

the real estate advisor

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The little details matter when you're choosing a home



Five steps for organizing your garage



What you may not know about home insurance

Sweat the small stuff

Before you fall in love with a home, take time to analyze the little things



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It's easy to be wowed by a house. You're anxious to discover your dream home and accomplish a big goal. You can't wait to cook in the brand new kitchen or relax in the spa-style tub. All that excitement can also make it easy to dismiss some minor issues that can become major annoyances down the road. Rather than letting your excitement get the best of you, take the time to analyze smaller details properly.

Don't dismiss location

Let's say you find a perfect home that's an extra 20 minutes each way from work. Those 40 total minutes don't seem like a big deal at first glance, but consider that you'll be dealing with that extra commute day after day, year after year for as long as you live in the house. Is that an inconvenience you're willing to deal with? Make an educated decision—do a test run of the actual commute and see whether it's tolerable.

Stressing location also means committing to a neighborhood. Does the potential neighborhood align with your priorities? Make sure you're choosing a location that makes it easy to do the things you love most, whether that's enjoying city nightlife or escaping to quiet home away from it all.

Working order

Shiny new appliances and an open-concept living space may be on your list of must-haves, but don't let the aesthetics distract from the basics.

Are the basement and attic in good shape? Problems like mold and water damage can turn an otherwise perfect home into a nightmare, and a poorly insulated attic can cause your bills to skyrocket. None of these issues should necessarily remove a home from consideration—you just have to be aware of the total package.