

Hints For Homebuyers[®]

Finding A Title Company

(NAPSA)—Closing your loan—or going to settlement, as it is often called—varies from state to state, and even within the same county or city. Settlements may be conducted by lenders, title insurance companies, escrow companies, real estate brokers or attorneys for the buyer or seller.

Many states give buyers the right to select the closing company. You are free to use whichever title or escrow company you prefer; you do not have to use the one recommended by your real estate agent or lender. In fact, you may save money by shopping for your settlement or title agent.

The title company works to make sure the transaction goes smoothly. This includes such services as: working with the lender to pay off old mortgages; fixing any problems with the title; obtaining information on taxes and other fees needed at closing; acting as an escrow agent; and acting as a third party in the transaction.

Remember, whether you're purchasing your first home or your fifth, the day of closing should be a time of celebration. While you're busy packing, ordering phone service and scheduling movers, it's comforting to know that skilled title professionals are busy working behind the scenes to make sure your closing runs smoothly.

The American Land Title Association (ALTA) provides a searchable database of ALTA member companies which can conduct your settlement. To learn more, visit the Consumer Information section of www.alta.org.