

2026 Southeast Idaho Homebuyer Guide

Your Complete Guide to Buying a Home in SE Idaho

\$365K

MEDIAN PRICE

55

AVG DAYS ON MARKET

6.5%

30-YR RATE

3-5%

APPRECIATION

Sources: Redfin (Mar 2026), Freddie Mac PMMS (Apr 2026), Idaho Association of Realtors

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Why Southeast Idaho?

Southeast Idaho offers an exceptional quality of life that's drawing families, professionals, and investors from across the country. Here's why this region is one of the best-kept secrets in the Mountain West.

Affordable Cost of Living

Housing costs remain well below national averages while offering a higher quality of life. Your dollar goes further here than in Boise, Salt Lake City, or any West Coast metro.

World-Class Recreation

Minutes from Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton, and the Snake River. Skiing, fishing, hiking, and mountain biking are part of daily life — not just a vacation.

Strong Economic Anchors

Idaho National Laboratory (INL) is the region's largest employer with 6,200+ jobs and growing. BYU-Idaho brings a steady flow of students, faculty, and investment to Rexburg.

Excellent Schools & Community

Top-rated school districts, safe neighborhoods, and a family-first culture. Communities here are tight-knit and welcoming.

Steady Growth & Appreciation

SE Idaho home values have appreciated approximately 3-5% year-over-year in 2025-2026. Early buyers benefit from continued growth as the region attracts more employers and residents.

Sources: INL.gov (2026), Idaho Dept. of Labor, Idaho Association of Realtors Q1 2026

Understanding the Market

The Southeast Idaho real estate market is active and evolving. Understanding current conditions will help you make informed decisions and move with confidence.

City	Median Price	Days on Market	Inventory	YoY Change
Idaho Falls	\$365K	55 days	Medium	+3–5%
Ammon	\$430K	49 days	Medium	+5.3%
Rexburg	\$279K	40 days	Medium	+3–5%
Island Park	\$350K+	55 days	Low	Varies
Rigby	\$380K	35 days	Medium	+4.0%
Shelley	\$340K	38 days	Medium	+3.8%

What This Means for Buyers

- Homes in desirable neighborhoods sell quickly — be prepared to move fast with a pre-approval in hand.
- Rexburg and Ammon see the fastest turnover. If you're targeting these areas, set up instant MLS alerts.
- Island Park is a different market — vacation homes sit longer, giving you more negotiating room.
- Overall appreciation remains steady, making SE Idaho a solid long-term investment.

Sources: Redfin Market Data (Jan-Mar 2026), Snake River Regional MLS, Idaho Association of Realtors Q1 2026 Report

The Homebuying Process

Buying a home doesn't have to be overwhelming. Here's a clear, step-by-step roadmap from pre-approval to getting your keys.

1 Get Pre-Approved

Know your budget before you start shopping. We connect you with trusted local lenders who know the SE Idaho market.

2 Define Your Needs

Bedrooms, location, school district, lot size — we'll help you prioritize what matters most to your family.

3 Search & Tour Homes

Full MLS access via Two70.com, plus private tours scheduled around your life. See listings before most buyers.

4 Make an Offer

We craft competitive offers using real-time market data and comps. Our negotiation experience wins you the best terms.

5 Inspection & Appraisal

We coordinate everything and advocate for you if issues come up. No surprises — just informed decisions.

6 Close & Get Your Keys

Final walkthrough, signing day, and the moment you've been waiting for. Welcome home.

Financing Your Home

Understanding your financing options is critical. Southeast Idaho buyers have access to several loan programs, including some that are uniquely advantageous for rural communities.

Conventional Loans

5-20% down. Best rates for buyers with strong credit (700+). Most common for move-up buyers. Typically the fastest to close.

FHA Loans

3.5% down with credit scores as low as 580. Popular with first-time buyers. Requires mortgage insurance, which can be removed after reaching 20% equity.

VA Loans

0% down for eligible veterans and active military. No mortgage insurance required. One of the best deals in lending — ask us about local VA-approved lenders.

USDA Rural Development

0% down for homes in eligible rural areas. Much of SE Idaho qualifies — including parts of Ammon, Rigby, and Shelley. Often overlooked but incredibly valuable.

IHFA Down Payment Assistance

Idaho Housing and Finance Association offers grants and second mortgages to help with down payment and closing costs. Income limits apply — check eligibility at ihfa.org.

Current 30-Year Fixed Rate: ~6.5%

Freddie Mac PMMS, April 2, 2026. Rates change daily. Contact us for current lender recommendations.

Neighborhood Guide

Every community in SE Idaho has its own character. Here's our local take on where to look based on what matters most to you.

Idaho Falls

The region's hub. Best for professionals, families, and anyone who wants walkable amenities, dining, and the broadest price range (\$250K-\$600K+). Strong schools across multiple districts. Median ~\$365K.

Ammon

East of Idaho Falls. Newer construction, excellent schools (Hillcrest corridor), and a family-oriented feel. Higher median (~\$430K) but you get more house for the money — bigger lots and modern builds.

Rexburg

College town energy with strong rental demand. Ideal for investors and young families. Growing rapidly with new retail and restaurants. Median around \$285K — one of the most affordable options in the region.

Island Park

Vacation and cabin country. 30 minutes from Yellowstone's west entrance. Great for second homes and short-term rentals. Prices vary widely by property type — from \$250K cabins to \$600K+ lakefront.

Rigby, Shelley & St. Anthony

Affordable alternatives with rural charm. Perfect for buyers who want land, space, and a slower pace. Medians range from \$340K-\$380K with quick commutes to Idaho Falls.

Sources: Redfin, Zillow Home Value Index, Snake River Regional MLS (Jan-Mar 2026)

First-Time Buyer Tips

Buying your first home is exciting — and it's normal to feel overwhelmed. These five tips will save you time, money, and stress.

1 Budget Beyond the Mortgage

Property taxes, homeowner's insurance, HOA fees, utilities, and maintenance add up. A good rule: budget an extra 1-2% of the home's value annually for upkeep.

2 Don't Skip the Inspection

Even on new construction. An inspection costs \$300-\$500 and can save you thousands. We've seen brand-new homes with foundation issues.

3 Understand Earnest Money

In SE Idaho, earnest money is typically 1-2% of the purchase price. It shows the seller you're serious and is applied to your down payment at closing.

4 Know Your Contingencies

Financing, inspection, and appraisal contingencies protect you. We'll help you understand when to use them and when waiving one gives you a competitive edge.

5 Work With a Local Expert

National online services don't know the difference between east and west Idaho Falls. Local knowledge wins — especially in a competitive market.

The Smith Robinson Advantage

We're not just another real estate team. Here's what makes working with Smith Robinson Real Estate Two70 different.

1,000+ Homes Sold

We've helped over a thousand families buy and sell across Southeast Idaho. That experience translates into better negotiations, fewer surprises, and a smoother process for you.

Full MLS Access via Two70.com

Search every active listing in SE Idaho, updated every 15 minutes from the Snake River Regional MLS. Set up instant alerts and never miss a new listing.

In-House Cinematic Media

When you sell with us, your home gets professional photography, aerial drone, and cinematic video — all produced in-house. When you're buying, you see properties at their absolute best.

Dedicated Client Portal

Real-time transaction updates, document signing, and direct messaging with your agent — all in one place. No phone tag, no missed emails.

Deep Local Expertise

We live here. We raise our families here. We know every neighborhood, school district, and backroad. That local knowledge is your competitive advantage.

Sources & Methodology

All market data in this guide is sourced from reputable, publicly available databases. We believe in transparency — here's where our numbers come from.

Market Data & Home Prices

- Redfin Housing Market Data — [redfin.com](https://www.redfin.com) (Idaho Falls, Ammon, Rexburg, Jan-Mar 2026)
- Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI) — [zillow.com/research](https://www.zillow.com/research) (SE Idaho metro, Q1 2026)
- Snake River Regional MLS — active and sold listing data (accessed Mar 2026)
- Idaho Association of Realtors — Q1 2026 Market Report (statewide and regional breakdowns)

Mortgage Rates

- Freddie Mac Primary Mortgage Market Survey (PMMS) — [freddiemac.com/pmms](https://www.freddiemac.com/pmms) (Apr 2, 2026)
- Note: Rates shown are national averages. Your actual rate depends on credit score, loan type, and lender.

Employment & Economic Data

- Idaho National Laboratory — [inl.gov/about-inl](https://www.inl.gov/about-inl) (workforce figures, 2026)
- Idaho Department of Labor — labor.idaho.gov (regional employment trends)
- BYU-Idaho enrollment and economic impact reports — byui.edu

Loan Programs

- Idaho Housing and Finance Association (IHFA) — ihfa.org (down payment assistance programs)
- USDA Rural Development Eligibility — rd.usda.gov/eligibility (property eligibility maps)
- VA Home Loan Program — va.gov/housing-assistance/home-loans

Market data is current as of Q1 2026 and is subject to change. This guide is updated quarterly. For the most current data, contact our team or visit srtwo70.com.

Ready to Find Your Perfect Home?

SMITH ROBINSON REAL ESTATE TWO70

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srtwo70.com

Search all listings at two70.com

START YOUR HOME SEARCH

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