



Investment Property Financing Guide

CONVENTIONAL • DSCR • BANK STATEMENT • PRIVATE MONEY



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Investment Property Financing Guide

Conventional investor loans, DSCR, bank statement, asset-based, no-ratio, and private money — how each is underwritten and where each fits.

Investment property financing is a set of distinct products, not one loan. Conventional investor financing qualifies you on personal income and DTI. DSCR qualifies the property on rental income relative to housing debt. Bank statement and asset-based programs qualify self-employed or asset-rich borrowers without traditional income documentation. No-ratio programs rely on credit, equity, and collateral. Private money and bridge loans fund speed and transitional condition rather than documentation. The right choice depends on how your income documents, how the property performs, how fast you need to close, and how long you intend to hold.

Key takeaways

- Choose the loan by how your income documents and how the property performs, not by advertised rate alone.
- Underwriting DSCR is a qualifying ratio; it is not the same as the property's actual cash flow after real operating expenses.
- Reserves are frequently the constraint that stops an otherwise strong investor file.
- Entity ownership is possible with many investor programs, but title, insurance, and personal guarantees all follow from it.
- Short-term rental underwriting differs materially from long-term rental underwriting.
- Underwrite every deal with vacancy, maintenance, management, and capital reserves included
 - not just PITI against gross rent.

Who this guide is for

- First-time investors buying a first rental
- Buy-and-hold and portfolio landlords
- Short-term rental operators
- Multi-unit and small-commercial buyers
- Self-employed investors with complex tax returns
- Investors purchasing through an LLC or refinancing to access equity

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1. The investment loan categories

Investors often ask what rate they can get before establishing which product they belong in. That is backwards. Each category answers a different qualification question, and the answer determines the leverage, cost, timeline, and structure available to you.

Conventional investment financing qualifies the borrower on personal income and debt-to-income. DSCR financing qualifies the property on rental income against housing debt. Bank statement financing qualifies self-employed borrowers on deposit activity. Asset qualifier and asset depletion qualify on the balance sheet. No-ratio financing relies on credit, equity, and collateral. Private money and bridge loans fund speed and transitional property condition. Construction and renovation loans fund work rather than a stabilized asset. Portfolio and commercial financing handle scale.

Most experienced investors use more than one of these across a career, and often more than one at the same time — a bridge loan to acquire and renovate, then a DSCR refinance once the property is leased.

The categories at a glance

- ☐ Conventional investment loans — personal income and DTI
- ☐ DSCR loans — property rental income against housing debt
- ☐ Bank statement loans — deposit-based income for self-employed investors
- ☐ Asset qualifier loans — verified eligible assets
- ☐ Asset depletion loans — assets converted to a qualifying income stream
- ☐ No-ratio loans — credit, equity, and collateral focus
- ☐ Private money loans — speed, condition, and exit-driven
- ☐ Bridge loans — short-term financing to a defined exit
- ☐ Construction loans — ground-up, draw-funded
- ☐ Renovation loans — improvements financed against expected value
- ☐ Portfolio loans — multiple properties under one facility
- ☐ Commercial financing — five-plus units and mixed use

2. Conventional investment financing

Conventional investor loans are the traditional path. They generally offer the most competitive pricing available to an investor, and they are the most demanding on personal documentation.

Qualification runs through your personal income and debt-to-income ratio. Every property you own, and its mortgage, taxes, insurance, HOA, and flood coverage, is part of that ratio, offset by rental income treated under program rules.

Rental income treatment matters enormously as a portfolio grows. Existing leases, tax-return Schedule E history, and appraisal rent schedules can all play a role, and programs typically apply a vacancy factor rather than counting gross rent. Two lenders can reach materially different DTI conclusions from the same portfolio.

Down payment requirements for investment properties are higher than for primary residences, reserves are typically required, and pricing carries an adjustment for investment occupancy. Credit score has a larger pricing effect on investment loans than on owner-occupied loans.

The number of financed properties is a real constraint. Conventional guidelines limit how many financed properties a borrower may have, and pricing and reserve requirements tighten as that count rises. Investors frequently move to DSCR or portfolio financing when they hit that wall.

Entity ownership is generally restricted on conventional loans; title is usually held personally. Investors who require LLC vesting typically look at DSCR, no-ratio, private money, or commercial structures.

Down payment minimums, reserve requirements, financed-property limits, and rental-income treatment are set by the applicable agency guidelines and lender overlays and change over time. Ask for the requirements applicable to your file in writing.

3. DSCR financing

DSCR financing qualifies the property rather than the borrower's personal income. The core ratio is qualifying rental income divided by the applicable monthly housing debt — principal, interest, taxes, insurance, HOA, and flood insurance where applicable.

The appeal is obvious for investors with complex returns or a large portfolio: personal DTI is not the gate. The trade-off is that the property has to carry itself on the lender's methodology, and pricing generally sits above conventional investor pricing.

Qualifying rent is determined from the lease, from an appraisal rent schedule such as the 1007, or from operating history. Where a property is vacant, market rent from the appraisal typically governs. Short-term rental income, where accepted, is usually documented from platform statements or third-party market data, and treatment varies widely.

The most important thing to understand is that a DSCR of 1.00 does not mean the property breaks even in real life. The ratio compares rent to housing debt only. It excludes vacancy, maintenance, management, capital expenditures, utilities, cleaning, and platform fees. A property can qualify comfortably and still lose money.

Other common features: LLC vesting is frequently permitted, reserves are required, prepayment penalties are common, and some programs impose geographic, property-type, or minimum-loan-amount restrictions.

There is no single universal DSCR threshold. Minimum ratios, rent documentation standards, and short-term rental acceptance differ by lender and investor.

4. Bank statement financing for investors

Bank statement programs qualify income from deposit activity rather than tax returns, typically over twelve or twenty-four months, with an expense factor applied to approximate business costs.

For an investor who is also a business owner, this can be the difference between a file that works and one that does not — particularly when the target property does not produce enough rent to carry a DSCR loan, or when the investor wants conventional-like leverage without conventional income documentation.

Transfers, loan proceeds, and non-business deposits are excluded. Business existence and ownership are verified. Credit, reserves, and the property still matter.

5. Asset-based financing

Asset qualifier programs base qualification on verified eligible assets. Asset depletion converts eligible assets into a qualifying monthly income figure over a defined period. Both suit investors whose balance sheet is far stronger than their tax returns suggest.

Liquidity governs eligibility. Cash and marketable securities are treated most favorably. Retirement accounts may be discounted or restricted based on age and access. Business operating funds, encumbered accounts, and illiquid holdings are often limited or excluded.

Reserves are usually assessed separately from the assets used to qualify, so confirm whether the same dollars can serve both purposes before you plan a purchase around a balance.

Tax consequences of any actual liquidation are your tax advisor's territory, not the lender's. Qualification does not require you to sell anything.

6. No-ratio financing

No-ratio programs remove the personal debt-to-income calculation from the analysis. They are most common in investment and business-purpose lending, where the collateral and the borrower's equity carry the risk.

Because income is not evaluated, other factors tighten. Expect meaningful equity or down payment, strong credit, documented reserves, and a property that appraises cleanly. Pricing typically sits above documented alternatives, and leverage is usually lower.

No-ratio suits an investor whose income genuinely cannot be documented efficiently — not one who simply prefers less paperwork on a deal that would qualify elsewhere at a lower cost.

7. Private money and bridge financing

Private money is collateral-driven, short-term financing. Its value is speed and flexibility on properties that conventional and DSCR lenders will not touch — properties with deferred maintenance, missing systems, or conditions that fail habitability standards.

Underwriting centers on the asset: current value, after-repair value where relevant, the renovation budget and scope, the borrower's experience with similar projects, liquidity to carry the project, and — above all — a credible exit.

The exit is the whole deal. A private loan is a bridge to something: a sale, or a refinance into DSCR or conventional financing once the property is stabilized and leased. An investor who cannot articulate the exit in specific terms with specific numbers is not ready to borrow this way.

Costs are higher: rate, points, and often fees for draws and inspections. Terms are short, frequently measured in months. Renovation funds are usually held back and released through a draw process tied to completed work, not paid at closing.

Used well, the higher cost is bought back in acquisition price and forced appreciation. Used badly — with an optimistic budget and no reserve for overruns — it is the fastest way to lose a deal.

Before taking a private or bridge loan

- ☐ Write the exit strategy down with dates and figures
- ☐ Confirm the refinance path exists — get pre-qualified for the takeout loan first
- ☐ Build a renovation budget with a contingency, not a best case
- ☐ Understand the draw process and what triggers each release
- ☐ Model carrying costs for a timeline longer than you expect
- ☐ Confirm extension terms and what they cost
- ☐ Verify insurance requirements for a vacant or under-renovation property

8. Property analysis: the numbers that matter

Every serious investor uses the same short list of metrics. Learn them once and you can compare any two deals in any market.

Gross rent is the scheduled rent at full occupancy. Effective gross income subtracts vacancy and collection loss. Operating expenses are the real costs of running the property — taxes, insurance,

management, maintenance, repairs, utilities you pay, HOA, licensing, landscaping, and pest control — excluding debt service.

Net operating income is effective gross income minus operating expenses. NOI deliberately excludes the mortgage, which is what makes it comparable across properties financed differently.

Debt service is the annual principal and interest. Cash flow is NOI minus debt service, and it is the number that actually shows up in your account.

Cap rate is NOI divided by purchase price or value — a measure of unlevered return that lets you compare properties. Cash-on-cash return is annual cash flow divided by total cash invested, which measures the return on the money you actually put in.

DSCR, as lenders compute it for qualification, is rent divided by housing debt. Debt yield is NOI divided by the loan amount, a lender's view of return on the loan independent of rate and amortization.

Break-even occupancy is the occupancy level at which the property covers operating expenses and debt service. It is the single best stress-test number for a short-term rental.

The core investor metrics

Metric	Formula	What it tells you
Effective gross income	Gross rent – vacancy and collection loss	Realistic income before expenses
Net operating income	Effective gross income – operating expenses	Property performance before financing
Cash flow	NOI – annual debt service	Money left after the mortgage
Cap rate	NOI ÷ purchase price	Unlevered return, comparable across deals
Cash-on-cash return	Annual cash flow ÷ total cash invested	Return on the money you actually deployed
DSCR (underwriting)	Qualifying rent ÷ housing debt (PITIA)	The lender's qualifying ratio
Debt yield	NOI ÷ loan amount	Lender's return on the loan, ignoring rate and term
Break-even occupancy	(Operating expenses + debt service) ÷ gross potential rent	How full the property must stay to survive
Total cash invested	Down payment + closing costs + renovation + reserves	The denominator most investors understate

Use the Investment Property Calculator to run these figures on a specific property, and stress-test with higher vacancy and higher expenses than you expect.

9. Financing short-term rentals

Short-term rentals are a different business from long-term rentals, and financing reflects that. Revenue is higher and far less predictable, and the expense load is dramatically heavier.

Seasonality dominates in Florida coastal markets. A Gulf-front property can produce most of its annual revenue in a handful of months, which means an annual average tells you very little about cash-flow timing.

The expense list that surprises new operators: platform fees, cleaning between stays, linens and consumables, furnishing and periodic replacement, higher utility costs, professional management often priced well above long-term rates, licensing and tourist-tax registration, and higher insurance.

Underwriting treatment varies. Some lenders accept documented platform revenue history. Some accept third-party market projections. Some will only use long-term market rent even for a property operating as a short-term rental. Ask before you go under contract, because the answer can change your leverage entirely.

Regulatory risk is the item most likely to break a deal after closing. HOA restrictions, municipal ordinances, minimum-stay rules, registration requirements, and occupancy caps vary by city and sometimes by street. Verify in writing with the municipality and read the HOA documents before your inspection period ends.

Underwrite short-term rentals on net revenue, never gross. Gross platform revenue overstates what reaches you by a wide margin.

Short-term rental due diligence

- ☐ Confirm the municipality permits short-term rental at this address
- ☐ Read HOA or condo documents for minimum-stay and rental restrictions
- ☐ Verify licensing, registration, and tourist-tax obligations
- ☐ Obtain at least twelve months of platform revenue history where available
- ☐ Model revenue by month, not as an annual average
- ☐ Budget cleaning, linens, supplies, and furnishing replacement
- ☐ Obtain a short-term rental insurance quote, not a standard landlord quote
- ☐ Confirm windstorm and flood coverage and deductibles
- ☐ Compare full-service management pricing against self-management time
- ☐ Calculate break-even occupancy and test it against a weak season

10. Financing long-term rentals

Long-term rentals are the more predictable side of the business, and financing treats them accordingly. An executed lease with a paying tenant is the strongest documentation a rental property can present.

Where there is no lease, market rent from an appraisal rent schedule generally governs. Where there is a lease materially below market, most lenders use the lease.

Tenant quality is part of underwriting on larger files: payment history, lease term remaining, and whether the tenancy is month-to-month all matter.

Vacancy and turnover are the costs most often underestimated. Turnover involves lost rent, cleaning, paint, and often a leasing fee. Budget for it annually rather than hoping it does not happen.

Professional management typically prices as a percentage of collected rent plus leasing fees. Self-managing saves that expense and costs time; be honest about which one you actually have.

Reserves matter more than most first-time investors accept. A single HVAC replacement or roof event can exceed a year of cash flow.

11. Multi-unit properties

Two-to-four-unit properties are residential for financing purposes. They appraise against comparable small residential income properties, and they can be financed through conventional, DSCR, and most alternative programs.

Five units and above is commercial. The appraisal shifts to an income approach, underwriting focuses on the property's NOI and debt yield, terms are frequently shorter with balloon structures, and the borrower's experience carries more weight.

Owner-occupancy changes the picture entirely on two-to-four-unit properties. An owner-occupant may access dramatically better terms, including in some cases low- or no-down-payment programs, while renting the remaining units. It remains one of the most effective entry paths for a first-time investor.

Rental income analysis on multi-unit properties uses a rent roll and, where available, operating statements. Expect closer scrutiny of expense ratios than on a single-family rental.

Management complexity scales faster than unit count. Four tenancies is not four times one tenancy in effort, but it is not the same as one either — plan for it before you buy.

12. Entity ownership

Many investors want to hold title in an LLC. Whether that is possible depends entirely on the loan program. DSCR, no-ratio, private money, portfolio, and commercial financing commonly permit it. Conventional financing generally does not.

A personal guarantee is usually required even when the entity holds title. The LLC owns the asset; the individual still stands behind the debt in most investor lending.

Documentation typically includes the articles of organization, the operating agreement, a certificate of good standing, the EIN, and evidence of the authorized signer.

Insurance must match title. A policy naming an individual on a property titled to an LLC is a claim problem waiting to happen. Name the entity, and add the lender as required.

Transferring an existing personally-held property into an LLC after closing can implicate the due-on-sale clause in the mortgage. Some servicers do not act on it; the clause still exists. Take legal advice before transferring title on a financed property.

Whether an entity is right for you is a legal and tax question about liability and structure. It is not a mortgage question, and your loan officer should not be the one answering it.

Entity structuring, liability protection, and tax treatment require advice from your attorney and CPA. Nothing here is legal or tax advice.

13. Acquisition strategies

Strategy determines financing more than most investors realize. Match the loan term to the hold period and the loan type to the property's condition.

A stabilized purchase — a property already leased and in good condition — pairs naturally with long-term financing: conventional or DSCR.

A value-add purchase involves buying below market condition, improving it, and raising rent. It typically needs renovation financing or private money first, then a refinance.

The buy, renovate, rent, refinance approach is the systematized version of that: acquire with short-term capital, improve, lease, then refinance into permanent financing based on the improved value. The risk sits entirely in the refinance assumption — if values or rents do not land where you modeled, you are holding expensive short-term debt.

Bridge-to-permanent is the same logic for larger or slower projects. New construction adds draw management, builder risk, and a longer timeline.

Short-term rental acquisition is a hybrid: it is a real estate purchase and an operating business at once.

Portfolio refinance consolidates multiple properties, often to free equity or simplify servicing. It can also concentrate risk under cross-collateralization — read the terms.

No strategy is superior in the abstract. Each carries a different risk profile, capital requirement, and time commitment.

14. Financing comparison

The table below is the shortest honest summary of the market. Use it to narrow to two options, then price both.

Investor financing options compared

Option	Qualification focus	Income documentation	Property use	Property condition	Typical term	Relative pricing	Speed	Entity ownership	Prepayment	Best fit
Conventional	Personal income and DTI	Full documentation	Investment	Habitable	15 to 30 years	Lowest	Standard	Generally not permitted	Typically none	Documented income, few financed properties
DSCR	Property rent vs housing debt	None personal	Investment	Habitable	30 years, some interest-only	Moderate	Fast	Commonly permitted	Often present	Cash-flowing rentals, complex returns
Bank statement	Deposit-based income	12 to 24 months statements	Investment or occupied	Habitable	15 to 30 years	Moderate	Moderate	Program-specific	Program-specific	Self-employed investors
Asset qualifier	Verified eligible assets	Asset statements	Varies	Habitable	Varies	Moderate	Moderate	Program-specific	Program-specific	Asset-rich, income-light
Asset depletion	Assets as income stream	Asset statements	Varies	Habitable	Varies	Moderate	Moderate	Program-specific	Program-specific	Retirees and high-net-worth
No ratio	Credit, equity, collateral	None used	Usually investment	Habitable	Varies	Higher	Fast	Commonly permitted	Often present	Income cannot be documented efficiently

Option	Qualification focus	Income documentation	Property use	Property condition	Typical term	Relative pricing	Speed	Entity ownership	Prepayment	Best fit
Private money	Collateral and exit	Minimal	Investment or business purpose	Any, including distressed	Months to a few years	Highest	Fastest	Commonly permitted	Often present	Distressed property, speed, renovation

Relative pricing, terms, and availability shift with market conditions and vary by lender and investor. Compare actual quotes, including points and prepayment terms, not category generalizations.

15. Investor due-diligence checklist

Work this list on every property before your inspection period expires.

Property and market

- ☐ Verify market rent from multiple independent sources
- ☐ Confirm local rental restrictions and any short-term rental ordinance
- ☐ Read HOA or condo documents for rental limits and pending assessments
- ☐ Pull the actual property tax bill and check for a post-sale reassessment
- ☐ Obtain a real insurance quote for this address, not a rule of thumb
- ☐ Determine flood zone and whether an elevation certificate affects pricing
- ☐ Inspect the property and scope any specialty inspections needed
- ☐ Get written repair estimates rather than assuming a number

Financial and legal

- ☐ Model vacancy at a realistic rate for the submarket
- ☐ Budget management, maintenance, and capital reserves separately
- ☐ Confirm which utilities you will pay
- ☐ Verify total financing cost including points and fees
- ☐ Understand any prepayment penalty and how it decays
- ☐ Define the exit strategy and the timeline
- ☐ Order a title search and review exceptions
- ☐ Review existing leases, deposits held, and tenant payment history
- ☐ Review the appraisal and rent schedule when they arrive

- ☐ Stress-test cash flow with higher vacancy, higher rates, and higher insurance

16. Investor documentation checklist

What lenders commonly request from investor borrowers.

Gather before you apply

- ☐ Government-issued identification
- ☐ Entity documents: articles, operating agreement, EIN, certificate of good standing
- ☐ Asset statements for down payment and reserves
- ☐ Schedule of real estate owned with balances, payments, and rents
- ☐ Executed leases for each occupied property
- ☐ Rent roll for multi-unit properties
- ☐ Operating statements or trailing twelve months where available
- ☐ Current mortgage statements for owned properties
- ☐ Insurance declaration pages, including flood where applicable
- ☐ Property tax bills
- ☐ The executed purchase agreement
- ☐ Renovation budget and scope of work for value-add projects
- ☐ Experience schedule of prior projects for private-money financing
- ☐ Business bank statements or tax returns where the program requires them

17. Important disclosure

Loan programs, qualification standards, pricing, leverage, reserve expectations, and property eligibility vary by lender, investor, market, property, and borrower profile. This guide is educational and is not a loan approval, a commitment to lend, a Loan Estimate, an investment recommendation, or legal or tax advice. Rental income figures used in examples are illustrative only.

Frequently asked questions

How do I finance an investment property?

Start by identifying which qualification path fits: personal income (conventional), property rent (DSCR), deposits (bank statement), assets (asset qualifier or depletion), credit and equity (no ratio), or collateral and speed (private money). The property type, condition, and your hold period narrow it further.

What is the minimum down payment on an investment property?

Investment properties require more down payment than primary residences, and the requirement varies by program, credit profile, property type, and leverage. Ask for the specific requirement in writing rather than relying on a general figure.

How many properties can I finance?

Conventional guidelines limit the number of financed properties, with reserve and pricing requirements tightening as the count rises. DSCR, portfolio, and commercial financing are the common paths beyond that limit.

Can an LLC buy the property?

With DSCR, no-ratio, private money, portfolio, and commercial financing, entity vesting is commonly permitted. Conventional financing generally requires personal title. A personal guarantee is usually required either way.

What is a DSCR loan?

A loan qualified on the property's rental income relative to its housing debt — principal, interest, taxes, insurance, HOA, and flood insurance — instead of the borrower's personal income and DTI.

Can rental income be used to qualify?

Yes, under most investor programs, though the method differs. Conventional programs apply guideline treatment to leases and Schedule E history; DSCR programs use lease or appraisal market rent directly.

Can projected rent be used?

On a vacant property, market rent from an appraisal rent schedule is commonly used. Whether third-party projections are accepted, particularly for short-term rentals, varies significantly by lender.

Can Airbnb income be used?

Some programs accept documented platform revenue history, some accept third-party projections, and some will only use long-term market rent. Confirm before going under contract.

What is cap rate?

Net operating income divided by purchase price or value. It measures unlevered return and allows comparison between properties regardless of how each is financed.

What is cash-on-cash return?

Annual cash flow divided by total cash invested, including down payment, closing costs, renovation, and reserves. It measures the return on the money you actually deployed.

What is NOI?

Net operating income: effective gross income minus operating expenses, excluding debt service. It is the standard measure of property performance before financing.

What is debt yield?

Net operating income divided by the loan amount. Lenders use it as a rate- and amortization-independent measure of loan risk.

What is break-even occupancy?

The occupancy level at which the property covers operating expenses and debt service. It is the most useful stress-test metric for seasonal and short-term rentals.

What reserves are required?

Reserve requirements vary by program, property count, and property type, and are commonly expressed as months of housing payments. They are frequently the binding constraint on investor files.

Can first-time investors qualify?

Yes for most conventional and DSCR financing. Private money and larger commercial financing weigh borrower experience more heavily, and inexperience may affect leverage or pricing.

Can I use private money?

Yes, for acquisitions that need speed or involve property condition that conventional and DSCR lenders will not accept. Cost is higher and terms are short, so the exit strategy must be defined before you borrow.

What is a bridge loan?

Short-term financing used to move from acquisition to a defined exit — usually a sale or a refinance into permanent financing after stabilization.

Can I finance renovations?

Yes, through renovation financing or private money with a draw structure. Funds are typically released against completed work rather than advanced at closing.

Can I refinance after making repairs?

Yes. That is the standard buy-renovate-rent-refinance path. The refinance depends on the appraised value after improvements and on meeting the takeout program's seasoning and documentation requirements.

Can I take cash out of an investment property?

Cash-out refinancing on investment properties is available under many programs, with leverage limits, seasoning requirements, and pricing that differ from owner-occupied cash-out.

Can I use business funds for the down payment?

Often, where ownership of the funds is documented and, on some programs, where the withdrawal does not impair the business. Requirements vary.

Do investment loans have prepayment penalties?

Conventional investment loans typically do not. DSCR, no-ratio, and private-money loans frequently do, often on a declining schedule. Always ask how the penalty is calculated and when it expires.

Are investment property rates higher?

Investment occupancy carries pricing adjustments relative to primary residences, and alternative documentation programs price above conventional. Compare total cost across the hold period rather than rate alone.

Can I finance a condominium as an investment?

Often, subject to project eligibility review — owner-occupancy ratios, litigation, reserves, and insurance are all examined. Condo project approval is a frequent source of late-stage surprises.

Can I finance a short-term rental?

Yes, through several programs, but income treatment, insurance, and regulatory verification all differ from long-term rentals. Confirm local ordinance and HOA permission first.

What insurance is needed?

Typically a landlord or dwelling-fire policy, liability coverage, flood insurance where applicable, and windstorm coverage in coastal markets. Short-term rentals need a policy written for that use.

What documents are required?

Identification, entity documents, asset statements, a schedule of real estate owned, leases and rent roll, mortgage statements, insurance and tax documents, and the purchase agreement. Renovation budgets and experience schedules apply to project financing.

Can foreign nationals qualify?

Some programs are available to foreign national borrowers where offered, generally with larger down payments, different documentation, and specific reserve requirements. Availability varies by lender.

Can I use a no-ratio loan for an investment property?

Yes. No-ratio programs are most often used for investment and business-purpose transactions, with credit, equity, reserves, and collateral carrying the file.

How should I compare financing options?

Compare total cost over your realistic hold period: rate, points, fees, prepayment terms, leverage, reserve requirements, and how quickly the lender can actually close. The cheapest rate on a deal that does not close is worth nothing.

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Sources

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- [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau — Mortgage basics](#)

Disclosures

Version 2026-07-27. Last reviewed 2026-07-27. Written by Vabasso Mortgage Editorial Team; reviewed by Vabasso Mortgage Licensed Advisory Team.

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Vabasso Mortgage · NMLS #2864025 · (727) 835-9104 · hello@vabasso.com

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