

BUYING A HOME

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A Home Buyer's Story: House Hunting Gets Stressful

By Kristin Offiler

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Finding the right [house to buy](#) was getting a little stressful. A few weeks after we withdrew the first offer we ever made on a house, Matt and I found another one we loved – a foreclosure property – and so began another emotional roller coaster ride of ups and downs as we anxiously awaited the outcome of our offer on house #2.

House #2 was a beautiful gambrel with a unique slate roof, gleaming hardwoods, and a stunning entryway. It also had some things the last house didn't have: one-and-a-half bathrooms, bigger bedrooms, and attic space. The yard was tiny, but the house had so much character that we hardly cared about the small outdoor space.

Waiting for a Response

We made an offer on the house and waited. And waited and waited. Who would have guessed that so much of the stress and anxiety of [buying a home](#) hinges on waiting for an answer, but since this house was a foreclosure we were at the mercy of the bank. And they were in no particular rush. Eventually they responded and said they had a few other offers and wanted everyone to resubmit their best and final offer. So we resubmitted ours at a higher price than they were asking.

Then we waited more. And then it rained for days, causing a widespread, historically large flood in our area. Our real estate agent had trouble getting in touch with someone from the bank about the house—had the basement flooded like so many other houses in our state? Finally, we got inside to check it out and found 7 inches of stagnant water pooled in the basement.

We were upset, but not defeated: we rewrote our offer, hoping the bank would be flexible if the furnace was completely ruined because of the flood (foreclosure properties are typically sold "as is."). We waited again. A few weeks passed. We drove by the house often, chatted with neighbors who were pumping out their flooded cellars, and imagined ourselves living in the house.

House Offer Rejected

And then weeks after the process had started, our agent called with bad news: the bank had turned down our offer and decided to go with another one. We were crushed; we'd planned on getting that house and had fallen far too much in love with it. The disappointment left us wondering if we should just find an apartment since our wedding was only 4 months away. The stress was mounting, and we were feeling exhausted by the process.

After taking a short break from looking at houses, our agent helped us get back in the game. We shook off the disappointment and made some appointments and went to some open houses. I forced myself to stay detached emotionally from all houses going forward until we officially owned one. And honestly, as stressful as it can be to find a house and as upsetting as it can be to have an offer rejected, it happens for a reason.

How to deal with the stresses of house hunting:

- Try to prevent yourself from getting too attached to a house until you know it's yours for sure.
- See house hunting as a game: you have to make strategic decisions based on your best interest rather than your emotions.
- Stay positive after [making a house offer](#), even if it gets rejected; the right house *will* come along.
- Take a break from looking for a house if you're getting overwhelmed by the process. We took a few weeks to reassess after the second house didn't work out, and once we did that we were that much closer to finding our home.

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Kristin Offiler is a freelance writer who recently completed a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing. She lives happily in her new home in the Northeast with her husband and dog.

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