

HOME MODIFICATIONS FOR SENIORS

CAREGIVERS



Home Modifications For Seniors

Helpful Home Modifications for Seniors that Won't Bust the Budget

Use this inexpensive, do-it-yourself home modification checklist to keep your senior safe while they age in place.

Hidden hazards in the home can make seniors' lives more challenging and put them at greater risk of injury. Inexpensive home modifications can make a difference.

Making home improvements can increase senior safety and comfort. Fortunately, many modifications can be made inexpensively. You can perform several affordable improvements yourself or hire a contractor to make simple changes. As a result, seniors will be better equipped for aging in place.



Inexpensive Do-It-Yourself Home Modification Checklist (healthinaging.org)

Whole Home

- Install pull or lever handles instead of door knobs
- Add glow in the dark lighting strips along floor and next to important switches
- Rearrange furniture to create clear pathways without clutter

Main Living Spaces

- Add more lamps behind and around furniture
- Remove curtains and replace with blinds to let natural lighting in
- Adhere cords and wires to walls out of the way

Hallways

- Add lighting and light switches if hallways are dark (nightlights are a great choice)
- Install low rails for support along the walls
- Remove loose rugs and other tripping hazards

Kitchen

- Move heavy and often-used items to easy-to-reach spaces
- Add lighting wherever possible
- Choose a table to use for prep space instead of standing by tall countertops

Bathrooms

- Install grab bars in and around the shower and toilet
- Add easy-access, waist-height shelving for storage
- Place non-slip pads on tub floors and surfaces that often get wet
- Lower water heater temperature to 120 degrees Fahrenheit

Bedrooms

- Place additional, easy-to-use lights on each side of the bed
- Install a bed rail for support getting into and out of bed
- Add pillows or pads if headboards have sharp or hard edges
- Swap out shelves for heavy drawers and high bars in closets



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Affordable Renovation Options

Some modifications typically require knowledge of and experience in construction. A certified contractor can make renovations like these if needed:

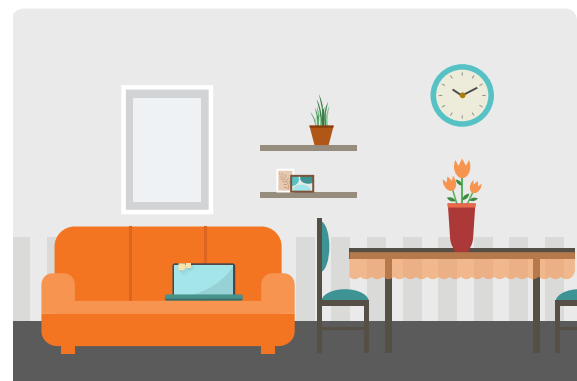
- Widen doorways for wheelchair access
- Install a wheelchair ramp
- Add an electronic stair lift
- Install a walk-in tub or shower
- Lower countertops
- Move light switches down for wheelchair reach

(Info from [Senior Advisor](#))



Home Care Tip:

Pay attention to what seniors mention as concerns. Watch as they perform activities to see what causes them to hesitate. Use what you notice to guide your home modification priorities.



Change Home Habits for Safety and Convenience

- Use smaller, wheeled laundry baskets
- Put often-used items like remotes in easy-to-reach baskets
- Connect lights to one switch to illuminate rooms more easily
- Designate half the kitchen table for prep space
- Rearrange items to make clearer paths in the home
- Make towels accessible for cleaning spills quickly
- Establish upkeep routines so messes don't become too burdensome
- Keep track of medications in a weekly pill box
- Relocate bedroom for one-floor living

Get an Expert's Advice

AARP, together with the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), offers Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS) training. Visit the NAHB website to find a CAPS certified contractor to assess and work on a senior's home.

(aarp.org)



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