

YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO BUYING AT AUCTION



WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Harcourts Auctions is a modern, non-priced property marketing method designed to offer buyers a transparent and efficient purchasing process. Our structured four-week campaign eliminates lengthy and uncertain negotiations, ensuring clear timelines and maximum buyer confidence. The process may culminate in a live auction, allowing you to secure your dream property without concerns about overpaying or losing out due to undisclosed competing offers.

The seller has chosen to utilise this platform to sell their home within a set timeframe, demonstrating a sincere commitment to the sale. The process unfolds in three clear phases, giving you multiple opportunities to acquire the property in a way that suits you best.

UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS

The Harcourts Auction process is a transparent, structured, and buyer-friendly way to purchase property, offering three clear opportunities to secure your new home. In Phase 1, you can submit a pre-auction offer to buy the property before auction day. If the seller accepts, the sale is concluded immediately. In Phase 2, the property goes to a live online auction, where registered buyers compete in real time, with the highest bid securing the home—provided the seller's reserve price is met. Finally, in Phase 3, if the property remains unsold, buyers still have a chance to negotiate post-auction. This method ensures fair market value, no hidden buyer fees, and complete transparency, giving you confidence in your purchase.

OVERVIEW OF THE AUCTION PROCESS FOR BUYERS



The auction process typically consists of three key phases: preparation, the auction day, and post-auction. Understanding each phase will help you navigate the process confidently.

Phase One: Before auction day, you have the option to submit a traditional offer. If you prefer to secure the property without bidding or are certain about your purchase, you can present the seller with an offer in advance. If the seller accepts, the property is sold, and you become the new owner—without needing to participate in the auction.

Sellers may consider pre-auction offers, which must be unconditional or pre-approved bonds and submitted in writing to the Harcourts representative. If the seller declines the offer, the auction will proceed as scheduled.

To maximise your chances of securing the property, we strongly recommend submitting your best offer as early as possible.

Phase Two - Auction Day: On the day of the auction, the auction will happen online make sure you register to bid, providing proof of funds or pre-qualification. The auction is unconditional, meaning there's no cooling-off period once you win. Bid within your budget, and be prepared for competition. If a pre-auction offer was accepted, the auction may be canceled, but you'll be notified in advance if you can submit your own offer.

Phase Three - Post-Auction: If the property doesn't sell at auction, the seller may accept conditional offers, such as those dependent on selling another property, securing funds over a longer period, or other agreed terms. Alternatively, the seller might list the property at a set price for buyers who prefer a traditional sale. If you're interested in making a post-auction offer, consult your Harcourts representative, who can advise you and help present your offer effectively.

UNDERSTANDING THE LEGALITIES

All offers must be submitted in writing, even if you place an offer online. If you wish to participate in the auction, you must register as a bidder by completing a Bidder's Registration Form and submitting the following:

- FICA documentation (proof of identity and residence)
- Proof of finance (pre-qualification certificate for a bond or proof of funds)

Unlike traditional auctions, there are no additional costs, commissions, or deposits required if you are the highest bidder.

Staying informed

Throughout the campaign, the property will be available for viewing. We highly recommend attending these viewings to familiarise yourself with the home before making an offer or bidding at auction.

We encourage you to gather all necessary information to ensure you feel confident in either submitting a pre-auction offer or bidding on auction day. You are welcome to request all available documentation from your Harcourts representative.

Clear benefits of buying at auction

- Auctions determine the true market value of a property.
- All bidders are given a fair opportunity to buy.
- No buyer commission payable.
- Negotiations are transparent and open to all participants.
- Sellers are motivated, as the sale is final at the fall of the hammer.
- You may face limited competition.
- Winning could mean paying only slightly more than the competition.

UNDERSTANDING THE PRICING & THE MARKET

As a buyer, you want to ensure you are making a competitive offer without overpaying. To avoid missing out on your dream home by offering just short of a competing bid, we encourage you to consult with your agent. As property professionals, we have access to a wide range of data to assist you in making the right decision regarding the purchase of your home. This includes recent sales data, street reports, and value-added items like TPN suburb reports, which provide insight into recent sales trends and average rental amounts in a specific area.

How to Determine Your Offer Price

When preparing to make an offer before a property auction, it's important to ensure your offer is fair and competitive. Follow these steps to decide on the right price in the South African property market.

Research Similar Properties: Look at the prices of similar properties sold in the area over the past three to six months. Also, review current listings to understand the level of competition and typical asking prices.

Understand Market Conditions

Consult your Harcourts Representative to learn about the local market. Are properties selling quickly, indicating high demand? This may require a higher offer. Are sellers reducing their prices? This could allow you to offer less.

Consider Auction Factors:

Seller's Minimum Price: The seller has a minimum price they will accept, known as the reserve. Your agent may be able to advise if this price is reasonable.

Pre-Auction Offers

You can submit an offer before the auction. It should be competitive but aligned with the property's value.

Note: Building inspections, such as pest and compliance certificates, may not always be available prior to the sale agreement being signed. Buyers have the option to arrange these inspections at their own cost if they wish to gain additional peace of mind before committing to a purchase. However, all available documentation will be provided to purchasers to assist in their decision-making.

GETTING READY FOR AUCTION DAY

Preparing to Buy at Auction

Purchasing a property at auction requires careful preparation to ensure you're ready financially and informed about the process. Auctions are unconditional, meaning there's no cooling-off period, so it's important to take these steps before the auction date:

Organise your finances

- Ensure you have funds available to pay the deposit on auction day, as well as transfer costs and duties to register the property in your name. A table of these costs can be requested from your Harcourts representative.
- If you need financing, obtain a pre-qualification certificate from a reputable institution, such as our finance partner, Ooba. This certificate proves your ability to purchase the property and strengthens your offer.
- If you're selling another property to fund this purchase, finalise that sale before the auction.

Understand the Property's Value

- Work with your Harcourts Representative to review local market trends and assess the property's fair value. You may also consider an independent valuation for additional guidance.
- Request area, suburb, and street reports from your Harcourts Representative if you need more information about the location.

Complete Pre-Auction Tasks

- Arrange a property inspection to check the condition of the home.
- Review all auction documents to understand the terms and conditions.

Checklist before auction:

- Request a bidder's registration form and familiarise yourself with the legal terms of the sale.
- Should you wish to review the title deed, feel free to request this. Understand the property's components and any servitudes or restrictions if applicable.
- If you require financing, obtain pre-qualification with a bond originator for a certificate.
- Review the list of fixtures, fittings, and inclusions available on the listing. Ask your Harcourts Representative for a printed or online version to familiarise yourself.
- Inspect the property multiple times. Arrange inspections with specialists (e.g., builder, plumber) if necessary.
- Familiarise yourself with the auction event by observing an online auction in advance.

PHASE TWO AUCTION DAY

Attending the auction event

Why You Should Attend the Harcourts Online Auction

Attending a Harcourts online auction via Zoom is an exciting and easy way to secure your dream property, all from the comfort of your home. Our live online auctions are designed to be user-friendly, giving you the opportunity to compete with other buyers in a real-time, transparent environment. You can feel confident and in control throughout the process, with the platform designed to guide you step-by-step. By registering to bid, you'll have direct access to view and bid on the property in a secure, professional setting, with no need for costly commissions or hidden fees.

Advantages of participating in a Harcourts online auction:

Convenience – You can attend and bid from anywhere, eliminating the need to travel.

Transparency – See all bids in real-time and know exactly where you stand.

No Pressure – Bid at your own pace within the auction timeframe, with full access to necessary property information beforehand.

Whether you're a seasoned property buyer or new to the auction world, our online platform makes it simple, straightforward, and exciting to secure a property with confidence.



AUCTION DAY FORMALITIES

- Register to bid before the auction and review the terms of sale.
- Receive the Link from your Harcourts Representative, as this is by invitation.
- Pay attention to the auctioneer's opening remarks. The rules of the auction will be discussed.
- Seller bids may be used to build momentum but will not exceed the reserve price.
- Bid confidently within your financial limits

Bidding strategies:

- Start with a strong opening bid.
- Randomise or double your bid increments.
- Show confidence to deter competitors.

Points to remember

- There will be No Buyer's Commission.
- Full Finance Options Are Available, but need to be in place before you bid.
- Offers Can be Accepted prior to Auction Day in Phase One.
- All property reports available on request, please ask your Harcourts Representative.
- The seller has a Non-Disclosed Reserve Price.
- Opening bid on auction day will be advertised and announced on the auction day.
- Registration requires FICA, i.e. proof of ID, and residence.
- The Bidding will occur in South African Rand.
- The Highest bidder commits to purchase.
- The Purchaser is not liable for property arrears.
- This is an auction with Reserve; seller can reject bids below reserve.
- The Purchaser only pays purchase price and transfer / registration costs.
- Property is sold subject to confirmation by the seller.
- The auction is Compliant with Consumer Protection Act.

PHASE THREE POST-AUCTION OFFERS

In the unlikely event that the property remains unsold after auction day, the seller may be open to offers with conditions, such as the sale of another property, extended timeframes for securing funds, or other negotiated terms. Alternatively, the seller might list the property at a set price to appeal to buyers who prefer a traditional purchasing process.

If you're a serious buyer, this is your chance to act decisively. A post-auction offer allows you to present your best proposal—but remember, the best offer isn't always the highest price. Sellers also value favorable terms, such as a quick settlement or flexibility that meets their needs. To make your offer stand out, put your best foot forward by balancing a competitive price with terms that make the deal attractive.

Discuss your options with your Harcourts representative, who can guide you through the process and ensure your offer is presented effectively to maximise your chances of success.





This guide is intended for general information purposes only. The content does not take your personal circumstances into account. You should obtain independent legal and financial advice before undertaking any transaction involving real estate.

Harcourts uses reasonable endeavours to ensure the information in this guide is current and accurate. To the extent permitted by law, Harcourts makes no representations or warranties as to the accuracy, reliability, completeness, or currency of the information within this guide, and the use of this guide is at your own risk. None of Harcourts, its employees, or any authors of this guide can be held liable for any inaccuracies, errors, or omissions in this guide.

All information and material contained in this guide is copyrighted and owned by Harcourts South Africa (Pty) Ltd. Except as permitted by applicable local laws, no part of this guide may in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or any other means be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or broadcast or transmitted without prior permission.

© 2025 Harcourts South Africa (Pty) Ltd



Harcourts

*We make it
possible*