A mortgage in Dubai for the handover payment: what the bank checks, and when to start

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In many Dubai payment plans, most of the money is paid at handover. If you do not plan for this, you may find out at the last minute that you need a mortgage, and that banks do not rush. Here are the UAE Central Bank rules, and what I have seen with the investors I guide.

In short

- Banks will not lend above the Central Bank ceilings, and they usually lend less.
- Start checking two to three months before handover. Approval in principle is usually valid for about 60 days.
- Beyond the interest, there are other costs: valuation, a processing fee, registration and insurance.

In this guide

01 When you need a mortgage

02 The Central Bank rules

03 Resident or non-resident: how the mortgage differs

04 What it costs beyond the interest

05 What the bank checks

06 What helps you get approved, and what makes it harder

07 From my experience

08 The timeline

09 What to do

01 When you need a mortgage

You will need a mortgage when your payment plan leaves a large part of the price for handover, for example 50% or 75%, and you do not have the funds ready. Your payment plan is in the contract

and in the statement of account (SOA) the developer sends. You can find examples of these plans in the guide to buying off-plan.

02 The Central Bank rules

- The monthly repayment on all your loans together cannot exceed 50% of your monthly income.
- For non-UAE nationals buying a completed property as a first home, the loan can be up to 80% of the value for a property up to AED 5 million, and up to 70% above that.
- For a second or further property, the loan can be up to 60%.
- For an off-plan property, the loan can be up to 50%, for every buyer.

These are ceilings. Each bank sets its own terms, which are usually lower.

The loan term is up to 25 years, and the age by which it must end is set by each bank, usually between 65 and 70. An example of the repayment limit: someone earning AED 30,000 a month can pay up to AED 15,000 a month on all loans together. If they have a car loan repayment of AED 3,000 and a minimum credit card payment of AED 1,000, the mortgage repayment can be up to AED 11,000 a month.

> How much can a bank lend under these rules, and what is the maximum monthly repayment? In the mortgage calculator you enter the property price and your income.

03 Resident or non-resident: how the mortgage differs

The Central Bank does not require residency to get a mortgage. Each bank decides for itself whether to lend to someone without a residence visa, and on what terms. The Central Bank caps apply to every non-UAE national. The 50% to 60% for non-residents is bank policy, not a Central Bank rule. But the terms for residents and non-residents are very different:

	Resident (visa and Emirates ID)	Non-resident
How many banks offer a mortgage	Most banks	Only a few banks
How much the bank finances (completed property)	Up to 80% for a first home (up to 70% above AED 5 million)	Usually 50% to 60%
How much the bank finances (off-plan property)	Up to 50%, for every buyer	Up to 50%, but only with a few products
Interest rate	Standard	Usually higher

	Resident (visa and Emirates ID)	Non-resident
Documents	Passport, visa and Emirates ID, a salary certificate, payslips and six months of bank statements	Passport, three to six months of bank statements, payslips or tax returns, and a credit report from the country where you live
Repayment limit	Up to 50% of income, on all loans together	The same rule

What this means in practice: a non-resident usually needs to cover at least 40% to 50% of the property price with their own money. If you have a Golden Visa or another residence visa, you count as a resident (see the visa comparison).

Off-plan property for non-residents: most banks finance only completed property for non-residents. In 2026, Dubai Islamic Bank launched off-plan financing for non-residents too, up to 50% of the property value, subject to the bank's eligibility criteria. During construction you pay only the bank's profit, and full instalments start at key handover or after 24 months, whichever comes first.

From my experience: in practice, without a residence visa it is very hard to get a mortgage approved at handover, so start with the visa. If you have no visa and no time to get one before handover, you are left with two options: pay the balance with your own money, or sell the property before handover.

04 What it costs beyond the interest

Cost	How much
Property valuation	Usually AED 2,500 to 3,500
Bank processing fee	Up to 1% of the loan amount, plus VAT
Mortgage registration with the Dubai Land Department	0.25% of the mortgage amount, plus AED 4,000 + VAT service partner fee (5,000 for an off-plan property) and AED 250 for the certificate
Life insurance and property insurance	Required, and the price depends on the bank
Early settlement	Up to 1% of the outstanding balance, and no more than AED 10,000

05 What the bank checks

- Your income, and where it comes from.
- Bank statements from recent months.

- Existing commitments, such as loans and credit cards.
- The property value, based on the bank's valuation.

Residents need to provide a passport, visa and Emirates ID, a salary certificate, payslips and six months of bank statements.

Non-residents need to provide a passport, three to six months of bank statements, payslips or tax returns, and a credit report from the country where they live.

If you already own an apartment in Dubai that is rented out, include the tenancy contract as well. And if the developer has sent a notice about the handover date or a delay, include that too.

For an off-plan property, the bank also asks for the Oqood certificate and an up-to-date statement of account (SOA) from the developer. The SOA shows how much has been paid and how much is left to pay at handover.

06 What helps you get approved, and what makes it harder

In my experience, and that of the professionals I work with in Dubai, these are the things that change the picture for the bank:

- **Income in Dubai helps.** The bank wants to see about six months of payslips from a company in Dubai. If you have been in a new job for only three months, you are still considered to be on probation.
- **Income only from outside the UAE makes it very hard,** even when it is high.
- **If you have your own company:** make sure you have payslips and a salary certificate. It does not matter where the company is registered.
- **A Golden Visa helps,** because the bank views someone with a ten-year residency differently.
- **Your own money at handover improves your chances.** If you can cover part of the amount yourself and reduce the financing you ask for, for example from 50% to 40%, it is easier to get approval from the bank.
- **Go to the bank only when everything is ready.** Before you talk to the bank, have your file checked, so you do not get stuck halfway through and have the mortgage rejected.

07 From my experience

An investor I guided had already paid half the price and reached the point where he needed a mortgage for the other half. Exactly then one of his income sources ended, which could change the amount the bank would approve. So start checking with banks well before the handover letter arrives, not after.

08 The timeline

Approval in principle usually takes a few working days and is valid for about 60 days. Final approval takes another two to four weeks. So start two to three months before handover. The bank lends based on the valuation of the finished apartment. If the valuation is lower than the price, you pay the difference yourself.

If handover is already close, go to the bank at least a month to a month and a half before the date. Any later than that, there is usually not enough time to get final approval.

09 What to do

1. Check in your contract how much is left to pay at handover, and when.
2. Prepare your documents in advance.
3. Approach several banks, or a licensed mortgage adviser, and compare.
4. Do not commit to a payment date before you have approval in principle.

What else happens on handover day? See the guide to handover day.

Frequently asked questions

Can I get a mortgage without a UAE visa?

Some banks offer mortgages to non-residents too, but they usually finance only 50% to 60% of the price of a completed property, at a higher interest rate, and ask for more documents. In my experience, it is very hard in practice to get approved without a visa and a bank account in Dubai, so start with the visa (see the visa comparison). If you have no visa and no time to get one before handover, you are left with two options: pay the balance with your own money, or sell the property before handover.

Can non-residents get a mortgage in Dubai?

Yes. The Central Bank does not require residency. But only a few banks lend to someone without a residence visa, and they usually finance 50% to 60% of the price of a completed property. The full comparison is in the table above.

When should I start?

You should start two to three months before the handover date.

Can I pay off the mortgage early?

Yes. The fee is up to 1% of the outstanding balance, and no more than AED 10,000.

Do banks in Dubai refuse mortgages because of nationality?

In my experience, I have not come across a refusal because of a passport. The bank looks at your income, your documents and your residency, like any bank.

I have several units to pay for at handover. Can I get a mortgage for all of them?

The bank adds up the repayments on all your loans, and the total monthly repayment cannot exceed 50% of your income. A second unit onward counts as a second property, where the financing cap is lower. Each unit is valued separately, and the costs (valuation, processing fee, registration) are paid on each loan.

Sources

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- The story: my own experience with an investor I guided in 2026.

Approaching handover?

Tell me how much is left to pay and when, and we will plan ahead.

Send a WhatsApp message →

I am not a mortgage adviser. This is general information, correct as of the update date, and each bank sets its own terms.