

## Living in an HOA Neighborhood

Living in a community governed by a homeowners' association (HOA) offers a unique residential experience that comes with its own set of advantages and disadvantages.

For those considering HOA-managed properties, it's essential to understand both sides of the coin before deciding to purchase or lease. HOA living can have a huge effect on property values and daily life.

### PROS OF HOAS

HOAs typically enforce rules regarding property upkeep, ensuring the neighborhood remains visually appealing. They maintain a standard of aesthetics as well-maintained common areas, landscaping and consistent architectural style can enhance the overall curb appeal. Many HOA communities offer residents access to amenities such as swimming pools, fitness centers, playgrounds and even security services. These features can add value to your daily life without the responsibility of maintenance.



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HOAs often organize social events, fostering a sense of community among residents. Neighborhood gatherings, book clubs or sports activities can provide opportunities to connect with neighbors and build friendships.

By enforcing property maintenance standards and overseeing common areas, HOAs can help maintain and potentially increase property values over time. This stability can be reassuring for homeowners. HOAs provide a structured framework for resolving disputes among neighbors, which can reduce conflicts

and maintain a harmonious living environment.

### CONS OF HOAS

Living in an HOA community typically involves monthly or annual fees. These fees cover the costs of common area maintenance, amenities and HOA management. HOAs often have rules governing everything from exterior paint colors to lawn maintenance. While these rules can maintain aesthetics, they may limit your creative freedom and require adherence even if you disagree.

Residents may have limited

say in the HOA's decisions, including budget allocation and rule changes. Your preferences may not align with those of the HOA board. HOAs have authority to enforce rules through fines, which can be a source of frustration if you receive penalties for minor infractions or have disputes with the association.

In some cases, HOAs may mismanage funds or make decisions that negatively affect the community. It's crucial to research the HOA's history and governance structure before purchasing a property. A change in HOA board lead-

ership can lead to shifts in rules and regulations, potentially affecting your living experience.

### PROPERTY VALUE AND DAILY LIFE

Property values can be both positively and negatively affected by HOAs. On the one hand, the well-maintained appearance, amenities and community cohesion promoted by HOAs can contribute to increased property values over time. However, the strict rules and fees associated with HOAs may deter some buyers, potentially limiting your pool of potential future buyers.

Regarding daily life, HOA living can provide a sense of security and shared amenities that enhance your lifestyle. However, it can also mean sacrificing some personal freedoms and potentially dealing with conflicts over rule enforcement.

Prospective residents should carefully consider their preferences, budget and lifestyle before deciding whether living in an HOA community aligns with their goals and values. Whether the benefits of community cohesion and property value stability outweigh the restrictions imposed by HOA rules is a personal decision that requires thoughtful consideration.





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### REAL ESTATE 101



#### Seller's Tip

Offensive odors will make it hard to sell your home and covering them up isn't going to do the trick. Take time to find the source of bad odors and get rid of them. Wash your garbage bins, clear drains, get rid of old furniture, wash your bed sheets and open windows to air out the house — especially kitchens. If you are a smoker, place bowls of vinegar around the house for three days then open the windows and air the house out.

### HOMEWISSE GLOSSARY

**Fixture:** personal property which is permanently affixed or attached to real property such that it is considered to be an integral part of the real property. **SOURCE:** American Bar Association

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