

Seven signs that you need a new nest

Some people like moving house as it gives them the feeling of having a “fresh start” every few years. But for most of us, moving is a stressful experience we prefer to put off as long as possible.

Sometimes it is really necessary though, says Richard Gray, CEO of Harcourts Real Estate, and there are certain definite signs that the time has come for you to start looking for a new home.

The most common of these is that your family has outgrown your current home. “As children get older they need more space, such as their own bedrooms, and their own work/ recreation areas. They also don’t necessarily leave home these days as soon as they’ve finished studying, and if you also need to accommodate aging parents, it is very likely that you will need a bigger home.”

Similarly, he says, if you were single but are now part of a couple, you will probably want to move soon from your trendy studio apartment or tiny townhouse to something bigger. New marriages and partnerships are another major reason for people to move home.

“Alternatively, you could be in a situation now where your family has grown and gone off to set up their own homes and you suddenly have too much house – that is, rooms you don’t even use and a big garden that is troublesome to maintain. And if you are about to retire or have already done so, you may feel even more strongly that the time has come to sell and move to a new place that gives you more security, better weather, and more freedom to do what you want.”

Gray says other major reasons to move include the following:

- Financial worries. If you are straining to pay your utility bills and running costs on top of your home loan repayment every month, you should really consider moving soon to a more affordable home, so that you can get a grip on your finances – and sleep better.
- Transport woes. If you’re weary of traffic congestion or a long and costly commute each day, it may well be time to consider moving closer to work – and preferably to a neighbourhood where the schools, shops and sports facilities are within walking distance.
- Too much maintenance. Some people love home improvement and DIY, but if you want to spend your weekends doing something other than mowing the lawn or retiling the bathroom, it could be that you need to move to a new home in complex where someone else will take care of most of the maintenance. Or you may just want a more energy efficient, “green”, home that will save you money on utilities.

And finally, he says, a move is urgently indicated if you believe that your neighbourhood is going into a decline. “If you notice more litter, more loiterers in the park, more empty shops and houses, and more crime or police activity, the writing is on the wall and you should sell your property and move as soon as possible.”

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