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What Are You Looking for in a Home? Part II

The process of finding the right home for your needs starts by determining just what your needs are. Not only should you pinpoint the necessities you require in a house, but you should also prioritize your preferred options as well. This is the second part in an article series that aims to help homebuyers determine exactly what they are looking for in a home and make the home shopping process more efficient.

The first part of this article concentrated on exploring your preferences on a home's space and design. Now it is time to consider the condition of the home and the type of amenities you prefer.

In terms of the home's condition, you need to determine how old of a house you are willing to consider. Some people love the charm of old, turn-of-the-century homes, while others refuse to live in a home that someone else has lived in. If you would rather enjoy the architecture and coziness of an older home, you should realize that you may have to face problems with an aging or ancient plumbing system, the lack of central heating or air, and other modern fixtures. A newer home will probably present you with fewer repair problems, but you will have to pay for it in the price of the home.

Similarly, it is important to determine whether you are looking for a fixer-upper or something that is move-in ready. You could save a lot on the price by buying a home that needs some repairs and maintenance. If you plan to move in a few years, making some upgrades could net you some nice profits when you sell. If this is your preference, be sure to research how much money the repairs and renovation will cost you and how much you can expect the home to appreciate before you sell.

It is also important to consider which amenities are the top priority for you. Is it essential that your home have a fireplace? What about a Jacuzzi tub in the master suite? Would you consider installing one yourself after you buy the home? Or more practically, are you looking for a home with energy-saving features like doubled-paned windows, or solar panels? These type of elements in a home will not contribute to a cleaner environment, but they will also end up saving you hundreds of dollars each year in energy bills. The flip side is that you will have to pay more upfront for these features in the price of the home.

What are your preferences in terms of a yard? How much space do you need between your home and your neighbor's? If you abhor gardening and mowing, a large yard may be more of a cost and nuisance than a benefit. If you love working in the yard, you may consider buying a home with little or no landscaping. Doing it yourself after the sale is a great way to add a lot of value to the home.

Obviously there are a lot of factors that will determine which house you end up buying. Establishing your needs and preferences before starting your home search will make it easier to find the perfect home for you and your family.