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FRISCO · PLANO · MCKINNEY · ALLEN · PROSPER · CELINA · DALLAS

The DFW Buyer's Guide

— Fall 2026 —

What homes cost right now, how Texas buying actually works, and where builder incentives can lower your monthly payment — explained in plain English.

Javed Memon, Realtor®
eXp Realty

FREE GUIDE · FALL 2026 EDITION

START HERE

A short note before you start touring homes

Buying in Dallas–Fort Worth does not have to feel rushed, confusing, or overpriced.

Two years ago, buyers in DFW were often competing the same weekend a home hit the market. That is not the market we are in today. Homes are taking longer to sell, there are more sellers than buyers in Dallas right now, and builders are offering incentives they did not need to offer before. Prepared buyers have real leverage — if they know where it is.

That is what this guide is for. It covers the numbers that matter, the suburbs most buyers ask me about, how builder incentives work, what your payment is really made of, and the Texas-specific steps — the option period and earnest money — that out-of-state buyers often miss.

No pressure and no sales pitch in these pages. Read it, mark what applies to you, and call or text me when you want the current, local version of any number in here. Incentives and listings change weekly; a conversation is how you get this week's.

— Javed Memon, Realtor®, eXp Realty

Serving Frisco, Plano, McKinney, Allen, Prosper, Celina, Dallas, and greater DFW.

How to use this guide

Start with the market snapshot on the next page, compare suburbs by commute and budget, then read the money and timeline chapters before you tour. Bring your questions — that is the point.

The DFW market right now

~$390K	58 days	More sellers
Median home price across DFW, Fall 2026	Average time on market — time to compare, not just react	Than buyers in Dallas right now — negotiation room has returned

What this means for you as a buyer

You can ask for things again. With homes averaging 58 days on market, sellers are more open to repairs, closing-cost help, rate-buydown credits, and flexible timelines than they were when bidding wars set the tone.

The list price is a starting point. Around a ~$390K metro median, the right offer depends on the specific home, its days on market, and what comparable homes nearby actually sold for — not on a metro average. Get the local comparison before you offer.

Builders are competing too. New-construction communities are using incentives to win buyers. Chapter 3 explains how those offers work and why the deadline on them matters as much as the headline.

Preparation still wins. Leverage does not replace a strong pre-approval. Sellers negotiate best with buyers who can close cleanly and on time.

Pick the corridor first, then the city

DFW is vast, and your daily commute will shape your life more than a floor plan will. Compare each area on the same three facts: price tier, the age and style of the housing stock, and the commute character. Check school ratings and attendance boundaries directly in Texas Education Agency report cards, because zones change.

Frisco

HIGHER PRICE TIER · DALLAS NORTH TOLLWAY

Predominantly newer construction in master-planned communities, plus townhomes. Commuting runs mainly down the Dallas North Tollway toward Plano and Dallas job centers. In the current market, roughly $500K–$700K opens Frisco townhomes, with $700K and above opening more single-family and new-construction choice.

Plano

MID-UPPER TO HIGHER TIER · US-75 AND TOLLWAY

An established suburb with mature trees and a housing stock largely built from the 1970s through the 2000s, mostly brick single-family homes, with newer pockets in the west. Two major corridors — US-75 and the Tollway — plus the Legacy employment area inside the city itself.

McKinney

MID TO MID-UPPER TIER · US-75, NORTH

A mix of a historic downtown core with older homes and large newer master-planned communities on the west side. It sits further north on US-75, so the Dallas commute is longer — and the same budget generally stretches to more home than in Frisco or Plano.

Allen

MID-UPPER TIER · US-75

Established neighborhoods on the east side and newer construction to the west, mostly brick single-family homes. Allen sits on US-75 between Plano and McKinney, giving it a shorter Dallas commute than the cities further north, at a price tier broadly comparable to McKinney and Plano.

Prosper

HIGHER PRICE TIER · TOLLWAY EXTENSION, NORTH OF FRISCO

One of the newest housing stocks in this comparison — large master-planned communities and larger lots, still actively building out. Commuting runs south via the Dallas North Tollway extension and Preston Road.

Expect $700K and above to be the common entry point for single-family new construction.

Celina

EMERGING TIER · NORTH OF PROSPER

The growth frontier of the six: new construction dominates, communities are still being built, and entry prices have generally run below comparable new homes in Prosper and Frisco. The trade-off is distance — the longest Dallas commute of the group today, in an area that is changing quickly.

A simple way to decide

- Start with the office. Map the real commute at rush hour, not on a Sunday. A 25-minute weekend drive can become 55 minutes on a Tuesday.
- Then set the budget band. Roughly, $500K–$700K opens Plano, Allen, McKinney, and Frisco townhomes; $700K and above opens more Frisco, Prosper, and new-construction choice.
- Then choose new build or resale. New builds bring incentives and warranties; resale brings established lots and mature trees, with roof and HVAC age to budget for in Texas heat.
- Drive the toll roads. If your commute uses the Tollway or Sam Rayburn Tollway daily, get a TollTag and factor tolls into the monthly math.

Not sure which corridor fits?
Tell me where you work and your budget, and I will narrow this to two or three areas worth touring — before you spend a weekend driving all six.

Builder incentives can beat a price cut

When builders need to move homes, they frequently offer money in forms other than a lower price: a rate buydown, closing-cost help, or included upgrades. For many buyers, those are worth more per month than the same dollars off the price.

How a rate buydown works

A 2/1 buydown lowers your interest rate by two percentage points in year one and one point in year two, then moves to the note rate. A 3/2/1 buydown steps down three, two, then one point over the first three years. The builder or seller funds the difference into an escrow account. Your payment starts lower and steps up on a schedule you can plan for — it does not change the price of the home.

Closing-cost help works differently: the builder credits money at closing toward lender, title, and prepaid costs, reducing the cash you need to bring. Some builders tie the best incentives to using their affiliated lender — always compare that offer against an outside quote.

The part most buyers miss

Incentives change weekly and carry contract deadlines. An offer available this week may expire, shrink, or be replaced next week, and it may apply only to specific homes or communities. That is why this guide does not print a specific rate as a promise — any rate printed here would be out of date before you finished reading.

Ask me for this week's builder incentive list

Text INCENTIVES to 646-288-3845 and I will send the current offers I am tracking across DFW builders — with their deadlines.

You do not need 20% down

The 20% rule is the most common myth I hear from first-time buyers. It is one option — not a requirement.

At a high level, buyers commonly use conventional loans with as little as 3%–5% down for qualified borrowers, Federal Housing Administration (FHA) loans with a lower down payment, and — for eligible veterans and service members — VA loans, as well as USDA loans in eligible areas. Each option prices the loan differently, and lower down payments usually add mortgage insurance. Your lender will compare the total cost of each path for your situation; this chapter is education, not financial advice.

Closing costs, in plain terms

- Lender costs: origination, appraisal, and credit-related fees.
- Title costs: title insurance and closing services — in Texas, the seller customarily pays for the owner's title policy, and the buyer pays for the lender's policy.
- Prepaids and escrows: property taxes and homeowner's insurance collected up front to start your escrow account.

What your monthly payment is really made of

Part	What it covers
Principal and interest	The loan itself — the part most online calculators focus on.
Property taxes	Texas has no state income tax, but DFW effective property tax rates run roughly 1.8%–2.2%. On a $500K home, that is about $750–$900 a month. File for the homestead exemption after closing — it is not automatic.
Homeowner's insurance	Texas premiums run high due to hail, wind, and tornado exposure. Price insurance early — it changes affordability.
HOA dues, if any	Common in master-planned communities. Ask for the amount before you offer.

Judge a home by the full monthly payment — principal, interest, taxes, insurance, and HOA together — not by the sale price alone.

One boundary worth stating plainly: the tax notes in this chapter are general facts about how Texas property taxes work, not tax advice. For anything specific to your own situation — exemptions, timing, or how a purchase affects your taxes — talk to a tax CPA; that is their lane, not your agent's.

From pre-approval to keys, the Texas way

1 **Get pre-approved, not just pre-qualified**
A pre-approval with verified income and assets is what DFW sellers take seriously. Do this before you tour, so your budget and payment are real numbers.

2 **Tour with a plan**
Narrow to a corridor first, then tour a focused set of homes. Drive the commute at rush hour for any finalist.

3 **Make the offer**
Price, closing date, and terms are set against recent comparable sales and the home's days on market — not the list price alone.

4 **Option period and earnest money — the Texas part**
Texas contracts include an option period: you pay a small option fee (often $100–$500) for the unrestricted right to terminate within the agreed days, typically 7–10. That is your inspection window. Earnest money is typically about 1% of the price and generally goes hard after the option period ends — know that date.

5 **Inspection**
Hire your own inspector during the option period, and get a survey. Texas sellers are not required to fix anything — the inspection is your information, and your leverage to renegotiate or exit while the option period is open.

6 **Appraisal**
Your lender orders an appraisal. If it comes in below the contract price, you and the seller renegotiate, you cover the gap, or you use the protections written into your contract.

7 **Closing**
Final walkthrough, signing at the title company, funding, and keys. Then file your homestead exemption — the deadline is April 30 of the year after you buy.

The relocation quick checklist

8–12 weeks out: the money

- Get pre-approved with a lender who knows Texas contracts.
- Budget for Texas property taxes (roughly 1.8%–2.2%) in the monthly payment.
- Get 2–3 homeowner's insurance quotes early.
- Plan to file the homestead exemption after closing.

6–8 weeks out: the corridor

- Map where the office really is; pick a corridor before a city.
- Match budget to corridor — $500K–$700K opens Plano, Allen, McKinney, and Frisco townhomes.
- Check schools directly in TEA report cards and confirm the exact attendance zone.
- Compare new build (incentives) against resale (established lots, roof and HVAC age).

4 weeks out: visit with a plan

- Home-finding trip: 2–3 days, 8–12 homes maximum.
- Drive the real commute at rush hour.
- Get a TollTag and budget for tolls if you will commute on toll roads.
- For finalists, check the FEMA flood map and ask about foundation history — Texas clay soil moves.

Under contract and after arrival

- Always take the option period; get an inspection and a survey.
- Set up electric (shop plans on PowerToChoose.org), water, gas, and internet.
- Texas gives new residents 90 days for driver's license and plates — vehicle inspection first.
- File the homestead exemption and update voter registration.

Relocating well is mostly sequencing: money first, corridor second, touring third.

NEXT STEP

Ready to buy in DFW?

Start with a conversation. Tell me your budget, your timeline, and where you work or want to live. I will tell you plainly which areas fit, what your full monthly payment looks like, and whether a new build or a resale home is the better buy for you right now.

And if a builder incentive could lower your payment, I will show you the current list — not last month's.

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Instagram: @javedmemonrealtor — DM me anytime

This week's builder incentive list

Text INCENTIVES to 646-288-3845 and I will send the DFW builder offers I am tracking this week, with deadlines.

Market figures are a Fall 2026 snapshot and change over time; builder incentives change weekly and are subject to builder terms and contract deadlines.