

How To Own A Home Before You're 30, According To Real Estate Experts

You can do it!

🕒 04/19/2016 12:43 pm ET | Updated 1 day ago

Wanna make that studio apartment into a full-on house?

Many ambitious renters in their 20s are aiming to become [real-deal homeowners](#) by the time they hit 30 years old. And you don't have to be an overachiever in order to join them.

Turns out many of us CAN own a home or apartment by the time we're 30, if we learn how to save and spend properly. We asked some real estate experts how to get in on the game, ASAP. Here are their pro tips.

1. Start saving now.

It may sound obvious, but solid financial planning can make sure you're ready to purchase a home in the future. Jeremy Wacksman, the chief marketing officer at [Zillow](#), recommends setting up automatic transfers to a savings account that's dedicated to your future down payment. While it's tempting to rely on loans, it's best if you fund the down payment yourself. "The more money you can put down, the better," Wacksman says. That way, "you'll be able to obtain a better interest rate, avoid paying mortgage insurance and have a lower monthly mortgage payment."



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2. Watch your credit.

“Poor credit is easily the most common reason why you might be denied a mortgage,” Wacksman says. So pay your bills on time and keep balances below 30 percent of your credit limit, along with these other [key tips](#).

Good credit is especially important if you do decide to go the loan route, says [Roberta Axelrod](#), a sales director with [Time Equities](#). “Many first-time purchasers are going to be taking out loans,” she says. “So make sure your credit is excellent.”

3. Consider buying in a new construction.

Deborah Zolan leads sales at [51 Jay Street](#), a residential warehouse conversion project in Brooklyn, New York. She says that prospective home buyers could find great deals if they’re comfortable buying in a new construction. “With a new development, prices start out at a certain point. If you are involved in the first 15 or 30 percent of the purchases, more likely than not, you’ll get a great deal,” she says. With 51 Jay Street in particular, the property has raised its prices eight times over the past year and a half of filling the building. Getting in early might also give new homebuyers the opportunity to get deals on closing costs.



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4. Be a real estate trendsetter.

If you're flexible in terms of where you live, Zolan says, then homebuyers should look to neighborhoods that are up-and-coming or going through transformations. "This requires doing a lot of due diligence, research and working with a broker who is knowledgeable about up-and-coming neighborhoods," she adds. Prospective homebuyers research should include finding out other new developments planned for the area, both residential and commercial. A Zillow study released earlier this year found that two years after a Trader Joe's store has opened in a given area, the median home within a mile of that store has increased in value 10 percent more than other homes in the same area. That's because Trader Joe's is likely doing a ton of research on finding up-and-coming neighborhoods as it picks places to open new stores.

5. Rent strategically.

Zolan has personal experience with this one. Previously, she was renting in a building in the Dumbo neighborhood of Brooklyn when the developer was reverting the property to condominiums. So she was able to purchase her apartment for what she described as an insider rate, because the developer had to sell a certain number of units quickly. Renting in buildings that could become conversion properties could give potential homebuyers that extra help.

6. Ask family for help.

In Zolan's experience, many first time homebuyers in their late 20s and early 30s have had financial help from family members. "Whether they're single or married, I'm definitely seeing parents helping out," she says.

Axelrod agrees. Accept whatever help you need to get in the game early, she says, so you can start reaping the rewards of home ownership — like some real-estate payments — as soon as possible. "Don't be too proud to ask your parents," Axelrod says. "The sooner you stop spending money on rent... the sooner you're going to get the benefits of home ownership."

And *that* is a sweet deal.

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