



Land Contract Buyer Guide: At Signing

What is a land contract? A land contract is a real estate transaction in which the buyer pays the seller for the purchase of a property over time. A land contract purchaser is not a renter, but has partial ownership while they are making payments. The seller holds the deed until the purchase is fully paid, and the buyer has most of the other rights and responsibilities of ownership throughout the payment period. It is a legally binding agreement.

Once a buyer has done their research, fully reviewed the contract, and decided to purchase a home on land contract, they are ready to sign. When signing a land contract, a buyer should know what to bring, what to receive, and what questions to ask.

- **Items to bring:** The buyer must bring identification and any necessary payment, such as down payment.
- **Forms to fill out:** The buyer may sign some or all of these documents: land contract, memorandum of land contract, Property Transfer Affidavit, and Principal Residence Exemption.
- **Questions:** The buyer should find out who is responsible for recording and filing signed documents.
- **Take home items:** The buyer should review and receive disclosure forms required by the government (Lead Disclosure, Seller’s Disclosure) and copies of all signed documents.

See the back of this page for a step-by-step guide that will take you through these steps that should be followed at the signing of the land contract. Additional information is also available at detroitlandcontracthelp.com.

Housing Counseling Services

The following offer free or low-cost counseling and services for housing, financial, legal, and other issues. Buyers are recommended to reach out to counseling services before signing a land contract.

- **Detroit Housing Network**
detroithousingnetwork.org
- **Detroit Justice Center**
1420 Washington Blvd #220
Detroit, MI 48226
313-736-5957
detroitjustice.org
- **Lakeshore Legal Aid**
2727 2nd Ave, #301
Detroit, MI 48202
888-783-8190
lakeshorelegalaid.org
- **Michigan Legal Help**
michiganlegalhelp.org
- **Michigan Legal Services/United Community Housing Coalition**
2727 2nd Ave, #313
Detroit, MI 48202
313-963-3310
uchcdetroit.org
help@uchcdetroit.org

Government Resources

- **Detroit Taxpayer Service Center**
Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, 2 Woodward Ave, Suite 130
Detroit, MI 48226
- **Wayne County Register of Deeds**
400 Monroe St, 7th Fl
Detroit, MI 48226
313-224-5850
waynecountylandrecords.com/recorder/web
- **Wayne County Treasurer**
400 Monroe St, 5th Fl
Detroit, MI 48226
313-224-5990
pta.waynecounty.com





Stage 2 Step-by-Step Guide: At Signing

Buyers: use these steps if you are ready to sign a land contract. Fields with a red “stop sign” indicate possible red flags and risks that may be a problem to the buyer.

Items to Bring		Answer	
1	ID for notary	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
2	Down payment (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No

Forms to Sign/Fill Out		Answer	
3	Land contract	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
4	Memorandum “Memo” of Land Contract <i>Recommended, but not required for recordation unless there are delinquent taxes (Pre-Signing Research #3).</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
5	Property Transfer Affidavit (PTA)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
6	Principal Residence Exemption (PRE)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No

Questions		Answer	
7	Will the land contract be recorded for you? <i>If No, keep the original signed Land Contract and/or Memorandum for recording.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8	Will the PTA and PRE be filed for you? <i>If No, you can do this yourself. See “Stages 3 and 4: After Signing”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Take Home Items		Answer	
9	Lead disclosure and lead safe handbook	<input type="checkbox"/> Received	<input type="radio"/> Didn't Receive
10	Seller's Disclosure Statement	<input type="checkbox"/> Received	<input type="radio"/> Didn't Receive
11	Original copy of the land contract	<input type="checkbox"/> Received	<input type="radio"/> Didn't Receive
12	Original copy of the Memorandum of Land Contract (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Received	<input type="radio"/> Didn't Receive
13	Signed PTA and PRE	<input type="checkbox"/> Received	<input type="radio"/> Didn't Receive
14	Receipt for payment	<input type="checkbox"/> Received	<input type="radio"/> Didn't Receive