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LANDFALL GUIDE · SCOTLAND

How does buying a home in Scotland work?

THE SHORT ANSWER

Very differently from the US, and from England. Homes are often sold "offers over" with a closing date for sealed bids, the seller provides a Home Report with a survey, your offer goes through a solicitor, and you pay Land and Buildings Transaction Tax rather than Stamp Duty.

For US citizens and green card holders moving to the UK. Build your free, personal move plan at **yourlandfall.com/plan**.

What's different

- **"Offers over."** Many homes are marketed at "offers over" a set price, and often sell for more.
- **Closing dates.** When several buyers are interested, there's a deadline for sealed bids. There's usually one chance, so agree your limit first.
- **The Home Report.** The seller provides a report with a survey, a valuation and an energy report before you view. Lenders usually work from it.
- **Solicitors do more.** Your offer is made through a solicitor, and many solicitors also sell homes.
- **The deal binds earlier.** Once the **missives** (formal letters between solicitors) are concluded, the contract is binding.

Step by step

1. **Get a mortgage agreed in principle.** This is harder without UK credit history, and some lenders specialize in buyers who've just moved here.
2. **View with the Home Report in hand**, and read the survey and valuation.
3. **Ask your solicitor to note interest**, so you're told if a closing date is set.
4. **Offer by the closing date** through your solicitor.
5. **Missives are concluded**, and the deal is binding.
6. **Date of entry**: the money moves, your solicitor files the LBTT return and pays it, and you get the keys.

Property tax: LBTT and the Additional Dwelling Supplement

In Scotland you pay **Land and Buildings Transaction Tax (LBTT)** to Revenue Scotland, not Stamp Duty.

Two points that catch Americans out:

- **Still own your US home?** If you own another home anywhere in the world when you buy, the **Additional Dwelling Supplement** can apply on top, unless you're replacing your main home within the rules.
- **First-time buyer relief** only applies if you've never owned a home anywhere, including in the US.

Renting first

Most new arrivals rent first. Private tenancies in Scotland are **open-ended**, with no fixed six- or twelve-month term, which gives you flexibility while you get to know the area.

What to do next

See what else is different in Scotland, or build your move plan with Scotland as your destination.

See every step for your move. Answer five questions and get a free plan in the right order: yourlandfall.com/plan