

The Successful | Actor's Guide to Los Angeles

*Creating an Acting Career
in the City of Angels*

Josh Ubaldi

Introduction

Congrats on taking a huge leap in becoming an actor in Hollywood. This e-book gives you a map for an immense amount of success as an actor in Los Angeles. I've created ~~it~~this with a whole lot of passion because I want new actors--and more seasoned actors who are new ~~to~~L.A.--to really feel like they are set up for success, ~~and~~ ~~and~~ ~~to~~ have a clearer path in a profession that has no real arc of progress, ~~one,~~ ~~and~~ ~~that~~ ~~is,~~ of course, ~~is~~ wildly quirky.

I got more and more disturbed and sad ~~when~~as I ~~heard~~realized I ~~was~~ ~~hearing~~ the same conversation ~~regarding the business in L.A.~~ over and over and over from friends and acquaintances, at countless cafes, bars, classes, and days on set. ~~It~~ ~~always~~ ~~went~~ ~~goes~~ the same way ~~regarding the business in L.A.~~: “the Learning Curve was too steep” (or long); “we got great craft training at drama school, but nothing prepared us for the business”; “there’s no formula for success”; “it’s nothing but ~~luck~~luck”; “I wish I hadn’t wasted so much time”; and the clincher: “I had no idea where to start!” ~~These same comments go on~~ to infinity. ~~So I wrote t~~his book ~~in order~~attempts to address all of these issues for you, right at the foundational level.

At various points in my own career, I ~~ve~~ had a lot of the same negative thoughts about the business. My landing in Los Angeles was a little less stressful because I went through these extremes of frustration in New York City, a ~~placend~~ ~~tha~~ ~~tha~~ that was infinitely more stressful than this playground of a town.

I’m going to stay extremely specific to Los Angeles in this book, but first let’s talk for a moment about how darn quirky our profession is: wacky, unpredictable, ridiculous, scary, overwhelming...the adjectives go on and on. And usually, the

connotations are pretty tragic. But there is only one important question for you, ~~dear actors,~~ to ask yourself, ~~dear actor,~~ and to answer ~~every~~ day: “Do I want to succeed as an actor, and do whatever it takes?” And to that question, you had better say YES every day. Otherwise, please do something else. You’ve heard this before, ~~but~~ it bears saying again. Los Angeles can swallow you up if you are not prepared and excited about taking complete responsibility for your career. And you can do that. No more victimization about being at the mercy of nasty casting directors, agents, and producers. Is your glass half empty? Then go find a better glass.

There is little more to be said here about your commitment to acting; ~~here~~, there are plenty of other books, courses, and seminars that you can attack, if you need a pep talk. There is something wonderful called the Actors Fund if you have decided to leave your acting career behind and ~~need~~ some guidance in the process of choosing a new career (~~and~~ they do fantastic work for people who remain in the industry too). I’ve had several friends do just that, and best of luck to them. Frankly, if you’re tepid about your career, leave the roles and perks to people who really want to be in the game.

Going forward, we will focus only on what you CAN do, what you WILL do, and most of all, what you WANT to do.

Welcome to Los Angeles.

Planning Your Arrival

If you're already in Los Angeles, you may still want to read this as a reminder of why you moved here, what you love about the city, and perhaps [grab](#) a few pointers [on things](#) that you've overlooked in [your](#)~~the~~ sprint to hop on the casting train. Or [you may](#) simply skip to the next chapters.

For those of you lucky enough to be freshly arriving – or considering arriving – from some other town, village, city, [or](#) even country, then you're in for a treat. Los Angeles is like nowhere else. I moved here from New York City. For many years, I never considered moving to [L.A.](#) because I was not what I believed [to be](#)~~was~~ an [L.A.](#) Type: tall, tan, leading man material. The level of folly in this is extremely apparent to [those of](#) you reading this: [surely you, who](#) are [already](#)~~surely~~ wiser than I [was](#). But I also discovered that many people have the same image of [L.A.:](#) as [a](#) [place](#)~~being~~ full of [just](#) three or four specific types. Boy, were we wrong!

Just look at the amazing TV [that is](#) produced on network and cable, full of every flavor [of](#) human being imaginable. [L.A.](#) is for everyone, and I mean *everyone*, [provided that you](#)~~who~~ can deal with the sun and traffic and potential earthquakes. Even if you insist on living on a ranch with horses, you can still live in the vicinity and have an active career, [although](#) your commute will be a little longer.

Money, Money, Money

Let's jump right into the practicalities of moving here. How much money do you have in the bank? Yes, we need to talk about money immediately. Los Angeles is not an expensive city to live in compared to other large [U.S.](#) cities, [although](#) it may be [more costly](#)

if you're from somewhere much smaller. Either way, you will incur considerable expenses in order to give your career the best kick start, once you arrive, and you will be shocked at the ~~number~~amount of options you will have ~~for~~to spending your money ~~on~~. If you've been here for any length of time and didn't arrive~~not come~~ with a trust fund and an accountant, then you've likely already sacrificed classes, coaching, and even simple networking activities in order to pay your basic bills, when you could have *invested* real money in yourself and your career much earlier.

Consider some basic math right now, and don't skip this section, no matter how~~as~~ finance~~--~~adverse ~~as~~ you might be. Let's assess your building blocks so that you don't need to do things, once you're here, that you will regret down the line. Let's just assume that your ~~re~~ career is going to explode, and TMZ and ET will want the scoop on you. Work your integrity from day one!

Below is a sample budget for your first three months in Los Angeles, based on current prices and trends. Create your own budget, taking into account your unique needs and whatever you already have.

Budget for Your First Three Months in Los Angeles

- Apartment: 3,500
- New Car: 2,000
- Car Insurance: 300
- Internet: 100
- Telephone: 250
- Acting Classes: 800
- Coach: 300
- Workshops: 300
- Headshots: 500

- Subscriptions: 200
- Marketing: 150
- Eating: 600
- Total: \$9,000

Formatted: No underline

Formatted: No underline

Formatted: Underline

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.5", No bullets or numbering

Your first three months alone, ~~in L.A.~~, to start at a running pace in L.A., will cost you over \$9,000. Sure, there are some expenses that may disappear fast, like bringing your own car, or crashing on a friend's couch for a month or two. But there are always countless miscellaneous charges, too. So assume that this is a safe base estimate, no matter what. You may even want to save/keep a generous total of \$10,000, just to give yourself more breathing space.

Here's the big picture: L.A. will throw you enough curve balls (e.g. parking tickets and gas hikes), and you will need to give yourself both time and mental space in order to assess how the industry works here, so please please please don't come with just \$500 in your pocket and some good friends willing to help you out, ~~and~~ then struggle from day one. You'll fall directly into the trap of "why did everything take so long?"? The answer will only be, because you didn't bother to give yourself a proper foundation necessary to prosper. Take time to plan and plot. Let that excite you and get you focused. Your career may happen overnight, or it may take years to develop. Either way, be smart about it from the outset.

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold, Underline

Overhead Alternatives

For those of you who detest the idea of saving money, or who simply have no idea how you might start that process, let's think outside the box a little. Here are some options:

Get an investor. Just the same way as that people get investors to start up their businesses as entrepreneurs, you are your own business as an actor. S, so reach out to people that you trust who

Formatted: Underline

Formatted: Underline

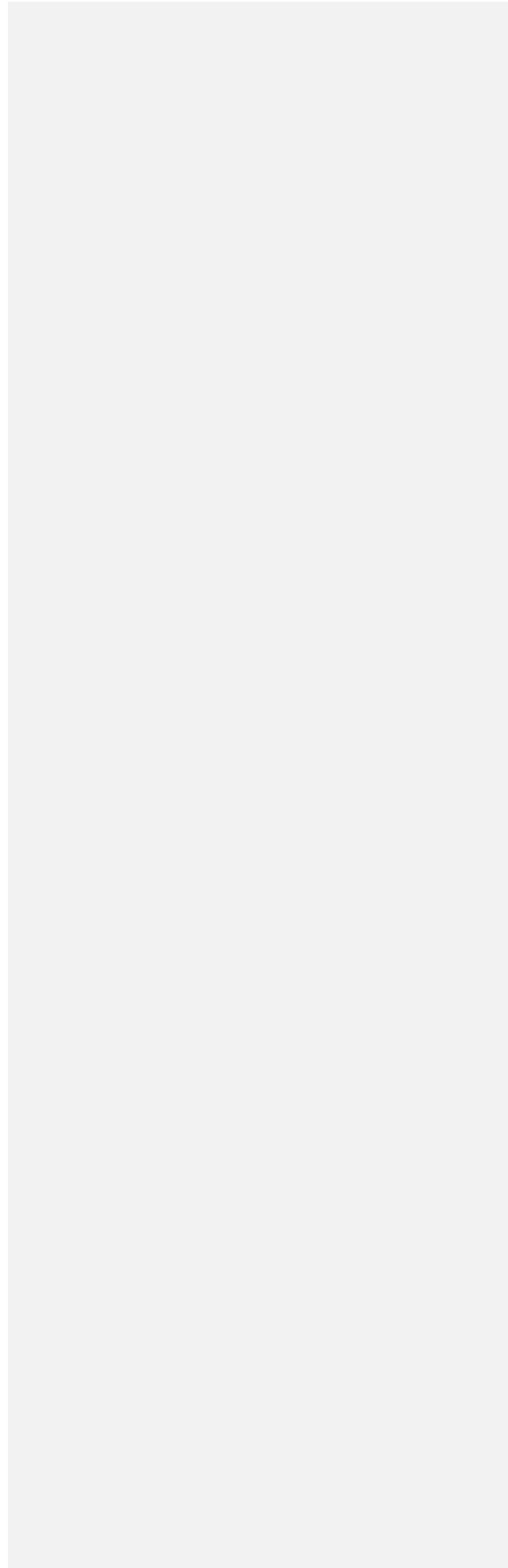
have extra cash, and ask them to make an investment in you. If you consider yourself an investment, and if you take actions ~~to~~ repeatedly in order to invest in yourself, then you have a good basis on which to ask for some investment and to create a plan to repay your investor when you start making income as an actor.

Line up a job before you get here. Unless you have an unlimited trust fund to spend ~~from~~, you might need a Money Job, so why not line one up before you get here, and take a huge financial burden off of your back? Between Facebook shout outs and requests, Craigslist, and Monster.com, you can possibly set up a gig, if not some good interviews, before you arrive. Take as many non-acting stressors off your back as possible before you land in Los Angeles arrive. This is deeply personal. Some people don't want to "jinx" their energy ~~by~~ cutting off acting success from day one, so see how you personally feel about this. Do what makes you secure and comfortable.

Meditate on the reality that L.A. is the right choice. This is a complex one, and I really mean MEDITATE! Give yourself active and sub-conscious time to process whether making a huge move from wherever you're from is the right move for you. Are you too concerned about security and stability to give your all to this career of high risk investment? Do you have too many ties that are keeping you where you are now, ones that you are unwilling to give up? Are you content enough to stay where you are and start a family, or create a different career, or caregive, or live vicariously through television shows and films while enjoying the creature comforts of suburbia?

This last one might seem a bit of a trick, but if you answered "NO" to all of the above, congratulations! Get on a plane or drive across country and commit yourself fully to starting a new life and planting long-term roots in a new industry that will require your patience, focus, love and joy.

Now that this vision is assured, let's talk about planting your roots in Los Angeles.



Resting Your Head at Night

Location means everything. In terms of ~~they~~^{your} best use of your time, decide what kind of person you are immediately, and allow your space to ~~only~~ make you even more so. I've met plenty of people who have moved to L.A. and said, "But I live in Los Angeles... I have to live near the beach." And then they do, and wonder why their lives are so arduous, full of ~~with~~ traffic and spending lots of travel time ~~spent~~, while they barely go to the beach one day a month. True story. And amazingly, where you live will define your character to other people consistently. Silver Lake or Westwood or Venice; people will slot you into stereotypes of these 'hoods. Not that you need to be overly concerned about ~~with~~ this, but it will offer you insight into who they are.

Let's discuss neighborhoods solely in terms of the business. If ~~you're~~ intent is to make millions in commercials, then by all means, settle in Santa Monica or Venice, and live a glorious beachy existence. A staggering amount of casting for commercials is based in Santa Monica and the lower beach cities, not to mention many of the production houses where you will go for fittings, meetings, and shooting. There is also a hub for commercials in West Hollywood and some in Hollywood, as well, so if you want to work mostly where you audition, these are some solid options. And to be clear; ~~here~~ we're talking here about the union, big money commercials. You'll find plenty of non-union casting all over the city, but these are the neighborhoods where most of the big kids mostly play.

Formatted: Font: Italic

When I first moved to L.A., I desperately wanted to live in Venice: the bohemian vibe, the beach, the restaurants and galleries dotting charming streets, and the random canals left over from another era. And then I got caught in midday traffic one afternoon... ~~and~~ the dream crashed and shattered as gridlock smacked reality into focus. Travel and time, not to mention gas prices, must be of ~~your~~ ~~greatest~~ concern if you are to have any kind of life aside from auditioning. ~~And~~ Venice is a fantastic example of the character that L.A.'s unique little villages all have, each with ~~their~~ ~~its~~ own ~~special~~ ~~little~~ *je ne sais quoi*. You will find your *quoi* as time passes, but be gentle with yourself in choosing that ~~first~~ pivotal ~~first~~ abode. I moved three times in my first four months before settling somewhere decent, so take some heed from my experience.

Formatted: Font: Italic

Formatted: Font: Italic

How about movies and television? Most of you are likely moving here to find your fortune, if not fame, from the old standards of ~~your~~ craft. There are a couple ~~of~~ ways ~~to~~ ~~of~~ approaching this ~~one~~. The ~~film/TV~~ route is certainly the more long-term one, where relationships dictate how often you pop with your auditions and bookings. You may choose to live central to your auditioning locations, ~~which is~~ wise, ~~choic~~ since you may spend days, months, or years auditioning before a part lands in your lap. There are major studios and casting offices in Culver City (over on the way to Venice, on the ~~W~~west-side), ~~m~~Mid-city and Hollywood, and numerous ~~ones located~~ in the Valley. If you get to audition at most of them, Hollywood or West Hollywood are great hubs. My highest consideration is ~~to live in place that is~~ ~~ing~~ ~~where is~~ most conducive to auditioning rather than ~~to~~ booking.

In terms of booking jobs, let's consider one other reality. Being the national hub of television production, ~~Los Angeles accounts for~~ a huge percentage of ~~its~~ filming time ~~is spent~~ on ~~area~~ locations. And if you follow the ~~cat~~ path of booking co-star and guest-star roles, you ~~might~~ find yourself ~~only~~ working ~~only~~ on location, and never setting foot in ~~side~~ the hallowed halls of ~~at~~ the studio set. You may book four jobs in your first year, and find yourself ~~only~~ working

only on location, ~~save~~ but for the odd advance table read ~~in~~ advance. And, in terms of film, forget about it! You'll seldom ~~happen to~~ know where you're shooting until moments in advance, it may seem. The film machine is so large that, ~~if~~ you only have a line or two, you might ~~ay~~ expect to work on set for ~~just a only one~~ portion of once a day, and never be seen there again, ~~so large is the film machine.~~

Now that we have some industry location basics under control, let's discuss neighborhoods specifically. Opinions will differ wildly here, but I am mirroring a sense of consensus about these regions. By no means will this be exhaustive, but it will give you the greatest sense of vibe, limitations and benefits. And any brief glance at a Google map of L.A. will show you the oddly numerous ~~quantity~~ amount of tiny neighborhoods amassed here, ~~al~~ though almost no one will know where any really begin or end. Again, welcome to L.A.

The Neighborhoods

Santa Monica / Venice / Marina del Rey

Vibe: These are the communities along the ocean, due west of Hollywood, ~~at the ocean,~~ and just west of the 405 freeway. (If you drive, I defy you to start thinking ~~about~~ neighborhoods without referencing freeways!) They are artsy, trendy, hip towns; with very much ~~with~~ their own proud identities. ~~They, and~~ consider themselves separate from L.A., and, technically ~~are too,~~ in the case of Santa Monica, they are. They are also fairly affluent, so if you prefer higher living standards in the form of restaurants, shops, and galleries, you'll be in good company. You get culture and the beach. Bingo!

Formatted: Underline

Benefits: As we've already mentioned, they do have a hub of commercial casting offices and production houses, and a handful of talent agencies, too. ~~They are a~~ great option if commercials are your passion. ~~Plus, And~~ if the beach is a necessity for living in L.A., then you've found your home.

Limitations: Being affluent, the cost of living can be remarkably high there, ~~although~~ Venice does also have affordable and down-to-earth pockets. They are also small communities that have experienced considerable growth. Google and Yahoo are currently based here, and there is constant discussion of ~~the~~ lack of civic planning to accommodate such businesses. ~~Along these lines, the~~ traffic may be a huge deterrent ~~to choosing this area to live in~~. While it can take ages to get through traffic ~~in order~~ to go across town to Hollywood or the Valley, the traffic within the community can ~~also~~ be horrific. At seemingly off-hours, going hither and thither can take hours. Your gas bills and time may be severely strained.

Westwood / Century City / Beverly Hills

Vibe: ~~West~~Side east of the 405. I'm grouping these communities ~~together~~ because they are more convenient in ~~travel~~ terms ~~of travel~~ than the ~~West~~Side ocean communities, and ~~they~~ have their own elite feeling. Also, ~~here are~~ Bel Air and Brentwood ~~are there~~; secluded hill communities for celebrities past and present. There is affluence and ostensible wealth most everywhere ~~in this area~~~~here~~. The houses and streets often seem smaller, but look closely and see how ritzy they really are. Westwood is home to UCLA and its community is quietly moneyed. Beverly Hills... what needs to be said ~~here~~? ~~These~~ ~~y~~ can be stodgy, bourgeois areas, but if comfort and security are paramount, welcome home.

Benefits: Wealth and all its convenient trappings. Central to both Santa Monica and West Hollywood, good for a commercial hub.

Also, home to Fox Studios. The Geffen Theater is based adjacent~~midst~~ the UCLA campus, so you'll find fantastic theater with casts plucked almost solely ~~plucked~~ from film and TV. Note please here, that, if you're an NYC theatre actor, these theaters can be *restrictive* in letting ~~in~~ new actors in without these screen credits. Sad, but true.

Limitations: Traffic deadlock. No fast access to the Valley studios via east roads, and 405 often is deadlocked or even closed. Can feel isolated.

Culver City / West LA

Vibe: Cute, artsy little pocket of the city with numerous shops and restaurants, and lots of bohemian locals, actors, writers, etc. Also included in this area are West L.A. and Mar Vista. Easy and fast to the beach due west, but still closer to Hollywood.

Benefits: Home to Sony Studios, and a stone's throw from Fox Studios

Limitations: Can also feel isolated, travel can take long to Hollywood, not to mention ages into the Valley, again ~~only~~ relying only on the 405 freeway or slow surface streets, and convoluted freeways on east side.

West Hollywood

Vibe: WeHo is stylish, civically independent, and packsing in the trendy and party folks. Certainly the hub of mainstream gay culture in L.A. Parking is atrocious, but if you can get a parking pass, you'll feel like you've made it. Great for dog lovers and fashion lovers.

Benefits: Pretty much situated in the heart of Los Angeles, in terms of industry. Equidistant from the Wests-Side offices and studios in the Valley, ~~and~~ Paramount Pictures is around the bend. Lots of agencies and casting offices call WeHo home, and it's directly above the bland band of Wilshire and Olympic in generic "Los Angeles" that houses the very big agencies and management companies. Networking opportunities abound, and such is the attitude that you will often encounter. Proximity to athe wealth of hiking and trails in the Hollywood HHills is surprising, and a welcome relief from the cramped spaces of the vvillage.

Limitations: Rents are high, spaces are cramped, you pay for a trendier address. Everyone I know without a parking spot for their apartment amasses oodles in parking tickets. If you are diligent about-in avoiding these traps, settle in!

Hollywood

Vibe: Wow, the name that carries a million dreams and creates more flow of cash around the world than many others. What can be said other than that is... it's pretty dingy, on the whole. Yup, that's the truth. Hollywood is a pretty amazing hodgepodge of residential pockets. To be fair, there are some very nice neighborhoodpockets to be found, and in the Hills themselves you'll discoverfind stunning, breathtaking homes and vistas. But down on the streets, you'll find extensive pockets of un-modernized squalor. The range is truly from grotesquely wealthy to solidly middle class to vile housing projects, and this can occur from one street to the next. If you're searching for a place on Craigslist, be forewarned that each micro-climate must be felt in person.

There are also some lovely, quiet streets that after 10 PMpm are dead silent, pitch black, and feel completely suburban. It's

downright strange. The southern reaches of Hollywood also abut Hancock Park, a swanky, mansion-filled 'hood; and Miracle Mile as well, a primarily business ~~kind of~~ district that has many housing options.

A majority of trendy clubs and restaurants are based in Hollywood, and there's lots of power-lunching ~~along with~~ fun little dives and bars where you can ~~to~~ meet friends and chill. Aside from the tiny jumble that is the tourist base around Grauman's Chinese Theater, there is no real “central” area.

Benefits: If TV and film are your driving force, this is geographically the central-most point for all studios, offices, and auditions in the city. You're smack in between the offices of Mid-city Los Angeles, and West Hollywood and the West-side studios, as well as ~~the~~ the mass of studios and offices in the San Fernando Valley.

If you are careful in your choice of micro-area, ~~then~~ you can find great, affordable housing that is both safe and convenient. You're also close to the nature of the Hills and their many ~~all the~~ parks and trails that provide, ~~so~~ a little relief from city living.

Limitations: Many the actor ~~who~~ has been shocked about ~~by~~ where they ended up, in Hollywood ~~here~~. Seen ~~“Mulholland Drive”~~? You get my point. If you're prone to getting swallowed up in the industry-obsessed scene, or the club culture and nightlife bent that is Hollywood, be forewarned. Otherwise, it's a great area to settle to network.

Downtown / Koreatown

Vibe: Having moved to Los Angeles from New York City, I'm not terribly impressed with Downtown L.A. (DTLA). It's a bit of NYC redux, but its inhabitants tend to be deeply loyal and proud of it.

Formatted: Font: Italic

There is certainly an upsurge of luxury housing around downtown, and there are the high prices that go along with such development. And, like Hollywood, there are beautiful pockets and awful ones ~~too~~ pockets, often just a single street away from one each ~~an~~ other, so proceed carefully. There are some great cultural institutions ~~downtown here~~, so if you crave culture in your daily life, you can be sated. Other entertainment options tend to be corporate in nature.

I'm also throwing Koreatown (Ktown) into this mix, mostly because it doesn't deserve its own little section, and because it has that same dingy urban feel that can be found ~~that in this the same~~ old drums ~~of as the NYC's dinginess of~~ Midtown west or so. You'll find huge swathes of generic apartment buildings, mostly unrenovated (like much of L.A., truth be told). If you love that urban feel and want cheaper rents, this is your hood. For some reason unbeknownst to me, locals are often quite loyal to it; so, apartside from the great Korean BBQ, something great is happening there.

Benefits: DTLA has the glory of high culture that is the Music Center, which is being the opera and theatre hub of L.A. with its in ~~the~~ Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Mark Taper Forum, and Ahmanson Theatre. ~~This is truly~~ some of the finest culture that you will find in L.A. is right here, in one place. In terms of an active screen industry, ~~there is~~ a lot of TV and film shooting that happens downtown on location ~~downtown~~, but that's pretty much the extent of it.

Limitations: Where most of L.A. is at least spacious and even suburban, DTLA cuts that off pretty quickly. You would be choosing to live in an urban atmosphere in a citytown that is really not urban, by nature. Rents can be high, and if not, the spaces may be depressingly dingy. Crime is still kind of high down there, and traffic alone will make heading to auditions at even the best of hours a complete chore, even at the best of hours. The hub

of freeways that converges here seems to make travel far worse rather than better.

Silver Lake / Los Feliz

Vibe: While Venice is the bohemian hub of the West-side, Silver Lake is the edgier, more hipster hub of the east side. Fiercely localistic in nature, the quirkiness of the social demographic is mirrored in the hilly, hodgepodge terrain and maze of streets that make it up. Plus, you'll smell skunks almost always in this quasi-rural haven. Los Feliz is its upscale little sister; more apparently affluent and orderly, ~~while~~ abutting Griffith Park, it feels more like prime real estate. The prices somewhat reflect this, but Silver Lake isn't that cheap, either.

Benefits: If you're not ~~too~~ mainstream, yourself-minded, then you will be surrounded with many like-minded individuals; ironic as that may sound. There is no specific industry activity in Silver Lake ~~over here~~, though you're a fairly quick commute to the Burbank studios like Warner Brothers, over the hill. And if you're a hiker, Los Feliz can be like living in a unique half-urban, half-rural terrain. Plus, the Greek Theater in Griffith Park and the Hollywood Bowl are at easy distances, ~~offering for~~ some of the best outdoor entertainment in L.A.

Limitations: The maze of streets can make travelling through the area take more time ~~longer~~ than you might think. Once you're out of it, ~~however~~ though, there are enough arteries to be smooth sailing to most destinations. Travelling to the West-side, ~~though~~ may feel like a real chore, so, if you're very commercially minded, be forewarned.

Pasadena / Eagle Rock / Highland Park / Glendale

Vibe: An odd grouping, but for our purposes, ~~these are~~ far east side residential areas that can be very pleasant, if distant. Pasadena is mostly wealthy and has all the old-time charm and corporate chain convenience ~~that~~ you could wish for, wherever you ~~are~~ from. The Arts and Crafts atmosphere is prevalent and protected, and it's pleasant as hell if you're historically minded. Along with Mount Washington, Eagle Rock and Highland Park are hilly, grittier ~~hoods~~, but have lovely pockets and now seem more family-~~orient~~mind~~ed~~, and affordable-~~in-scope~~. And, I'll throw Glendale into this mix too. It's the hub of Armenian LA., and far more conservative in feeling, but a highly planned community that values its family-centric culture.

Benefits: Easy travel to the Burbank studios, and if you're very outdoorsy, you'll love the easy access ~~to~~ not only ~~to~~ the urban rural bastion ~~that is of~~ Griffith Park, but ~~to~~ all of the natural parks above the 210 freeway, ~~as well fast and easy~~.

Limitations: The basic travel ~~problems: ones that~~ the further east you ~~are tend~~, the more convoluted ~~it is~~ to ~~reach get to~~ any ~~central placething central other than that is not~~ Burbank.

The Valley / Burbank

Vibe: Yes, I'm grouping dozens of communities into one giant realm ~~called of~~ the Valley. There is ~~lots of so much~~ shit-talking about the Valley, and while some ~~of it~~ is merited, ~~this area it's~~ actually ~~has~~ a pleasant, more suburban atmosphere with many conveniences ~~that are~~ -not to be poo~~h~~-poo~~h~~ed. ~~When I moved Moving~~ from NYC, I first settled in Studio City, just over the hill from Hollywood, and ~~I~~ found it immensely quiet and ~~calm settling~~.

Notwithstanding the inflexible roommate ~~that~~ I endured—more on roommates later—I had ample space, my own side-by-side parking spot (a luxury in itself), ~~and~~ a pool and a Jacuzzi. There is much to be said for this. The Valley is known for porn production, too, and there is plenty ~~of that~~ further ~~north and east-in~~, but don't expect to ~~be bumping~~ into it. Burbank is also ~~located within~~ the ~~geographic~~ physical space of the Valley, but considers itself a world of its own. And, frankly, ~~Burbank it's~~ so conservative and unchanging, ~~that~~ it may as well be. You'll also ~~find-get~~ all ~~of~~ the suburban corporate outlets ~~here too~~ that come along with ~~anthis~~ upper-middle-class ~~-~~demographic.

Benefits: There are many casting offices, talent agencies, and management companies based in the Valley, not to mention the primary studios of Warner Bros. ~~ther, and~~ Universal and Disney, CBS, NBC and ABC, some of ~~whichom~~ are tied together. If you ~~wantish~~ to work solely in this world; and ~~desirewant~~ a quiet, suburban life, then you ~~have~~ found your bastion of peace and comfort. The Valley is also significantly cheaper than most areas ~~overbelow~~ the hill, and ~~you're-you will~~ definitely ~~getting~~ more space and ~~better~~ amenities. The prime ~~'hoods~~ ~~in the Valley~~ that are ~~most~~ ~~easiest~~ to traverse include: Studio City, Universal City, North Hollywood, Toluca Lake, and Sherman Oaks.

Limitations: Travel can be annoying along the three main freeway arteries to take you over the ~~H~~hills to L.A. proper, but it's not insurmountable. You will find yourself travelling more than you may like if commercials are your main bent, but if you're booking, you will like the bang for your buck. Be warned, ~~however-though~~, that the further into the Valley you go, the cheaper it becomes, in all ways. Travel may take significantly longer. Safety also can become an issue, so stick to the areas abutting the Hollywood Hills.

The Rest

I'm just not going to bother exploring ~~-about~~ anything further afield. If you want a successful career, settle somewhere central enough that you don't struggle in terms of travel just to save a few bucks. It will take its toll in terms of time and car expenses, if you do. In brief, the areas south of the 10 freeway get sketchy, and they often feel too far. The beach communities below Venice are lovely, but are better suited for retirement or for when your career is more settled. B, and beyond Pasadena, or above the Valley, ~~-that~~ also count as preferreds for retirement. Be central, feel central, work central.

Physical Safety

I have chosen ~~-to~~ not to discuss physical safety in terms of areas and neighborhoods, but it still bears mentioning. 2012 was the 20th anniversary of the L.A. riots. Socio-economic ~~and racial~~ divides and racial tensions are still an active force here. This, a fact ~~that still~~ shocks me, in modern America, but such is L.A. You won't necessarily feel endangered where hoods collide, but you will notice socio-economic barriers within neighborhoods in a significant way, and how they change rapidly ~~they change~~. Of course, do what is comfortable knowing that, when you're working, you may be leaving home at odd hours, and coming home very late at night or early in the morning. You must feel safe and comfortable after a long day of shooting on set.

Your New Home

Finally, let's chat about these spaces themselves where you will spend your time. Apartment or condo or pool house or small house? Roommate or alone? Such personal considerations, these are, and usually based on price. While L.A. may seem more expensive than other parts of the country, it's not remarkably expensive in overall expenses including dining and entertainment,

so you may wish to splurge a bit ~~more~~ in terms of a decent accommodation. Roommates are ~~extreme~~surprisingly common here, which always surprises me, ~~given that~~singles (or studio apartments) are not terribly expensive. However, you can often get considerably more bang for your buck by sharing with someone in a nicer building that ~~may~~offers suburban amenities, like perhaps a pool and spa (~~jacuzzi~~Jacuzzi to most of us), and good parking. Enough emphasis ~~cannot be~~put made on good parking. Many a parking ticket have amassed for the majority of folks I've known who have~~with~~ no designated parking. ~~A~~and once thousands – yes, thousands! – of dollars pile up~~amass~~ in ticket costs, you may wonder why you didn't splurge on the slightly more expensive~~costly~~ condo that had~~with~~ good parking.

Formatted: Underline

How will you search for your new home? First, let your social networking system do the work for you. Send out a Tweet or Facebook post looking for a place or a roommate. It seems that there is always someone offering one or the other. You can always consider real estate agents if you have disposable income, and are searching for higher end apartments or ~~even~~ a small house. This just doesn't seem to be necessary, though, if you're willing to do a little legwork; you can save that commission to invest in your acting career, itself.

Craigslist is very effective for decent to very good apartments, although you may have to see a lot of options in order to satisfy your basic requirements, and to ensure that the micro-neighborhood is safe. However, you may find yourself simply pounding the pavement to find your dream space. ~~L.A.~~I in the current economic climate, L.A. is great for advertising open rentals on the outside of buildings. Target your ideal neighborhoods, and start walking. In very nice arcane neighborhoods, you'll find plenty of "To Rent" signs, which is how I found my first apartment without a roommate.

Are you surprised that so much time and care ~~are~~ being spent on location? I hope that you ~~both~~ have both a better orientation of the city and the industry's physical place in it after reading this, as well ~~and~~ a good understanding of how your time and money will be spent in terms of the place where you must be most comfortable in. And consider this: since moving to my own neighborhood, I've locally met actors, writers and producers that I would not have met but for hanging out in my home hood. Yes, it's L.A., and in another area, I'd likely meet a different set of actors, producers and writers, but relationships are the way that ~~how~~ you will build your career the strongest. So let your choice of home also provide you with opportunities for success.