



## When buying a home, check out the neighborhood too

Choosing the right neighborhood is just as important as the actual home. A great neighborhood should have the features you need and also be extremely safe. The biggest mistake many homebuyers make is not realizing they're investing in a good neighborhood, as much as in a good home.

The team at AlarmSystemReport.com, an alarm review site of top companies, has put together a list of tips to help buyers find out if a neighborhood will suit their needs.

- Search, online, for crime data for particular areas and neighborhoods.
- Contact the local law enforcement agency. Learn about criminal activity in the area. Find out if the neighborhood has a community watch program and other safety measures.
- Drive and walk around the neighborhood to feel how safe it is. If it seems abandoned, dirty or has a lot of bars on windows, it's probably not a safe choice. Look for signs of outdoor activity, such as families and people outside. It's also more likely that homes that are well-kept are going to mean a safer neighborhood, since the neighbors take pride in their home and the surrounding area.
- Check out the neighborhood school. Does it have a good reputation? Ask teachers.
- Research if property values have improved over the last 5 or 10 years. Ask your real estate agent if property taxes have increased (a good sign).