

8 TIPS FOR CHOOSING A NEIGHBOURHOOD



Making a move to a new home often means also moving to a new town. This presents an opportunity to explore what many towns around you have to offer. Here are some tips to help you choose the neighborhood that's best for you.

1. RESEARCH NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL SYSTEMS.

If you have school-aged children, this will likely be one of your top priorities. School zoning is very specific in some areas: your children's schools can be determined by your home's exact location. You want to make sure your new neighborhood offers a school system that gains positive reviews and boasts passionate teachers and administrators.

2. DECIDE WHICH CONVENIENCES ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU. Do you want to be able to walk to a local coffee shop or to a nearby library? Are you interested in a quiet area with minimal traffic? Do you want to be able to have your own backyard garden? Different communities offer their own charm, culture, and conveniences. Living in an area that allows you to walk to nearby shops may also mean heavy traffic and a higher noise capacity. Living out in the country will be quieter but also less convenient. Make a list of which communities have the conveniences that matter to you most.

3. LOOK INTO WHICH AMENITIES YOUR COMMUNITY SHOULD OFFER. If you have young, active children, you may want to look for areas that offer things like plenty of sidewalks, community recreation centers, family-friendly events, and children's museums. For your own purposes, you may want your community to offer amenities such as a yoga center, a golf course, or a book store. Consider the accessibility of these things that will make your neighborhood fitting for your family.

4. CONSIDER WHICH TYPE OF HOME YOU WILL BE LOOKING FOR. Once you start in the search for a home, do you hope to live in a newly constructed, upgraded house, or something more historic and quirky? Some neighborhoods, such as Surry Hills, have an enchantingly historic feel, from their community festivals to their individual homes. Other neighborhoods focus on efficiency and modern design. The neighborhood you choose will affect the types of homes from which you can choose.

5. UNDERSTAND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUR BUDGET AND NEIGHBORHOOD EXPENSES. All of the above factors (school systems, conveniences, amenities, and home type) will affect the overall cost of living in a neighborhood. Taxes and homeowner's association fees operate on a wide scale depending on the factors of each neighborhood. Depending on your budget, you may have to prioritize your ideal characteristics for a community and choose an area that can make both you and your budget happy.

6. DO YOUR DUE DILIGENCE. Ask neighbors, friends, and potential neighbors what they know and like about certain communities. Visit multiple neighborhoods to develop your own impression, too. Consider the good and the bad to get an honest outlook on what each neighborhood will offer.

7. MAP OUT PROXIMITY TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS. Moving to a new community can mean moving closer to or further from your family and friends. If living close to these people is important to you, consider the driving distance to visit your parents or your sister's house. If you visit these friends and family often, a further distance could put a burden on making weekend visits. Especially for those who have parents, friends, or in-laws who help to babysit or housesit, you will want to establish a new location that still allows you to reap the benefits of having loved ones nearby. On the other hand, sometimes it is nice to get out and explore a new, unfamiliar territory. If you're getting tired of your mother-in-law stopping in (uninvited), it might be beneficial to choose a neighborhood that's a little farther away!

8. UNDERSTAND WHAT'S REALISTIC. Of course, all of these tips are here to help you choose a neighborhood that is right for you. It is also important, however, to understand that nothing is perfect! You will likely have to sacrifice a few of your ideal community characteristics to find a neighborhood that will eventually become home. Some factors are fixed while others are moldable and will require compromise. No neighborhood will be perfect, but one will be just right for you.