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The benefits to choosing a local wedding venue

Wedding planning requires coordinating a laundry list of details that ultimately come together to make for a memorable ceremony and reception. Couples tying the knot have their work cut out for them, and one of the biggest decisions they will have to make involves choosing where to hold the ceremony and reception. Religious couples often opt for ceremonies at their churches, synagogues and mosques. Secular weddings can occur just about anywhere, with couples sometimes utilizing ceremony spaces adjacent to their reception rooms.

As brides and grooms narrow down their venue options, they may want to give strong consideration to the benefits that sticking close to home can offer. Certainly there are advantages to be had hosting a wedding at venues many miles away or even in international locations, but there are unique perks to keeping festivities local. The Knot 2025 Real Weddings Study indicated six in 10 couples chose to get married in a place where they currently live; 23 per-



cent opted for a hometown venue; and 18 percent decided on a destination wedding. Here's a look at some of the perks of staying local.

- **Convenience:** One of the biggest benefits of a local venue is convenience for both the couple and their guests. Local venues tend to be easily accessible for those who live nearby, minimizing travel time and reducing any barriers brought on by a lack of familiarity with distant locales.
- **Familiarity:** Couples who love their hometowns and close environs may want to get married in a familiar and comfortable atmosphere. Plus, they may already be familiar with venues in the

area and what they offer.

- **Expertise:** Venue staff likely live in the area or are familiar with other services close by. They can offer valuable recommendations and insights on other vendors, including what has worked before and what to avoid.
- **Familiarity with clergy:** Couples who get married in a local house of worship likely know the religious leaders there and any support staff. This can add a particularly personal component to the ceremony.
- **Easy payments:** Many venues require some sort of payment plan that consists of a deposit at the time of booking and a series of payments culminating with the last in-

stallment upon learning the final head count. Choosing a local venue makes it easy to stop at the reception site in person and provide such payments with ease, while getting confirmation and receipts in real time.

- **Reduce delivery fees:** If florists and other vendors have to drop off items, they may not charge the same delivery fees if the reception site is close by.
 - **Ease returning home:** Chances are the couple will arrive at the ceremony and reception by hired car. Once the wedding is over, they'll have to find transportation back home, especially if there is a gap in time before departing on a honeymoon. Utilizing a local venue can make it easier to get home.
 - **Support of local businesses:** Choosing a local venue keeps dollars in couples' own communities, which is a great way to support businesses in the town and the people that work for them.
- There are notable advantages to getting married close to home. When planning to tie the knot, couples can give ample consideration to local venues.

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Four car-buying tips to consider

Drivers spend a lot of time in their vehicles, and that's perhaps one reason why new car buyers are willing to spend so much on a new automobile. According to a recent report from Kelley Blue Book, the average transaction price of a new vehicle in June 2025 was just under \$49,000.

Drivers who have not purchased a new car in a while may be overcome by sticker shock when they start shopping for a new car, but plenty of reliable vehicles can still be had for less than \$49,000. Motorists in the market for new vehicles can consider these four tips as they begin their search for a new ride.

1. Consider buying in fall. Fall can be a buyer-friendly time to purchase a new vehicle because many dealerships may be seeking to unload outgoing model years to make room for the coming year's models. In such instances, dealerships may sell outgoing model year vehicles for thousands of dollars less than the incoming year's models. Inventory of outgoing model years may be limited, which can reduce the options drivers have in regard to various amenities, such as vehicle color and accessories. But if such details aren't high on buyers' priority lists, then buying in fall can be advantageous.
2. Make a sizable down payment, if possible. Interest rates remain high, so the less drivers will need to borrow when buying a new car, the more money they'll save in interest charges over the life of the loan. The consumer advocates at Consumer Reports recommend new car buyers put at least 15 percent down and ideally between 20 and 25 percent at the time of purchase. The higher the initial down payment, the more manageable the ensuing monthly payments become.
3. Get your credit ducks in a row. Of course, the size of the down payment won't be the only number that determines the amount of a monthly payment. Drivers' credit ratings affect their interest rates, so it's best to maintain a good reputation or rebuild a poor one in the months leading up to a new car purchase. Pay off existing consumer debt entirely, if possible. If that's beyond reason, then make sure to make all monthly payments on time and pay more than just the minimum required each month.
4. Shop for incentives. Consumer Reports notes that dealerships and manufacturers offer a wide range of incentives that can help to reduce the cost of a new vehicle. Cash-back offers and zero percent financing are two notable incentives buyers can shop for. After researching which vehicles to buy, shop around for incentives packages to help narrow down your options.

Drivers in the market for a new vehicle can employ various strategies to land a reliable and affordable car or truck.

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How nutritional needs change with age

The human body undergoes an assortment of changes over the course of a lifetime. Some of those changes are visible to the naked eye, but many more are not. The body's changing needs in regard to nutrition is one alteration that people cannot see.

A nutritious diet can be a building block of a long and healthy life. Nutritional needs change as the body ages, and recognition of those changes can help people rest easy that their diets are working in their favor and not to their detriment.

Calorie needs
The body requires fewer calories as individuals reach adulthood. That's because muscle mass begins to decrease in adulthood while fat increases. The National Institutes of Health notes that muscles use more calories than fat throughout the day, so it makes sense that a body experiencing a decline in muscle mass will require less calories than one in which muscle mass is on the rise. No two individuals are the same, and some adults exercise more than others. So it's best for adults to consult their physician to discuss their own calorie needs and then adjust their diets based on such discussions.

What to eat
The American Heart As-



sociation notes aging adults' calories should come from nutrient-dense foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean meat, and low-fat dairy. This recommendation aligns with adults' declining calorie needs, as nutrient-dense foods contain ample amounts of protein, vitamins and/or minerals but do not contain a lot of calories.

Water needs
It's vital for aging adults to make a concerted effort to drink water each day. The

Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion notes that the sensation of thirst declines with age. Aging adults who are unaware of that unique biological reality may be risking dehydration because they are not compelled to drink water throughout the day. The Cleveland Clinic notes that dehydration can contribute to dizziness, weakness and lightheadedness, among other symptoms. Those symptoms can be particularly menacing for older adults,

who are at increased risk for potentially harmful falls even if they are not dehydrated. The body still needs water as it ages, and seniors taking certain medications may need more than usual due to medication-related fluid loss. These are just some of the ways nutritional needs change with age. Adults are urged to pay greater attention to diet as they age and make choices that can counter age-related changes in their bodies.

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A home-buying guide for empty nesters

The day a child leaves home can be bittersweet for parents. Although a son or daughter being successful and mature enough to move on to new opportunities can be a source of pride, parents typically lament the quiet that comes from empty rooms and a change to the daily routine they'd grown accustomed to when the kids were around. After some time, some couples decide to downsize to a home more befitting the empty nester lifestyle.

Downsizing presents an option for homeowners whose kids have left the nest. New analysis from a survey of 2,500 empty nesters commissioned by Regency Living found that 30 percent of empty nesters choose to downsize and move from their original family homes. When retirement is just around the corner, many professionals shift focus to how they want to live and where. Moving to a new home presents plenty of opportunities for older adults, including a chance to choose a home based on what's right for them in this stage of life. There are questions homeowners can ask themselves as they ponder if downsizing is right for them.

1. How much upkeep can

I handle? A lifelong family home may be well-loved, but chances are it requires significant upkeep and repairs. Empty nesters may choose to move on to a home that offers lifestyle benefits like less maintenance. Homes in lifestyle communities or those overseen by a homeowners' association tend to have certain maintenance built into a monthly fee.

2. Is this layout still a fit? Many empty nesters may not immediately feel the effects of aging, but before selecting a next home, individuals should think about aging in place and any unique needs they may have. Opting for a single-level home, or at least one with the owner's suite on the main level, can be advantageous.
3. Can I make due with less square footage? A cavernous home with many rooms often isn't desirable for empty nesters. All of that square footage requires heating, cooling and maintenance. Rattling around inside a big, empty house may precipitate the decision to downsize. Downsizing also can free up home equity, which can be used to fund retirement needs.
4. Which features do you

desire? Many empty nesters want the next home to focus on some luxury items they may have bypassed in the first home when priorities lay elsewhere. Upscale environments like gourmet kitchens, spa-like bathrooms and outdoor living spaces may be in the budget when moving into a home with a smaller footprint.

5. Will my home be secure while I travel? Empty nesters

might want to choose homes in gated communities or condominium complexes for safety reasons. Should they opt to spend a portion of time at a vacation rental or second home as snowbirds, secure communities enable residents to leave their primary residence with the peace of mind that those homes will be less vulnerable to thieves.

6. Does this home have enough light? The American Optometric Association

says many adults start to have problems seeing clearly beginning at age 40. Homes with more light from large windows and artificial lighting can reduce accident risk.

Moving to a smaller home is a consideration for many empty nesters. Various features offer benefits to adults who want to age in place.



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