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HOME EQUITY

Using a HELOC to Buy Before You Sell: Is Bridge Financing Right for You?

Coltrain Mortgage Team · September 2026 · 6 min read

You find the right house, but you haven't sold yours yet. Do you make a contingent offer and risk losing it, or sell first and scramble to find your next home on a deadline? There's a third option most buyers don't realize they have: using the equity you already have to bridge the gap.

The problem bridge financing actually solves

In a competitive market, an offer contingent on selling your current home is a weaker offer — sellers often pass it over for a cleaner one. But selling first means moving twice, storing your belongings, and house-hunting under real time pressure. Bridge financing lets you access the equity sitting in your current home *before* it sells, so you can make a strong, non-contingent offer on the next one.

No Contingency Needed

Move Only Once

Use Equity You Already Have

Pay It Off When You Sell

Two ways to structure it

HELOC on Your Current Home

Open a line of credit against your current home's equity, draw what you need for the down payment on the new home, then pay it off with proceeds once your old home sells.

A Formal Bridge Loan

A short-term loan specifically structured around your sale timeline, typically paid off in full the moment your current home closes.

Which structure makes sense depends on how much equity you have, how confident you are in your sale timeline, and whether you'd rather have a revolving line or a defined short-term loan.

Who this actually makes sense for

COMPETITIVE MARKETS

Where a contingent offer is likely to lose to a clean one, even at a similar price.

RELOCATING ON A TIMELINE

A new job or family situation with a move-in date you don't control.

DOWNSIZING OR UPSIZING

You know your next home, but your current one hasn't hit the market yet.

AVOIDING A DOUBLE MOVE

Skipping temporary housing or storage between selling and buying.

1 Move, Not 2

The core appeal of bridge financing: go straight from your current home to your next one, on your timeline.

> **The honest trade-off:** for a period of time, you may be carrying payments on both properties. Bridge financing works best when you have a realistic, well-supported sale timeline for your current home — not a hopeful one. We'll walk through your actual numbers before you commit to anything.

Is this the right move for you?

Bridge financing isn't the right fit for every situation, but for the right buyer it's the difference between losing the house you want and moving into it on your own terms.

Thinking about buying before you sell?

Ready to talk it through?
Scan to reach a loan officer, or call (631) 851-4420.
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READY WHEN YOU ARE

Find out how much bridge financing you qualify for.

No pressure, no obligation — just a clear answer from a local loan officer.

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