



Home Buyers Workbook: The 3-Part Series

NARROW YOUR TOWN SEARCH:

Questions to ask yourself when choosing your town. (Because choosing your town is a BIG DEAL.)

READY TO MOVE BAROMETER:

Pinpoint how ready you are and what to do to get there.

PRIORITIZING YOUR NEEDS AND WANTS WORKSHEET

so EVERYBODY is happy!

Hi I'm Val,

As a 15-year resident of Bronxville, I understand the importance of relationships. The magic of any community is steeped in friendships with neighbors, merchants that add style and vitality to your town, and the community that keeps everything running on track. My client relationships are no different — friendship, professionalism, and keeping things on track and on time.

Buying a home is an exciting time. It can also be stressful, with many unknowns. Is this really the right time in my life to buy? Am I buying in a sellers' or buyers' market? How can I make sure that I'm making a good investment? I have so many things on my wish list — how can I get everything I want for my family? Relax, friend. These are all great questions, and it's my job to help you feel clear and confident in your decisions by demystifying the process, providing insightful counsel, removing the pain points, and communicating regularly. I believe in being available — whether that's over a cup of tea, a text, or an old-fashioned phone call — to listen, strategize, course-correct as needed, and have a few laughs to boot!

As a homebuyer, you want to feel confident that you're buying the right home for you and your family's needs, at the right price. Before you even begin the search process, it helps to have a general sense of what you're looking for and why each item on your wish list is important. Sound hard? My Home Buyers Workbook (HBWB) is designed to help you through it!

This workbook should help you identify your priorities in choosing your ideal town and home. You are setting the groundwork to begin your search. When you're ready, we can schedule a consultation where we discuss your priorities and needs and ultimately start the search for your dream home.

As an agent with the leading Westchester brokerage, Houlihan Lawrence, I have access to the most comprehensive market data and intelligence. As a local agent and mom of 2 who are going through the Bronxville school system, I know this area like the back of my hand and can recommend everything from the best plumbers to best blowouts. My business background (yes, I'm an MBA nerd) will slice and dice market stats to ensure that you have a firm grasp on the market and the knowledge you need to make good decisions during a tough negotiation. My strong relationships with other local agents will also help position your offer in a positive light, complete with happy vibes.

My goal is to prepare you to step forward confidently when the right house comes along. And while you may be oohing and ahing about the gorgeous kitchen details and home office space, I'll make sure that all of the less-visible parts of your home (think boiler, roof, the list goes on ...) are just as dreamy, by bringing in fully vetted experts to make sure things truly are as peachy as they seem.

Most of all, I will be there for you every step of the way, so you can move into your dream home on time, with no hassles.

You can download my Homebuyer's Workbook and run with it or look it over and then call, text, or email me. Not quite ready? That's ok too. Check out my Working With Buyers Process to get a better sense of how I do what I do and to see if I'm a good fit.

To get a PDF of my process, just email me at votto@houlihanlawrence.com. Thanks for stopping by — I am so excited for your journey ahead!

-Val

Narrowing Your Town Search: Questions to Ask Yourself

How close do you want to be to Manhattan?

- No more than a 30-minute train ride into the city.
- No more than a 45-minute train ride into the city.
- No more than an hour train ride into the city.
- Don't care because I work from home.

How do you feel about having a walkable village vs. a more spread-out location?

- Give me walkable! I love window shopping and tooling around town.
- My car is my best friend and I drive everywhere.

Do you like having neighbors nearby or do you prefer more privacy?

- I like to chat over the fence with my neighbors every once in a while.
- My home is my castle — I like more land and more privacy.

Do you like an urban (access to shop and restaurants) or country vibe (with rolling hills and horse farms)?

- Hey, I'm from New York! I need my restaurants and favorite shops.
- You had me at rolling hills.

Do you prefer to be on the water?

- Aye aye, matey!
- What water? New York has water?

Do you have any family you would like to be near, and if yes, where do they live and how close would you like to be?

- No, my family isn't really local.
- Thanks, but I'm good (no judgment!).
- Yes! They live in _____
and I would like to be within _____ miles.

Do you prefer pre-war or newer construction?

- I love the charm of an older home
- Give me new!

If you have kids:

Are you planning on public or private school?

- Private
- Public.
- Not sure yet.

If public, does the size of the school matter? Have you decided on your preferred school systems?

- I'm looking for small and intimate.
- Just looking for the right fit – it's ok if it's bigger.
- Don't know.

What age range are your kids? _____

What other considerations are there when considering your ideal town?

THE I'M READY TO MOVE BAROMETER

On a scale of 1 to 10, how ready do you feel you are to buy a house?



(1-3) Just dipping my toe in and curious. (4-6) I'm interested. (7-10) I'm committed!

If you aren't ready yet, that's totally cool. What needs to happen for you to be ready?

There are emotional and practical considerations that play into being ready to buy a home. Some practical questions to ask yourself are:

- 🔍 Do you rent or own your current home?
- 🔍 If you rent, when does your lease expire?
- 🔍 If you own, do you have to sell your home to buy your new home? If you're planning to sell, have you begun that process yet? (Check out my *Getting Your Home Ready to Sell Checklist* here.)
- 🔍 Are you planning on financing your new home or buying with cash?
- 🔍 If you are getting a mortgage, have you been pre-approved?
- 🔍 Have you identified your budget?

Now that you've determined what needs to happen to be ready to buy your dream home, let's figure out what that dream home is really all about!

PRIORITIZING YOUR NEEDS AND WANTS WORKSHEET

Part I: If you're like 98% of people, you have probably already started looking at homes online. I know, it's fun – and can be a little addictive too. It makes sense to get the lay of the land, identify what you're looking for, and research what's available in your price range.

If this is you, articulating what you liked most about your favorite homes will also help you understand how to prioritize your wish list and what's most important to you.

List 3 homes you liked and what it was about them that drew you to them:

Address #1 _____

I liked this home because _____

Address #2 _____

I liked this home because _____

Address #3 _____

I liked this home because _____

Whether you wind up buying one of the homes you've been admiring online or not, the top reasons you articulated above are important to you. It might be a gorgeous kitchen, open-concept living, or a killer master suite – the point is that you may have just articulated what's most important to you, so take note!

Let's keep going – it's time to dream.

Part II: Dream Home Exercise: We all have wish lists. How important is it for you to have a big yard? Is that more or less important than being walking distance to school? What is your ideal floor plan flow? Are you looking for something that's totally move-in ready? You may already have a list in your mind of what you're looking for, but it's key to understand not only WHAT you want but WHY you want it. Especially when there are two buyers involved – understanding the WHY means coming together on the WHAT.

So here's your homework. Separately, write your list of what you're looking for in your new dream home and why. Then compare and discuss.

If you're a solo buyer, this is a great exercise to help you look at a home through the lens of how it delivers on what drives you (your Why), beyond just its current inventory of attributes. This will help you see a home's possibilities, not just how it's staged, and see the possibilities that other buyers may not see.

Soooo ... check out your handy worksheets on the next two pages!

Once you're done, congratulations! You have just (hopefully) brought a little more clarity to your home search. As a next step, find a Realtor you feel comfortable with, is a local market expert, and has great reviews. I would be SO excited to hear from you and help you on your home search. If you're looking outside of my geographic zone of expertise, I am connected with excellent Realtors throughout Westchester, Connecticut, and beyond, who I would love to connect you with.

BUYER 1

FEATURES (WHATS)

BENEFITS (WHYS)

BUYER 2

FEATURES (WHATS)

BENEFITS (WHYS)
