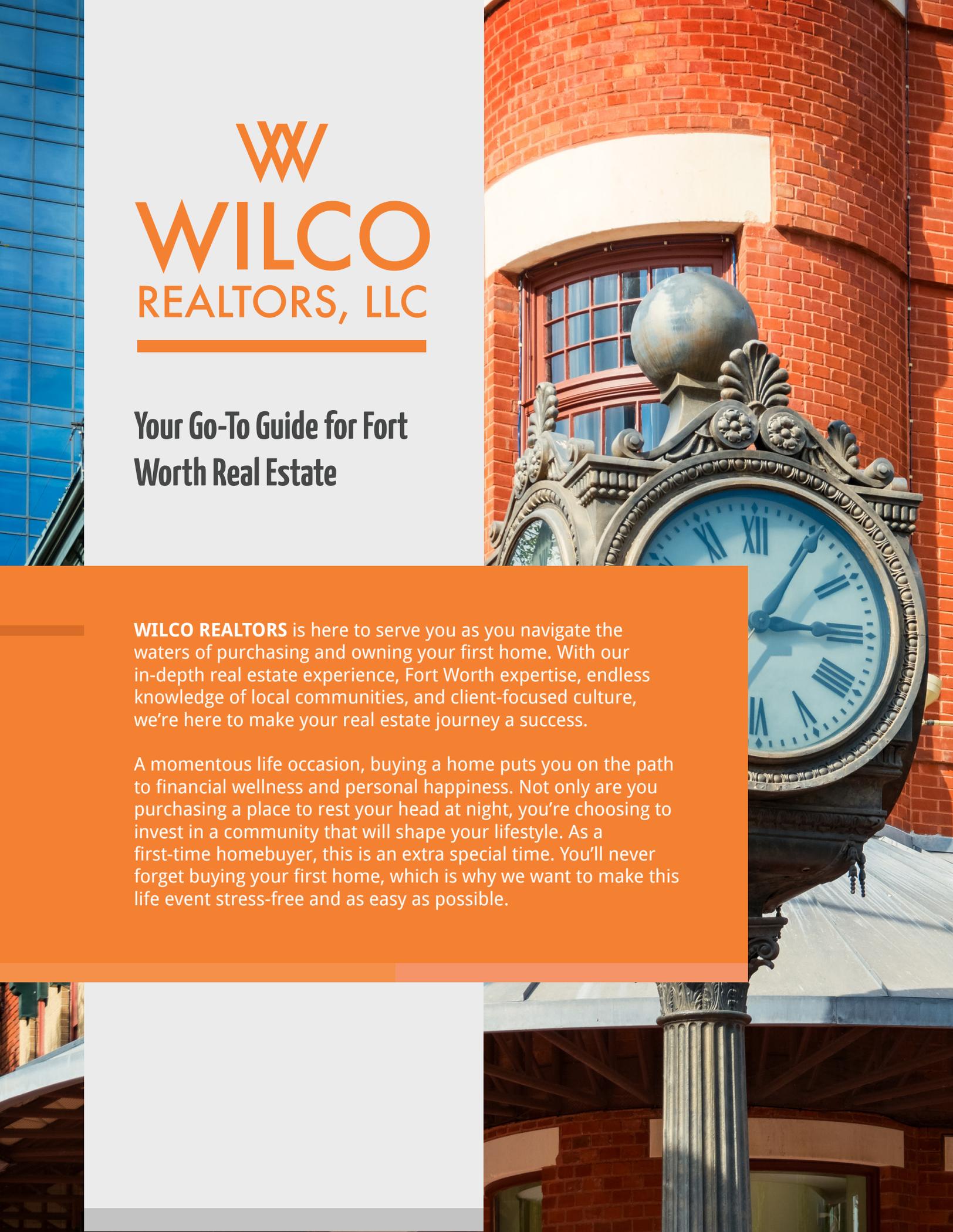


The First Time Home Buyer's

# Complete Guide

Here's everything you need to know about owning your first home, from closing the deal to picking a warranty and what to do when things go sour. I'll be here for you every step of the way.

**Let's get started!**



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## Your Go-To Guide for Fort Worth Real Estate

**WILCO REALTORS** is here to serve you as you navigate the waters of purchasing and owning your first home. With our in-depth real estate experience, Fort Worth expertise, endless knowledge of local communities, and client-focused culture, we're here to make your real estate journey a success.

A momentous life occasion, buying a home puts you on the path to financial wellness and personal happiness. Not only are you purchasing a place to rest your head at night, you're choosing to invest in a community that will shape your lifestyle. As a first-time homebuyer, this is an extra special time. You'll never forget buying your first home, which is why we want to make this life event stress-free and as easy as possible.

# Steps to Becoming a Homeowner

## Closing on Your First Home

You've picked out your dream home, made an offer, and negotiated with seller's Realtor. What's next?

Here's a quick guide to closing on your first home in the Fort Worth area:



### Schedule a Home Inspection.

Hire a professional to walk through the home and thoroughly inspect every part of it to make sure there are no structural issues that would make it unlivable. If the inspector finds something, you can request that the seller repair any major issues. Don't know how to hire a home inspector? Give us a call, we would love to recommend a trusted professional.



### Review Your Contract.

Sit down with your agent or lawyer to carefully go over your contract. Be sure that there are contingencies, so if something falls through with your mortgage loan you're not obligated to purchase the house.



### Finalize Your Mortgage.

Submit your official mortgage application with your lender. Sit down with them to have your home appraised and review all closing costs. Closing fees include attorney fees, title insurance, appraisal fees, home inspection fees, courier fees, government recording fees, and taxes.



### Pay Closing Costs.

For buyers, these aren't usually too bad. In addition to your down payment, you'll need to pay all the fees we just talked about and sign your paperwork.

Once you've completed items one through four, congrats! You just closed on your first home.

# Do I Need a Home Warranty?

## That Depends on You.

A home warranty is a service contract that covers repairs to your home's major appliances and other specified parts. Warranties commonly include major kitchen appliances, plumbing, water systems, HVAC, septic tank, ceiling fans, and other major home appliances. Warranties can cost anywhere from \$300 to \$600 a year, professional.

Some sellers may offer coverage for the first year of homeownership. If you buy a new-construction home, a warranty may be included with your purchase.

## Is a Warranty Right for Me?

If you're buying an older home, or one that's been lived in previously, you may be inheriting used appliances or home systems. While they may be in great condition, if they've been used for many years you can expect some wear and tear.

Depending on how old those appliances and systems are, a warranty may give you peace of mind. If your HVAC system stops working in the middle of summer and you have a warranty, you're likely to get it fixed that much quicker (and without paying an arm or a leg.)

## What Kind of Warranty is the Best?

When purchasing a warranty, be sure to read every word of the terms and conditions. Make sure there aren't any stipulations you can't live with. Some warranty plans may not cover repairs if the appliance is too old, wasn't installed correctly, or wasn't maintained properly. Know what you're getting yourself into.

Need a recommendation for the right kind of home warranty? Please reach out to us. We would love to steer you in the right direction. Know what you're getting yourself into.



## As for the actual move...

Closed on your home? Check. Figured out your warranty options? Check. Now it's time for the fun part (said no one ever.)

But, if you plan ahead a little, moving doesn't have to be hard! The sooner you start, the easier it will be. Here are a few ways you can de-stress your move so you can look forward to life in your new home.

### Minimalize Your Life

We're serious when we say start as soon as you can. Begin by getting rid of unused or outgrown items. Do one room at a time. Go through all of your belonging and sort them into piles: **keep, sell, donate.**

Put all of your 'donate' items in bags or boxes and take them to your local charity organization. With organizations like Good Will, you can even donate broken or unwearable items because the companies can still salvage the raw fabric.

Next, consider setting up an account with a merchant service like eBay, Thred Up, or even Craigslist. Or, you could go the old-fashioned way and host a yard sale! Either way, you'll thank yourself later when you have a little extra money to spend on moving costs.

### Get Packing

Once you've gotten rid of everything you no longer need, it's time to start packing. We recommend going room by room. Start with a room that has non-essential items in it, like a craft room or office. Pack up each room in labeled boxes. This will make unpacking easier.

Save your kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom for last, in the days leading up to the move.

### Hire Professional Movers, or DIY

Assess your situation, and your finances, and see if a team of professional movers is an option for you. This is an awesome option if you don't have a lot of strong friends available to help you move boxes and heavy furniture.

If you're moving a long distance, be sure to exchange contact information with the movers so you never lose track of your belongings.

Don't want to hire professional movers? We don't blame you. Enlist your friends, bribe your coworkers, and do whatever you can to move your furniture and belongings into a moving truck.

### Moving Day

#### It's finally here!

As you pack up your last few belongings, set aside your essential items into an "open first" bag. Pack your phone charger, change of clothes, personal toiletries, and essential documents here for easy access.

### After the Move...

You've just transported your whole life to a brand new home, now what?

Before you begin unpacking, go ahead and deep clean the kitchen and bathroom. To avoid becoming overwhelmed, we recommend unpacking room by room. Begin with the kitchen and then move to your bedroom and bathroom.

# What to Do When Something Breaks...

One of the most intimidating parts of owning your home is, well, being responsible for it! Unlike renting, where a property management company or landlord is usually available to repair any damages, your home is your responsibility. That means, when something breaks, it's up to you to get it fixed.

Depending on how handy you are, some things you can probably fix yourself. For more challenging repairs, however, it's best to hire an expert.

For example, here are some repairs you can DIY:

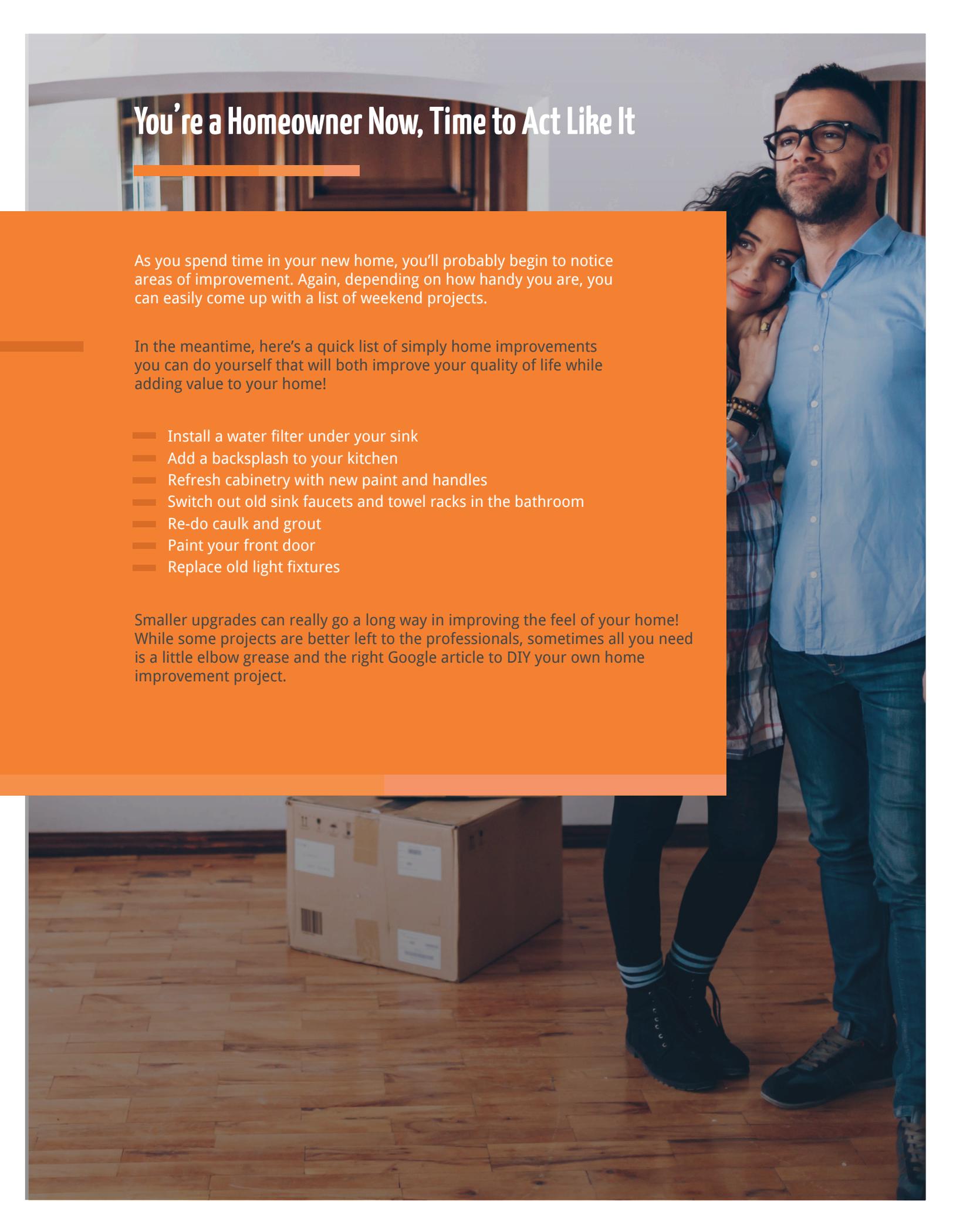
- Replacing hardware like doorknobs and light switches.
- Unclogging a toilet
- Fixing leaky pipes
- Replacing a light switch (so long as the wiring doesn't need to be fixed)
- Patching a hole

And here are some home repairs that require a professional.

- Replacing any major appliances
- Electrical wiring
- Extensive plumbing work
- HVAC installation

As we mentioned before, this is where a home warranty may come in handy. Depending on your plan type, your warranty company may be able to perform those major home repairs — which means less money out of your pocket!

# You're a Homeowner Now, Time to Act Like It

A man and a woman are standing in a new home. The man is wearing a light blue button-down shirt, glasses, and a beard. The woman is wearing a plaid shirt and black leggings. They are standing on a wooden floor next to a large cardboard box. The background shows a doorway and a wall.

As you spend time in your new home, you'll probably begin to notice areas of improvement. Again, depending on how handy you are, you can easily come up with a list of weekend projects.

In the meantime, here's a quick list of simply home improvements you can do yourself that will both improve your quality of life while adding value to your home!

- Install a water filter under your sink
- Add a backsplash to your kitchen
- Refresh cabinetry with new paint and handles
- Switch out old sink faucets and towel racks in the bathroom
- Re-do caulk and grout
- Paint your front door
- Replace old light fixtures

Smaller upgrades can really go a long way in improving the feel of your home! While some projects are better left to the professionals, sometimes all you need is a little elbow grease and the right Google article to DIY your own home improvement project.

## Ready to Join the Homeowner Club?

We're here to help. If you're a first-time buyer searching for home in the greater Fort Worth area, we should set up a time to chat about your plans.



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