



Cost of Living in The Villages, Florida for a \$250,000 Home

Mortgage payment A \$250,000 house, with 20% down, and a 30-year fixed rate mortgage at 3.5% and came up with \$898 per month.

Homeowners Insurance Policies include hurricane insurance 2 to 5% deductible. Sinkhole insurance is no longer available, but it has been replaced by catastrophic land movement. See my website for details.

Amenities Fee The amenities fee is currently \$145 a month and is adjusted every 2 to 3 years slightly. This fee allows you access to every recreation center, clubs and activities. Things like golf on all the 29 executive courses and 279 Championship holes of golf, swimming, tennis, organized activities, 24 hour neighborhood watch and more.

Property Taxes Property taxes are based on the selling price of the home. The Villages Florida is located in 3 counties with rate ranging from \$13 (Sumter County) to \$18 (Lake County) per thousand. If you are a full time resident you qualify for a homestead exemption that is currently \$50,000.

How to Calculate: $\$250,000 - \$50,000 = \$200,000$

$\$200,000 / 1000 = 200 \times \text{tax rate} = \text{Property taxes}$

Home Bond In Sumter and Marion Counties, each home has a **BOND** when the home was new. The BOND is the cost of the infrastructure of a particular neighborhood. Infrastructure is things like, water, sewer, electric, gas, cable TV, streets, etc. The total cost of this is divided among the number of lots in the neighborhood and is financed by a 30 year municipal bond. Each resident pays an annual payment towards the retirement of the BOND in their tax bill each year. The BOND does not add any values to the home for pricing. It can be paid off at any time, and BOND balance will pass to the next owner when the home is sold. Bonds range from a few thousand to \$23,000 on new homes. The older the home the lower the bond will be. Lake County does not have BONDS.

CDD Assessments The Villages Florida will have 10 Community Development Districts (CDD) when it is built out in 2017. The CDD is similar to the BOND in that it is for each neighborhood or Village. It provides maintenance for the common areas of the neighborhood and the cost of pools, executive golf courses. This fee will be in effect for ever. It is paid annually in your Property tax bill and will range from \$220 to a \$1,000 a year. Again, the older the home the lower the CDD will be. You can look up the bond amount and CDD assessment by street name.

Utilities

The Villages Florida provides water, sewer and trash. Electric is provided by Progress Electric, and SECO. Not all areas of The Villages Florida have natural gas which is provided by TECO. Areas where gas is available include Marion County and homes that were built prior to 2006 in Sumter County. The average electric is \$128 a month and gas is \$68 a month. Add more if you have pool. Of course this is dictated by your heat and cooling preferences. Cable or satellite, high speed internet and telephone are estimated at \$145 - \$180 a month and can be bundled for economy of scale.

Landscaping

You might think cutting your own grass and trimming your trees and shrubs sounds like a good idea at first, but most people eventually agree its either too dang hot or they are just too dang busy to keep up with it all. So most opt for a lawn service to come.

Prices for lawn vary by type of home (size of the lots), Villas \$35 a month, Ranch/Cottage and Designer homes are \$50 a month and large Cul de Sac and corner lots will be around \$60 per month. This service provides for lawn to be cut, edged and weed whacked week March through November. Most people continue to pay December thru February with a cutting maybe once a month.

Trimming of trees/shrubs is usually additional. A budget of \$40-\$50 every other month starting in March and ending in November should be sufficient.

Pest Control (Home and Yard)

You really need two types of pest control. The home it self needs to be sprayed outside for bugs and termites about 3 to 4 times a year. There are several reputable companies that will provide pest service for specific needs such as mice etc.

Homes built prior to 2006 will have St. Augustine grass which is susceptible to chinch bugs which destroy the root systems of the grass. You should have your lawn sprayed for this and also fertilized 6 time a year. Again there are reputable companies that provide this service.

Each service costs about \$300 a year.

Termite Bond

When homes are built, the day before the slab is poured, a termite company will spray the earth where the slab will be formed with some NASTY termite spray. After the home is built the company will provide a termite bond for damages up to \$1,000,000 for about \$125 a year. This is optional and at your discretion. Termites are prevalent in Florida, but because most people use Pest Control Companies, the risk is reduced. So do what you feel comfortable with.

Exterior Maintenance

Homes in The Villages Florida have both siding and stucco exteriors. Both need to be power washed at least twice a year, Cost depends on the size of the home, but an average home will run \$50-\$60 per. Stucco homes will need to be painted every 5-7 years should be between \$2,000 and \$3,500.

Air conditioners in Florida last about 8 – 10 years. The federal efficiency rating changed a couple of years ago from 10 seer to 13 seer. So, if your condenser goes out, you will have to replace the coils also. The cost can range from \$4000 to \$8000 depending on size and features.

Golf

“Free golf for life” might just be the very thing that got your attention and attracted you to The Villages Florida in the first place. But, it’s not quite that simple.

You do get free golf for life on the executive courses if you walk and carry your clubs. If you use a pull cart it is \$1 per round of 9 holes. If you use your golf cart a trail fee of \$4 per golfer is required. Residents share golf carts so only two per foursome is required. If you play at three rounds a week, then TRAIL PASS would be cost effective. You can find more information in this [Trail Fee Application](#). Guest fees range from \$7 to \$11 depending on the time of year plus trail fee.

There are 11 Country Clubs that offer 279 holes of golf. For the avid golfer there are several options as it relates to Priority Championship Course Memberships, too many to list here. But on

the high end (all courses) they are currently \$925 per couple (rates are less for singles) and this includes use of the Country Club pools, your executive trail fee and tennis at Hacienda Hills and approximately 20-25% greens fee discounts. Greens fees range \$17-\$2 in the Summer and \$40 - \$57 in the Winter.

Golf Carts

This will likely be one of the first purchases you make after buying your home, and many even complete this purchase BEFORE buying their home! Prices, styles and options for golf carts are almost as varied as for homes. You can find used carts in the classifieds or in some stores for less than \$2000 or you can spend more than \$20,000 for a tricked-out custom cart. The choice is yours but don't forget to budget for this expense. Both electric and gas golf carts are used in The Villages. Each has advantages and disadvantages. New electric carts have a range of 60 miles per charge and require new batteries every 3 to 4 years (\$800).

You'll also need golf cart insurance. Like anything else it's good to shop around. Ask your cart dealer or salesman for a recommendation. I've seen rates range between \$60/year to more than \$200/year.

Roadside Service

Like cars, golf carts get flat tires, dead batteries, etc. A couple companies offer roadside assistance for yearly fees ranging from about \$30/yr. to \$60/yr. depending on the level of service you'd like. Check out [Kartaide](#) and [24 Hour Cart Club](#) for more details.

Entertainment and Movies

You'll never be short on entertainment options in The Villages. You've got nightly entertainment in the town squares which is free. There are also ticketed shows, musical acts, Polo matches, etc. with ticket prices ranging from just a few bucks to \$30+ depending on the act and the venue.

The Villages Florida now has three movie theaters with 18 screens , 2 of which offer Stadium seating and two digital 3-D screens. Ticket prices are currently \$6.75 for residents showing a resident ID.

Newspaper

The Villages Florida Daily Sun is currently \$60/year, and while you should probably subscribe just to keep up with daily events/happenings you're not going to see any hardcore news reporting. Because of this, many also get the Orlando Sentinel which is about \$33 for 13 weeks.

TheVillages.net

You can get golf tee times by phone, but some want the convenience of doing it online. If that's you, you'll pay \$8/month for TheVillages.net. This also includes 2 @thevillages.net email addresses.

VHA/POA Memberships

I'm a strong proponent of joining these two organizations. After a while you'll notice they have different aims and viewpoints in many cases but both are worth being a member of. The Villages Florida Homeowners Association (VHA) is just \$15/household for 2 years, and the POA is \$10/household for 1 year. Both are voluntary.

House Watch Service

If you're going to be a [seasonal resident](#) you'll probably want to look into a house watch service and these range from \$35-\$50/month depending on the level of service you want.

Groceries

I'd say grocery prices in The Villages Florida are pretty average for Florida. There's quite a bit of choice with Publix \$\$, Sweet-bay \$\$, Fresh Choice \$\$\$, Sam's Club \$, Super Wal-Mart \$.

Drinks and Eating Out

The Villages Florida now offers over 100 restaurants in The Villages Florida [83 accessible](#) by golf cart and nearly [230 within 30 minutes](#) of The Villages. There are lots of choices, and the competition keeps the prices in line. You don't have to look too hard to find coupons and deals enticing enough for just about any budget.

BUT, because of the amount of choices, many just a short golf cart ride away, most residents find themselves eating out and/or socializing with new friends more than they ever have in the past. So to be safe, add 20-30% on to whatever your budget is now for drinking and eating out, not because prices are higher, but because you will likely be doing it more often.