

FREE GUIDE

The Honest Guide to Moving to Middle Tennessee

Everything you actually need to know before you move
— neighborhoods, schools, costs, and the real stuff
nobody else will tell you.

FROM ALYSSA HAINES

Franklin & Middle Tennessee



"I just moved here from Pennsylvania. I've done this.

Let me save you the Googling." — Alyssa

WELCOME

Hey — glad you found this.

I'm Alyssa. I'm a real estate agent based in Franklin, TN, and I specialize in helping people relocate to Middle Tennessee. I also just did this myself — I moved here from the Poconos in Pennsylvania about two months ago. So when I say I get it, I mean it.

This guide isn't a glossy, corporate "Welcome to Tennessee!" brochure. It's what I wish someone had handed me: the real stuff. The honest stuff. The "here's what you actually need to know before you start making offers" stuff.

Let's get into it.

276,784	Top 5	#1
Williamson County population (2026)	State for inbound migration (2024)	Safest city in TN: Nolensville

Where Should You Actually Live?

This is the question everyone asks first — and the honest answer is: it depends on your budget, your commute, and your vibe. Here's the real breakdown:

Franklin — \$700K–\$900K+ median

The heart of it all. Historic downtown, amazing restaurants, farmers markets, killer schools. It's got a real community feel without being stuffy. This is where most relocating families want to land — just know the price tag reflects that.

Brentwood — \$900K–\$1.2M+ median

North of Franklin, closer to Nashville. Very polished, very established. Great schools, bigger lots, easy highway access. If your budget is there and you want something more upscale and quiet, Brentwood delivers.

Spring Hill — \$450K–\$650K median

The sweet spot for families who want newer construction, more space, and a lower price per square foot. Growing fast — lots of new amenities popping up. Commute to Nashville is longer, so factor that in.

Nolensville — \$550K–\$750K median

Ranked the #1 safest city in Tennessee in 2025. Small-town charm, top-rated schools, and a tight-knit community. Growing fast but still has that "everyone waves at you" energy. Highly underrated.

Thompson's Station — \$450K–\$650K median

Semi-rural, peaceful, and scenic. Great if you want space to breathe and don't mind a longer drive. Top-ranked schools and genuinely beautiful surroundings.

Leiper's Fork — \$\$\$ — Acreage & custom

A historic, artsy little village with rolling hills and a country feel. Think celebrities, horses, and weekend antique markets. Stunning — but more niche. Great if that's your scene.

Pro tip: School zoning follows your address, not your city. Always verify which school zone a specific home falls in before you fall in love with it.

Schools: Here's Why People Actually Move Here

Let me give it to you straight: Williamson County Schools are genuinely excellent — and that's not just marketing fluff.

Ranked 5th	out of 139 districts statewide (SchoolDigger)
67% math proficiency	vs. 34% Tennessee average
69% reading proficiency	vs. 37% Tennessee average
ACT avg. 25.3	vs. state average of 19.3 — that's a huge gap
Top high schools	Ravenwood (#1 in county), Brentwood HS (#5 in TN), Franklin HS (#10 in TN)

Cost of Living: The Honest Version

Tennessee has no state income tax. Full stop. If you're coming from Illinois, California, New York, or New Jersey — you already know what that means for your paycheck. But let's not sugarcoat the housing market:

Area	Median Home Price	Vibe Check
Franklin	~\$874K	Worth it if you can swing it
Brentwood	~\$1M+	Premium — and it shows
Spring Hill	~\$550K	Best value for new construction
Nolensville	~\$650K	Up-and-coming, act fast
Nashville proper	~\$480K	Urban lifestyle, different feel

The good news: even at these prices, you're likely getting more house than you'd get back home — and you're keeping way more of your paycheck with zero state income tax.

Buying a Home From Out of State (Without Losing Your Mind)

This is where having the right agent matters more than anywhere else. Here's how I walk my relocation clients through it:

Step 1: Get pre-approved before you do anything else.

Seriously. The market moves fast. You don't want to fall in love with a house and not be able to move on it. I can connect you with local lenders who know this market inside and out.

Step 2: Do a scouting trip — but make it count.

One long weekend, planned strategically. I'll map out neighborhoods by your priorities (schools, commute, budget) so you're not just driving around aimlessly. We'll hit the areas that actually make sense for YOU.

Step 3: Use video tours like it's your job.

Can't make it down yet? I do thorough video walkthroughs — not just a quick pan around the room. I'll open every closet, check the basement, tell you what I actually think about the house. No hype.

Step 4: Trust your agent to be your eyes.

This is the big one. You need someone who will tell you the truth, even when it's not what you want to hear. If something feels off about a house or a deal, I'll say so. That's kind of my whole thing.

Step 5: Remote closing is totally doable.

You don't have to be here in person to close. Remote and mail-away closings happen regularly. We'll handle the logistics — you just need to show up (or not) with a good internet connection.

Things to Know Before You Move

Okay, the stuff nobody puts in the brochure:

The weather is actually nice — mostly.

Mild winters, hot summers, beautiful springs and falls. You will experience approximately three days of 'tornado watch' anxiety per year. Download the weather app.

Traffic is real.

I-65 between Franklin and Nashville gets congested during rush hour. Test your commute route at 8am on a Tuesday before you commit to a neighborhood.

Southern charm is not a myth.

People are genuinely friendly here. Neighbors introduce themselves. Strangers wave. It's a real adjustment if you're coming from the Northeast — in the best way.

Everything is spread out.

This isn't a walkable city situation. You will be in your car a lot. That's just the trade-off for the space and the lifestyle.

Franklin fills up in October.

The fall festivals and the downtown scene are genuinely amazing — but also genuinely crowded. Plan accordingly.

Alyssa's Local Faves (So Far)

Two months in, I've done my research. Here's what I'm actually recommending to people:

EAT + DRINK

Puckett's Grocery & Restaurant — Franklin — live music, comfort food, very Tennessee. Go.

Gray's on Main — Franklin — cocktails and Southern food in a gorgeous historic building.

The Factory at Franklin — Not a restaurant but a whole vibe — shops, food, events. Great first stop when you visit.

55 South — Franklin — upscale Southern. Treat yourself.

DO + EXPLORE

Historic Downtown Franklin — Just walk it. All 16 blocks. The architecture alone is worth the trip.

Leiper's Fork — A quick drive out of town for galleries, antiques, and very good energy.

Natchez Trace Parkway — Gorgeous scenic drive with hiking and history. One of the best-kept secrets.

Franklin Farmers Market — Saturdays. Go early. The tomatoes alone will change your life.

Ready to make the move?

I help families relocate to Middle Tennessee every day — and I do it the way I'd want someone to do it for me: honestly, thoroughly, and without the sales pressure. Let's talk about what you're looking for.

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