. To be in the best position to purchase a property you should apply for a "Decision in Principle" from a lender. This will provide any estate agent with proof that you are able to afford any property that you wish to make an offer on. If you contact your local branch we can put you in touch with a number of independent mortgage advisors who can help you calculate all of these costs.



How do I register with an Estate Agent?

To register with jdm you can visit us at your local branch, complete our online registration form or call your local branch. Let us know what you're looking for and we'll start searching for properties that meet your criteria.

Should I arrange a mortgage before I start looking at properties?

If you know that you will need to take out a mortgage in order to buy a property, then it makes sense to seek financial advice at an early stage. Once you have provisionally arranged for the required mortgage funds to be made available to you, it is a good idea to obtain a mortgage certificate or offer in principle from the lender. This can then be used to prove to a seller or estate agent, that you have the necessary funds available to finance your purchase. Your local jdm branch can provide you with some recommendations for local financial advisers.

I've found a property I love. What do I do now?

Once you have found a property you love, the next step is to make an offer to purchase the property to the estate agent who is marketing the property. An estate agent will want to know:

- how much you are offering to buy the property for;
- who will be purchasing the property;
- what your position is i.e. do you have a property to sell, are you a cash-buyer, a first time buyer, do you have a decision in principle from a lender etc.
- details of any financial advisor and conveyancer or solicitor; and
- if there is any other relevant information they need to know about your offer to purchase the property.

The estate agent will then pass your offer on to the seller of the property and report back to you on their response. If the offer is accepted the estate agent will then need to carry out money laundering checks on you and any other person who is buying the property with you. This is required by law.

Frequently Asked Questions

Buyer

How long will it take to complete my purchase?

Every purchase is different. Your position and the seller's position will have an impact on how long the purchase will take. If the seller has already vacated the property and you have already arranged a mortgage, or if you're a cash buyer, then exchange of contracts and completion can happen relatively quickly. We find that typically an exchange of contracts takes between 4 and 6 weeks and the completion takes between 2 and 4 weeks. So in total you should expect up to 10 weeks to complete the purchase. Certain factors can delay the amount of time required to reach an exchange of contracts and completion such as:

- if you need to arrange a mortgage;
- if you have a property to sell, or a long chain behind you;
- if the seller is still in the property;
- if there are issues which are raised at survey;
- if the seller hasn't found somewhere to move to.

How much will conveyancing cost?

Conveyancing is all the legal work that has to take place to make a property yours. Conveyancing is undertaken by either a licensed conveyancer or a solicitor. They will investigate the property you are purchasing and negotiate the contract that needs to be agreed and will formally make you the owner of the house. The cost of the work will depend on the value of the property, whether you are buying a leasehold or a freehold property and whether you also require work for the sale of a property (as opposed to just the purchase). Your local jdm branch can provide you with some quotes from local conveyancers and solicitors.

How much will stamp duty cost?

When you buy a property in the UK over a certain price you have to pay Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT). The way stamp duty is calculated is quite complicated. We have a stamp duty calculator which will work out how much you will need to pay. Buy to let and second home buyers have to pay a 3% surcharge when purchasing properties.

Do I need a survey?

If you require a mortgage to purchase your property, your mortgage lender will arrange a survey (sometimes also called a homebuyers report) that you will have to pay for in order to secure the mortgage. This survey is usually basic and confirms with the lender that the property is worth what you are being loaned and will not give details on the condition of the property. Depending on the age and condition of the property, it might be advisable to get a full structural survey. Your own survey will help you understand the current condition of the property, reduce the likelihood of unforeseen property repair costs.

The Surveyor has found a problem with the property that I want to buy.

What should I do?

On occasions, buyers will find out that there are problems with a property before they have exchanged contracts. If this happens, you will likely have 3 options:

1. You can request that the Seller corrects the problem
2. You can seek a price reduction to cover the cost of resolving the problem
3. If the problem is substantial, you may wish to withdraw from the purchase

When do I need to pay the deposit?

The deposit (which is usually somewhere between 5 and 10% of the purchase price) is paid to the Seller's solicitor, usually upon exchange of contracts. If your purchase is dependent on a sale, your solicitor will typically use your buyer's deposit for your related purchase.



Frequently Asked Questions

Buyer

When will my mortgage lender release the funds?

The mortgage will be requested from the lender by your solicitor or conveyancer. It usually takes around 4-5 working days for the lender to release any money which is being loaned. Your solicitor/conveyancer will take this time into account when advising you of the earliest possible completion date.

When do I need to arrange insurance?

Usually your solicitor or conveyancer will advise you when you will need to arrange insurance for any property you are buying. It is usual for the Seller to maintain insurance until the day of completion, when it would be come your responsibility to then insure the property.

What happens once a sale is agreed?

After the sale is agreed, the Seller's solicitor will draft a contract. Your solicitor will confirm the details of the property and perform searches and ask the Seller questions about the property. At the same time (if you are taking out a mortgage), your mortgage lender will conduct a mortgage valuation and send you a mortgage offer. Your solicitor or conveyancer will provide you with a report on title which will tell you about the property you are buying and make you aware of any issues with the property. Once all of this is complete, you will be ready to sign the contract to purchase the property and proceed to exchange of contracts.



When is the Buyer or Seller bound to the sale or purchase?

Until both solicitors receive signed contracts from the Seller and the Buyer, either party can pull out at any time and for any reason without cost or penalty until the contracts are exchanged.

How is a completion date chosen?

Once both parties have signed the contracts then your solicitor and the Seller's solicitor will consult both parties and agree a completion date. If you require a mortgage then after the contracts are signed, the mortgage money will be requested from the lender by your solicitor or conveyancer. The mortgage lender will let your solicitor know when the funds will be released, then your solicitor and the seller's solicitor will consult both parties and agree a completion date.

How and when do I get the keys?

Once the seller's solicitor has confirmed receipt of funds to confirm the transaction has completed, the estate agent will be able to confirm where and when you may collect the keys. Usually the Seller's estate agent holds the keys and is told by the Seller's solicitor or conveyancer when they can release the keys to the new owner.

What will the Seller leave in the property?

Usually the Seller will fill out a fixtures and fittings form which sets out what they intend to remove and what they will include in the house price. In some instances they may offer items for sale for the purchaser to consider, and some contents can be offered for inclusion as part of the negotiation of the purchase price.

What happens if I want to buy a house that has not yet been built?

jdm has a dedicated Land and New Homes department, which can assist you if you are looking to purchase a new build property. Click to find out more about this specialist service.