

Making Your Home Accessible

Ensuring your home is accessible to people with disabilities is a compassionate consideration and can also expand the market appeal and value of your property.

By making targeted renovations, you can create a more inclusive living environment and attract potential buyers seeking accessible homes. Some are concerned that making home modifications can lower resale value, but that is not always the case, especially if you own a home in an area with a high demographic of older people.

In some places, grants are available to help you renovate your home to make it more accessible, especially if you are a veteran. Check for both state and federal grants as well as those from local non-profits who will help defray the cost of accessible renovations. You may also qualify for low-cost renovation-specific loans.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

What many people are starting to lean toward is Universal



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REAL ESTATE 101

Affordable Housing

In 2023, The Balance reported their findings on a data analysis on how affordable housing is in the U.S. They calculated that the average monthly cost of home ownership in the U.S. is \$1,558. The national home ownership expense ratio is 24.7%. The three most affordable cities for monthly home ownership in their index are St. Louis, Detroit and Atlanta.

Design, which increases property values while making a home more accessible. Also called barrier-free design, PBS defined it as focusing on making the house safe and accessible for everyone, regardless of age, physical ability or stature. The goal is to design spaces that are inclusive and that promote independence for everyone.

TARGETED RENOVATIONS

Start by focusing on the entrance and pathways to your home. Install ramps or gradual slopes to eliminate steps and facilitate wheelchair access. Ensure that pathways leading to the main entrance are wide enough to accommodate mobility aids and have a

smooth, non-slip surface. Consider installing handrails for additional support and make sure pathways are well-lit to aid visibility for those with visual impairments.

Replace traditional door-knobs with lever-style handles, which are easier to operate for those with limited dexterity. Remove any potential

obstacles or clutter along pathways to create unobstructed passages.

Hardwood floors are easier to move on than carpeted surfaces and is a change that is resell-friendly. People with mobility issues benefit from first-floor laundries and bedrooms.

Bathroom renovations make a significant difference for people with disabilities. Install grab bars near the toilet and in the shower or bathtub area to provide stability and support. Consider replacing traditional bathtubs with roll-in showers, which allow easy wheelchair access. Install a shower bench or chair for added convenience. Ensure that faucets and controls are accessible and easy to operate.

Making the kitchen more accessible involves adjusting countertop heights to accommodate individuals who use wheelchairs. Install lower countertops with open space beneath to allow comfortable access. Consider incorporating pull-out shelves and drawers for easier reach. Install lever-style handles on cabinets and drawers for easier gripping and operation.

Proper lighting is essential for individuals with visual impairments. Install bright, even lighting throughout the home, including hallways, staircases and entrance areas.



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HOMEWISSE GLOSSARY

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FHA futures: Down payment assistance for a loan where the buyer can borrow up to 6% of the loan amount to be used towards closing costs and down payment. **SOURCE:** MLS.com

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