Mortgage Preapproval FAQs

A mortgage preapproval is a lender's conditional commitment to provide a specific amount based on financial information, lasting 60 to 90 days, requiring documentation, and potentially affecting credit scores, with the possibility of final denial due to changes in financial status; it is advised to obtain preapproval before house hunting for better budgeting and competitiveness.

1. What is a mortgage preapproval?

A mortgage preapproval is a lender's conditional commitment to lend you a specific amount, based on a review of your financial information.

2. How is preapproval different from prequalification?

- **Prequalification** is an estimate based on self-reported info.
- **Preapproval** involves a deeper review, including credit checks and documentation.

3. How long does a preapproval last?

Typically **60 to 90 days**, depending on the lender.

4. Does getting preapproved affect my credit score?

Yes, it involves a **hard inquiry**, which may slightly lower your score temporarily.

5. Can I get preapproved by more than one lender?

Yes, and it's often recommended to **compare rates**. Multiple inquiries within a short window (usually 14–45 days) are treated as one for credit scoring.

6. What documents do I need?

You'll need ID, income verification, tax returns, bank statements, and debt info. [See full checklist above.]

7. How much can I get preapproved for?

It depends on your **income**, **credit score**, **debts**, and **down payment**.

8. Can I still be denied after preapproval?

Yes. Changes in your financial situation, job status, or credit score can affect final approval.

9. Should I get preapproved before house hunting?

Absolutely. It helps you shop within your budget and makes your offer more competitive.

10. Is there a fee for preapproval?

Most lenders offer it **for free**, but some may charge a small fee for credit checks.