


How Do You Decide When It's Time to Downsize? It's a Very Personal Decision

Downsizing is an increasingly common reason that homeowners make the decision to put their home on the market. It's not an easy decision to make, and it can take years to "pull the trigger."

REAL ESTATE TODAY



By **JIM SMITH, Realtor®**

There are many reasons people choose to downsize — to buy a smaller house on a smaller lot.

The "empty nester" is probably the most familiar example. The children are off to college or have simply moved away, and you're heating a lot of excess square footage each winter. Sometimes the urge to downsize is to forestall

those children returning — what we've come to know as "boomerang" children. You're glad they've left your nest and don't want them to return except on holidays with the grandchildren!

Recently I listed a 5-bedroom home for a couple that were not empty nesters. They not only have children, but they've accepted friends of their children into their home, because of their big hearts. Now they want to move into a 3-bedroom home so that they won't allow themselves to have as many extra live-ins!

Another common scenario is the homeowner with a large lot, including perhaps a garden. They love gardening and they love having the big yard, but they're also getting on in years and worry about it becoming too much. The only way for them to cut down on the hard work of gardening and yard maintenance is to get rid of the yard. It's not that they no longer enjoy it, but they know they can't keep it up forever and they see the possibilities in releasing that obligation. These are the buyers who want to buy a patio home where all exterior maintenance and lawn care is handled by their HOA.

As our cities and neighborhoods get more crowded and built out, I encounter sellers who want to downsize their environment and not just their home. Put bluntly, they just want to get away from people and the traffic they create. When they bought their current home, it was quieter and less crowded and they didn't have as much traffic to contend with when they did their daily errands or commuted to work. Now maybe they're retired (or are getting close to retiring) and, as much as they love the home they've lived in all these years, they want to move to a quieter environment, where the homes are further apart and there are more trees.

Then there are the elderly for whom downsizing means moving into assisted living. Perhaps they've fallen in their home and are worried about falling again. Or they have cooked three meals a day for 50 years and like the idea of not cooking any more. It's hard to leave that home, but common sense dictates that it's time. I wrote about this topic a couple months ago when I discovered Care Patrol, a business that helps people in this situation choose the best assisted living or senior community. As real estate professionals, we're ill-equipped to assist or advise beyond selling their home. Now I'm joined in my listing appointments by Jenn Gomer or Kim Thomson from Care Patrol, who fill that need beautifully. Just this Monday I had a closing with a couple in their 80's whose transition from home ownership to assisted living was eased by Care Patrol. It warmed my heart.

Health is a big motivator. One couple I know received a diagnosis of early stage Parkinson's disease. This couple owns an RV and loves to travel, so they decided to sell their home and hit the road while they could still enjoy it. Another couple, getting on in years, loved to sail. They sold their house and bought a boat they could live on and moved to the Caribbean! The theme is the same — enjoy life while you can. If you have enough equity in your home and enough savings, it can be a viable option! (It has Rita and me thinkin'...)

Whatever your own reason for downsizing, you may find it worthwhile to brainstorm with a Realtor about your options. Certainly, we Realtors at Golden Real Estate are happy to do so without any obligation to hire one of us as your agent. Let's put our heads together and look at what's possible.

Get Your Last-Minute Pumpkins from One of the Habitat for Humanity Pumpkin Patches



Each year about now the stores have run out of good pumpkins, but you'll find plenty at the Habitat for Humanity pumpkin patches at Garrison & Alameda and at 68th & Wadsworth. The pumpkin sales also benefit the Navajo tribe which grows them in southwestern Colorado. Proceeds from these two pumpkin patches net Habitat for Humanity over \$30,000 annually.



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