

Features and Amenities Assessment

A good way to narrow the field of available housing options is to create three columns. In the first column, list all the features or amenities you must have in a home. Next, list all the things you would like but can compromise on. Then in the last column, list things you cannot accept about a house.

Example:		
“Must Haves”	“Would Likes”	“Can’t Deal”
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safe neighborhood• 3 bedrooms• Large kitchen• A view	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A basement or deck• Whirlpool tub• Walk-in closets• 2 car garage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• House near highway• Needs too much• Work noisy neighbors• Too far from job

“Must Haves”	“Would Likes”	“Can’t Deal”
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

These lists will change as you begin to see actual properties. Revise as you go.

Remember that some compromising is inevitable even when money is plentiful. Rarely do house hunters find the “perfect” house. Try to discern what can be easily changed about what you don’t like and what cannot be changed.

Location, Location, Location...

Some real estate experts advise prospective homeowners to “buy” the neighborhood first. Drive or walk around the area where the house is located. If it doesn’t feel like home, you probably shouldn’t buy a house there.

Determine the kind of place you want to live beyond the walls of your new home. Towns, like people, have personalities. Some are changing and growing while others are stable. Some have a homey feel while others feel dynamic. Who are the people who live there? Are they all married with children or is there an interesting diversity? What about the houses near or next to the one you are considering? Are they larger, smaller, or the same size? What about the school system, the police, the fire department? What are the taxes like? As a homebuyer, you are actually buying a lot more than a structure on a lot. You are buying the entire community around it.

“Location is the only thing in real estate that can’t be fixed.”