

8 STEPS TO A SMOOTH GLOBAL TRANSACTION

If you're a foreign buyer who's looking to purchase property in Florida, there are a few things you should consider to facilitate a smoother transaction.

1. CONSIDER HOW TO BUY. You can purchase the property as an individual or through a legal entity such as a limited liability corporation (LLC). If you choose an LLC, it could protect the property from estate and gift taxes and limit liability if an accident occurs. But every situation is different. Consult a tax attorney before making a final decision.

2. DECIDE HOW TO PAY. Do you plan to obtain a mortgage or pay cash? You may find U.S. lenders charge foreign buyers a higher interest rate and require a downpayment of 30% or more.

3. LEARN HOW TO SEARCH. While it is common in some countries to use a different agent to visit each potential property, in the United States all Realtors® have access to a Multiple Listing Service and can take you to any home included in the MLS.

4. PREPARE FOR THE PROCESS. Buying a home in the U.S. is a deliberative process that can take 30 days, on average, from the time you make an offer. Expect the process to be longer if obtaining financing.

5. INVESTIGATE CLOSING COSTS. In addition to purchase price, buyers of U.S. properties face costs such as title search and title insurance, and legal and recording fees that can add anywhere from 1.5% to 3% to the final cost.

6. UNDERSTAND THE RESTRICTIONS ON YOUR STAYS. The amount of time you can stay in the U.S. varies by your country of origin. Also, residents of select countries, including Canada, do not need visas to visit the U.S. For more information on the rules, go to travel.state.gov

7. CONSIDER A REMOTE CLOSING. Many countries now offer the ability to do closings through remote online notarization. Please consult your title company for options.

8. RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF AN EXPERIENCED REALTOR. Consider working with an agent who specializes in international sales. Often these agents have a team of experts—including a tax attorney, international lawyer and international accountant—who can help smooth the process of buying and owning a home in the U.S.



FloridaRealtors®
The Voice for Real Estate® in Florida

Sources: National Association of Realtors®, Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Department of State