

Aging in Place

As seniors age, their homes may need modifications to ensure safety, comfort, and accessibility. This guide provides practical steps to help prepare a home for aging in place, covering various aspects from simple adjustments to structural changes.

1

Home Assessment: Conduct a thorough assessment of the home to identify areas that require modification. Consider hiring a certified aging-in-place specialist (CAPS) or occupational therapist to assist in this evaluation.

Entryways and Exits

Ramps and Thresholds: Install ramps or smooth out thresholds for wheelchair or walker access. Ensure entryways are wide enough (at least 36 inches) for easy navigation.

Lighting: Ensure entryways are well-lit with motion-sensor lights to prevent trips and falls.
Handrails: Install sturdy handrails on both sides of stairs and at all

entry points.

Interior Accessibility

Doorways: Widen doorways to at least 32 inches to accommodate wheelchairs.

Hallways: Ensure hallways are free of obstacles and at least 36 inches wide.

5 Flooring: Use non-slip flooring materials. Avoid area rugs or secure them with double-sided tape to prevent tripping.

Lighting: Enhance lighting in all areas, especially in stairways, hallways, and bathrooms. Use night lights in key areas to improve visibility at night.

Living Areas

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Furniture Arrangement: Arrange furniture to allow clear, wide pathways. Choose stable, comfortable furniture with armrests. **Seating:** Use chairs and sofas with firm cushions and a higher seating position to make it easier to sit and stand.

Telephones: Ensure telephones are easily accessible in all main rooms. Consider using phones with larger buttons and emergency call features.

Kitchen Modifications

Countertops: Lower a section of the countertop to allow for seated meal preparation.

Cabinets: Install pull-out shelves and lazy Susans in cabinets for easier access. Place frequently used items within easy reach.

5 Appliances: Use appliances with front controls and easy-to-read displays. Consider installing a wall oven and a side-by-side refrigerator.

Flooring: Ensure the kitchen floor is non-slip and consider cushioned mats to reduce strain.



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Bathroom Safety

Grab Bars: Install grab bars near the toilet, shower, and bathtub. Ensure they are securely anchored to support body weight. **Toilet:** Replace the toilet with a comfort-height model or add a raised toilet seat.

6 **Shower and Bathtub:** Consider a walk-in shower or tub. Use non-slip mats or decals in the shower/tub.

Handheld Showerhead: Install a handheld showerhead with a long hose.

Seating: Place a shower chair or bench in the shower.

Bedroom Adjustments

Bed Height: Ensure the bed is at an appropriate height for easy access. Use bed risers if necessary.

7 **Nightstands:** Keep a lamp, phone, and essential items within easy reach on the nightstand.

Closets: Lower closet rods and install pull-down rods for easier access. Use open shelving and clear storage bins.

Staircase Enhancements

Stairlifts: Install a stairlift if navigating stairs becomes difficult. **Handrails:** Ensure there are sturdy handrails on both sides of the

8 staircase.

Lighting: Install adequate lighting and light switches at the top and bottom of the stairs.

Smart Home Technology

Voice-Activated Systems: Use voice-activated assistants (like Amazon Alexa or Google Home) for controlling lights, appliances, and security systems.

Medical Alert Systems: Install a medical alert system with wearable devices.

Smart Thermostats: Use programmable or smart thermostats for easy climate control.

General Safety Measures

Emergency Plan: Create and practice an emergency evacuation plan.

 Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors: Install detectors and ensure they have accessible, working batteries.
Medication Management: Use automated pill dispensers and keep a list of medications in an accessible location.

Conclusion

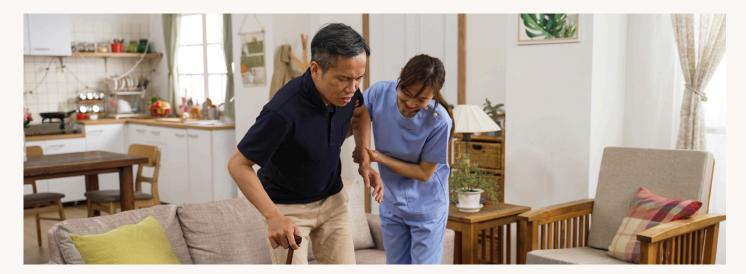
Preparing a home for aging in place involves a combination of structural modifications, safety enhancements, and the incorporation of supportive technology. These adjustments help create a safe, comfortable, and accessible living environment, enabling seniors to maintain their independence and quality of life. Regular reassessment and adjustments as needs change are essential to ensure continued safety and comfort.

Get Started with CareTech Today

With our compassionate and knowledgeable team, we go above and beyond to ensure the comfort and well-being of your seniors. From companion care to personal care, dementia care to respite care, we have it all. Find peace of mind with Caretech, the leading non-medical home care agency in Nebraska.

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