

“Downsizing Without Downgrading: How to Find Your Next-Chapter Home”

Keywords: downsizing in St. Louis, retiree home buying, empty nester real estate, is downsizing worth it?

Meta Description (160 characters max.): Is downsizing worth it? It is if it means less time maintaining your home and more time doing what you love. Our agents can make retiree home-buying a breeze.

Social Post: Moving to a smaller home should be a fun, stress-free process. Here’s how our agents help empty nesters and retirees find the perfect home they’ll love well into their golden years.

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Whether you’re a new empty nester or you’ve recently retired, you’re likely contemplating the idea of a smaller home. Less square footage typically means less space to take care of, with fewer rooms and a smaller yard (or no yard at all). But is downsizing worth it if it means giving up favorite things about your current house, or having to leave a neighborhood you love?

The truth is that downsizing in St. Louis offers plenty of options to simplify your life without sacrificing usable space, comfort, lifestyle, or even location. By working with the right realtor, it’s possible to find a property that’s easier to care for but still feels like home.

As experts in retiree home buying, here are some questions we commonly ask seniors looking to downsize.

How Much Space Do You Really Need?

When bedrooms sit unoccupied, they can easily become storage rooms for the kids’ old sports equipment, toys, and musical instruments. Now is the time to really think about what you need to keep and what you don’t. Sentimental things like photo albums, greeting cards, and baby blankets are one thing, but will your adult son ever pick up that clarinet again? Chances are, if you work on purging and [decluttering](#), you will find that all those extra rooms aren’t necessary.

Many times, for empty nesters, a two or three-bedroom home is [plenty of space](#). In addition to the master suite, an office or craft room can double as a guest room for when kids come to visit.

Do You Want to Keep Going Up and Down Stairs?

There may have been a time when a stately two-story was perfect for your family, with bedrooms upstairs and laundry in the basement. But with age comes arthritis and other mobility

issues that make going up and down steps challenging. There are plenty of ranches and [condos](#) in St. Louis with no steps, making daily living easier. Whether physical ailments are happening now or you just want to plan for the future, it's worth it to view some one-story properties to see what's out there.

If you're interested in building a home that suits your needs as you age, ask a realtor about developments that offer options like walk-in showers and wider doorways. New construction homes abound in [Mehlville](#), [Affton](#), and throughout the metro area.

What Location Are You Looking For?

When [deciding where to live next](#), consider how far you are willing to stray from your current city. Years ago, you may have chosen to build a 2-story, 4-bedroom home on a full acre in Chesterfield to fit your family's needs, but now you find yourself driving to O'Fallon to visit the grandkids. And even a trip to the nearest grocery store involves fighting heavy traffic. Perhaps a [newer ranch with a small yard](#) closer to family and conveniences would save on gas mileage and be more physically manageable.

On the other hand, if your neighbors in the Central West End have become your best friends and all of your favorite restaurants are on your block, there's likely a [condo nearby](#) that could allow you to stay put while [saying goodbye to yard work and snow removal](#). Talking to your realtor about whether you want a house or would consider a condo or townhome, as well as your location preferences, will allow them to help you to find the perfect home.

Do You Want to Entertain?

You might think of empty-nest real estate as houses with tiny kitchens where only two people can dine. If you love to host holidays with the family or have friends over for game night, it's possible to find a beautiful, smaller home that's laid out for entertaining. Look for listings with large center kitchen islands and open floor plans. And keep in mind that intimacy, warmth, and thoughtful, flexible design matter more than square footage. In fact, according to [Southern Living](#), 1,500 square feet is the perfect-sized home if it has ample light and multi-purpose spaces. As long as you have plenty of windows and a few gathering areas, your guests will feel right at home.

Do You Enjoy The Outdoors?

Mowing an expansive lawn and shoveling a long driveway can become taxing with age, which is one big reason seniors downsize. However, research shows that there are mental health benefits to spending time outside, and [gardening for seniors](#) is especially therapeutic. If you don't want to cut grass but still tend to flowers or vegetables, a small yard or even a large terrace could provide enough space for potted plants. Or consider a condo complex with a pool

and outdoor common space. A nearby park for walking or bicycling is also helpful for getting plenty of activity and fresh air.

Just remember: Downsizing doesn't have to mean becoming a recluse!

What is Your Budget?

Choosing the size and location of your next home will depend on your finances and what your [current home is worth](#). If your home is paid off, you could use the proceeds for a down payment on a smaller home, or even pay cash, depending on the price. Just keep in mind that buying a newer home in some areas might mean taking on a mortgage payment. Your realtor will help crunch some numbers to determine a budget that allows you to live comfortably well into your golden years.

Are You Ready to Downsize?

Our agents make downsizing in St. Louis an easy, fun process. When you're ready to discuss details, [contact our team](#) at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Select Properties.