

Refinance Review

Start with the loan you already have. It is the baseline, and it is the column most refinance presentations omit.

	Keep existing loan	New 30-year	Shorter term	New 30-year, keep paying old amount
Balance today				
Rate				
Required payment				
Payment actually made				
Cost paid in cash				
Cost financed into balance				
Simple break-even (months)				
Interest to common date				
Balance at common date				
Scheduled payoff date				

Common future date used in every column (three, five or seven years)

Comparing a loan with twenty-three years left against a brand-new thirty gives the new loan a seven-year head start that does not appear anywhere in the presentation.

State the objective before reading the table: reduce cost, reduce the required payment, shorten the debt, change risk, access cash, or consolidate debt?

Judge the result against that objective — not against whichever number happens to look best.