

The Nine Questions

Use this before any major real-estate or mortgage decision. If you cannot fill in a line, that is the line to work on.

#	Question	Your answer
1	Objective. What am I trying to accomplish, and by when?	
2	Time Frame. How long will I keep the property? How long will I keep this loan?	
3	Structure. Which structure does that job? What else was considered?	
4	Total Cost. What does each option cost over the period that matters?	
5	Capital. How much of my money goes in? What does the rest need to do?	
6	Liquidity. What is left accessible afterward, and what is it protecting?	
7	Risk. What can go wrong, and which of those would actually hurt?	
8	Stress Test. What if two or three assumptions disappoint together?	
9	Exit. How does this end? What triggers a review?	

The one-sentence test

Finish this before you sign anything.

I am doing this because —

— and it improves the plan by —

If either blank is vague, the decision is not finished.