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party, isn't it? Builders in this area haven't eliminated the living room yet, but it is the next logical step.

Besides the kitchen and family rooms, you will want to look over the bathrooms. Note the plural. One bathroom is not very convenient if you have children. While a second full bath is not necessarily too important, at least a second half bath will make your family life more pleasant, even if it must be situated in the basement for economy reasons. Of course, if it is on the main floor or bedroom floor of the house, and if it is a full bathroom, it will add to the resale value of your house more.

If you are considering buying an older home with just one bathroom, consider where you could put an additional bathroom. It would be well worth while if you buy the house to get the bathroom installed at the beginning and added into the cost of the mortgage.

The size of the bathroom is important too. If it has a vanity, it will be much more convenient than if it merely has a sink. If the vanity has storage drawers, so much the better. One thing to note is that many model homes show large mirrors in the bathrooms, and they are labeled "optional," as is the decorator wall paper. It's easy to see the mirror and the wall paper, but somehow the "optional" doesn't stick too well in your memory. And it's quite difficult to visualize how the room would look with a smaller mirror and plain painted walls. It

might be worth it to pay extra and get the optionals. This is another decision for you. Ceramic tile is the preferred covering for the floor, the walls, and around the tub, but it is also the most expensive and many builders use it just around the tub, with vinyl tile on the floor and wall paper on the walls. If the wall paper is washable and the tile is easy to clean, you may be very happy and pay less too. Some of the newer bathrooms have a molded fiberglass tub-shower that does away with the need for tile of any kind around the tub. The fiberglass is easy to clean and has rounded corners to avoid collecting dirt.

In considering a house, consider what the extras are and whether or not you will use them. A fireplace is very nice, of course, but if you won't use it, it is money down the drain. Any room that will remain empty much of the time is a waste of your money.

Size of the bedrooms is important only to the extent that they will adequately serve your family. If a bedroom is to serve also as a study, be sure there is room for a desk as well as whatever furniture you will want to include. Check to see where the heat vents are, since it is not very satisfactory to place heavy furniture in front of the heat vent. It will block the flow of heat and possibly dry out and warp the wood. If the size looks too small, bring your tape measure and check to see how large it really is. Model homes frequently are furnished

with smaller than standard furniture in order to make the rooms look larger. Sometimes a model bedroom will

contain several decorator items and a bed, but no dresser or chest of drawers. The room may be decorated so attractively that you don't even notice. If you like to read or watch television in your bedroom, you may want to have one large enough for a couple of easy chairs. If this is one of the extras your budget won't tolerate, you can always read in the living room.

One important factor in any house is its closet space. Few families feel that they have too much closet space, and many feel cramped. Of course, there are clothes in practically everybody's closet that have been hanging there unworn for quite a while. If you are a person who hangs onto things, either make sure you have enough closet space (or other storage space maybe in a basement) or vow to change. Getting the closet space is easier.

A convenient laundry area is a joy. In most moderately priced houses, it is relegated to the basement. This involves much running up and down stairs and is an exercise most women would prefer to do without. First floor laundries are a luxury, however, usually available only in the most expensive homes.

The idea is to closely analyze your family's life style and see how you spend your time in order to determine more nearly what you would like and what you need.

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