2026 EDITION

Things to Consider When
BUYING A HOME

Isaiah Thomas • Realtor

Rates: What You Can Control

Mortgage rates have been volatile — pushed by global uncertainty, inflation, and oil prices. You can't control where rates go, but you can control the rate you qualify for.

SCORE
HIGHER CREDIT = LOWER RATE

LOAN TYPE
CONV., FHA, USDA, VA VARY

TERM
15 / 20 / 30-YR CHANGES RATE

WHAT A RATE DROP SAVES YOU / MONTH

LOAN	7.5%	7.0%	6.5%	6.0%
$250K	$1,748	$1,663	$1,580	**–$249**
$450K	$3,146	$2,994	$2,844	**–$448**
$650K	$4,545	$4,324	$4,108	**–$648**

P&I only; forecasts point to rates holding in the low-to-mid 6% range through 2026. Source: MortgageCalculator.net

3 MYTHS — DEBUNKED

“Rates will crash soon.”
Forecasts show rates holding steady in the low-to-mid 6% range — waiting likely won't pay off.

“There's too much inventory.”
Listings are up 5% YoY, but still ~13% below the normal 2017–2019 market — only 15 states exceed pre-pandemic levels.

“Prices are about to crash.”
Low inventory + rate-locked sellers are keeping prices up in most metros; mild dips are moderation, not a crash.

NEW VS. EXISTING HOMES

Newly built home prices just hit a 5-year low ($422,500 median, down from a $460,300 peak) — and 61% of builders are still offering incentives.

EXISTING HOME	BRAND-NEW HOME
• Wider variety of floor plans • Charm & character • Mature landscaping	• Customizable features • No repairs up front • Energy-efficient by default

TOP 2 BUYER MISTAKES TODAY

01 **Putting off pre-approval.** Get pre-approved before house hunting, or risk missing your shot on the right home.

02 **Buying more than you can afford.** Budget the monthly payment — not the max you qualify for — factoring in taxes & insurance

AFTER YOU APPLY FOR A MORTGAGE — DON'T:

- Change bank accounts
- Apply for new credit or close accounts
- Deposit cash without talking to your lender
- Co-sign a loan for anyone
- Make any large purchases

> **"The best time for prospective buyers is when they find a home that they like, that meets their family's current and foreseeable needs, and that they can afford."**
>
> — ORPHE DIVOUNGUY, SENIOR MACROECONOMIST, ZILLOW HOME LOANS

Buyers say the #1 thing they want from an agent is **help finding the right home** — followed by negotiating and pricing guidance. Questions about today's market or your specific situation? **Let's connect.**

Isaiah Thomas
REALTOR® · Century 21 Signature Real Estate, Iowa