

Checklist and Hints

The following checklist is designed to raise issues. In some cases a few words will trigger off a new angle that you will need to research. The book "[Where to Retire in Australia](#)" includes this checklist and much more. The authors list the great locations spread around Australia

Your General Plan

What is your timing?

Have you decided precisely when you will retire? Will your employer offer any assistance with re-location expenses? Will your partner be retiring at the same time? Are there any tax or social security issues which impact on your timing? Does your superannuation benefit increase significantly if you wait until you have completed one more year of service?

How will your loved ones react?

Openly share your thoughts about retirement with your partner, children and friends and listen with an open mind to their feelings.

Handling a different time schedule

What will the change from a time schedule regulated by your employer to a self regulated time schedule be like for you? Can you ease into retirement by working part-time?

Can you write down how you will spend your time?

Describe your ideal day, week and even a year. Will you play golf for three days a week? How much time will you devote to not for profit organisations? Are there some activities that you can only do in the area in which you currently live?

What are your hobbies?

What do you enjoy doing most in your spare time? Do you hope to develop new hobbies in retirement? Are you considering taking any courses to learn new skills? Will you be able to travel to a nearby university or college?

What about your social life?

Do you currently have an active social life? Is most of your social life dominated by work related entertainment? When you relocate how will you handle leaving the security of your home and friends? Will you become active in clubs and interest groups in the new area?

Are you involved in the arts?

Are you a theatre buff, opera or music lover and will you miss being close to an area that regularly hosts cultural events? Will your new location make it possible to travel to a show within an hour or two?

Are your parents an issue?

How much of your time will your parents require in the next few years? Will you need to physically assist them in any way? Could they be moved to a nearby aged care facility in the new location? How will they feel about you moving?

Has a professional checked the financial plan?

Have you prepared a budget? Will your move involve committing more capital to your home or will you release more capital for investment? Have the tax and social security issues been addressed? Are you sure that your cash flow will be adequate

What do you look for in a new location?

Weather all year round.

Weather is one of the big factors to consider. Will you get four seasons? How do you react to humidity or dry heat? Do you have a problem with allergies? Is wind direction an issue?

Sea or country?

If the serenity of the sea attracts you, will the tranquillity be disturbed regularly by holiday makers? Are country prices depressed and likely to fall further?

One place or two?

Some people will be able to enjoy living at two locations during retirement. Commuting costs become an issue and security at both locations becomes a big issue. Home and contents insurance will need to be carefully examined.

Man's best friend.

Will the new location be suitable for your pets? Many retirement communities do not allow pets.

Part time work.

Are there reasonable prospects of finding employment in the area? If you plan to run a small business, have you checked the regulations in the area concerning home based businesses.

Security.

Does the area have a neighbourhood watch program? Have you checked the recent crime statistics or reviewed the local papers over an extended time period? Does the area have a high rate of unemployment? Do you have a security plan?

Social compatibility

Will you have common interests with your neighbours? Will you fit in and make new friends easily? Will there be people with similar political, cultural and social backgrounds? Will it be important that you find an acceptable place of worship in the area and a religious community?

Servicing your car

How close is the nearest authorised service centre equipped with the latest diagnostic equipment? New vehicles under warranty should normally be serviced by an authorised service centre. The value of a used car is often influenced by where the car has been serviced.

Gardening

If gardening is your passion be careful to check whether you will be able to grow your favourite plants in the new location. Some seaside locations do not lend themselves to traditional gardens due to the salt in the air. In some locations pests such as rabbits cause real problems for avid gardeners

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Taking care of your health

Have you checked the hospitals?

How long does it take to get to a hospital? Is the nearest hospital able to handle all emergencies?

What type of care is available?

Does the nearest hospital cater for aged care patients or are they relocated to another town? Does the hospital run a nursing home?

How many doctors live and practise in the area?

Do the local doctors operate as individuals or are they working together in clinics? Do they make home visits in an emergency?

Do doctors bulk bill or charge above the scale fees?

Do you know how the doctors charge for their services?

How many specialists are close by?

Do specialist doctors regularly visit the area or will you have to travel?

How many dentists are in the area?

Have you checked the number of dentists in the area and enquired about their services?

Will you need to change your health insurance?

Some health insurance providers operate within a State or Territory and may not offer services in the area you are moving to. It may be a good time to reassess your health insurance and check the items covered under extended insurance arrangements