

AT HOME
WITH
GROWING
OLDER

Aging 360

People change, homes can too:
Low-cost tips for better living from the
Aging 360 workshop



Age-friendly design principles

Staying connected to yourself and others
with safety, comfort and delight

The Aging 360™ Workshop



Our workshop was created by a team of experts—an architect, an industrial designer, and a social worker—and has been shaped by the valuable insights of participants like you.

Most of us grow older in places we've lived in for years, and that were not designed specifically for our later years. The good news? Simple changes to these familiar homes can help us live on our own terms longer and more comfortably.

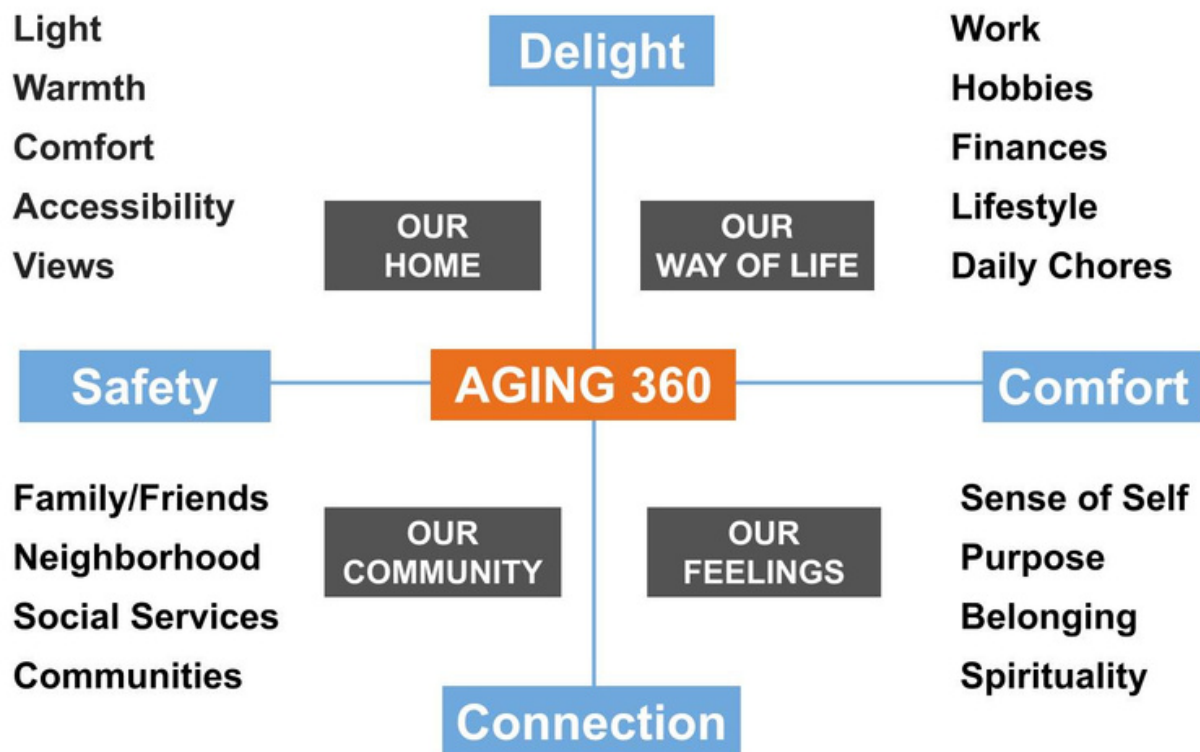
Many of these improvements make daily activities easier—from getting out of bed to preparing meals—and often cost little or nothing to implement.

In these pages, you'll find practical tips and improvement ideas from the Aging 360 workshop.

The products listed on this website are recommended based on research, information, and community feedback, but please note that *At Home with Growing Older* has not personally tested or endorsed these items. We do not guarantee the quality, safety, or effectiveness of any products featured here. We encourage you to do your own research and read reviews before making a purchase decision. By using these links, you acknowledge that *At Home with Growing Older* is not responsible for any issues or outcomes resulting from the purchase or use of these products.

AT HOME
WITH
GROWING
OLDER

Age-Friendly HOME



TIP:

Periodically ask yourself:

How are things in my home serving me now?

How can I shift things so they will serve me as I grow older?

Clear pathways to reduce the risk of falling

Walk around your room and look for anything that might cause trips or falls. Common hazards include furniture blocking walkways, items piles on the floor, loose or curled rug corners, electrical cords across paths, other obstacles in walking areas.



TIP:

Remove trip hazards by relocating, removing, securing them properly. Use your walls to hang things. Adhesive hooks or simple shelves help to keep your floor clear.

Improve lighting

Vision changes are a normal part of aging and require you to adjust the lighting in your room.

Ask yourself:

- Where do you need more light and for what activity? (ex. in the closet to get dressed, at the bed to get up at night)
- How can you maximize the benefit of natural light? (ex. move a chair to the window, clean a window)



TIP:

Simple, inexpensive floor lamps that light the ceiling can brighten up the whole room. Simple battery powered or rechargeable LED puck lights can be used in many ways such as a night light, reading light or under a cabinet.

Make simple adaptations to furniture to fit your body and abilities

Our bodies are all different as we get older it becomes more difficult to adapt to the standardized world around us. Even a slightly higher chair might make it easier to sit down and get up from. A cushioned chair might also feel more comfortable for your sitting bones.

Some common, typical dimensions:

Chairs are 17" high but sofas are typically lower.

Tables are typically 30" high.

Counters are 36" high and 24" deep.



TIP:

Even a 1 " or 1.5 " seat pad can make a chair more comfortable by making it a little higher or cushioned. You might also experiment with putting it behind your back or on your lap to support a tray or computer.

Invite yourself for dinner

We eat with our eyes. Think about how you can entice yourself to eat well and regularly. A simple meal that is nicely served can be more appetizing! Sharing meals with others is not only good for your appetite but also good for our social life.

Scientifically proven contributors to healthy aging:

Eating well

Staying socially connected



TIP:

Use a colorful tray to invite yourself for dinner wherever it brings you pleasure or to bring a meal to somebody else in your building.

Optimize your kitchen for everyday use

- Good, nutritious food is one of the few proven contributors to healthy aging.
- Are the things you use most kept in a place that is reachable without a stool or ladder?
- Can you access most things without bending?
- Do you have enough light where you need it?
- Is your kitchen well vented?

Are cabinets and drawers easy to open?



TIP:

Use inexpensive baskets to create pull out drawers to avoid reaching and bending unnecessarily.

A friend can be a good support for helping you rethink where things are in your kitchen. We get used to what we've had for many years and don't consider that a different arrangement might make things easier.

Make room for daily exercises

Physical activity is an important part of healthy aging. Four types of exercise, endurance, flexibility, strength, and balance activities help to stay independent for longer.

Ask yourself:

What movements or tasks are becoming more difficult for you?
What exercises would help to practice them?
How much space do they take up?
Where is a place to do them?



TIP:

Exercise equipment should be easy to access. Use daily tasks as an opportunity to stretch and bend - tie your shoes with intention! Does your building have stairs? Hold on to the rail and use them as your stair-master!

Turn your bathroom into a living room

Bathrooms are prone to falls due to slippery floors and awkward layouts. Prioritize making this space safe, comfortable, and enjoyable, not intimidating.

Some 'ingredients' for turning a bathroom into a living room:

- Safety Bars
- Higher Toilets (19" instead of 16", look for ADA compliant toilets)
- Handheld showers
- Low curb or no curb shower pans
- Good lighting and ventilation
- A place to sit



TIP:

Safety bars can take many forms. They can become a decorative elements. You can even use a piece of driftwood. A toilet paper holder with a grip does double duty.

Bring nature into your home

Plants can contribute to making you healthier by reducing stress and fatigue and improving your mood. They also bring color and pleasant natural scents into your room.



TIP:

Consider setting up a narrow shelf or using your window sill for plants. If you do not have enough natural light even a simple LED light can be used as a grow light.

Make friends with your stairs

- Stairs can be a great exercise machine if they are well designed.
- Railings should be on both sides of the stairs.
- Make sure you can see when you step off a step, especially on the first and last step. A contrasting nosing helps.



TIP:

Thicker carpets on stairs can make the transition between steps too slippery. Consider wood or different kinds of 'resilient' flooring – luxury vinyl flooring is a good option. Nosing strips visually mark the edge of a step and are available in many different materials and price points.

Turn furry friend's utensils into furniture

Make sure food boxes do not wander around!



TIP:

Litter boxes and pet food bowls can be raised to make it easier to reach.

Do not forget delight

As we get older, daily tasks often become more challenging, making it increasingly important to surround ourselves with things that bring us delight at home.



TIP:

Colorful items, photos, art work, mementos, string lights, a glass ornament that catches the light from the window - are just a few examples....

Your Home Improvement Journal

Use this worksheet to track the improvements you make in your home. Note how each change helps you to stay connected with others, feel safer and more comfortable and to find moments of delight in your space.

CONNECTION

SAFETY/COMFORT

DELIGHT:

Listen to the At Home With Growing Older podcast on all major platforms



AT HOME, ON AIR

Subscribe to our podcast, and
join the next live conversation:
AtHomeWithGrowingOlder.org

 
@AHWGO

 
Listen, Learn, Live

AT HOME
WITH
GROWING
OLDER

athomewithgrowingold.org/podcast

Tune in now!



More info at:

Website: www.athomewithgrowingolder.org

Like us on Facebook: AHWGO