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THE CLOSING BLUEPRINT

The Houston Rent vs Own Guide

If you can afford rent, you may already qualify to own — with little or no money down.
Here's the math, the myths, and your 5-minute path out of renting.

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THE $132,000 QUESTION

Where your rent actually goes

Rent feels normal. But it's the one housing payment that builds you nothing. Look at what five years of renting really costs at common Houston rents:

Monthly rent	1 year	3 years	5 years
$1,800	$21,600	$64,800	$108,000
$2,200	$26,400	$79,200	$132,000
$2,800	$33,600	$100,800	$168,000
$3,200	$38,400	$115,200	$192,000

That money is gone — it built equity for your landlord. Put a similar payment toward a home and a meaningful share goes to **principal you keep**, on top of appreciation and mortgage-interest tax benefits. Owning usually isn't about spending more. It's about redirecting money you're *already* spending into something that's yours.

MYTH #1

“I need 20% down.” You almost certainly don't.

The 20% rule is the single biggest reason renters stay renters. Here's the reality of what's actually available:

- **0% down** programs exist for eligible buyers (certain VA and special programs).
- **3% – 3.5% down** is standard for conventional and FHA loans — on a $250k home that's roughly $7,500 – $8,750, not $50,000.
- **Down-payment assistance:** Texas and Houston-area programs can cover part or all of your down payment and some closing costs for qualifying buyers.
- **Gift funds** from family are allowed on most loan types.

> The real question isn't “do I have 20%?” It's “which low-down program do I qualify for?” — and that's a 5-minute conversation.

MYTH #2

“My credit isn't good enough.” Maybe it already is.

You may need a lower score than you think — and if you're not there yet, the fix is often faster than you'd expect.

Score range	Where you likely stand
720+	Strong — best rates and program access.
660 – 719	Solid — qualifies for most loan programs.
620 – 659	Workable — FHA and several programs are open to you.
580 – 619	Possible — FHA can go here with the right file.
Below 580	Let's build a 60–90 day plan to get you over the line.

Quick wins that can move a score fast:

- Pay revolving balances below 30% (ideally under 10%) of the limit.
- Don't close old accounts — age helps you.
- Dispute genuine errors; they're more common than people realize.
- Avoid new hard inquiries right before applying.

YOUR NEXT 5 MINUTES

The path from renter to owner

1

Get your numbers

Tell me your rent, rough credit, and timeline. I run what you could likely qualify for — free, no credit pull to start.

2

See your real payment

We compare your rent to an actual home payment in your price range, including taxes and insurance.

3

Match your program

I identify the low/no-down and assistance programs you qualify for as both your Realtor and lender.

4

Get pre-approved & shop

When you're ready, we pre-approve and start touring homes with payments near what you already pay.

Ready to stop renting?

Text **RENT** to 832-956-1759 or go to theclosingblueprint.com/renters
and I'll personally text you back with your next step.

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