

YOUR HOME

JUNE
2010

TIPS AND TRENDS TO HELP MAXIMIZE HOME BUYING AND SELLING

RELOCATION COSTS

Considering a move to a new city? Before you pack your bags and hire a moving company, be sure to research the potential price tag of relocating. It may cost more than you think.

Cost of living can vary greatly from town to town, so be sure to do some research before taking the plunge.

Better Homes and Gardens recommends browsing the local newspaper for grocery promotions, ads, and other local news to track costs so you can put those figures into a worksheet and determine the income you might need. While several cost-of-living calculators are available on the Internet, they provide only general figures and don't take into account specific housing needs.

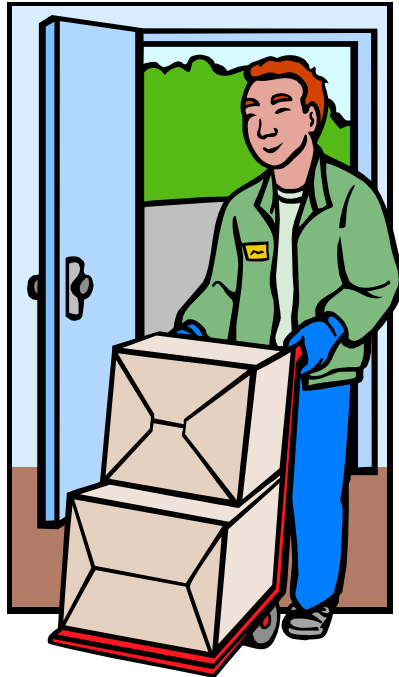
Be sure to ask a Certified Residential Specialist in your target area about "hidden" homeownership costs, such as recreation fees, trash collection and community services. Try to obtain a one-year sampling of utility bills for the type of home you're considering. What can you expect to pay for telephone, cable TV and Internet services? Will you have your own septic tank and water pump, or will the community provide water service?

There are a host of other expenses to consider. What taxes will you pay? Higher taxes may mean better schools, libraries, trash collection and other community services, while lower taxes could mean higher expenses for these services. But it pays to have all the facts before you make a move.

Likewise, transportation and parking costs often are higher in larger cities, while a small-town commute can mean a short walk or bike ride. Also, gas prices can be more costly in some areas than in others.

Leisure time costs can add up as well. How much more will you have to pay for tennis or health club memberships, adult education classes and golf course fees?

Moving away from family and friends can mean more frequent phone calls and trips back home, so be sure to allow for those additional costs as well.



HOME INSURANCE CHECKLIST

It can be easy for homebuyers to overlook home insurance costs. Most buyers tend to focus on factors such as quality of neighborhood, property taxes, school districts and available recreational and cultural outlets. But the seemingly mundane detail of home insurance can add up to a big investment. The size, location, construction and overall condition of a house can affect insurance cost, choice and availability, according to the Insurance Information Institute. When looking at prospective homes, the Institute recommends that homebuyers consider the following:

- Where is the nearest fire department? Houses located near a fire station usually cost less to insure.
- Are the plumbing and electrical systems in good condition? Poorly maintained, unsafe and/or outdated systems are more costly to insure than well-maintained ones.
- Is the home vulnerable to wind damage? A beach home may be more susceptible to wind damage and can be more costly to insure than homes located inland.
- Is the home at risk for flooding or located in a flood zone? Most standard homeowners' insurance policies do not cover floods, so you may need a separate policy, which you can get through the National Flood Insurance Program, which is serviced by private carriers, or from a few specialty insurers.
- Is the home located in an earthquake-prone area? If so, earthquake insurance requires an endorsement or a separate policy.
- Is the house well constructed and well maintained? Homes built with disaster-resistant materials and designed to meet current building codes are more likely to withstand natural disasters.



Your home is your biggest investment. Make sure you protect it with the right type of homeowners' insurance policy.

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Borrowers spend an average of 10 hours researching a car purchase and only five hours researching a mortgage or home equity loan.

Source: 2010 Zillow Mortgage Marketplace Survey



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COLOR CORRECT

The look of your home's exterior can make a strong first impression, enhance curb appeal and help boost resale value, but choosing the right color can be tricky. The paint experts at Sherwin-Williams offer several helpful hints for selecting the best color for your home's exterior.

First, examine homes in different neighborhoods to get an idea of how residents apply color to their own homes. Note the most appealing color schemes in the area and consider adapting them to your home. Choose a scheme that blends well with homes in your current neighborhood or subtly stands out.

Landscaping elements, such as flower gardens, flowering shrubs and



trees that change color, can affect your color choice. For example, heavily wooded lots will make colors appear darker due to the shade, and the foliage tends to camouflage the home.

Elements of your home, such as roofing shingles, brick or stone accents, often have varying shades and hues that can serve as the foundation of your paint color choices. For example, a charcoal gray shingle could have flecks of gray-blue or gray-green that you can incorporate into the color scheme.

Be sure to examine color samples outdoors at various angles and at different times of the day. Consider buying small quantities of paint in desired colors and paint a section of the house where the body, trim and accent colors can be seen together.

Pay attention to the direction and intensity of the sun. Intense sunlight can wash out colors. While brighter colors may be suitable in Sunbelt cities, lighter, neutral tones often work better in other locales. Tinted and mid-tone neutrals are popular because they play off landscaping and other building materials.

White or light colors make a large home on a small lot appear even larger, while dark colors tend to make the same home look smaller but more substantial. Remember, light colors advance in space while dark colors recede. So if a home is located far from the curb, painting it a light color will make it look more prominent.

Work With a CRS Agent

Buying a home is one of the biggest and most emotional decisions you will ever make. So it's important to work with someone who can provide sound advice and a steady, guiding hand when you need it. That's why a CRS agent is the best person for the job.

A Certified Residential Specialist (CRS) is among the top 4 percent of all agents in the country. CRS agents have achieved a high volume of transactions and advanced training in areas such as business planning, real estate investing, marketing and technology. They must also maintain membership in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and abide by its Code of Ethics. Why work with anyone else when you can work with a CRS?



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DID YOU KNOW?



One hour of gardening burns 256 calories while one hour of cleaning gutters burns 320 calories.

Source: Fitness Magazine



Do you know someone who is thinking about buying or selling a home? Please mention our name.

This newsletter is for informational purposes only and should not be substituted for legal or financial advice. If you are currently working with another real estate agent or broker, it is not a solicitation for business.

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