

100 Questions to Answer Before You Move

This exercise will help you identify what criteria are most important to you as you look for your next home. Some of these factors won't be important to you, so just skip them.

Your Next Home

1. Do you want to live in a home that is smaller, larger, or about the same size as where you live now?
2. What type(s) of dwelling do you want to live in?
3. Which is more important: living as cheaply as possible, living in a place you really enjoy, being close to your family, or something else?
4. Do you plan to buy, rent, or rent first then buy?
5. What size city or town do you want to live in?
6. How close do you want to be to a big city? (In it, in a suburb, within an hour, as far away as possible)
7. When you walk out of your home, what do you most want to see? (The ocean, a lake or river, mountains, palm trees, a forest, city buildings, other houses, grass/flowers/shrubbery, a swimming pool, a golf course, etc.)
8. How important is a good internet connection?
9. Are you planning to (or willing to) live more frugally than you do now, do you hope to maintain your current standard of living, or do you want to live more lavishly?
10. How much can you afford to spend each month on living expenses? (food, utilities, gasoline, rent/mortgage, household supplies, clothing, medications, entertainment, etc. but not counting travel or other occasional major expenses)

11. Would you consider moving to another country?
12. What country or countries do you have in mind?
13. What benefits would you hope to gain by moving to another country?
14. Do you speak other languages? Are you willing to learn another language?
15. How comfortable would you be with being different from most of the local people?
16. Do you plan to have pets in your new location?
17. Of all the places you have ever been, which ones have impressed you as places you would most like to live?
18. What is it about those places that is so appealing?
19. Are you looking for a place you will live for only part of the year? What part?
20. Would you prefer to live in an older, well-established community or a place with a lot of new, modern homes?
21. Do you want to have access to a swimming pool? Your own or a community pool?
22. Are you willing to do (or pay for) yard work and exterior maintenance, or do you want to live in a place where that is done for you?
23. How do you feel about living in a community that has a Home Owners' Association (HOA) with rules you have to live by?

Weather and Climate

24. What average daily high temperature and humidity level would be ideal for you during summer?
25. What average daily high temperature and humidity level would be the highest you would be willing to endure?
26. What average daily low temperature would be ideal for you during winter?
27. What average daily low temperature would be the lowest you would be willing to endure?
28. How much rain is okay?
29. How much snow is okay?
30. What kinds of natural disasters do you most want to avoid? (Hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, forest fires, floods, etc.)

Local Environment

31. How important is having a car?
32. How well can you tolerate freeways, traffic, and crazy drivers, or do you want to avoid them?
33. How important is walkability?
34. What type(s) of transportation do you want to be able to use?
35. Do you want to be surrounded by other retirees or live among a variety of people?
36. How important is it to have everything you need for day-to-day living available within a short distance?
37. How important is it to live in an area where there are a lot of things to see and do?
38. How close do you want to live to doctors and hospitals?
39. What senior services do you think you might need to have available now or in the future?
40. What types of crime concern you the most?
41. What is your level of tolerance for how safe must an area be for you to consider living there?

42. How important is it to be close to nature?
43. How important is peace and quiet?
44. How important is air quality?
45. How important is it to live in an area with good visual appeal (interesting architecture, attractive public spaces, nice plants along roadways, etc.)?
46. How important is living near a church of your faith?

Recreation and Leisure

47. What outdoor activities do you want to have available to you?
48. What do you like to do for entertainment outside the home?
49. Are you a homebody or do you like to get out of the house a lot?
50. Do you like to see live music? What kinds?
51. Do you like to see live sporting events? What kinds?
52. Do you enjoy seeing live theatre?
53. Do you enjoy seeing movies in theaters? Do you prefer mainstream releases, independent art films, or both?
54. What streaming services would you prefer not to live without? (music, TV, movies)
55. What subjects would you like to learn more about after you retire?

- 56. How important is it to live near a higher educational institution?
- 57. What creative endeavors do you want to participate in? (music, theatre, art, writing, crafts, etc.)
- 58. Do you plan to have a garden?
- 59. Do you own or plan to own a boat?
- 60. Do you like going to museums? Art, history, or both?
- 61. How important is being near a good bookstore?
- 62. How important is being near a gym or fitness classes?

Family and Friends

- 63. How important is it to be close to your family?
- 64. How important is it to retain your current friends or will you focus on making new friends in your new location? Will you want to see your current friends occasionally or is online communication sufficient?
- 65. What family members or good friends do you plan to visit?
- 66. How far are you willing to travel to visit them?
- 67. What family members or good friends do you expect will come visit you?
- 68. What family obligations or responsibilities might you have?

Socialization

69. Do you want to live with a lot of people around you or very few people around you?
70. How will you meet new people?
71. What organizations do you hope your new community will have?
72. What kinds of organized activities do you want to have available to you?

Shopping and Eating

73. How often do you expect to eat out?
74. Are you a foodie or will you be satisfied with chain restaurants?
75. What kinds of restaurant cuisine do you like?
76. What restaurants would you really miss if they weren't available near you?
77. Do you shop primarily in big box stores, local shops, or online?
78. What stores would you really miss if they weren't available near you?
79. What products would you miss if you couldn't find them locally?
80. How important is buying locally-produced foods? (i.e. farmer's markets, local bakers, etc.)

- 81. How important is it to live in a place where Amazon delivers?
- 82. How important is it to live in a place where you can have restaurant food and groceries delivered to your home?

Travel

- 83. How much do you want to travel?
- 84. Do you plan to take big major trips or stay within a few hours of where you live?
- 85. Where are some of the places you hope to travel?
- 86. Do you expect that most of your travel will involve visiting family and friends, discovering new places, or returning to favorite vacation spots?
- 87. How do you plan to travel? (Car, airplane, cruise ship, camper/RV, etc.)

Self-Assessment

- 88. Why do you want to move away from your current location?
- 89. Do you like to experience new things or do you prefer the comfort of familiar things?
- 90. Are you looking forward to a calm, relaxing retirement or a retirement filled with activities and adventure?

91. Which of your personal possessions must you absolutely take with you, wherever you go?
92. How minimally are you willing to live, in terms of amount of possessions?
93. If you are a minority of any type, how important is it to be near other people like you?
94. What legal protections (or lack thereof) are of concern to you?
95. Do you or your spouse have mobility needs? Do you expect that you might have mobility needs in the future?
96. Do you expect to move to an assisted living facility or a continuing care community at some point in the future? How important is it to be close to one now?
97. Do you plan to work in some form (part-time, seasonal, consulting, online, other entrepreneurial pursuit)?
98. How important is the political climate of the place you move to?
99. How important is it to be surrounded by people who have similar cultural, political, and socio-economic characteristics?
100. How well can you adapt to different environments?

What are the most important qualities and/or things your new area must have? Write 'High' next to these items above, or make a list.

What other qualities and/or things would it be nice if your new area has? Write 'Medium' next to these items above, or make a list.

What things (or absence of things) would eliminate a place from consideration? Write 'Not' next to these items above, or make a list.