

THE GEORGIA REAL ESTATE
ESSENTIALS SERIES

RELOCATING TO GEORGIA?

A Welcome Guide
for Newcomers



BY THE CORBIN TEAM
RON & ADDISON CORBIN

Relocating to Georgia? A Welcome Guide for Newcomers

Everything you need to know before making Georgia your new home — from neighborhoods to closing day.

The Georgia Real Estate Essentials Series

BY THE CORBIN TEAM

RON & ADDISON CORBIN

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About This Series

The Georgia Real Estate Essentials Series

By The Corbin Real Estate Team – Ron & Addison Corbin

Buying or selling a home in Georgia is a big decision—and for most people, it's the biggest financial move they'll ever make. But too often, the process feels overwhelming, confusing, or just plain frustrating.

That's why we created this book series.

At **The Corbin Real Estate Team**, we've spent years helping Georgia families buy and sell homes with clarity, confidence, and a winning strategy. These books are designed to give you straight answers, practical advice, and a few inside tips—no sales fluff, no confusing jargon.

Each guide in the *Georgia Real Estate Essentials Series* focuses on a specific moment or challenge in your real estate journey. Whether you're buying your first home, prepping for a fast sale, inheriting a property, or recovering from an expired listing, we've got your back.

We wrote these books to:

- Help you make informed, confident real estate decisions
- Show you exactly what to expect at every step
- Share the smart strategies we use every day with our own clients
- And yes—if it feels like a good fit, we'd love the chance to work with you too

This isn't just another real estate guide. It's a Georgia-specific playbook, written by two brokers who live here, work here, and know how to get homes sold in *your* neighborhood.

Let's get to it.

— Ron & Addison Corbin

The Corbin Real Estate Team

Core Real Estate Series – For Every Buyer & Seller

1. **Selling Smart: How to Sell Your Georgia Home Fast & for Top Dollar**
Your complete guide to getting the most for your home—without stress or surprises.
 2. **The Georgia Home Buyer's Handbook: What to Know Before You Buy**
Avoid costly mistakes and buy with confidence in the Peach State.
 3. **Back on the Market: How to Sell Your Georgia Home After It Didn't Sell the First Time**
Learn why your listing expired—and how to get it right the second time around.
 4. **From FSBO to Sold: Why Georgia Homeowners Hire the Right Agent (Eventually)**
The honest truth about going it alone—and what to do when it's not working.
 5. **The Ultimate Guide to Georgia Real Estate: From Search to Sold**
An all-in-one resource for navigating the Georgia market like a pro.
 6. **Smart Moves: How to Time Your Georgia Real Estate Transaction Just Right**
Buy, sell, and relocate with confidence—without the panic, overlap, or missed opportunity.
 7. **The Georgia Land Guide: Buying and Selling Lots, Acreage, and Rural Property the Smart Way**
A practical guide to buying, selling, and evaluating Georgia land—from zoning to perc tests and everything in between.
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Life Events Series – Emotional & Transactional Guidance

8. **Selling Your Georgia Home in a Divorce: A Clear Plan for a Clean Break**
Navigate the legal, emotional, and financial complexities of selling during a split.
 9. **Inherited Property in Georgia: What to Do When You've Inherited a Home**
Probate, prep, pricing, and peace of mind—your guide to selling a home you didn't plan to own.
 10. **Downsizing in Georgia: How to Right-Size Your Life Without the Stress**
Smart steps for selling your current home and moving into a lifestyle that fits.
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Lifestyle-Based Guides

11. **First-Time Buyer in Georgia? Start Here**
Everything a Georgia first-timer needs to know—from financing to keys in hand.
 12. **Your Empty Nest, Your Next Nest: A Georgia Homeowner's Guide**
Guidance for empty nesters ready to sell, relocate, or reimagine their next chapter.
 13. **Relocating to Georgia? A Welcome Guide for Newcomers**
From neighborhoods to contracts—what new residents need to succeed in Georgia.
-



Investor & Upscaler Series

14. Real Estate Investing in Georgia: Buy, Rent, Profit

Learn the Georgia-specific rules, risks, and rewards of building your portfolio.

15. Upgrade Without the Overwhelm: Selling & Buying Simultaneously in Georgia

Juggle both transactions like a pro—without losing your sanity or your equity.



Home Prep & Marketing Mini-Guides

16. Stage, Snap, Sell: Prepping Your Georgia Home for a Hot Market

Declutter, stage, and photograph like the pros—for faster, stronger offers.

17. Real Estate Red Flags: What Georgia Buyers Should Watch For

Avoid costly surprises with a keen eye for common listing issues.

18. Your Home's Secret Value: Small Upgrades, Big Return

Budget-friendly improvements that boost appeal and ROI in Georgia markets.



How the Corbin Team is Different - Bonus Titles

19. Behind the Sale: What Georgia Real Estate Agents Really Do for You

A transparent look at how agents earn their keep—and protect your interests.

20. From For Sale to Sold: How We Help Georgia Homeowners Win

Real-world results from the Corbin Team playbook.

21. Our Georgia Real Estate Playbook: How Addison & Ron Get Results

The tools, timelines, and strategies that set our team apart.

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Preface: Why We Wrote This Book

A welcome message from Ron & Addison Corbin

Relocating is more than just packing boxes and scheduling movers — it's a leap of faith.

Whether you're moving to Georgia for work, family, retirement, or a fresh start, we want to officially say: **Welcome. You're in good hands.**

We're Ron and Addison Corbin — a father-son real estate team based in Metro Atlanta. We've helped hundreds of people make the move to Georgia, and we know how exciting (and sometimes confusing) that journey can be.

You might be wondering things like:

- *What part of Georgia should I move to?*
- *How does buying a home here work compared to my current state?*
- *Can I really do this from a distance without losing my mind — or my money?*

We wrote this book for you.

Relocating brings both opportunity and uncertainty. But with the right knowledge, a clear process, and a trustworthy local guide, you can relocate with confidence — and actually enjoy the process along the way.

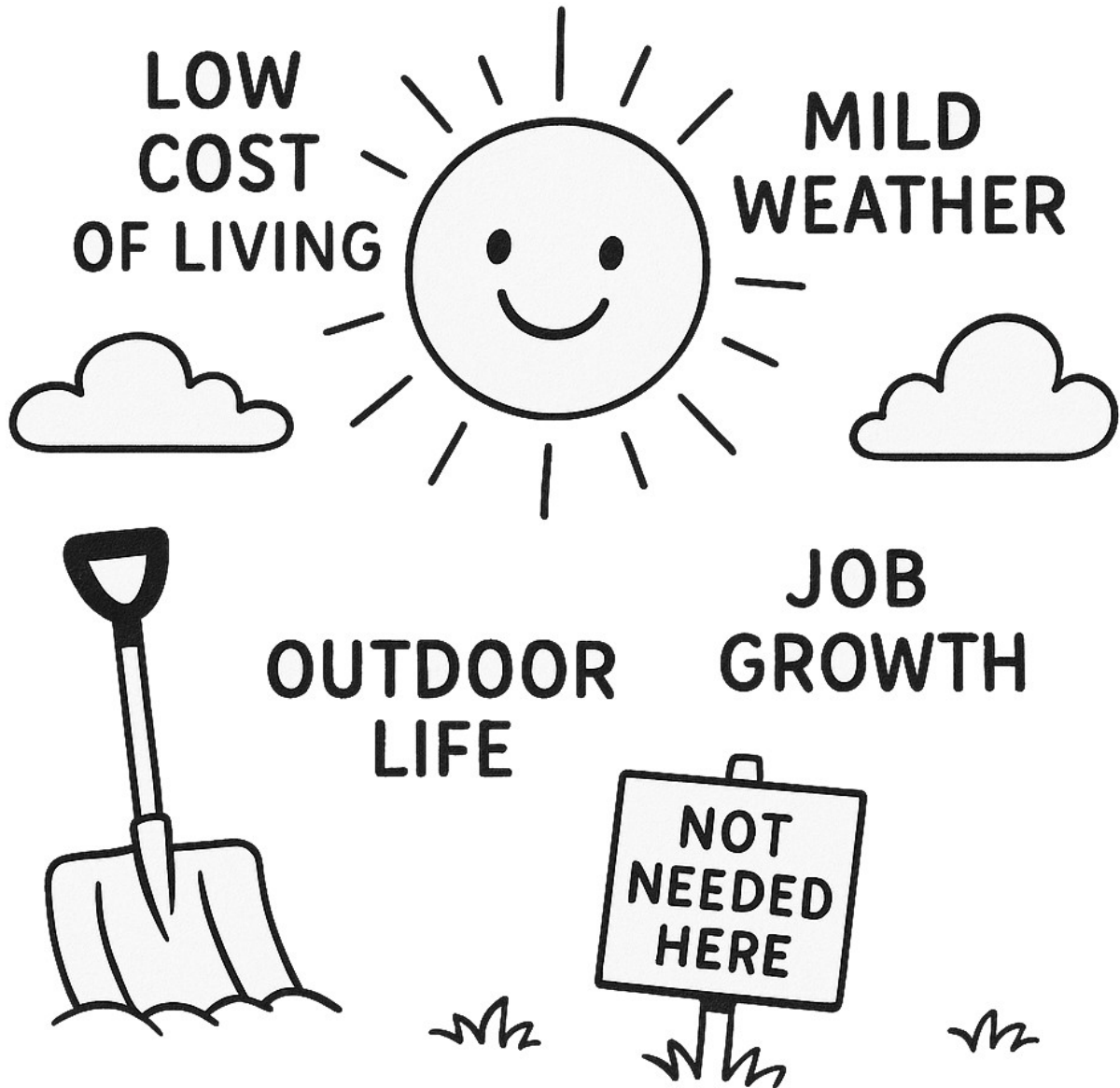
This isn't just a guide to buying a house in Georgia. It's a warm introduction to a new chapter in your life.

Let's get started.

Warmly,

Ron & Addison Corbin

The Corbin Real Estate Team



Chapter 1: Why Georgia? Why Now?

What Makes the Peach State One of the Most Popular Places to Relocate in the U.S.

If you're considering a move to Georgia, you're not alone.

Tens of thousands of people relocate to Georgia every year — and for good reason. With a dynamic blend of Southern charm, economic opportunity, and diverse communities, Georgia has quickly become one of the most livable and welcoming states in the country.

This chapter introduces the top reasons newcomers are flocking to Georgia — and what makes it a place worth calling home.

Year-Round Mild Weather (Yes, Even in Winter)

One of the most common things we hear from out-of-state clients? “We’re ready to escape the snow.”

Georgia offers four distinct seasons — but winters are typically short, mild, and snow-free in most areas. Spring and fall are especially beautiful, with dogwoods, azaleas, and colorful foliage giving way to mild, sunny skies. While summers can get hot and humid, they also bring lake days, mountain getaways, and shaded porches made for sweet tea.

Affordable Cost of Living — Without Sacrificing Quality of Life

Compared to states like California, New York, or even parts of Florida, Georgia offers tremendous value — especially when it comes to housing.

- Lower property taxes
- More home for your money (especially in Metro Atlanta suburbs)
- Competitive utilities, insurance, and gas prices
- No state tax on Social Security income (a big win for retirees)

 *Example:*

A 2,500 sq ft home in a top-rated school district near McDonough or Cumming can cost 30–50% less than a comparable property in many large metro areas nationwide.

Easy Access to Everything — Without the Overcrowding

Georgia strikes a balance between access and breathing room. Atlanta is a major transportation hub — with Hartsfield-Jackson consistently ranked as the busiest airport in the world — and yet you’re never far from:

- Lake life (Lanier, Oconee, Sinclair)
- Mountains (Blue Ridge, Ellijay, Dahlonega)
- Coastline (Savannah and the Golden Isles)
- Scenic drives, outdoor adventures, and quiet small towns

This variety makes Georgia a great home base whether you're commuting, retiring, or working remotely.

Booming Job Market and Business Growth

Metro Atlanta is home to the headquarters of Coca-Cola, Delta, Home Depot, UPS, and hundreds of major employers in tech, film, logistics, and healthcare. Combine that with Georgia’s business-friendly tax environment, and you’ve got a state with staying power — and job security.

Add in growing suburban hubs like Alpharetta, Newnan, and Peachtree City, and you've got job opportunities that reach far beyond downtown Atlanta.

A Home Style for Every Lifestyle

One of Georgia's greatest strengths is its **diversity of communities and homes**. Whether you're looking for:

- A walkable city vibe
- Quiet country acreage
- New construction in the suburbs
- Historic homes with character
- Low-maintenance townhomes or active adult communities

Georgia offers a little bit of everything.

Friendly Faces and Southern Hospitality

Yes, it's real.

People say hello in the grocery store. Neighbors wave from the porch. Local events fill town squares with food trucks, live music, and crafts.

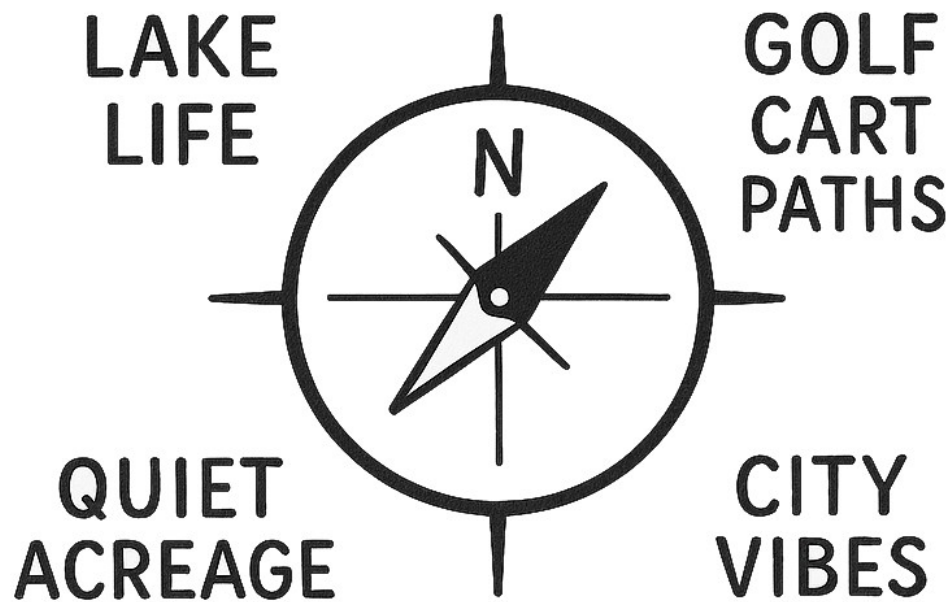
If you're coming from a faster-paced or more densely packed place, the slower rhythm and neighborly culture may take you by surprise — in the best way.

Summary: Georgia Has Options — and Opportunities — for Everyone

- ✓ Warm climate and natural beauty
 - ✓ Affordable housing and cost of living
 - ✓ A strong economy and job growth
 - ✓ Easy access to mountains, lakes, and city amenities
 - ✓ A culture that welcomes newcomers and values connection
-

In the next chapter, we'll help you explore Georgia's diverse communities — and how to figure out *where* in Georgia feels like home for you.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMPASS



Chapter 2: Finding the Right Fit — Exploring Georgia’s Diverse Communities

Where You Live Matters — Here’s How to Find the Right Spot for Your Lifestyle

When people say they’re “moving to Georgia,” what they really mean is, “I’m searching for the right *place* in Georgia.”

And that’s the key — Georgia isn’t one-size-fits-all. From buzzing urban centers to peaceful lake towns and rolling countryside, this state offers a community for every pace, personality, and preference.

This chapter will guide you through Georgia’s most popular relocation areas, highlight lifestyle-based differences, and help you narrow down what “home” really looks like for you.

Start With Lifestyle, Not Listings

Before you dive into home search websites, stop and ask yourself:

- Do I prefer walkability and a vibrant social scene — or quiet and space?
- Do I want to be close to family, work, or outdoor activities?
- How important are things like school districts, traffic, and commute times?
- Am I dreaming of a move-in-ready home or something with character and projects?

Georgia gives you choices — but knowing your values helps you narrow the field.

Let's Talk Regions: Exploring Metro Atlanta and Beyond

Here are a few examples of high-demand areas that welcome thousands of newcomers each year — all within the *expanded Metro Atlanta market*.

McDonough (South Metro)

Charming, growing, and conveniently connected

Located about 30 miles south of Atlanta, McDonough combines small-town Southern charm with big-city proximity.

- Family-friendly neighborhoods and newer construction
- Lower average home prices compared to North Metro
- Easy access to I-75 and Hartsfield-Jackson Airport
- Growing commercial and healthcare sectors

Great for: Commuters, young families, retirees looking for affordability with convenience

Cumming (North Metro / Forsyth County)

Top schools, scenic living, and a mix of new and established neighborhoods

Located near Lake Lanier and at the base of the North Georgia mountains, Cumming is one of Georgia's most in-demand areas.

- Highly rated public schools and park systems
- A mix of master-planned communities and rural properties
- Proximity to GA-400 and major employers in Alpharetta
- Strong property values and resale appeal

Great for: Families, nature lovers, anyone seeking upscale suburbia with space

Peachtree City & Fayetteville (Southwest Metro)

Golf carts, trails, and a true sense of community

With a reputation for planned neighborhoods, lake living, and miles of golf cart paths, this area feels like a small town with smart design.

- Excellent schools and tight-knit communities
- Proximity to film industry jobs (Pinewood Studios) and airport access
- Green spaces, shopping, and events for all ages

Great for: Families, active retirees, remote workers who want lifestyle with convenience

Intown Atlanta (City Living)

Culture, energy, and walkability

From the BeltLine to Midtown, Inman Park to Grant Park, Atlanta offers pockets of personality — along with high walkability and a thriving food and arts scene.

- Historic homes and new builds in character-filled neighborhoods
- Diversity of culture and community
- Higher home prices and faster pace of life
- Traffic can be intense — but MARTA transit and work-from-home trends help

Great for: Professionals, creatives, those who want a city vibe with southern soul

Don't Forget Georgia's Hidden Gems

Outside of Metro Atlanta, Georgia is filled with communities worth exploring — from college towns like Athens to mountain escapes in Blue Ridge and waterfront properties near Lake Oconee or Lake Sinclair.

And if you're relocating for retirement? Georgia's 55+ communities offer low-maintenance homes, active social scenes, and beautiful settings statewide.

How We Help You Decide

We don't just show you listings — we help you get to the heart of what matters.

Our relocation support includes:

- Personalized community comparisons

- Lifestyle-based recommendations
- Virtual tours and walkthroughs if you're still out of state
- Honest advice about schools, commute patterns, and resale value

Summary: You're Not Just Buying a Home — You're Choosing a Life

- ✓ Georgia offers a place for every lifestyle — city, suburb, rural, or lakeside
- ✓ McDonough and Cumming are two top areas we serve, with strong growth and livability
- ✓ Let your *daily routine* guide your decision as much as square footage
- ✓ A trusted local team can help match you with the right neighborhood and pace

In the next chapter, we'll walk you through how buying a home from out of state works — and how Georgia's real estate process may differ from what you're used to.

BUYING FROM OUT OF STATE



Chapter 3: Buying from Out of State — What's Different and What to Expect

How Georgia's Real Estate Process Works — and What Newcomers Need to Know

Relocating from out of state adds a few layers of complexity to your home search — but it's completely doable when you understand the process and have the right support.

Georgia's real estate rules and contract timelines may differ from what you're used to, especially if you're coming from states like California, New York, Illinois, or Texas.

In this chapter, we'll walk you through how buying a home in Georgia works, what's different from other states, and how to avoid the most common relocation pitfalls.

Expect a More Flexible, Buyer-Friendly Market (In Most Areas)

In many parts of Georgia — especially outside of the city core — you'll likely find:

- More inventory for your dollar
- Less cutthroat competition than in hyper-saturated markets
- A range of housing styles and settings, even at modest price points

That said, popular suburbs and homes under \$500K still move quickly. A well-priced home in Cumming or McDonough can still receive multiple offers — especially if it's staged well and in move-in condition.

How Real Estate Transactions Work in Georgia

Here's what typically makes Georgia's process unique or different:

Georgia Uses the GAR Contract

The Georgia Association of REALTORS® (GAR) provides a standardized contract used by most agents and brokerages. This agreement:

- Includes default terms for due diligence, contingencies, and disclosures
- Allows buyer and seller to negotiate key timelines (inspection, financing, appraisal)
- Provides more flexibility than many other states' contracts

 *Note:* Georgia does **not** require an attorney to close (although you may use one). Instead, closings are usually handled by a **closing attorney or title company** selected by the buyer or seller.

Understanding the Due Diligence Period

Georgia buyers typically request a **Due Diligence Period** — usually 7 to 10 days — during which you can:

- Conduct inspections
- Negotiate repairs
- Cancel the contract for *any* reason and still retain your earnest money

This is often different from inspection periods in other states where cancellation requires more justification. It gives out-of-state buyers peace of mind and flexibility — especially if you're only seeing the home once or relying on virtual tours.

What You'll Need as a Remote Buyer

Here's how we help you buy from a distance with confidence:

- **Initial Consultation Call:** We'll learn your goals, preferences, and timeline
 - **Virtual Tours:** We offer live or recorded walkthroughs with honest feedback and commentary
 - **Digital Signing:** Offers, disclosures, and contracts can all be signed electronically
 - **Lender Coordination:** We connect you with mortgage pros familiar with Georgia closings and relocation needs
 - **Trusted Vendor Referrals:** For inspections, appraisals, insurance, movers, and more
 - **Constant Communication:** You'll never wonder "what's next" — we guide you every step of the way
-

What Surprises Most Out-of-State Buyers

- **Earnest money is typically paid via wire or certified check** — not personal check
 - **Appraisal and inspection costs are often lower** than in major metro markets
 - **Closing costs are split** — typically with buyers covering more than in some other states
 - **Property taxes and HOA dues vary widely** — we help you compare costs between neighborhoods
-

Summary: Georgia's Real Estate Process Is Buyer-Friendly — and Relocation Ready

- ✓ Georgia's contracts are flexible and protect buyers during the due diligence period
 - ✓ You can make offers and complete your purchase 100% remotely (yes, even closing)
 - ✓ A trusted, tech-savvy agent is essential for navigating from afar
 - ✓ We help you avoid surprises, reduce stress, and feel confident — even if you've never set foot in the home (yet)
-

In the next chapter, we'll explain how to choose a local agent you can trust — and what you should expect them to handle when you're relocating from out of state.

WORKING WITH A LOCAL AGENT



CHOOSE WISELY.

Chapter 4: Working with a Local Agent You Can Trust

Why the Right Realtor Makes All the Difference — Especially When You're Not Local

Relocating to Georgia is a big move — both logistically and emotionally. That's why your choice of real estate agent matters even more than usual.

You're not just picking someone to open doors. You're choosing a guide who will help you:

- Understand a new market
- Advocate for you when you're not physically present
- Coordinate dozens of moving pieces (sometimes literally)

- Keep you informed, calm, and confident through the entire process

In this chapter, we'll show you how to find a local agent you can trust — and what we believe a great agent should handle for every relocating client.

What Makes a Great Relocation Agent?

Not all agents are equipped for long-distance support. Look for someone who is:

- ✓ **Experienced in working with out-of-state buyers**
 - ✓ **Tech-savvy** — for virtual tours, digital paperwork, and quick communication
 - ✓ **Deeply familiar with local communities** — not just the listings
 - ✓ **Proactive** — they should guide the process, not wait for you to ask
 - ✓ **Networked** — able to recommend lenders, movers, inspectors, attorneys, and more
-

What We Do for Our Relocating Clients

At The Corbin Real Estate Team, we've worked with dozens of families moving to Georgia from across the country — and we've built a system that makes the experience smooth and personal.

Here's what you can expect from us:

Pre-Move Planning Call

We get clear on your timeline, housing needs, budget, and preferred lifestyle. We'll also help you understand how your current market compares to Georgia.

Area Matchmaking

We'll introduce you to communities that fit your lifestyle, not just your budget — including pros, cons, commute times, school zones, and resale trends.

Video Tours & Honest Feedback

We walk homes live (via FaceTime/Zoom) or record detailed walk-throughs with commentary. We'll show you the good, the bad, and the “you should know about this before you fall in love” stuff.

Offer Strategy & Negotiation

We advise on pricing, write strong offers, and negotiate on your behalf — explaining every document and decision point along the way.

Vendor Coordination

We schedule inspections, connect you with trusted contractors, and help you understand your repair options — even from hundreds of miles away.

Closing Oversight

We stay on top of every deadline, document, and delivery — from earnest money to closing day logistics.

What You Should Expect — And What You Shouldn't Have to Worry About

✓ You should expect:

- Frequent updates
- Transparent communication
- Real-world advice (not just Zillow estimates)
- A local advocate who works *for you*

✗ You shouldn't have to:

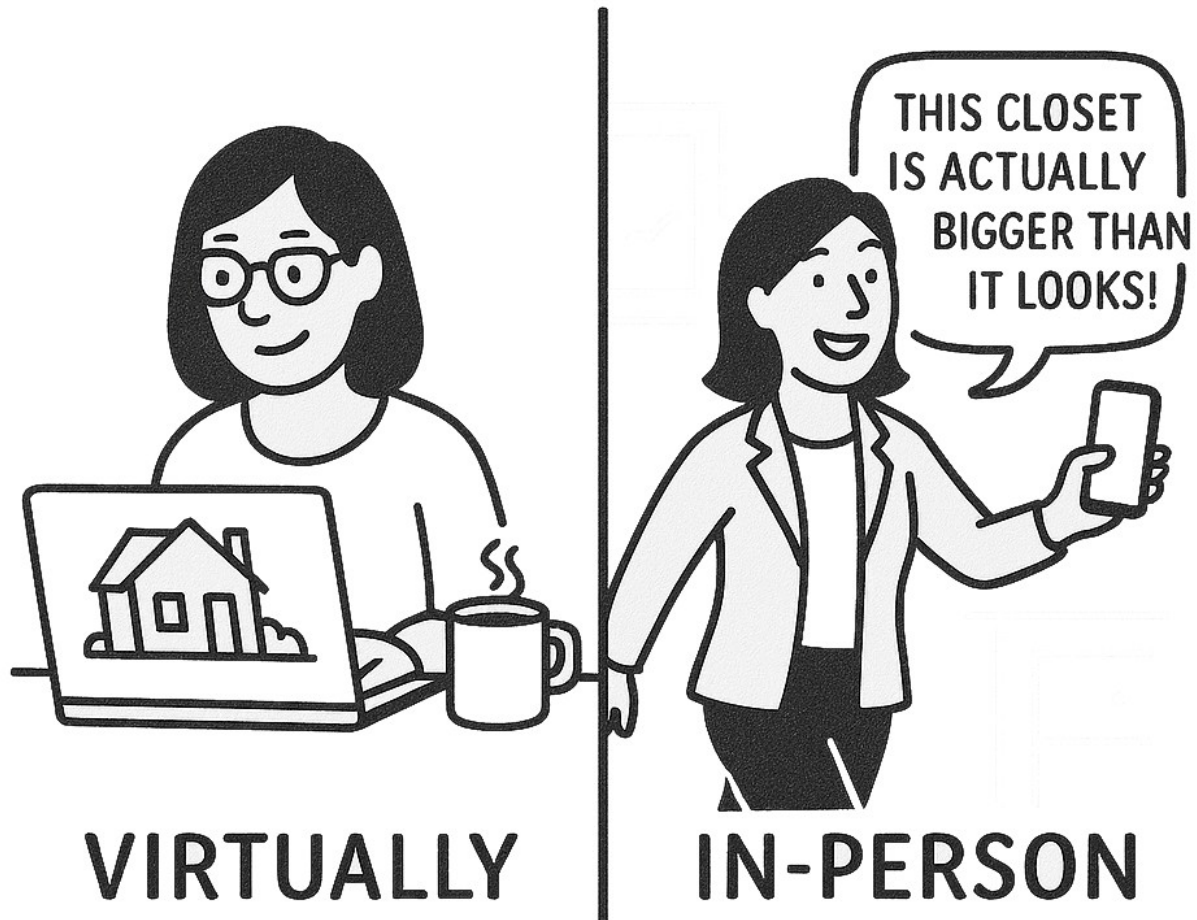
- Coordinate everything yourself
- Wonder if you're overpaying or missing something
- Fly back and forth unnecessarily
- Navigate Georgia real estate laws on your own

Summary: The Right Agent Turns Relocation Stress Into Confidence

- ✓ Choose an agent with relocation experience and strong local knowledge
- ✓ Expect hands-on service, virtual support, and proactive guidance
- ✓ Don't settle for someone who only sends listings — you need a true partner
- ✓ We take the guesswork (and stress) out of moving to Georgia

In the next chapter, we'll help you understand how to *tour homes* from out of state — whether virtually or during a focused house-hunting trip.

TOURING HOMES VIRTUALLY AND IN-PERSON



Chapter 5: Touring Homes Virtually and In-Person

How to Confidently Evaluate Homes — Even If You're Not in Georgia Yet

House hunting is one of the most exciting parts of moving — but when you're relocating from another state, it can also feel frustrating or risky.

You might be wondering:

- *Can I trust a virtual tour?*
- *Should I plan a trip to Georgia before making an offer?*
- *What if the home looks perfect online but not in person?*

In this chapter, we'll show you how to confidently tour homes — both virtually and in-person — and how our team helps make each showing efficient, honest, and tailored to your needs.

Virtual Touring: How It Works (and Why It's So Effective)

Technology has transformed the way people buy homes — and long-distance buyers are leading the way.

With our virtual tour process, you'll get more than a shaky phone video or a silent walk-through. We bring each home to *life* — with real-time commentary, strategic observations, and neighborhood insights.

Here's what a great virtual tour should include:

- A full walkthrough of the exterior, including roof, yard, driveway, and street
- Detailed video or FaceTime showing the flow of each room
- Close-ups of finishes, appliances, and any potential flaws
- Comments on smells, sounds, and “feel” — things photos don't show
- A tour of the neighborhood, nearby amenities, or school proximity if needed

 *Client Feedback:*

“We made our offer from 700 miles away — and never felt like we were missing anything. Ron pointed out stuff I wouldn't have noticed even in person!”

When to Make a House-Hunting Trip

If your schedule allows, we recommend planning a **focused house-hunting visit** at some point during your search. Ideally:

- After narrowing your options
- Once your budget and financing are confirmed
- When we've lined up 5–7 homes worth seeing in person

A two-day tour (especially if we've pre-toured virtually) is often enough to make a confident choice.

Can't travel before closing? That's okay too — we've had many clients successfully purchase using only virtual tours, detailed inspections, and video-based final walkthroughs.

What to Look for When Touring (In Person or Virtually)

Whether you're there in person or joining us on a screen, we help you evaluate:

- Layout and flow — does it suit your lifestyle and furniture?

- Storage space — closets, garages, and attic/basement areas
- Natural light and noise levels
- Condition of floors, walls, fixtures, and windows
- Age of roof, HVAC, and major systems
- HOA rules or community amenities

We also point out resale potential — even if you plan to stay long term, it's smart to consider how the home will appeal to future buyers.

Touring New Construction? Let Us Be Your Eyes (and Advocate)

Many relocating buyers choose **new construction** — especially in areas like McDonough, Cumming, or Fayetteville.

But even brand-new homes need oversight. We:

- Attend builder walk-throughs
- Review contracts (which are different from resale)
- Connect you with inspectors who specialize in new builds
- Track progress photos and punch list items

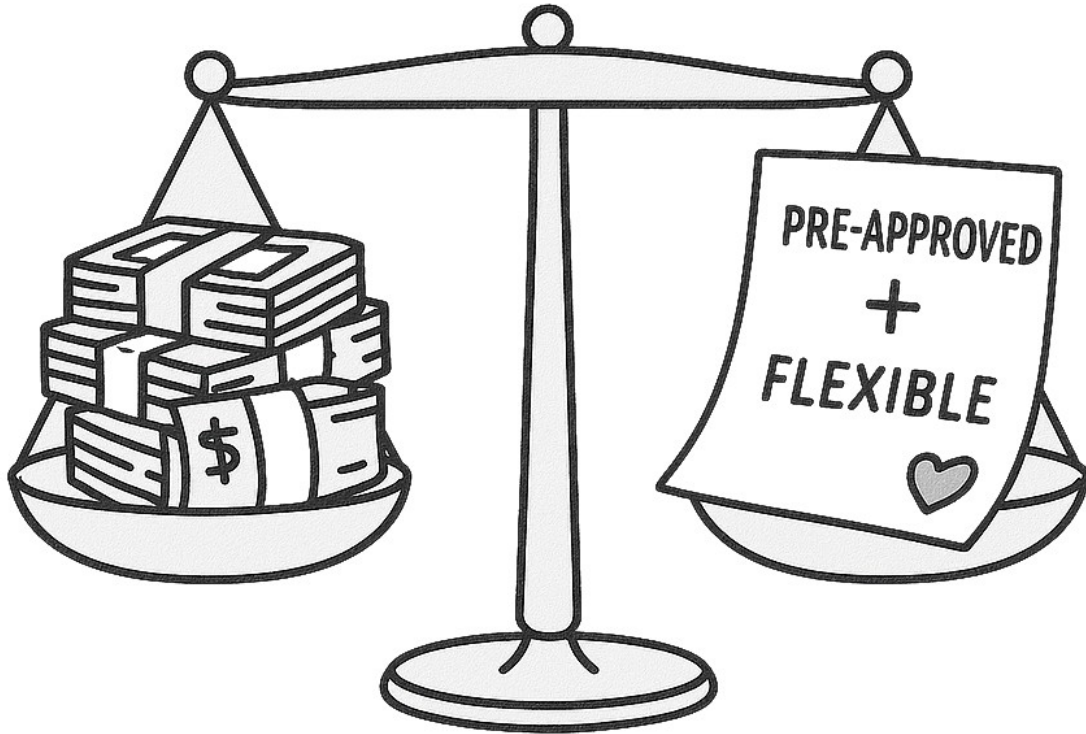
Never assume the builder's agent represents *you* — they don't. We make sure your interests are protected at every step.

Summary: Touring From Afar Is Totally Doable — With the Right Support

- ✓ Virtual tours can be highly effective with the right guide
 - ✓ You don't *have* to visit in person — but it can help narrow your options
 - ✓ Our team helps you see what matters — not just what the listing photos show
 - ✓ From resale to new construction, we're your eyes, ears, and boots on the ground
-

In the next chapter, we'll cover how to make an offer, what's in a Georgia contract, and how to protect yourself during the transaction.

**WINNING ISN'T
ALWAYS ABOUT PRICE**



Chapter 6: Making an Offer and Navigating Georgia Contracts

What You're Signing, Why It Matters, and How to Make a Winning Offer from Afar

You've toured the homes. You've narrowed it down. And now — you've found the one. It's time to make an offer.

This is where many relocating buyers feel the most pressure. You may be asking:

- *How do I know what to offer in a new market?*
- *What's in a Georgia real estate contract?*

- *What's normal here... and what's negotiable?*

In this chapter, we'll walk you through how the offer process works in Georgia, break down the key contract terms, and help you write a smart offer that protects your interests — whether you're buying from across the street or across the country.

Step 1: Understand the Market You're Buying Into

Before you decide what to offer, you need to understand the **current conditions** in your target area — and sometimes even your target neighborhood.

Georgia isn't a one-market state. In any given week, you could see:

- A seller's market in Cumming for homes under \$500K
- A buyer's market for condos in downtown Atlanta
- A balanced market for new builds in McDonough

We run a **comparative market analysis (CMA)** to help you understand:

- What similar homes nearby have sold for
- How long they stayed on the market
- If they sold above, below, or at list price
- What's typical in terms of concessions, repairs, and closing costs

Example:

A relocating family from Denver fell in love with a 4-bedroom in Henry County. It was listed at \$389,000. Similar homes nearby had sold between \$375K–\$395K in the last 60 days. We offered \$384,000 with flexible terms — and beat out a higher-priced offer because we were well-prepared and responsive.

Step 2: Know What's in the Georgia Purchase & Sale Agreement

Georgia uses the **GAR Purchase and Sale Agreement**, which is standard statewide. Here's what it includes — and why each part matters:

◆ Purchase Price & Earnest Money

- **Earnest Money Deposit:** Typically 1–2% of the purchase price, submitted by wire or certified check. This shows you're serious.
- **Held by:** Usually the closing attorney or buyer's broker.

◆ Financing & Appraisal Contingencies

- These protect you if your financing falls through or if the home appraises below the sale price. You'll have specific timelines to resolve each.

◆ Due Diligence Period

This is unique to Georgia — and incredibly buyer-friendly.

It's a negotiated window (often 7–10 days) during which you can:

- Conduct inspections
- Review HOA documents
- Back out **for any reason** and still keep your earnest money

🔧 *Example:*

A relocating buyer from Illinois used her due diligence period to negotiate \$7,000 in repairs after a home inspection revealed issues with the HVAC system. We coordinated with the seller, repair vendors, and her lender while she remained 500 miles away.

◆ Closing & Possession

Georgia closings are typically 30–45 days from contract, and possession usually occurs **at closing** — not days or weeks later, unless negotiated differently.

🛡️ Step 3: Write a Strong Offer — Especially From a Distance

When you're not local, your offer needs to send the message:

"I'm serious. I'm qualified. I'm ready."

Here's how we help you write a **competitive, confident offer**:

- **Pre-approval in hand:** Local lenders are often preferred by sellers and their agents
- **Clean terms:** Fewer contingencies and flexible timelines can be more appealing than a higher price
- **Personal touch:** In some cases, we include a brief buyer introduction (especially for FSBOs or sentimental sellers)
- **Prompt communication:** We confirm receipt, answer questions, and keep your offer top-of-mind for the seller's agent

💡 Pro Tips for Out-of-State Buyers

✅ Ask for seller disclosures before making your offer

You'll gain insight into known issues — and sometimes negotiate pre-offer.

✅ Use video to re-review the property before submitting

We'll go back with a fresh pair of eyes if needed to confirm anything that concerns you.

✅ Consider adding an escalation clause (only in hot markets)

We'll cap your price but make sure you don't lose over \$1,000.

✓ **Be ready to act fast**

In popular areas, homes under \$500K can move in 24–48 hours. Our team monitors listings *in real-time* and can often schedule a showing the same day — even if it's virtual.

Summary: The Offer Is Where Strategy and Guidance Matter Most

- ✓ Georgia's contracts protect buyers with flexible terms and due diligence
 - ✓ A strong, clean offer can win — even if it's not the highest
 - ✓ We help you understand the contract, review comps, and negotiate every term
 - ✓ You don't need to be here in person to compete — just informed and well-represented
-

In the next chapter, we'll walk you through how **closing from a distance** works in Georgia — and what you'll need to do to finalize your move with confidence.



Chapter 7: Closing From a Distance (Yes, It's Possible)

How to Finalize Your Georgia Home Purchase Without Ever Boarding a Plane

You've made the offer, cleared due diligence, and are headed toward the finish line — but you're still hundreds (or thousands) of miles away.

Can you really close on your new Georgia home without being there in person?

Absolutely. And we've helped dozens of clients do exactly that — from military families stationed abroad to retirees moving from across the country. With the right plan, the right team, and the right tech, closing remotely in Georgia is not only possible — it's reliable.

In this chapter, we'll walk you through the full remote closing process, what to expect at each stage, and how we make it seamless.

Step 1: Choose the Right Closing Attorney (We'll Help)

In Georgia, **real estate closings are attorney-handled** — not title company-led like in many other states.

This means a Georgia-licensed closing attorney will:

- Manage title search and insurance
- Prepare your final paperwork
- Oversee the disbursement of funds
- Conduct the actual closing session (either in person or virtually)

We'll recommend trusted attorneys we've worked with, especially those experienced with **remote closings**. Many now offer:

- Secure electronic document signing
 - Remote online notarization (RON), if allowed in your state
 - Overnight or mobile notary services for required wet signatures
 - Coordinated scheduling across time zones
-

Step 2: Review the Final Settlement Statement

A few days before closing, you'll receive a **Settlement Statement** (sometimes called a Closing Disclosure if you're financing). This document outlines:

- Purchase price
- Loan details (if applicable)
- Earnest money applied
- Seller-paid costs or credits
- Buyer closing costs (attorney fees, taxes, insurance, etc.)
- Final cash-to-close amount

 *Tip:* If anything seems confusing, we'll walk you through the document line-by-line. No surprises. No fine print.

Step 3: Fund the Deal — Securely

Your closing attorney will provide **wiring instructions** for your final payment — typically your down payment and closing costs combined.

- ✓ Use only secure, verified wire instructions
- ✓ Call the attorney directly to confirm routing and account numbers
- ✗ Never trust wiring instructions sent solely via email — **wire fraud is real** and targeting real estate transactions

Some buyers prefer to **overnight a cashier's check** if allowed, but wiring is more common.

 *Client Example:*

One of our clients relocating from Chicago was worried about wiring \$62,000 across state lines. We walked them through the entire process with the closing attorney, double-confirmed instructions by phone, and ensured their funds arrived safely and on time — no stress.

Step 4: Final Walkthrough — We've Got You

Before closing, buyers have the right to a **final walkthrough** — a quick visit to confirm the property's condition and that agreed-upon repairs (if any) were completed.

If you can't be here in person, no problem. We'll:

- Visit the home ourselves
- Record or livestream a detailed walkthrough
- Show you receipts, photos, and repair notes
- Confirm all systems are operational (HVAC, water, lights, appliances)

This step protects your investment and gives you peace of mind.

Step 5: Sign the Documents

Depending on your state and the lender's policies, you may sign documents via:

- **eSignature portals** (for most forms)
- **Mobile notary** sent to your home, office, or location of choice
- **Overnighted documents** for ink signatures, then returned via FedEx/UPS
- **Remote Online Notarization (RON)** if your state and lender permit

We coordinate all of this with your attorney and lender to ensure timing and compliance.

 *Note:* You don't have to take time off work or fly in — most closings are done in under an hour remotely, often from your kitchen table.

Step 6: You're Officially a Georgia Homeowner

Once the closing attorney confirms:

- All documents are signed
- All funds have cleared
- The deed is recorded with the county...

...it's official.

We'll coordinate delivery of:

- Keys
- Garage openers
- Welcome packets
- Utility info and HOA contacts

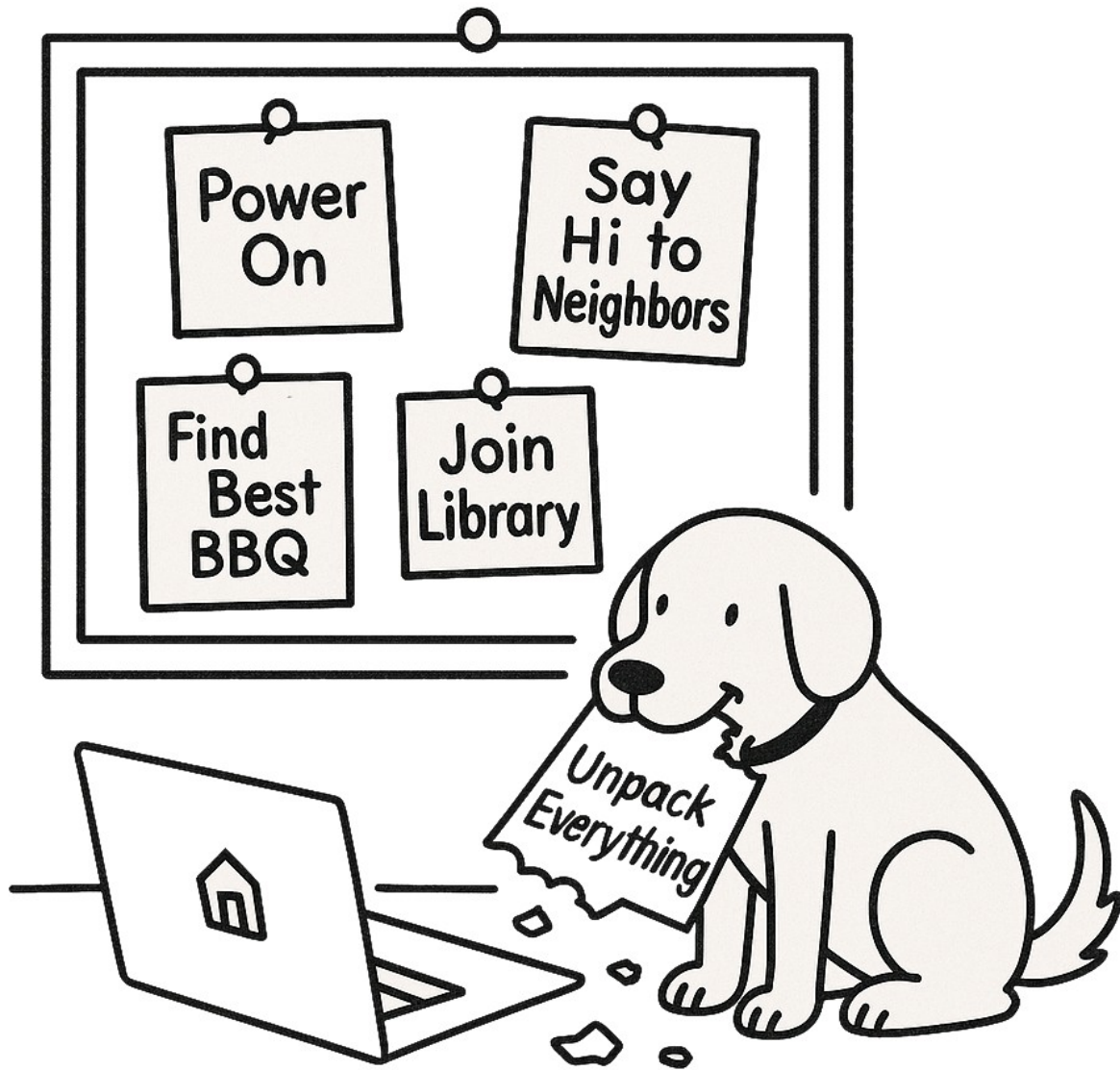
If you're not here yet, we can:

- Collect and hold keys securely
- Deliver them to your temporary address
- Arrange for in-person handoff when you arrive

Summary: Remote Closing Isn't Just Possible — It's Our Specialty

- ✓ Georgia closings are attorney-led, efficient, and relocation-friendly
- ✓ We coordinate everything — walkthroughs, wiring, documents, and delivery
- ✓ You can buy confidently from anywhere with secure tech and trusted guidance
- ✓ Closing day shouldn't be stressful — and with us, it's not

In the next chapter, we'll help you settle in like a local — with practical steps for switching utilities, updating IDs, and making Georgia truly feel like home.



Chapter 8: Settling In — From Utilities to License Plates

Everything You Need to Do (and Know) Once the Boxes Are Unpacked

You've closed. You've got the keys. You've taken your first deep breath in your new Georgia home.

Now what?

This is the part many books skip — but it's one of the most important chapters in your move: **getting settled**.

In this chapter, we'll walk you through the essential to-dos for turning your new house into a functioning, comfortable home — from setting up utilities to registering your car and becoming a Georgia resident.

Let's make your "relocation" feel like "home."

Step 1: Set Up Your Utilities and Services

You'd be surprised how many folks move in, flip a light switch... and realize the power's not on.

Here's how to get ahead of that:



Basic Services to Set Up:

- **Electricity** – Georgia Power (statewide) or your local EMC (e.g., Sawnee, Snapping Shoals)
- **Water & Sewer** – Managed by your local city or county utility office
- **Natural Gas** – In deregulated areas (like most of Metro Atlanta), you choose a gas marketer (Gas South, Georgia Natural Gas, etc.)
- **Trash & Recycling** – Typically handled by your county or a private provider (you may need to set up service separately)
- **Internet & Cable** – Common providers include Xfinity, AT&T Fiber, Spectrum, or T-Mobile Home Internet



Pro Tip:

Schedule service **5–7 days before closing** so utilities are ready when you move in. Need help? We'll give you a move-in checklist with phone numbers based on your address.



Step 2: Become a Georgia Resident (Legally Speaking)

Once you've moved, Georgia gives you **30 days** to:

- Transfer your driver's license
- Register your vehicle
- Update your voter registration

Let's break it down:



Get a Georgia Driver's License

- Visit a DDS (Department of Driver Services) office
- Bring: your out-of-state license, proof of GA residency (utility bill, lease, etc.), and proof of Social Security number
- Schedule an appointment online if possible — lines can get long!



Register Your Vehicle

- Go to your **county's tag office**

- Bring: Georgia ID, title or lease, proof of insurance, and emissions test (if applicable)
- Expect to pay title ad valorem tax (TAVT) at registration — one-time fee based on vehicle value

Register to Vote

- Can be done online at registertovote.sos.ga.gov once your license is issued
 - Georgia is a voter-friendly state — and we'll help you get set up!
-

Step 3: Handle Change of Address & Local Accounts

Don't forget these other essentials:

-  **Update your billing address** with banks, credit cards, and online stores
 -  **Set up mail forwarding** at [USPS.com](https://usps.com) — easy and effective for 6 months
 -  **Update pet registrations** or licensing if required by your county
 -  **Get a library card** — seriously, Georgia's library systems are impressive!
-

Step 4: Take Care of the House

Whether you're a first-time homeowner or a seasoned pro, here are smart steps to take in your first month:

- Change the locks or rekey the doors
- Replace air filters and test smoke detectors
- Locate your main water shutoff and breaker panel
- Meet the neighbors (they'll have great local insights!)
- Join local Facebook or Nextdoor groups — a great way to find trusted contractors or learn about events
- Schedule your first HVAC tune-up or pest control service

 *Client Example:*

A family relocating from Phoenix had no idea how Georgia's humidity could impact HVAC systems. We connected them with a local technician, and he saved them \$800 by catching a clogged drain line early — before it caused water damage.

Step 5: Make Georgia Home

The logistics are important — but so is the **feeling** of home.

- Explore local coffee shops, parks, or farmer's markets

- Find a gym, church, or group that reflects your lifestyle
 - Celebrate your first Georgia holiday (yes, peach cobbler counts)
 - Snap a photo with your new license plate — it's a milestone worth remembering!
-

Summary: You're Here — Let's Make It Official

- ✓ Set up utilities and services before you move in
 - ✓ Transfer licenses, registrations, and legal documents within 30 days
 - ✓ Take care of your home with smart first steps
 - ✓ Connect locally to feel at home faster
 - ✓ Reach out to us anytime — we're not just here for the sale
-

In the final chapter, we'll reflect on your relocation journey — and share how we stay connected with our Georgia newcomers long after the move is done.



Closing Thoughts: Welcome Home, Y'all

A Message From The Corbin Real Estate Team

You did it.

You made the move. You navigated a new market, a new process, and maybe even a brand-new way of life. Whether you relocated for work, family, retirement, or simply a fresh start, you took a big step — and we're honored to have helped guide the way.

This book wasn't just about real estate. It was about **empowerment**.

Our goal was to help you feel:

- Informed — with clear expectations
 - Supported — by a team who's done this many times before
 - Confident — even if you're buying from 1,000 miles away
 - Excited — about what's ahead in your Georgia journey
-

What You've Accomplished

- ✓ You've explored the diverse regions Georgia offers
- ✓ You've learned how to tour homes virtually and evaluate them smartly
- ✓ You've understood the contract process and closed from afar
- ✓ You've taken steps to settle in, connect locally, and truly feel at home

That's a lot — and we hope this guide gave you more than just instructions. We hope it gave you **clarity and momentum** as you build your life here.

Let's Stay Connected

We're more than real estate agents — we're your Georgia resource long after the keys change hands.



Follow us on social media for relocation tips, homeowner advice, and Georgia lifestyle inspiration



Call anytime — even if it's months (or years!) later and you just want a recommendation for a plumber, park, or peach pie



Join us at our Quarterly Client Appreciation Events — we love reconnecting in person with our clients, new and old

We mean it when we say: you're not just a transaction — you're part of our Georgia family now.

What's Next?

This may be your “forever” home — or just your first chapter in Georgia.

Either way, we're here when you need us.

Whether you're buying again, selling down the road, or helping a friend make their move, we'll be right here — ready to walk that journey with you, too.

Until then...

Welcome home, y'all.

Warmly,

Ron & Addison Corbin

The Corbin Real Estate Team

