

The Ultimate Aging in Place Design Checklist

General Design

Before going into the aging in place design checklist for each specific room, here's a list of the overall rules you should follow when designing a space for accessibility and safety. These rules apply to any room, including the general layout of the house.

- Open floor plan with few obstructions
- New lighting systems
- Larger windows
- [Specific colors](#) (proper contrasting to aid with depth perception)
- No-step entries
- Wider doorways (min. 36 inches)
- No throw rugs (tripping hazard)
- Ramp installation
- Lever-style door handles

Bathroom Design

It is extremely important to customize a bathroom for someone who is aging or has disabilities because bathrooms are prone to causing accidents. Due to their ceramic flooring and slippery surfaces, bathrooms are the cause of roughly [235,000 nonfatal injuries](#) in the U.S. alone per year.

- Adjusting toilet height or installing a seat extender
- Grab bars near toilet and in bath/shower
- Shower seat
- Anti-slip coating in tub/shower
- Slip-resistant floor treatment
- Walk-in shower/tub

- Handheld showerhead

Kitchen Design

When re-designing a kitchen for the elderly, you want to ensure ease of use and fluidity. You should not install cabinets that your client cannot reach, and you need to make sure all appliances are properly positioned so that your client doesn't have to move around too much.

- Adjusting height of sink
- Shallow sink
- Hands-free faucet
- Pull-out pantry
- Storage inside refrigerator door
- Front-mounted controls on cooktop
- D-shaped cabinet pulls
- Under-cabinet lighting
- Round edges for countertops
- Sink close to stove
- Large drawers
- Microwave at counter height

Bedroom & Closet Design

Getting in and out of bed and getting dressed can be a hassle for anyone who has a disability or for elderly people with back or hip problems. Home designers should consider all these factors when designing a bedroom for aging in place.

- Bedroom on main level
- Low-profile bed (20-23" from top of mattress to the floor)
- Nightstands placed at same height as bed
- Bed rail
- Phone beside bed
- Adequate clearance around bed
- Pull-down closet rods
- Lighting in closet

Laundry Room Design

This aging in place design checklist wouldn't be complete without tips for designing a laundry room. Doing laundry for the mobility-impaired is difficult as it is, so you should design the room as best you can to ensure an easy and smooth process.

- Laundry room near bedroom
- Front load washer and dryer
- Washer & dryer raised 12-15 inches above floor
- Easy to read controls
- Lower upper cabinets
- Pull-down shelving
- Laundry chute if multi-level house

Miscellaneous Tips

- Easy-to-maintain plants/shrubbery
- Longer lasting LED lights
- Clear pathway between bedroom and bathroom
- Chair lift on stairs