Gold Lion
Mortgages Inc.

A GOLD LION CHECKLIST

The 10-Point Mortgage Readiness Checklist

Everything to have lined up before you apply — so your approval goes smoothly and nothing slows you down

When the bank says no, we find a way.

(587) 740-0048

goldlionmortgages.com

> The smoothest mortgages start long before the offer. Work through these ten points and you will walk into your application ready, organized, and hard to say no to. Tick each box.

1 Know your credit

Your credit score and history shape what rates and lenders are open to you.

- [ ] Pull your own credit report (free through Equifax or TransUnion — checking your own does not hurt your score)
- [ ] Confirm there are no errors, old accounts, or surprises sitting on it
- [ ] Make every payment on time, especially in the months before you apply
- [ ] Avoid opening new loans or credit cards right before applying

A higher score opens up the most competitive options. A lower score does not shut the door — there are lenders for a wide range of credit profiles — but the cleaner the file, the better the terms.

2 Sort out your down payment — and where it comes from

Lenders care how much you are putting down and where the money came from.

- [ ] Know your minimum: in Canada it is 5% on the first $500,000 of the price, and 10% on the portion above $500,000
- [ ] Have the funds sitting in your account and visible
- [ ] Be ready to show a **90-day history** of the money (lenders trace it to confirm it is yours and not undisclosed borrowed funds)

3 Understand the gift rules (if family is helping)

A gifted down payment is common and completely allowed — with the right paperwork.

- [ ] The gift must come from an immediate family member
- [ ] You will need a signed **gift letter** stating the money is a true gift with no repayment expected
- [ ] Be ready to show the funds landing in your account
- [ ] The giver may be asked to show the money came from their own resources

Get the gift letter signed early — it is a small step that often holds up a file at the last minute.

4 Gather your income documents (by how you earn)

This is where most delays happen. Pull the right stack for your situation:

If you are employed (salary or hourly):

- [ ] Recent pay stubs
- [ ] A job letter from your employer
- [ ] Last 2 years' T4s (and NOAs if you have other income)

If you are self-employed:

- [ ] Last 2 years' Notice of Assessment (NOA) and T1 General returns
- [ ] Business financial statements (if incorporated)
- [ ] Last 6–12 months of business bank statements
- [ ] Proof your taxes are filed and nothing is owing to the CRA

If you earn commission, bonus, or overtime:

- [ ] Last 2 years' T4s and NOAs (lenders usually average this income over two years)

The path to qualifying differs by lender — A-lenders, B-lenders, and private all read income differently — so having every document ready lets us match you to the best fit fast.

5 Add up your debts and know your ratios — in plain terms

Lenders measure whether you can comfortably carry the mortgage using two numbers:

- **GDS (Gross Debt Service):** the share of your monthly income that goes to housing — mortgage, property tax, heat, and condo fees.
- **TDS (Total Debt Service):** the same, plus all your other monthly debt payments — car loans, credit cards, lines of credit, student loans.

A-lenders generally want these ratios within set limits (around 39% GDS and 44% TDS). B-lenders allow more room — up to roughly 50/50. To put yourself in the best position:

- [ ] List every monthly debt payment you have
- [ ] Pay down or pay off high balances where you can (credit cards especially)
- [ ] Avoid taking on a new car loan or big purchase right before applying

Every dollar of monthly debt you clear frees up room to borrow more for the home.

6 Get a real pre-approval — and know how it differs from a rate hold

These two get mixed up constantly.

- [ ] A **rate hold** locks a rate for a set window (often up to 120 days) so you are protected if rates rise. It does not verify your income or credit.
- [ ] A **pre-approval** is the deeper one — we review your documents, confirm what you can afford, and tell you your realistic price range before you shop.

A proper pre-approval makes your offer stronger and means fewer surprises later. Get pre-approved before you start house-hunting in earnest.

7 Have your deposit ready

The deposit is not the same as your down payment.

- [ ] When your offer is accepted, you provide a deposit (often a certified cheque or bank draft) within days to show you are serious
- [ ] Keep these funds liquid and ready to move quickly
- [ ] The deposit later counts toward your total down payment

8 Budget for closing costs

Beyond the down payment, set aside money for the costs of closing.

- [ ] Plan for roughly **1.5% to 4% of the purchase price** for closing costs
- [ ] This covers legal fees, title insurance, an appraisal if required, and adjustments
- [ ] In Alberta there is no land transfer tax, but you will pay smaller land title registration fees on the property and the mortgage
- [ ] Keep this money separate from your down payment so it is not a scramble at the end

9 Keep your file steady until closing

Once you are approved, do not rock the boat.

- [ ] Do not change jobs, quit, or go from salaried to self-employed before closing
- [ ] Do not make large purchases on credit
- [ ] Do not move large sums of money around without telling us
- [ ] Keep paying every bill on time

Lenders can re-check your file right up to closing day. Stability keeps the deal safe.

10 Get a broker in your corner early

The earlier you bring in a mortgage broker, the more we can do for you.

- [ ] Talk to us before you start shopping, not after you have an offer
- [ ] We pull your credit once and shop your file to many lenders — instead of you applying everywhere and dinging your score
- [ ] We spot issues early, while there is still time to fix them
- [ ] We match you to the lender most likely to approve you on the best terms your situation allows

A bank can only offer you its own products. We work across A-lenders, B-lenders, and private to find the one that fits you.

1 Ready to get started?

Run through this list, gather what you can, and reach out. Even if you are months away from buying, an early conversation puts you in the strongest possible position.

Let's find your path.

Have a question after reading this, or just want to talk it through? A quick conversation usually clears things up fast — no pressure, no obligation.

(587) 740-0048

goldlionmortgages.com

Surinderpal Singh · Mortgage Broker

When the bank says no, we find a way.

Powered by MCC Elevo Mortgages, Member of DLCG.