

# 10 Things That Can Improve Your Escrow Experience

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Escrow — that exchange of information, legal documents, and money between a buyer and seller in a real estate transaction — has always been a mystery to those who don't consider it their profession. And, in fact, most buyers and sellers treat it that way — something they don't need to understand since escrow professionals are “taking care of things.” However, a little know-how can really pay-off in overcoming snags that can derail your closing or in helping you ensure escrow closes as quickly as possible. As a leader with the California Escrow Association, a statewide organization that certifies escrow officers and provides continuing education, we are offering 10 tips on what you can do to improve the escrow process.

**1. Turn in your paperwork promptly.**

A lot depends on your information and it's usually a mad-dash to the finish for the escrow team. Help them keep on track.

**2. Provide the names, addresses, and account numbers of any loans or liens against your property or you personally.**

This one preliminary step that can save mountains of time.

**3. Make sure your lender orders the appraisal within 10-15 days.**

Much past that and the escrow may have to be extended or cancelled.

**4. Know how you want to list your title, such as joint tenancy.**

Your accountant or attorney can advise you on the tax and legal consequences of each option.

**5. If applicable, provide homeowner's association information to your escrow officer as soon as possible.**

An association adds an extra step, so it's smart to get a head start.

**6. Check into homeowner's insurance**

You should check into this before you even decide to purchase a particular home. It will help keep the green lights on throughout the process.

**7. Have funds ready.**

Your escrow officer will be able to give you an estimate of your costs just prior to closing.

**8. Don't seek additional credit or loans during this period.**

That's a red flag for lenders.

**9. Don't change jobs.**

Another red flag. Your income stream must be secure and have a history.

**10. Rely on a reputable realtor and certified escrow agent.**

They'll know the ropes, and will do everything possible to keep your escrow on schedule. To learn more about what certifications escrow agents should acquire, log onto [www.ceaescrow.org](http://www.ceaescrow.org).

For more tips visit the California Escrow Association Web site at <http://www.ceaescrow.org>.

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