



## A guide to first time buyer mortgages

**Having the opportunity to enter the realms of home ownership is important for most people – and everyone has to start somewhere.**

Just as an athlete prepares for an event, there are a number of things that you can do to get ‘mortgage fit’ and ready for your first foot on the property ladder.

If you are a first time buyer and need mortgage advice, then we’ve prepared a brief guide on what to think about, what to do and what to avoid when it comes to buying your first property.



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## Roll on

A really simple way to boost your credit score is ensuring that you're on the electoral roll.

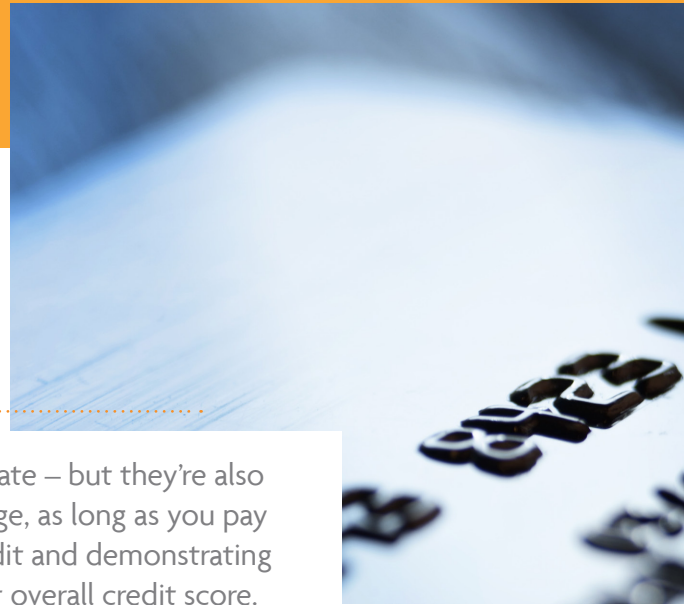
Identity verification is the cornerstone for credit agencies. Lenders want to make sure that the people they are considering lending to really are who they say they are.

If you want to make sure that you're on it or that your details are correct, then get in touch with your local authority. If you know that you're not registered then you can do so by visiting [www.gov.uk/get-on-electoral-register](http://www.gov.uk/get-on-electoral-register).

02

## Credit cards aren't always as bad as you think

Credit cards are often the source of negative debate – but they're also a useful tool when it comes to securing a mortgage, as long as you pay them back. Not only that, but also buying on credit and demonstrating that you can pay it back actually strengthens your overall credit score.



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## Cut your plastic, not your chances of borrowing

Do you have any unused credit cards sitting at the back of your wallet or purse? Whilst you may feel slightly righteous that you've not racked up a balance, lenders may interpret this as you having too much credit at your disposal. If you do have any 'empty plastic', we'd suggest that you cut them, cancel them and then check your credit file to make sure that the changes have been logged.



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## Be careful with your credit

Just because you have a credit limit of £12,000 doesn't mean you need to spend £12,000 on credit. At least that's the view of lenders, who would typically prefer your overall credit card debt to be no more than 50% of the amount available (the lower the better).

When it comes to credit card debt, then it's better to pay it off – however don't leave yourself with zero debt and huge credit limits; lenders worry that you may one day go on a huge spending spree!

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## Be diligent with your admin

We've all had accounts that we don't use and rather than close them down, we've simply cut the associated cards up and thought that that was it.

Having multiple bank accounts open with nothing in them isn't advisable, especially if the details attributable to those accounts are out of date and could be disadvantageous to you.

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## Run your own credit check

Running a simple check to ensure you fit the criteria and are made aware of anything that could affect your mortgage application six months prior to house hunting isn't a bad thing. It's much better to know where you stand and have the opportunity to fix any issues in advance of starting the buying process than finding out when you've already invested time, energy and emotion in finding your first property. You can access your credit file for free at [www.creditkarma.co.uk](http://www.creditkarma.co.uk).

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## Know how credit scoring works

The process of credit checking is often misunderstood. Essentially, the more times your credit record is checked over a short space of time, the more imprints are left on your file and the more likely it is that you will be perceived as a) struggling to find credit, or b) finding it difficult to meet your existing arrangements. If you are going to have your file checked then make sure it's up to date. If there is anything in there that could negatively influence a lender's decision then ensure that there is a 'notice of correction' - a brief explanation as to why a record has been logged – so that your prospective lender has a full picture.







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## Use your landline

Pretty much everyone has a mobile phone these days. In fact, can anyone remember what we did before they became an everyday essential? But do you have a landline, too? When it comes to credit, landlines provide greater reassurance to lenders than mobile phones for obvious reasons. When you apply for credit, use your landline on any documentation or application, as well as your mobile.

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## Don't let the past affect your future

Joint current accounts, loans and other commitments carry joint responsibility. If you're linked to any of these via an ex-partner – and the ex-partner has defaulted on a payment or done something that would have a negative consequence - then you're going to be affected, too.

The best way forward in this instance is to check if you're still linked in any way and, if you are, get yourself disassociated.

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## Don't apply for credit just before you apply for a mortgage

The more credit searches you have on your file in a short space of time, the more chance a lender has of thinking you're in desperate need of credit – even if you're not. We would advise that you get a mortgage before you get the new car!

## 11 Be ready for estate agents

Let's face it, nobody wants to have their time wasted. Estate agents need buyers who are ready to go and know what they want. So, before you enter an estate agent's premises, try and get confirmation that the finance is in place and establish exactly what it is you're looking for. These are things that can be done well in advance and are down to you, not the estate agent. By doing this, you'll make sure that you're the first port of call when a new property comes on to the market.

## 12 Moving can be expensive

When establishing your budget you need to factor in EVERYTHING. Whilst the property itself will be the highest cost, don't forget to factor in stamp duty, legal checks and surveys. Your solicitor (another cost) will handle this for you but make sure you've budgeted for all costs before you get too far down line only to realise that what you thought was affordable no longer is. We can give you guidance on these costs to make the whole process simpler for you.

## 13 Find a reputable mortgage broker

Mortgage broker advice is invaluable – particularly advice from a professional mortgage brokerage. Firstly, their advice is crucial as they have access to a wide range of lenders and thousands of deals on the market. Secondly, it's their job! As a result, they know what they're doing and this means that they are likely to find a mortgage that ticks all your boxes quicker than you can. Our only advice when it comes to mortgage brokers (although hopefully you'll choose to work with us) is to make sure that they are FCA regulated, which of course Complete Mortgages is and that they offer exceptional service, not just at the beginning of the house-buying process, but on an ongoing basis too. Our customers vouch for the service that Complete Mortgages provide, time and time again.



If you're a first time buyer that's thinking of applying for a mortgage, or if you've been struggling to get a mortgage, contact the Complete Mortgages team on **01483 238280** or email **info@complete-mortgages.co.uk**.

There will be a fee for arranging your mortgage and the precise amount will depend upon your circumstances. This fee will typically be £399.00 and is payable upon application.

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