

**DUNMAN HIGH SCHOOL**  
**Year 4 English 2023**  
**Singapore Issues – Livable Cities**



### **SOCRATIC SEMINAR –LIVABLE CITIES**

#### **Essential Questions:**

- **What makes a city livable?**
- **What are the advantages of livable cities?**
- **What are the disadvantages of livable cities?**
- **How can we contribute to building livable cities?**

With reference to the attached resource material, as well as your own research, construct a reasoned response on this issue, paying particular attention to the depth, breadth and fair-mindedness of your views.

You are not limited to discussing the essential questions above. You may dig deeper into the issues by asking critical questions to your fellow panelists, or lead the discussion into a specific perspective or angle.

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## **Exhibit 1**

### **Singapore remains the most livable location in the world**

8 February 2023

Expatriate management, Location allowances

- Singapore maintains its status as the most liveable location for expatriate workers from East Asia since 2005.
- The country's liveability score improved as its Covid-19 restrictions were relaxed sooner than many other Asian locations, putting it firmly in the top spot.
- Tightened Covid-19 policies in Hong Kong and mainland Chinese locations have contributed to a fall in their rankings, while locations in Japan and Australia dominate the top 10 most liveable locations.

Singapore – 8 February, 2023 – Singapore remains the most liveable location in the world for expatriates from East Asia with an improved liveability score in the past year, as revealed by the latest Location Ratings survey published by global mobility expert, ECA International. Covid-19 restrictions were lifted in Singapore sooner than other major locations in Asia, which had a positive effect on Singapore's liveability score and its attractiveness as a desirable location for expatriates.

## Top 10 most liveable locations for East Asian expatriates

Location	Country	2022 ranking	2021 ranking
 <b>Singapore</b>	Singapore	1	1
 <b>Tokyo</b>	Japan	2	3
 <b>Wellington</b>	New Zealand	3	2
 <b>Osaka</b>	Japan	4	3
 <b>Yokohama</b>	Japan	4	8
 <b>Adelaide</b>	Australia	4	10
 <b>Brisbane</b>	Australia	4	10
 <b>Auckland</b>	New Zealand	4	24
 <b>Copenhagen</b>	Denmark	9	3
 <b>Sydney</b>	Australia	9	10

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“A location’s position in our rankings is influenced by what happens in that location as well as other locations we research,” advised Lee Quane, Regional Director – Asia at ECA International. “Singapore relaxed social distancing restrictions earlier than other locations which facilitated a return to pre-pandemic norms, allowing the country to retain its top position in our rankings and increasing its lead over other locations in terms of liveability. Furthermore, the gap in liveability between Singapore and locations such as Hong Kong and Shanghai – both of which maintained or even enhanced Covid-19 related restrictions in 2022 – widened during the year, making it an even more compelling destination versus other locations in the region competing for international talent.”

ECA's Location Ratings system objectively evaluates a host of factors to form an assessment of the overall quality of living in over 500 locations worldwide. Factors assessed include climate; availability of health services; housing and utilities; natural phenomena; isolation; access to a social network and leisure facilities; infrastructure; personal safety; political tensions; and air quality.

## Asia Highlights

Hong Kong's liveability ranking has fallen 15 places to 92<sup>nd</sup> this past year. This decline is largely due to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions in 2022 and changes in its political environment. In contrast, other Asian locations have seen improvements as restrictions were lifted in the post-pandemic era.

"Hong Kong's maintenance of its Covid-19 mitigation measures this past year stood in contrast against many of its peers, both regionally and globally," Quane observed. "Continued quarantine restrictions, the limitation of access to recreational activities and other social distancing measures persisted throughout 2022, which put Hong Kong in a less favourable position compared to other locations. Furthermore, recent legislative council and elections for Hong Kong's Chief Executive also signalled changes in its political environment, which contributed to the decline in its liveability score and ranking."

"Likewise, cities in mainland China have all fallen in our rankings due exclusively to the impact of China's zero-Covid strategy that was maintained throughout most of 2022," explained Quane.

ASEAN locations generally improved in scores and rankings the past year, owing to the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions. Locations across Malaysia, Indonesia and Philippines saw a climb in their rankings, while Yangon, Myanmar, is the only ASEAN location which saw a fall in its ranking owing to the continued deterioration of security circumstances in the country.

"ASEAN locations followed Singapore's lead and relaxed their Covid-19 restrictions accordingly. In doing so, they improved their positions in our liveability rankings," said Quane. "Nonetheless, the impact of these improvements remains largely limited as the gap between Singapore and Bangkok – the second-highest location ranked in the ASEAN region but ranked 115<sup>th</sup> globally – indicates a wide disparity within the region that must be narrowed before other locations in ASEAN can offer similar living standards to the Lion City."

Elsewhere, major cities in the Asia Pacific have seen significant improvements due to the easing of Covid-19 restrictions. Cities in Australia saw major improvements in their liveability scores, while Auckland, New Zealand, was the biggest riser, climbing up 20 places to become the 4<sup>th</sup> most liveable location in the world for East Asian expatriates.

### Top 20 most liveable locations for East Asian expatriates

Location	2022 ranking	2021 ranking
Singapore	1	1

Tokyo, Japan	2	3
Wellington, New Zealand	3	2
Osaka, Japan	4	3
Yokohama, Japan	4	8
Adelaide, Australia	4	10
Brisbane, Australia	4	10
Auckland, New Zealand	4	24
Copenhagen, Denmark	9	3
Sydney, Australia	9	10
Bern, Switzerland	11	6
Eindhoven, Netherlands	11	8
Nagoya, Japan	13	6
Amsterdam, Netherlands	13	10
The Hague, Netherlands	13	10
Utrecht, Netherlands	13	10
Stavanger, Norway	17	10
Gothenburg, Sweden	17	10
Geneva, Switzerland	17	10
Rotterdam, Netherlands	17	24

Reference: <https://www.eca-international.com/news/february-2023/singapore-remains-the-most-liveable-location#:~:text=Singapore%20maintains%20its%20status%20as,firmlly%20in%20the%20top%20spot.>

## Exhibit 2

### These are the world's most livable cities

- **Vienna has returned to the top of an annual ranking of the world's most liveable cities.**
- **COVID-19, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and economic challenges are likely to impact liveability over the coming 12 months.**
- **Cities' ability to weather and respond to crises is crucial for the global economy and billions of livelihoods.**

Vienna is once again [the world's most liveable city](#), according to the Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) annual rankings.

The Austrian capital had slipped from the top spot it held in 2018 and 2019 as a result of the pandemic, but the report's authors write that "a rollback of COVID-19 restrictions" has seen the rankings more closely mirror those seen pre-pandemic. Vienna had fallen as far as 12th in 2021, as its museums and restaurants closed.

"Stability and good infrastructure are the city's main charms for its inhabitants," explains the EIU. This is "supported by good healthcare and plenty of opportunities for culture and entertainment".

### The 10 most liveable cities

The world's most liveable cities are dominated by Western European and Canadian destinations, with high vaccination rates and the easing of COVID restrictions returning life much closer to pre-pandemic norms.

Copenhagen in Denmark and Zürich in Switzerland complete the top three, while the Canadian cities of Calgary and Vancouver round out the world's five most liveable cities.

However, while the pandemic risk has receded in many cities, Russia's war on Ukraine has had affected this year's rankings. The EIU was forced to abandon its survey in Kyiv, while Moscow and St Petersburg have both slipped. The wider geopolitical risk has also had an influence in other Eastern European cities.

The most liveable cities ranking assesses each city on more than 30 qualitative and quantitative factors across five categories. Ratings are awarded by a combination of expert analysts and in-city contributors and take into account external data points.

This [methodology has faced criticism](#), though, because of the nature of the data and how it's collected.

### Top ten positions

City	Location	Rank	Index	Stability	Healthcare	Culture & Environment	Education	Infrastructure
Vienna	Austria	1	99.1	100.0	100.0	96.3	100.0	100.0
Copenhagen	Denmark	2	98.0	100.0	95.8	95.4	100.0	100.0
Zurich	Switzerland	3	96.3	95.0	100.0	96.3	91.7	96.4
Calgary	Canada	3	96.3	95.0	100.0	90.0	100.0	100.0
Vancouver	Canada	5	96.1	90.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	92.9
Geneva	Switzerland	6	95.9	95.0	100.0	94.9	91.7	96.4
Frankfurt	Germany	7	95.7	90.0	100.0	96.3	91.7	100.0
Toronto	Canada	8	95.4	95.0	100.0	95.4	100.0	89.3
Amsterdam	Netherlands	9	95.3	90.0	100.0	97.2	91.7	96.4
Osaka	Japan	10	95.1	100.0	100.0	83.1	100.0	96.4
Melbourne	Australia	10	95.1	95.0	83.3	98.6	100.0	100.0

Source: EIU.

2022 top 10 most liveable cities. Image: Economist Intelligence Unit

### The biggest risks to liveability

The report's authors caution that the pandemic is not over, with COVID-19 restrictions and the war in Ukraine set to influence liveability over the coming 12 months.

Commodity prices and a cost-of-living crisis are also going to have an effect. The "sharp spike in inflation will put quality of life in many cities at risk", the EIU says. Businesses such as hotels and restaurants that were already weakened by the pandemic could be further strained by rising interest rates and costs, affecting quality of life.

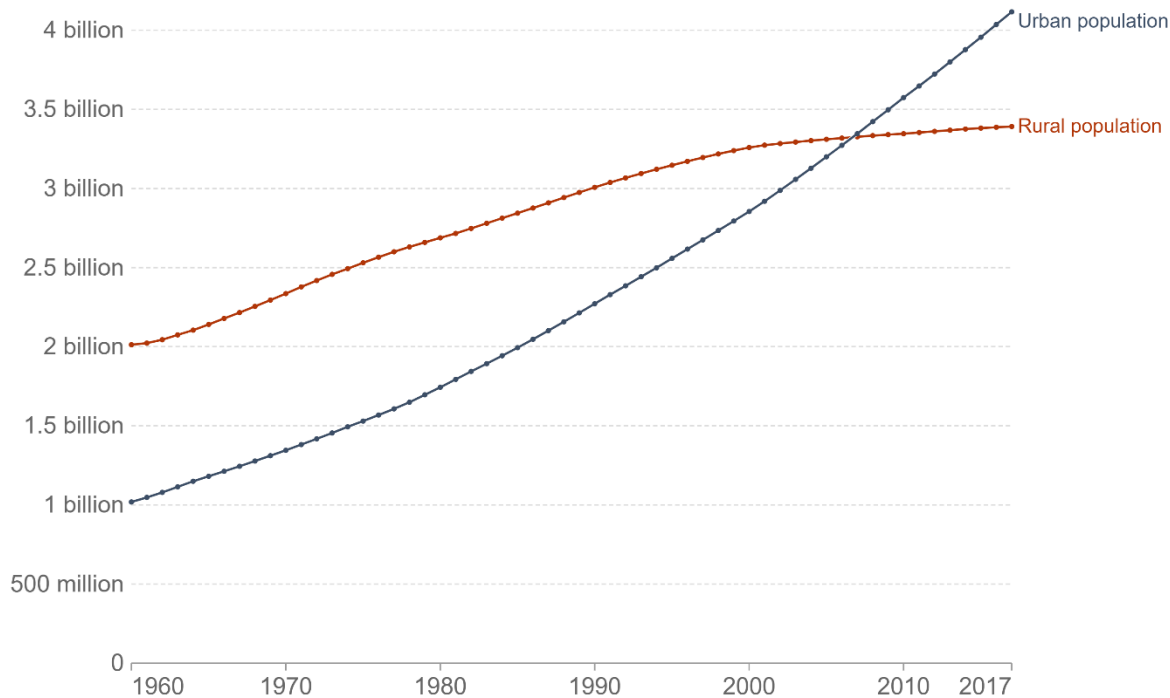
### Why it matters

For most of human history, people have lived in small communities, writes Our World in Data. However, in recent decades that's changed very rapidly.

As recently as [the 1960s, the rural population was around double that of the urban population](#), as the chart below shows. However, by 2007 more people lived in urban areas than rural areas – and urban populations are only expected to rise further.

## Number of people living in urban and rural areas, World

Our World  
in Data



Source: World Bank based on data from the UN Population Division

OurWorldInData.org/urbanization • CC BY

Note: Urban populations are defined based on the definition of urban areas by national statistical offices.

The rural-urban swap. Image: Our World in Data

[Two-thirds of humanity is expected to live in cities by 2050](#), according to the United Nations. So understanding what makes a city liveable is important on a human level – and impacts the daily lives of billions of people.

However, cities are also economic powerhouses – more than [80% of global GDP is generated in cities](#), according to the World Bank. They are also [major contributors to climate change](#), consuming nearly 80% of the world's energy and producing more than 60% of its greenhouse gas emissions, the UN says.

Reference: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/06/liveable-cities-urbanization-vienna/>



## **Exhibit 3**

### **Four Things We Can Learn from the World's Most Livable Cities**

The list for most livable cities of 2019 from The Economist Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Index has kept Vienna in the top spot for the second year, kicking out the previous first place holder, Melbourne out of its seven-year-long reign as the most livable city in the world.

Other cities in Australia, Japan and Canada make up 8 of the the top 10 spots while Denmark's capital city and the new queen bee in Austria represent the top in Europe. Other metropolitan areas that have previously made the list, such as Auckland (New Zealand), Helsinki (Finland) and Hamburg (Germany) have now fallen in rank. They have not ceased development rather, the other aforementioned cities have emerged with more modern growth.

The report takes factors like healthcare, education, stability, infrastructure, culture and environment into consideration, giving each city a score out of 100. [The index](#) favors mid-sized cities with relatively low density, turning away cultural hubs like London, New York and Paris who have become victims of their own success due to higher crime rates and strained infrastructure.

With that in mind, we have to ask— what is it that these cities are doing so right? What do they have in common? And, what can we learn from them?

### **Well-designed infrastructure promotes healthier lifestyles**

A city that provides inclusive opportunities for all residents access to green spaces, abundance of public spaces, efficient public transportation systems and healthcare availability are hallmarks of a healthy, livable city.

It's no secret that long commutes have effects on our wellbeing. Recent studies have shown that long commutes have negative impacts on mental health as well as worse productivity amongst employees, thus cities with inefficient or inaccessible transport systems tend to create more stressful commutes. Cities like Tokyo and Vienna regularly find themselves in the top 10 for best transportation systems in the world, known for its accessibility, efficiency and safety.

We know that effective public transportation has domino-effect like impacts on public health as well, contributing to less pollution and more fuel efficiency, while encouraging healthy habits simply from walking to one destination to another.

It also makes accessing recreational activities easier. An idyllic example—50 percent of Vienna is covered with green spaces. From forests and parks to vineyards and gardens to the Danube river, giving residents plenty of ways to connect to nature within the Austrian capital city limits.

### **Housing and amenities should be accessible and inclusive**

Having a decent space to call home is a cornerstone of a livable city - no matter your status. Viennese apartments are known for their stunningly bright and airy rooms, parquet floors, stunning façades and most importantly, reasonably affordable rents.

The Austrian capital also boasts a notable social housing system with 60% of the city's population residing in subsidized flats. Some of the most remarkable structures were designed by Austrian architect, Harry Gluck. He focused on implementing a vision of creating homes for the working class with features favored by the wealthy.

Arguably, creating spaces where one feels a sense of pride creates responsibility and care amongst tenants and promotes a more secure environment.

Photo courtesy of Alexandra Siebenthal

### **Urban settings should encourage connection**

How we shape urban spaces matters. Social connections are constructed based on the number of shared spaces around us. A perfect example of the impacts such spaces can make on a community takes us into the densely-diverse Nørrebro neighborhood of Copenhagen, Denmark that lacked a space with a sense of community.

Bjarke Ingels, founder of BIG Architects in collaboration with landscape architecture firm, Topotek 1, created a canvas for social connections where there wasn't before in the form of a public park—Superkilen.

The architects aimed for heavy civic involvement, asking various cultures of the communities that live in the neighborhood what they would like to see in their shared space. You can find installations from over 60 countries such as chess boards from Bulgaria, a Japanese octopus slide for children, or a two-sided swing from Iran. The designers wanted to foster a sense of familiarity and comfort through design for the foreigners who have found a new home in this Scandinavian city.

### **Liveability requires a broad definition of well-being**

One criticism to surface about the [The Economist Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Index](#) is that it is created for companies who are sending employees abroad to gauge how much hardship allowance the company should provide to its expats.

That being said, the question arises —**livability for whom?** While the cities that made the list inarguably offer some incredible amenities, we must also address this question of liveability and inclusion.

A prime example would be the previous crown-holder, Melbourne. It has been argued that the Australian city has become “a two-tiered city, with cosmopolitan Melbournians living near transport and cultural facilities, and the neglected fringe dwellers sitting in traffic for hours to get to work” ([The Guardian](#)). This city is revered as being highly-livable, but if infrastructure is not accessible to all, we are still far from creating a city of inclusion.

Reference: <https://www.resite.org/stories/four-things-we-can-learn-from-the-worlds-most-livable-cities>

## **Exhibit 4**

### **HONEST Pros & Cons of Living in New York City**

MAY 3, 2023

There's no adequate way to describe the way living in New York City feels. The Big Apple casts both shadows and spells and your experience will depend entirely on you. But there's no denying that living in New York City is an extraordinary feat, any way you slice it. The city tempts people in hoards and millions of residents are willing to overlook the inevitable cons of

#### **#1. New York City is (truly) the land of opportunity**

Cue: "If you can make it here, you can make it anywhere." New York City is where dreamers go to make their dreams come true. In my experience, this is true in two ways:

If you're an entrepreneur (way to go, you!), there's no better place than New York City to try and make it big. The opportunities and networking connections you can make while living in New York City are hard to beat.

Career-wise, New York City has the biggest names in tech, marketing, apparel, journalism, sports, you name it. So if you can't follow your dreams (yet), there's definitely a job for you, but I highly suggest having a gig lined up before moving to NYC otherwise you won't be setting yourself up for success.

New York City is home to 65 Fortune 500 companies, the second-highest concentration of Fortune 500 companies in the world, outside of Tokyo.

In terms of finding a job in New York City, you need to be keenly aware of finding a gig that works well with your lifestyle. Because one thing you'll quickly learn after moving to New York City is that you will need to hustle hard and that means long hours at the office.

With a population of 8.4 million, competition is fierce. Securing a job and keeping it will require more effort than it does in smaller cities, which is why New Yorkers are often considered workaholics. But at the end of the day, one thing is certain: if you're passionate enough to move to New York City then chances are good you'll find a way to make it work, one way or another. This is the city of dreamers and time and again it's the place where the greatest dream of all, the American dream, has been tested and has triumphed.

#### **#2. New York City is a safe place to live**

It may surprise you to learn that living in New York City is not unsafe, as most folks assume. It's hard to blame anyone for thinking that life in New York City could be dangerous. With 8.4 million residents, NYC is the most populous city in America and things are bound to happen.

However, relative to its size, New York City is considered one of the top 5 safest large cities in America. After living in New York City for 8+ years, I can honestly say I've never felt unsafe in the city and that's mostly because I've never really been alone on the streets. For instance, I don't walk through Central Park after dark. Instead, I stick to the main streets where eager tourists and locals alike meander through the city streets while returning home from late night meals or libations. There's power in numbers. I currently live in Manhattan and understand that busy streets are not as common in the other boroughs, so make sure to do deep research on the area you plan to move to NYC.

Gun laws have changed recently to become more lenient in NYC but it's still a far cry from living in Texas.

If you're seriously considering moving to New York City, I suggest reading: [Don't Move to New York City Without Knowing These 20 Crucial Things First](#)

Living in New York City

### #3. Exposure to the arts (and history)

New York City is often described as the cultural capital of the world, and I'd be damned if I didn't confess that this is quite possibly my favorite thing about living in New York City.

New York City is home to a whopping 83 museums, including the fifth largest museum in the world, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (colloquially known as the MET).

NYC is also home to one of the most gorgeous libraries in the world, the New York Public Library, which is also the third largest library in the world.

If history is more your thing, why not visit the birthplace of Theodore Roosevelt, grab a drink at the bar where George Washington bid an emotional farewell to his troops or check out Alexander Hamilton's final resting place?

The point is, you'll be hard pressed to find a more culturally exciting city than New York.

For example, my friend starts every weekend by exploring a museum with her kids and at the rate she's going, her kids will see more world-renowned art by the age of 7 than most people do in a lifetime!

#### #4. New York City is diverse

It's probably no surprise that with more than 200+ languages spoken on a daily basis, the habits, food and dress reflect the vibrant diversity of life in New York City. In fact, New York City is the most diverse city in the country.

As a result, no matter what you do, you will always "fit" in. In many ways, it feels like there's zero judgement while living in New York City. I personally feel like I can be whoever I want to be – seriously.

This realization, and subsequent freedom, makes me more confident and allows me to take risks I normally wouldn't. Talk about liberating.

For example, within two months of moving to NYC, I found that my wardrobe had completely changed.

I started wearing clothing that just didn't make sense in my previous city (Portland, Oregon) because there was seldom an occasion to get dressed for. After living in NYC, I've realized that the city is occasion enough.

All this to say, if you need a fresh start in life then moving to New York City is a great place to start. I swear, this city makes you self sufficient.

#### #5. Networking & social scene

One of the biggest pros of living in New York City is that you're in the heart of everything. This is the city where trends are born and million-dollar ideas take root.

In fact, New York City was home to more billionaires than anywhere else in the world, before being surpassed by Beijing not too long ago.

And since everyone is hustling hard to get their piece of the pie, you will make some serious connections while living in NYC.

If you're open to meeting new people and putting yourself out there, you'll find that there's never a shortage of new folks to grab dinner or drinks with.

I will add, the social atmosphere in NYC is downright addicting and has changed me. I went from hanging out with close friends once a month to grabbing drinks with friends 2 times a week after moving to New York City.

When in Rome, right?

#6. There's (always) something to do

When you live in New York City, it's hard to justify staying home because there's ALWAYS something going on.

Whether it's a new exhibit at a museum, a famous musician playing at the Blue Note, sunset yoga in Central Park or a five-course meal at a Michelin-star restaurant, you'll never have a reason to be bored while living in New York City.

Even random walks sometimes end on a magical note. All this to say – long gone are the days of “there's nothing to do around here” because when you move to New York City, that excuse is no longer valid.

In the country, there are a few chances of sudden rejuvenation—a shift in weather, perhaps, or something arriving in the mail. But in New York the chances are endless.

#7. The food in New York City is incredible

We can't talk about the pros of moving to New York City without mentioning the food. Oh my goodness! If there's one thing I love most about living in NYC, it's the incredible food scene.

With 69 Michelin-Starred restaurants, New York City is has the 5th highest concentration of Michelin-Starred restaurants in the world. And sure, you'll need a trust fund to try them all, but you know the best part?

You don't need to eat at these fancy places to enjoy a memorable meal because NYC's culinary abilities range a diverse spectrum and you can find great cheap eats.

New York City is a melting pot of different cultures so you are privy to the best-of-the-best regarding all types of cuisine.

After living in New York City, it's hard to find other cities that satisfy my cravings for good food.

I mean, let's get real real, you haven't lived until you find yourself with a hot bowl of award-winning ramen at 1am. But fair warning, you'll never be the same.

#### #8. New York City has great public parks

The amount of public parks sprinkled throughout the city is a huge perk of living in the Concrete Jungle.

Obviously Central Park takes the cake, spanning nearly 850 acres, this gem is bigger than the country of Monaco and is the most filmed location in the world.

And it's true, Central Park is picture-perfect, but don't make the mistake of overlooking the other 1,700+ parks in NYC.

It's clear that New York City understands the importance public green spaces and acts on that knowledge.

In fact, 22% of the city is dedicated specially for public parks and 99% of New York City residents are a mere 10-minute walk from a park.

I can attest that having access to green spaces makes living in NYC easy because when the city feels overwhelming it's not hard to find a little slice of greenery to escape to.

#### #9. The street fashion

For the most part, New Yorkers dress very well, especially when compared to other US cities.

Now, I'm not saying we're held to European standards, but close enough.

Living in New York City means you're constantly exposed to new trends and you can't help but benefit.

There's something exciting about living in a city where people take pride in the way they dress that makes you want to put your best foot forward, too.

Personally, I noticed this change in myself. As mentioned earlier, my wardrobe has substantially changed since moving to New York City and I love it.

There's no pressure to dress a certain way, so you can wear whatever you want.

I've been noticing a lot of maxi dresses this year and it turns out that I absolutely love wearing them, even though I never wore them in Portland – go figure.

It's funny, sometimes I leave the house feeling like a 10 only to see a mom pushing a stroller in a killer dress and realizing that if I'm a 10 she must be a 20. It cracks me up.

#### #10. Efficient public transportation

I know that most everyone likes to hate on their city's public transportation, but New York City's public transportation is pretty dang efficient.

We chose to move to NYC without a car and are glad we made the decision because you definitely don't need a car to get around.



Honestly, I can't imagine the headache of owning a car while living in NYC. Plus, the savings are starting to add up. We don't pay for gas and regular vehicle maintenance, not to mention the savings on car insurance.

A monthly subway pass will set you back \$133 but is worth the cost if you take the subway more than twice a day. Or you can opt for the weekly passes which give you unlimited rides for 7 consecutive days for \$33.

In my opinion, NYC's public transportation is efficient and affordable. Using it is a no-brainer for us and we don't dread it, which is saying a lot.

We're on time 80-90% of the time and can get wherever we need to go in a reasonable time, even the airport.

But don't just take my word for it, more than 10 million people ride the subway daily.

All this to say, if you're moving to New York City, leave the car behind because you won't need it here.

#### #11. The city never sleeps

You may not realize how big of a perk this is until you move out of New York City but just wait until you move somewhere else and find yourself craving cookies at 2am. There's always something lively going on in the city, so you can find something fun to do after work even if you get off closer to 9pm.

Great bars, awesome jazz clubs, romantic restaurants, you name it and it's at your fingertips well into the evening.

Yeah, this pro of living in NYC can't be overstated because (for foodies and party alike) it's a lifeline. We recently met up with some friends from Portland and found ourselves out until 2am.

We capped the night with a slice of pizza before heading home. We didn't even have to search hard to find a restaurant open near us, we had 10+ options within three city blocks.

And New York is the most beautiful city in the world? It is not far from it. No urban night is like the night there.... Squares after squares of flame, set up, and cut into the aether. Here is our poetry, for we have pulled down the stars to our will.

#1. Honestly, the rent is too damn high

Let's be honest, living in New York City is not realistic for a lot of people because of the astronomical cost of housing in the city.

New York City is not even in the same time zone as affordable!

I first fell in love with NYC after visiting for the first time after college, since then, I've spent 6+ years day dreaming about living in NYC but it felt out of reach because of the cost.

I saved as much as I could to finally make the big move to New York City, but boy — I don't want to fool you, it was far from easy.

The high cost of housing is why so many people live with roommates or find themselves far from the center (and then have to commute 45+ minute each way).

If helpful, our current rent for a 600 square foot apartment on the Upper West Side is \$2,800. It's charming but TINY!

The bathroom door doesn't open all the way because of a small trash can, it's hilarious and sad at the same time. But as most New Yorkers will tell you, you pay for the access, not the space.

Anyways, I'll post photos of our apartment soon and will send an update through the newsletter, if you're interested.

#2. The summer humidity & winter chill

You quickly learn after moving to New York City to take advantage of the blissful spring and fall seasons. The temperatures are perfect and the spring blooms and autumn leaves dazzle the city in breathtaking color.

However, summer is an absolute bear! It's hot, muggy and oftentimes stinky. The average summer temperature hovers around 85 – 90° and the humidity is no joke.

As you may or may not know, trash bags are tossed on the sidewalk to be picked up by sanitation workers. So if you're walking by during a 90° day, you can expect to pick up a few unpleasant whiffs.

All smells become amplified but the summer heat, brace yourself.

The winter weather sits on the other end of the spectrum. A brutal bone-chilling cold awaits you from November to March and you better be sure your tiny closet is full of good coats and wool socks.

Need help getting through New York City winters? Don't move to NYC without getting this super handy device first, it helps drastically with the dark gray winter skies. My therapist recommended it and I use it daily, I can't recommend it enough.

### #3. Living in New York City is expensive

I know, understatement of the century, right? But bear with me. New York City is the 7th most expensive city in the world.

Let that sink in.

I guess this goes hand-in-hand with the atrocious rent prices but that's only the beginning.

Expect every day things, like haircuts, groceries and experiences, to be much more expensive while living in New York.

For example, an average cocktail in NYC will set you back \$18-22, pre-tip (ouch). And since daily life in NYC is much more social than other cities, you can expect your friends to suggest meeting up at bars more often than not.

In fact, the high cost of living in New York City was the hardest adjustment for my husband and I. We had to have some serious talks about reigning in our finances shortly after moving to New York City because it became evident that our previous budget wouldn't work here.

We mentioned this to a friend who has lived in NYC for 10+ years and he said that when people first move to New York City they feel like they're on vacation.

All the new restaurants, museums, attractions, it's all so exciting! So it takes a while to adjust to a more disciplined way of daily life in New York.

Additionally, I can't speak for everyone (and I'm slightly embarrassed to admit this) but living in New York City has made me more materialistic.

There's something in the atmosphere of this electric city that makes me want to buy things in a way I never cared for before. I'm still trying to get to the bottom of it and will report back if I ever figure it out.

Moving to New York City

#4. Crowds will become a part of your daily life

Do you like standing in line? Great! You're going to LOVE loving in New York City.

Jokes aside, expect crowds and long lines anywhere you go.

You anticipate this as a tourist, but as a local, it's a bear.

Not only will you wait in line for most popular restaurants, but the streets are crowded all the (dang) time. Comes with the territory, I guess.

I feel like all first dates in NYC should go something like this: Name, occupation, longest wait time. Because nothing proves commitment like a 2 hour line for donuts. That's marriage material.

#### #5. New Yorkers are blunt

New Yorkers don't sugarcoat. They are direct because they don't like to waste time. You can tell this by how fast they walk ... everywhere.

New Yorkers weren't raised by southern mothers – forget manners, enter brevity. They have places to be and people to see.

It's just the way things are around here. I can try to explain it away, but why bother? It is what it is, just don't take it personally because it's not.

#### #6. Moving to New York City? Apartment hunting is a bear

A big con of living in New York City is trying to find an apartment.

The competition is intense and you'll need a broker to get an apartment, which greatly increases the overall expense. Most broker fees are equivalent to one month's rent or 10-15% of your total annual rent.

It's insane and adds an additional expense to moving to New York City.

Of course, some things have changed due to COVID and broker fees were paused for a while because landlords were having such a hard time finding renters.

But in any case, expect to find yourself refreshing apartment websites hourly and touring a handful of places before moving to NYC.

I wrote about our experience finding an apartment in New York City here. I talk about dead cockroaches, mouse traps and a few lessons we learned the hard way so you don't have to.

#### #7. If you live in NYC, prepare to be labeled a workaholic

There's no way around this. New York City is a hard working city. 40 hour work week? Sounds like a distant dream.

Living in NYC is not for the faint of heart, most come here to make a name for themselves, and it shows. Expect to put in long hours.

For example, both of our long-term NYC friends work until 8-9pm in the evening. They joke that they can hang out during the "other" 9-9.

It's not uncommon to find them answering emails on the weekends or checking their phones during happy hour.

Some days it feels like anxiety is a second language and we are all proficient in it.

You can't hustle to make it here and everyone works hard. Some people work 150 hours a week, others have 2-3 jobs to scrape by.

Whatever you do, secure a job before moving to New York City.

#### #8. New York City is a dirty city

I know some people like to call New York City "grungy" because it sounds cute, but let's get real the city is dirty. I mean, in 2018, New York City was rated the dirtiest city in America.

"When you leave New York, you are astonished at how clean the rest of the world is. Clean is not enough."

Reference: <https://newyorksimply.com/pros-cons-living-new-york-city/>