ARTICLES FOR PARENTS OF PRESCHOOLERS
AN OVERVIEW OF TYPES OF PRESCHOOLS AND CHILD CARE PROGRAMS FROM WHICH TO SELECT

CHILD CARE CENTERS
($100-$400 a week depending on age of child and location)

Child Care Centers are licensed by state agencies to provide care for a large number of children. Centers serve children from 6 weeks to 12 years of age with some centers accepting infants and school age children. A very small number of centers provide infant care. A child care center (or day care center as some are called) is typically open 11-12 hours per day, 5 days a week and 12 months a year. Many centers offer “summer camp” type activities in July and August including field trips and swimming activities to create a change of pace and schedule for children who attend all year round.

Programs offered by day care centers vary from center to center but usually include activities appropriate to the social, emotional, intellectual and physical needs of each age group they serve. Some child care centers specialize in working with children with developmental delays or special needs. Some child care centers will care for your preschool age child on a part-time basis. Few, if any, will accept infants just for two or three days per week. Centers will either allow your child to come several full days a week or part of each day. Some programs will allow you to pay for only the days your child is registered to attend; others require you to pay for the entire week even though your child attends part-time or just half days. Most centers require parents to pay for sick days and vacation days when their children do not attend.

MONTESSORI SCHOOLS OR CENTERS
($10,000-$15,000 a year depending on age of child, location & days attending)

The Montessori educational model was founded by Maria Montessori in Europe during the early 1900’s. Montessori education was introduced in the United States shortly before World War I. Most of the schools are small and commonly serve children two and a half years old to six years of age. Some schools expand to serve children all the way through high school. The classroom is usually comprised of mixed age groups and are often as large as thirty children in a group with a lead teacher and two assistants.

Children have the freedom to move around their classroom to choose their own activities but they must also accomplish or master certain materials and equipment in a systematic order as well. They are generally well behaved and are focused on their ‘work’ or tasks.

Teachers are trained in the specific teaching techniques of Montessori at the Montessori Institute in the DC metro area or in other sites around the country or around the world. Teaching staff learn to introduce the equipment and materials appropriately and how to work with the different ages of children in mastering various developmental activities. Montessori schools stress individualized learning – learning at a child’s own pace regardless of age.
Montessori programs are often on a ten to eleven month year schedule. Some Montessori schools offer summer camp programs for one month and close for school maintenance and staff training during the month before school starts in September.

COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOLS
($600-$1000 a month depending on age of child, days attending and location)

Cooperative Nursery Schools are difficult to find in the 21st Century, with so many parents working full time. Cooperative Nursery Schools encourage parent involvement in the classroom and in the management and maintenance of the preschool or child care program. Parents assist a professionally certified preschool teacher in the classroom one or more times a month; they help to clean and paint the facility, they do special projects and fundraisers for the school and in some programs, help to carpool children to the school.

Children attend cooperative nursery schools or preschools from two mornings to five full days a week, depending on the goals of the program. Cooperative nursery schools are generally less expensive than traditional nursery schools or centers because parents help out and they tend to be in rented space in churches or community buildings that do not charge high rents.

Preschools or Nursery Schools
($600- $1,400 a month depending on age of child, days attending and location)

Sometimes the term “preschool” is interchanged with the term “nursery school:” or even “child care center”. A preschool or a nursery school is generally a half-day program that serve children between the ages of two and five years of age. Generally, the younger children attend two or three mornings or afternoons a week and the four and five year olds attend three to five times a week. The half day preschools and nursery schools are often 10 month programs and do not offer summer camps.

Some programs extend the child’s day to include lunch time and even invite children to stay for rest or nap time until 3:00pm or later. A good preschool should be concerned about quality child care services including nutrition and personal habits as well as the education component of the curriculum. Some child care centers offer a half-day program to families where parents are home or those who have nannies who can care for the preschool child in the afternoons. A good child care center should have an extensive preschool curriculum concerned about the cognitive, physical, social and emotional needs of the children attending, based on their chronological and well as developmental age. A good child care center should have a curriculum accepted by the state it is licensed in, a schedule that is age-appropriate as well as its’ materials and equipment. Preschools or nursery schools and all child care centers based in Maryland are licensed by the State Department of Education. The licensing of centers in Virginia and the District of Columbia is done under the Department of Child Care Licensing, under the Department of Health. To insure even greater quality on a consistent basis, it is helpful if a preschool has an NAEYC credential.
Choosing
A Preschool

Once upon a time, preschool was an option for children whose parents wanted to give them opportunities that an at-home mother could not provide. Now, because almost all parents go to work, almost all young children go to school. Times change, but the question remains—how do parents choose the "right" preschool? Here are some helpful guidelines.

CAROL KRANOWITZ

Get Ready . . .
To start, consider your child's needs and wants. Age, interests and temperament, and special needs are three important considerations. You'll want a school that "fits" those characteristics, one where your child can feel safe and capable and can get the education you believe best.

Age. Three is a good age for a child to separate from home. Some 2-year-olds, however, may benefit from a two- or three-day-a-week program, and certain 4-year-olds may need only one year of preschool before kindergarten. Readiness depends on your child's energy and maturity, not on some inflexible chronological measure.

Interests and temperament. Does your child need plenty of space and vigorous outdoor activity? Would she thrive in a school with many animals? Is she shy and apt to be most comfortable in a small school where she can socialize easily? Does he play most happily when his activities are structured and monitored, or would he do best with minimal supervision?

Special needs. For a child with a physical disability, emotional problem, or language delay, a special education school may be necessary. Enlightened "regular" schools, however, often enroll ("mainstream") children with differences, convinced that such children enrich their programs. Special needs don't have to limit your child's educa-
tional possibilities, especially at the
preschool level.

What suits you? You should also con-
der what your own needs. Perhaps, an old-
shaded, morning preschool, leaving
your child’s afternoons free? A coop-
ratie nursery school, where parents
‘pay off’ tuition by working in the
classrooms? A full-time day care situa-
tion, where parents deliver their chil-
dren at 8:30am and retrieve them at
3:00pm? A combination of a stimula-
ting preschool in the mornings and a
day care center or babysitter’s home in
the afternoons?

And be sure to evaluate your family’s
values and goals for your child. Are you
seeking religious education for your
child, a racial-ethnic mix, fluency in a
second language, an “artsy” environ-
ment, or a school just like the one you
attended 30 years ago?

Find out what’s available. Ask every-
one. Ask the Welcome Wagon people for
a list of schools (they can’t give recom-
nendations). Ask at churches and
synagogues, many of which offer ecu-
menical preschool programs. Ask
neighbors and friends, with or without
young children. Look in the Yellow
Pages and other directories. Consult
community bulletin boards and public
libraries’ listings.

Unless you seek a particular type of
educational approach, you’ll need to
decide on location. Look first at neigh-
borhood schools. Proximity is impor-
tant in case of emergencies, as well as
for advancing after-school friendships
and arranging carpools. A nearby
school will also enhance a sense of
community for young children, for
whom familiarity breeds contentment.

Now, with these considerations in
mind, you can preselect possible
schools and eliminate others before
you actually apply.

Get Set . . .

Visit the schools. Call the school to
find out whether it schedules an open
house for parents of prospective stu-
dents or has a drop-in anytime phi-
losophy. It’s worth taking time off from
work for these firsthand views. When
you visit, do leave your child at home
that and the following tips can help
you make the most of your visit.

Ask questions. While visiting, direct
questions to the head of the school or
other spokesperson. What about such
matters as arts and crafts, science,
music and creative movement, reading
readiness, social skills, outside play,
ollet training, extended-day programs,
chonships, parent participation, or
mainstreaming? How does the school
handle “difficult” children? Are special
educational consultants available?
low are teachers selected and trained?

How are medical emergencies treated?
What criteria determine whether a
child is accepted? A friendly staff that
welcomes your questions, particularly
if you are a first-timer, bodes well for
future communication between school
and home.

Look for happy children. You will
learn a lot by observing the children.
Are they happily involved in their
work? Exuberantly busy children are a
good sign, of course, but equally happy
people can be the pensive child stroking a
rabbit, the one absorbed in designing a
block structure, or the one negotiating
a peaceful trade of shovels.

Look for happy teachers. Do the
teachers seem to like the children,
their work, and one another? Can you
detect a sense of fun?

Listen to the teachers. A proficient
staff enjoys practicing words of en-
couragement and approval: “I see how
hard you worked,” or “You must be so
proud now that you can zip!” or “We
don’t hit. Can you think of another way
to tell your friend you’re angry?” Posi-
tive language, spoken in a pleasant
tone, is what everyone wants to hear,
whether at home, at work, or at school.

Look for a “can-do” attitude. A school
should have a positive ambience in all
ways. Do teachers respond calmly and
with appropriate body language to
temper tantrums, lost mittens, and
sharing difficulties? Children need to
know that their problems, like them-
selves, are worthy of attention. A “can-
do” teacher makes students feel that
they have the skills to solve most of
their problems by themselves, that all
things are possible, and that their lexi-
on, like hers, includes the words “I try”
but not “I can’t.”

GO!

Since many schools begin application
procedures during January for the fol-
lowing September, telephone now. Ac-
ceptance letters are mailed in March.
Call (weekdays before noon) to learn
the exact dates and procedures and
any other requirements.

Reach for the best. If you’ve heard
that one school is tops but is impos-
sible to get into, pay attention—but
only to the first part of this counsel.
Schools are “best” for different reasons:
student-teacher ratio, teaching phi-
losophy, a beautiful facility, “academic”
emphasizes, or a dynamic director. Ap-
ply to the two or three schools that feel
right, that will best serve your child,
and that you would like to go to if you
were 3 years old.

For 15 years, Carol Kranowitz has taught
at St. Columba’s Nursery School, which
her two sons attended in the ’70s.
Guidelines for Selecting a Montessori Program

By Sally Nay

Placing your child in a Montessori program requires a commitment on the part of both parents to understand and practice the philosophy in the home. Too often parents place their children in a Montessori program expecting the school to create the child. Montessori ideals cannot be fully realized without parent participation.

It is necessary that both parents read about Montessori philosophy before observing a classroom. Without the knowledge of what to look for and an appreciation of what you are observing, you will naturally try to fit what you are seeing into your pre-existing ideas about education. Most likely Montessori is vastly different.

Observe several programs in your area before making a choice. Do not take your child with you to observe a program. This is unfair to your child and disruptive to the class. Make an appointment at another time for your child to meet with a teacher and interact with some Montessori materials.

There can be many differences from one Montessori program to another. Do not make broad assumptions about all Montessori programs based upon one short observation. Do not expect to understand everything you see but make certain that your questions are answered thoroughly after your observation so that you do not go away with misconceptions. Each teacher and classroom is unique in many ways.

If your gut feeling is that this is not the school for your child, you are probably correct.

The following is a list of questions to guide you in your observations:

The Child

- Are the children relaxed and spontaneous yet exhibiting self-discipline?

- Are the children involved in purposeful work of their own choosing? Do you see children making many choices?

- Do you see children who are very concentrated in their work?

- Do the children assume responsibility for their environment? (plant watering, cleaning up after themselves, making the snack, etc.)

- Do the children function independently or are they in constant need of the teacher?

- Is there a balanced three year age range?

- Do you see older children helping younger ones?
Guidelines for Selecting a Montessori Program
By Sally Nay

Directress (teacher)

- Is the directress calm and quiet and not overly-present in the classroom?

- Does the directress intervene when necessary when a child is out of control? Is she firm yet respectful?

- Does the directress refrain from intervening when a child is able to solve his/her own problems and/or working well independently?

- Does the directress seem aware of the total classroom as she moves about working with individuals and small groups?

- Does the directress exude warmth without encouraging an emotional dependency from the child?

- Can you see how the directress acts as the living link between the child and the Montessori materials?

- Does the directress guide children to make their own choices rather than direct children as to what to do?

Montessori Environment

- Does the classroom have a full range of Montessori materials and are the four basic areas of Practical Life, Language, Sensorial and Math recognizable?

- Is the room clean, orderly and uncluttered?

- Are the Montessori materials in good repair and attractive?

- Are the materials on the shelves "motives for activity"? Are they being used or collecting dust?

- Are the shelves at an appropriate level for children 3–6 to see and choose materials and are tables and chairs of proper height and size for children to work?

- Is there ample space for children to work on the floor with work rugs?

- Is the classroom truly a functioning "Children's House" where there is a flow of activity during which children know the correct process to choose their work, utilize the materials properly, clean up their work and return it to the shelves? Everything the child does in the classroom is "their work" from blowing their nose in a socially acceptable way to the most advanced math work.
GETTING SMART
By Larry Van Dyne

Eager to Learn
Montessori Schools Mix Freedom and Structure to Take Advantage of Kids’ Natural Curiosity

Jessica Pievy’s tiny fingers stroke the shape of the letter d, guided not only by her eyes but by the feel of the letter’s sandpaper surface against her skin. Her lips and tongue curl to make the correct sound—duh-duh-duh. The teacher offers a word or two of praise, and the little five-year-old reaches across the table for another sandpaper letter.

On a table nearby are three square cards with simple black-and-white drawings—one of hills, another of ocean waves, and the third of clouds. Next to them is a box containing small plastic figures—a mouse, a lobster, a fish, a puppy, a squirrel, and a bird. Katie Friedman, who is five, is showing three-year-old Kirsten Gonzalez where these creatures live—placing the fish on the card representing the sea, the mouse on land, and the bird among the clouds.

Daniel DiMichele, sitting alone at the other end of the room, is working with some colored plastic cubes and a diagram that are intended to help him understand numbers. He puts the single red cube in a column on the diagram marked with a 1, the two green ones over the 2, the three orange ones over 3, and on up through the yellows, whites, blues, and browns to 9.

So it goes over and over, little episodes of learning, in this class of 30 children—ages three through six—at the Barrie School in Silver Spring. Two teachers, Ann Epstein and Louise Ali, move among the children, getting them started on projects, offering advice and encouragement, checking their progress. Mostly, the children work on their own or in small groups, getting materials from the shelves by themselves, returning them when they’re finished.

Although the scene might seem similar to that in other schools, this one has the distinction of being run according to an educational philosophy and classroom methodology known as the Montessori method. Developed by an Italian physician and educator named Maria Montessori around the turn of the century, the method has undergone a revival in Washington and around the country over the past 30 years.

Maria Montessori was born in a small Italian town on the Adriatic coast in 1870, and in 1896 became the first woman to graduate from the University of Rome medical school, eventually joining the staff of the university’s psychiatric clinic. That job entailed working with young children who had been labeled mentally retarded, and the remarkable results she achieved in teaching them reading and writing led to a conviction that her emerging ideas about education might work with normal children. A few years later she became head of a day-care center in the slums of San Lorenzo, where she made further observations about child psychology and experimented with innovative techniques to help them learn.

Montessori’s observations left her in awe of the natural learning capacities of children. Especially impressive for her was the extent to which children were enthusiastic about learning at a very young age—an insight that anticipated the emergence of modern developmental psychology and the work of Jean Piaget and Jerome Bruner. Attempting to take advantage of this natural eagerness, Montessori gradually developed classroom practices and educational materials that were quite distinctive. The method began to spread to England and other European countries in the early 1900s as new schools were opened by Montessori-trained teachers.

Montessori education was introduced in the United States shortly before World War I, first coming to widespread public attention in 1911 through a series of articles in McClure’s magazine. Considerable enthusiasm for her methods soon developed in this country, according to a
biography of Montessori by Rita Kramer. The practices were written about in education journals and the press. Montessori teachers were trained, some 200 schools started nationwide, and Montessori herself was grandly received on a lecture tour.

Her first lecture in the US, in 1913, took place in Washington at the Masonic Temple on 16th Street; it was followed by a reception at the Connecticut Avenue mansion of the Alexander Graham Bells that was attended by cabinet members, diplomats, and Margaret Wilson, President Woodrow Wilson's daughter and a Montessori enthusiast. The Bells were among Montessori's strongest advocates in America, with Mrs. Bell helping found a Montessori school on Kalorama Road and the inventor himself serving as head of a national Montessori association.

Despite its fast start, the Montessori approach fell out of favor in the United States after World War I, and many of the schools, including the one on Kalorama Road, closed. There were many reasons for the decline. Montessori herself, always fearful that her methods would be distorted or exploited by others for commercial purposes, insisted on training all Montessori teachers herself in Italy, thus severely limiting the number of people able to start new schools. And some of America's leading educators—notably William Kilpatrick, a professor at the Teachers College of Columbia University and a disciple of the educational philosopher John Dewey—were critical of Montessori's methods. An influential little book Kilpatrick wrote in 1914 after a visit to Montessori's school in Italy pronounced her psychological theories outdated, her materials and methods too mechanical and too limiting of children's imaginations, and her classrooms weak in educating children as social beings, a principal aim of the Deweyites.

Montessori died in 1952, a few years before her methods began a comeback in the United States. A young American named Nancy Rambusch became interested in her ideas, went to Italy to get Montessori training, and returned to New York to found a school and help spread the word around the country.

This time the climate for acceptance was better. Educators, looking to apply the theories of child development advanced by Jean Piaget, began to see the relevance of Montessori's methods. And parents, dissatisfied with the academic shortcomings of the Dewey approach, found Montessori attractive. The Washington Montessori Institute was founded in 1962 to train teachers, and its graduates fanned out to start a new wave of private Montessori schools here.

Since then the number of Montessori schools in the metropolitan area has increased steadily. There are now about 70 private schools here that operate under the Montessori label—about half of them in suburban Maryland, 23 in Northern Virginia, and 14 in DC. The city also has

![Maria Montessori, an Italian physician and educator, developed her teaching methods early in this century.](image)

two teacher-training institutes, the older Washington Montessori Institute and a certification program at an Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies, run by the Barrie School.

Most of the schools are small, about 70 percent having enrollments under 100 students, with most of the remainder under 200. Most tuition rates fall in the range from just over $2,000 to more than $5,000. In keeping with Montessori's emphasis on young children, the most common classes are for children two-and-a-half to six. Several schools also offer classes for students through the elementary years, and Barrie and the Claremont School in Annandale both have classes for junior- and senior-high-aged students.

Montessori education also is available in a few of the area's public schools, usually as a matter of parental choice. Arlington County, which began its program in the early 1970s, offers Montessori classes for children ages three to five in four locations, with tuition charged in the first two years. A program in Prince George's County now operates in three elementary schools, offering one set of classes for children three through six, and another for children six through nine—with tuition for the threes and fours. In DC, Montessori classes are offered in four public elementary schools for children ages three through ten, without charge.

Some of Montessori's attitudes and innovations have been assimilated so thoroughly into regular programs of early-childhood education that their origins are no longer recognized. She was one of the first, it is said, to use classroom furniture sized for children and to emphasize the study of plants and animals by young children. "To some extent every classroom is a Montessori classroom," says Tim Seldin, the headmaster at Barrie, who notes that many non-Montessori preschools allow children freedom of movement in the classroom.

Montessori schools have grown popular here and around the country for several reasons. An increase in the number of women working outside the home has put more families in the market for schools that offer the early-childhood education that is a Montessori specialty. And parents and teachers are more sophisticated about the critical importance of the early years to a child's successful development.

In the public sector, Montessori classes also are an attractive way to differentiate "magnet schools" and provide parents educational options. Finally, Montessori education has philosophical appeal for many parents, especially those whose coming of age in the 1960s gave them an appreciation for the creative aspects of libertarian educational philosophy but who also want their children's classes to have enough rigor to allow them to compete successfully in high schools, colleges, and careers.

All schools—Montessori and non-Montessori alike—make a complex set of assumptions about human psychology, about the goals of education, and about the best techniques to achieve them.

What is important to learn: Intellectual skills? The ability to work with others? Respect for authority? Emotional stability? Creativity? Moral discernment? Practical skills?

How do children learn most productively: Listening to a teacher? Working on their own, individually or in small groups? Case studies? Memorization? Workbook exercises?

Montessorians have a certain way of grouping children that grows out of their answers to such questions. Because they believe that individuals learn at different paces, they shun the idea of putting all five-year-olds in kindergarten, all six-year-olds in first grade, all seven-year-olds in second grade, and so on. They
prefer multi-aged grouping—the threes, fours, and fives together in that Barrie School classroom being typical.

This arrangement, Montessorians say, not only allows individualized pacing but encourages "peer teaching," with older kids helping the younger ones. And because only a third of the class leaves and enters in any single year, says Ann Epstein, the sense of community and continuity in the classroom is enhanced.

Among the philosophical issues that schools face, none is more pivotal than the question of how much freedom to allow children. At the libertarian end of the continuum are schools that believe in complete freedom for children and little "structure," with the teacher as a background figure. At the more traditional end are those that believe in strict limits and lots of structure, with the teacher as the classroom's central figure.

Montessori's followers take something of a middle road. "Our conception," she wrote, "differs both from that of the world in which the adult does everything for the child and from that of a passive environment in which the adult abandons the child to himself."

In some ways Montessori classrooms are quite freeform. Children have the liberty to move about the classroom at will, they are allowed to choose their own activities, starting and stopping when they like, and they are free to work by themselves or in small groups without an adult always present.

Maria Montessori, it is said, discovered the benefits of such an approach partly by accident. One evening she forgot to lock the cupboard where she kept various learning materials; on her arrival the next morning she found that the children had helped themselves to the materials and were busily at work on their own. She called in a carpenter, who built open shelves the children could easily reach, and the locked cupboard was abandoned.

Montessorians insist, however, that children operate within certain parameters. They have no qualms about suppressing rude and destructive behavior. And they make certain that the classroom is structured in a specific, well-ordered way, creating what is called a "prepared environment." This environment—which is filled with learning materials (those sandpaper letters and the counting cubes, for instance) that are intended to nourish children in various stages of development—is one of Montessori's central tenets.

This combination—freedom of movement and choice for children within a prepared and ordered world—means that the Montessori teacher must be specially
trained in the methodology and be attuned to a role that is quite different from conventional teaching. Rather than dispensing knowledge to a group of passive students, Montessori teachers serve more as guides or facilitators. They do give brief "lessons" to individual children about using certain learning materials, but the emphasis is on letting children discover for themselves through repeated use of the materials. This means Montessori teachers must be good observants, sensing when children are developmentally ready for new lessons and when to leave them alone and let them work things out on their own.

"Montessori teaching is a little like conducting a symphony," says Barrie’s Ann Epstein, "because you have a lot of children doing different tasks at the same time."

Much of the learning that takes place in Montessori classrooms comes from children working with the 200 or so physical objects made available to them — objects like those Jessica, Katie, Kirsten, and Daniel were using at Barrie. Some of the materials were developed by Maria Montessori, and some were invented by other Montessorians or borrowed and adapted from other programs, but they all are critical to the Montessori method.

Most Montessori parents, for instance, probably have heard their children come home talking excitedly about "the pink tower," a set of ten pink, wooden blocks of various sizes that three-year-olds typically spend hours with, discovering ideas about dimension.

There are four main groups of Montessori materials. Some stress practical skills — shoe-polishing, table-washing, work with buckles, zippers, buttons, and snaps — with the aim of improving eye-hand coordination and instilling the same calmness and sense of accomplishment in children that adults sometimes find in cooking or carpentry. A second group is designed to educate and refine the senses through such devices as "sound cylinders," which are used to help kids learn sounds. Third are academic materials to teach language, writing, reading, mathematics, and the like — sandpaper letters, counting cubes, and geometric shapes, among other things. Finally, Montessori education emphasizes a global perspective by getting even very young children involved with maps, globes, flags, and the artifacts of various cultures.

Built into the design and presentation of these materials are several essential elements. Each object attempts to isolate for the child a single idea — shape, color, size, number, and the like — as opposed to the jumble of ideas inherent in most commercial toys. Each object also is designed to be "self-correcting," so that a child can figure out on his own what went wrong if he gets near the end of an exercise and finds, say, that the pegs left over won't fit in the remaining holes.

The materials are presented in sequence, from simple to complex, and they are all intended as "indirect preparation" for increasingly sophisticated ideas. Metal outlines, for example, are used to draw geometric shapes that children then color in by drawing line after line with their pencils — all of which helps develop in tiny fingers the muscular control needed for writing letters.

Montessori education has its critics. Some people in mainstream education perceive it as something of a cult; many remain unconvinced of the method's attractions despite research indicating that Montessori kids do ten to twenty points better on standardized achievement tests and are more self-confident and self-reliant. Others worry whether Montessori children can adjust if they go on to more traditional schools — the answer to which seems to depend on the child.

The Montessori movement has always been plagued by a shortage of teachers who have been fully trained in the method. And some in the movement are concerned that there are schools that claim to follow Montessori methods but don't have teachers with Montessori credentials. They advise parents to check.

Reassuringly, criticism of Montessori schools comes both from those who think they are too free and from those who think they are too structured — the direction of the criticism depends mostly on the educational philosophy of the critic. Which is to say that in education, as in so much else, there is no accounting for taste.