

FREE HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE

THE BUY-BEFORE-YOU-SELL GUIDE

How to buy your next home before you sell the one you're in — without moving twice, and without a contingent offer that loses.

You found the next house. The problem is that your down payment is sitting inside the one you live in — and the seller won't wait for you to sell it.

That's the most common move-up problem in Orange County, and most buyers only hear about one or two ways out of it. There are five. Each one trades something different.

YOUR FIVE OPTIONS

OPTION	HOW IT WORKS	WATCH OUT FOR
Sell first, then buy	Sell your home, move into a rental, then buy with your equity in hand.	Moving twice. Months of rent and storage. The house you wanted may be gone.
Contingent offer	Your offer depends on your current home selling first.	In competitive neighborhoods, contingent offers often lose to buyers who don't need one.
HELOC on your current home	Open a home equity line <i>before</i> you list, and use it for the new down payment.	Usually has to be opened before your home is listed. You may need to qualify carrying both payments.
Bridge loan MOST FLEXIBLE	A short-term loan against your current home's equity funds the new down payment. When your home sells, the sale repays it.	Costs more than a conventional mortgage, and it's short-term by design — months, not years.
Cross-collateralized bridge	A bridge secured by <i>both</i> homes, which can put more of your combined equity to work.	More complex. You want a broker who has actually structured — and exited — one before.

The right answer depends on your equity, your timeline, and how competitive the house you want is. Most people should compare at least two of these side by side before deciding.



HOW A BRIDGE LOAN WORKS

A bridge doesn't replace your mortgage. It covers the gap between buying the new home and selling the old one — then it disappears.

1

Size your equity

What your home is worth, what you owe, and how much of the difference can be put to work.

2

Make a stronger offer

Your down payment is ready, so your offer doesn't have to depend on selling first.

3

Move, then sell

List your old home empty, clean, and staged — on your schedule, not a seller's deadline.

4

The sale pays it off

Proceeds repay the bridge. You're left with one long-term mortgage on the home you actually wanted.

WHAT IT COSTS

A bridge is a short-term tool, and it's priced like one. Expect:

- ◆ A higher rate than a 30-year conventional loan
- ◆ Origination fees and third-party costs — appraisal, title, escrow
- ◆ Monthly interest carried until your home sells, often interest-only

The honest comparison isn't bridge vs. nothing. It's bridge vs. **two moves, months of rent, storage — or losing the house.** Ask for the total cost in writing and put it next to those numbers.

IS IT RIGHT FOR YOU?

Usually a good fit if:

- ✓ You have meaningful equity in your current home
- ✓ Your home should sell within a reasonable window
- ✓ You can comfortably carry costs for a few months
- ✓ You're competing where contingent offers lose

Probably not if:

- ✗ Your equity is thin
- ✗ Your home would be hard to sell quickly
- ✗ There's no cushion for a few months of overlap

SHORTEN THE OVERLAP

Every month you own both homes is a month of carrying cost. Three things keep that window short:

01

Prep before you buy

Repairs, decluttering, and photos lined up in advance, so the old home can list the week you move out.

02

Pick your listing agent early

Decide pricing and launch strategy before you close on the new home — not after.

03

Price to sell, not to test

Overpricing costs you months of carry. The right price usually protects you more than an extra 1%.



GETTING OUT MATTERS AS MUCH AS GETTING IN

A recent Steadfast file

A client came to us holding a short-term bridge secured by two properties — and a deadline to get out of it. We planned the exit before it was urgent: when one property sold, its proceeds plus a cash contribution retired the bridge, and we refinanced the remaining balance into a long-term loan through a wholesale lender.

Funded August 2026. Details shared anonymously. Every scenario is different; results depend on your equity, credit, and property.

Most lenders can tell you how a bridge gets in. Far fewer have planned how it gets out. That exit — the sale, the timing, the long-term loan that replaces it — is the part to ask about first.

SEVEN QUESTIONS TO ASK ANY LENDER

- ◆ How much of my equity can I actually access?
- ◆ What's the term — and what happens if my home hasn't sold by then?
- ◆ Is there a prepayment penalty?
- ◆ What's my monthly carrying cost while I own both homes?
- ◆ How is my new mortgage qualified with the bridge in place?
- ◆ Who is the actual lender, and how many of these have they closed?
- ◆ Can I see every fee, in writing, before I commit?

A good lender answers all seven without hesitating. If any answer is vague, that's your answer.

WANT TO SEE WHICH OPTION FITS YOUR MOVE?

Tell me your current home's address and the one you're considering. I'll lay out your options side by side — the real costs and the real timeline. No cost, no obligation.

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