

# HOME MODIFICATIONS FOR SENIORS

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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 [\(healthinaging.org\)](http://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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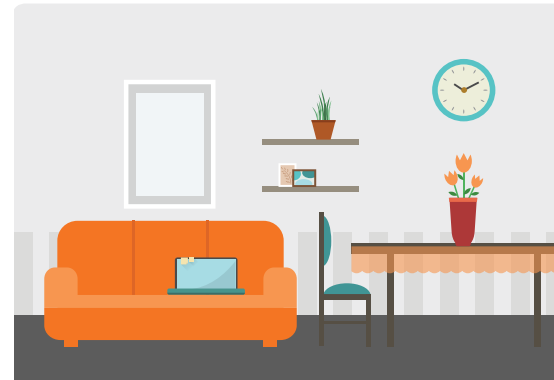
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## Affordable Renovation Options

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](#))

## 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



## 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.

## 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](http://aarp.org))

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