How to Find the Perfect Neighborhood
By David Hakimi

Location, location, location. Half of buying a home is finding where you want to live. You may have found your dream house, but it might not be in your dream location.

Here's how you can find the perfect neighborhood:

Check It Out Online
Look up what people are saying about the neighborhood you're interested in. Do people actually enjoy living there? What do they like and dislike about it?

Google the crime statistics for the area; safety should be top of mind. If you have kids, look up schools in the area. How are they rated? Social media platforms like Facebook and Nextdoor also offer a great window into the ins and outs of your potential neighborhood.

Scout It Out
Literally. Do drive-bys, and do them at different times of the day to get a feel for the neighborhood. Is there a soccer field or baseball diamond close by? You'll want to know before it's too late whether cars will be lined up on your street every weekend. What's that nearby intersection like during rush hour? Is there a grocery store close by? The more questions you can answer before moving in, the more confident you'll feel when it's time to put down an offer.

How Far Is Your Potential Home From Your Job?
A long commute has the potential to become an everyday stressor. If you take the bus, look up the route and times. If you drive, check out the route during your normal commute times on Google Maps.

Do Your Research on Property Taxes
Property taxes greatly differ from one region to the next and could majorly impact your cost of living. Do your due diligence and make sure you can afford the area you want to live in. Check out other costs of living while your at it—think utilities and food prices.

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