THE COST OF MOVING HOME

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Average cost of moving house

Moving home can be exciting, but you need to keep an eye on the costs. The estimated average cost of moving in the UK (includes the cost of buying, selling and moving house) is around £12,187*, although this can vary dramatically depending on a range of different factors.

Here, we go through some of the key home buying steps where you may need to pay close attention to the costs to help avoid any unwelcome surprises.

* Compare My Move (2024) The Cost of Moving House.

Available at:
https://www.comparemymove.com/house-removals/cost-of-moving-house-calculator

Plan ahead and budget

Valuations and Surveys

What's the difference between a valuation and a survey?
Your mortgage lender might arrange a valuation to make sure the property price is realistic. Some lenders might not charge for this, some might. However, a survey is a report by a qualified professional to highlight any issues that could cost you money in the future. Surveys may not be compulsory, but they're a really good idea.

How do I arrange a survey?
The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors can help put you in touch with a qualified surveyor in your area. Find out more at https://www.rics.org/uk/

Stamp Duty

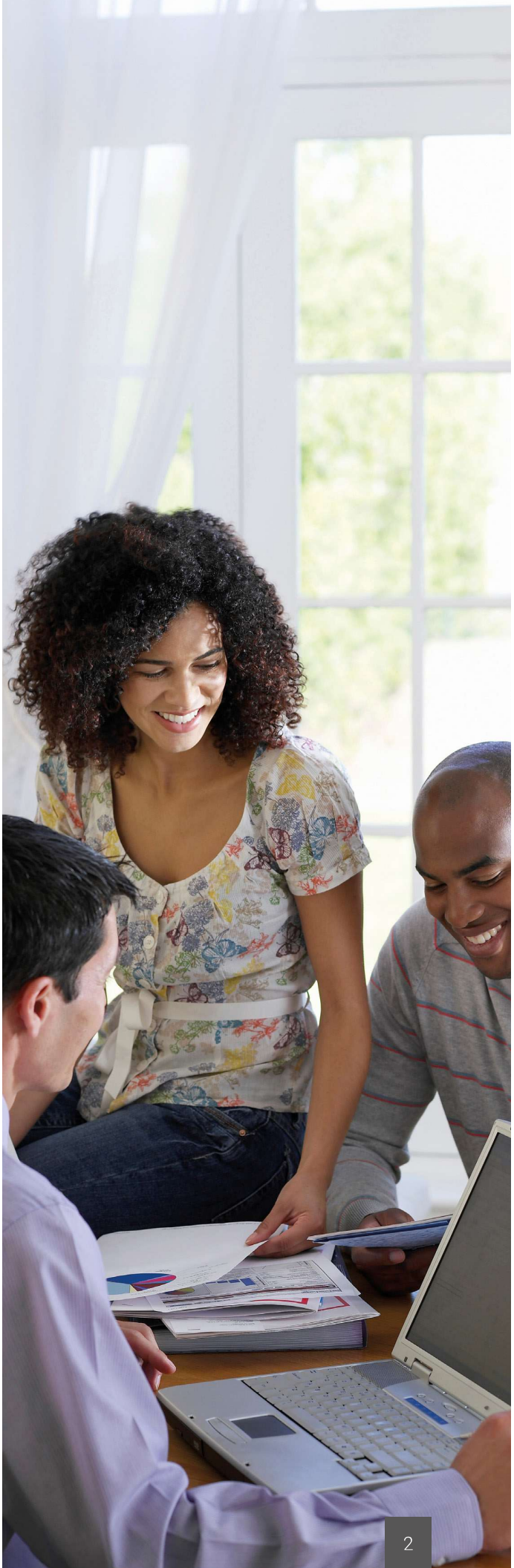
What is Stamp Duty?
Stamp Duty is a tax that you may have to pay when buying a home. The higher the purchase price of a property, the more stamp duty you will pay. Furthermore, if the property you are buying is a Buy-to-Let or second home the stamp duty increases further. The thresholds for Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) change periodically, so please visit the gov.uk site or speak to us to find out more.

It's important to know that different types of Stamp Duty taxation take place in England, Wales and Scotland. To find out more about the arrangement, you can visit the respective websites to find out more:

England
https://www.gov.uk/stamp-duty-land-tax/residential-property-rates

Wales
https://gov.wales/land-transaction-tax-guide

Scotland
https://www.gov.scot/policies/taxes/land-and-buildings-transaction-tax/



Legal fees

Do I need to hire a solicitor?
You'll need a solicitor or a licensed conveyancer to handle all the legal aspects of your home sale or purchase. Licensed conveyancers could work out cheaper than solicitors, although they're not qualified to deal with complex legal issues. Ask family or friends for recommendations.

Why do I have to pay legal fees?
Buying a property can be complex, and legal advice may help you avoid problems. Solicitors and conveyancers check for any planning issues that could affect you and register your ownership of the property. There are likely fees for this, which the solicitor will itemise in your bill.

When it comes to the fees involved
It's a good idea to get quotes from different firms – check whether the price includes VAT, search fees and Land Registry fees, so you can compare like for like.

Are there any other legal costs?
If your solicitor has to do any additional work because of your personal circumstances, they might charge you for it. For example, if you're buying with a family member or friend who isn't your partner, a solicitor might recommend that you set up a deed of trust. This would establish what would happen if one of you wanted to move out or sell their share. If this is an issue for you, your solicitor will explain.

What's a money transfer fee?
Most lenders charge a fee for transferring the mortgage money you've borrowed to your solicitor, so that the solicitor can complete your property purchase, this is often also combined into the final fees paid to your solicitor.

Insurance

What is buildings insurance?
It covers you for any damage to the structure of the building that could affect its value, and most lenders won't offer you a mortgage until you show you've got it. Some lenders may provide a quote to arrange the cover for you, but you can get the insurance from any provider. Buildings insurance usually covers permanent fixtures as well, like fitted kitchens and bathrooms.

How much buildings cover do I need?
You need to make sure the policy would pay out enough money to rebuild the property if it was destroyed. That's not the same as the price you pay for the property. The Association of British Insurers provides a calculator to help you work out the cover you need.

When do I need to arrange buildings insurance?
Your buildings cover needs to start on the date you exchange contracts – not the day you move in. If you're buying a freehold property, you need to arrange the insurance. The freeholder usually arranges it for leasehold properties, and bills it to you each year. Your solicitor will confirm this.

What about contents insurance?
This covers you for loss or damage to your personal possessions, valuables and furniture. The exact cover varies by policy, and many providers let you choose cover that suits your needs. It's not compulsory, but contents cover is there to help protect you from a number of unforeseen circumstances (cover is subject to providers criteria).

Do I need to get life insurance?
This isn't a condition of getting a mortgage, but you should consider it. Life insurance could help to cover your mortgage debt if you die or become seriously / critically ill, meaning that your loved ones potentially won't have to worry about losing their home. Speak to us to find out more about life insurance and we can run through some cover options that are applicable to your circumstances.

Deposit, mortgage costs and broker fees

Deposit
The amount of deposit you will need is dependent upon many variables, including how much you are seeking to borrow, the property you are buying and your own circumstances. There may also be options of Government assistance schemes available for certain segments of the market to encourage growth, such as for First Time Buyers, for example.

Fees and charges
Some mortgages require a fee to be paid, sometimes upfront or as part of the mortgage itself, we will explain this to you in detail before proceeding with anything. As well as this, there may be fees for mortgage advice too, all of which will be explained up front before proceeding.

Estate agent fees (if you're selling)

How much will it cost?
Whether selling your home via a high-street estate agent or an online service, it's highly likely that you will need to pay a fee for the service. The pricing is often calculated as a percentage or the sale price, or a flat fee for the sale. Make sure that the quote you receive is clear about whether VAT is included, as this can represent a considerable extra charge if not already included within your quote.

Costs to think about for moving day

Removal company

Do I need a removals company?
If you don't have heavy furniture, then hiring a self-drive van could be good value. Just make sure you have friends or family willing to lend a hand for the full day. For light removals, a man-with-a-van service is likely to be cheaper than a removals company, while professional movers will make light work of transporting large amounts of furniture and valuables. In either case, check the mover is insured so that your possessions are covered if they're damaged in transit.

How do I choose a removals company?
Aside from asking friends or family for recommendations for a good remover, the National Guild of Removers (recognised by the Removals Ombudsmen) has a useful website search facility to find an approved local remover – simply search at http://www.ngrs.co.uk/

Temporary storage

What if I need to store possessions before moving in?
It's sometimes worth thinking about a temporary storage facility for any belongings should you be unable to move them all into your new home on the date of exchange. Prices can vary widely, so it's advisable to shop around online and in local directories to find storage suppliers who can accommodate everything you've got to store for a competitive price.

Redirecting your mail

Cost of redirecting mail
The Royal Mail do a service to redirect mail to your new address, which comes at a cost however. The service is based on people living at an address with the same surname, so if you do live with someone who has a different surname, they'll need to pay separately. The latest price options can be found at https://www.royalmail.com/personal/receiving-mail/redirection

Move-out clean

Do I have to pay for a deep clean?
If you're currently renting, check what your tenancy agreement says about cleaning the property when you leave. Your landlord or letting agent might insist that you use its preferred cleaners, or you might have to hire your own.

What else should I do?
Either way, check the cleaners have done their job as agreed, and take pictures as proof. If you're using your own cleaner, get a printed receipt as confirmation the work has been done. This is vital, as not having proof could affect how much of your initial deposit you get back (renters).

Settling in to your new home

What about furniture costs?
Have a think about anything you'll need to buy straight away, especially if you're a first-time buyer. Settling into your new home is much easier when you have a comfortable place to sleep, eat or relax. Consider second-hand furniture if your budget is tight, rather than potentially expensive buy-now-pay-later deals.

Will I have utilities, broadband and TV?
Before you move, check which services are available at your new home, and contact providers for quotes. It's best to start planning this as soon as you have a completion date confirmed, as there may be a waiting list to get connected.

How do I find out about council tax?
Check with the local authority to find out what your council tax charge will be, as it may be significantly different from how much you currently pay – especially if you're moving to a new local authority area or a larger property.

For homes in England and Wales, you can check your Council tax bands here - https://www.gov.uk/council-tax-bands and for properties in Scotland, visit https://www.mygov.scot/council-tax/working-out-your-council-tax

Any other fees to get ready for?
If you buy a leasehold property, you might be responsible for ground rent and maintenance costs. Your solicitor should confirm these costs before you commit to the purchase.

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There may be a fee for mortgage advice. The precise amount will depend upon your circumstances and will be agreed with you before proceeding, but we estimate it will be £450.

The information contained within this brochure is subject to the UK regulatory regime and is therefore targeted at consumers based in the UK.

Your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage.

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