



The Geezers, Gadgets and Gizmos Checklist: How to Seniorize Your Home for Independent Living

Aging in place is not a default — it's a design decision. That's where the Geezers, Gadgets and Gizmos Checklist: How to "Seniorize" Your Home for Independent Living comes in. It helps you evaluate whether your home supports independence, safety, mobility, and long-term function. Use it as a planning tool — not a panic list.

1 ENTRANCE & EXTERIOR ACCESS

Goal: Safe entry in all weather and lighting conditions.

- Step-free or ramped entrance
- Sturdy handrails on both sides of stairs
- Non-slip surfaces on walkways
- Motion-sensor exterior lighting
- Brightly lit house numbers
- Door handles (lever style, not knobs)
- Threshold height minimized
- Video doorbell or security system
- Secure but easy-to-operate locks

2 FLOORING & MOBILITY FLOW

Goal: Reduce fall risk and improve navigation.

- Remove loose rugs
- Secure all carpets
- Eliminate threshold height differences
- Clear pathways (36" minimum recommended)
- No cords crossing walkways
- Non-slip flooring in high-traffic areas
- Contrast strips on stair edges
- Stair handrails on both sides

3 BATHROOM SAFETY

Goal: Prevent falls and maintain dignity.

- Grab bars (not towel racks) near toilet and shower
- Walk-in or curbless shower
- Shower bench or fold-down seat
- Handheld showerhead

- Non-slip mats or textured flooring
- Raised toilet seat or comfort-height toilet
- Adequate lighting (especially night lighting)
- Easy-turn faucet handles

4 KITCHEN FUNCTION

Goal: Maintain independence in daily living.

- Frequently used items stored at waist level
- Pull-out shelves or drawers
- Lever-style faucet
- Anti-scald protection
- Bright task lighting
- Clear space for walker or wheelchair
- Stove with automatic shut-off feature
- Easy-to-read appliance controls

5 BEDROOM ACCESS & NIGHT SAFETY

Goal: Safe navigation at night.

- Bed height allows easy sitting and standing
- Nightlights or motion lighting
- Clear path from bed to bathroom
- Phone or alert system within reach
- Stable bedside table

6 LIGHTING & VISUAL SUPPORT

Goal: Improve visibility and reduce strain.

- Increase overall lighting brightness
- Use warm LED bulbs (3000K–4000K range)
- Add under-cabinet lighting
- Light switches at accessible height
- Large-print clocks and thermostats
- Contrast color between floors and walls

7 TECHNOLOGY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Goal: Maintain independence through smart support.

- Medical alert system
- Voice-activated assistant
- Smart thermostat
- Video doorbell

- Medication reminder system
- Emergency contact list visible
- Fire extinguishers accessible
- Smoke and CO detectors tested

8 FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY SUPPORT

Goal: Support long-term physical independence.

- Space for home exercise
- Resistance bands or light weights
- Stable chair for balance exercises
- Easy access to outdoor walking area
- Storage for mobility aids

9 FUTURE-READINESS

Goal: Avoid crisis-driven decisions.

- First-floor bedroom option
- First-floor full bathroom
- Doorways wide enough for walker/wheelchair
- Ability to install stairlift if needed
- Home equity strategy understood
- Downsizing contingency plan
- Estate plan updated

10 SOCIAL & COGNITIVE SUPPORT

Goal: Prevent isolation.

- Comfortable seating for guests
- Technology for video calls
- Easy access to transportation
- Organized, clutter-free environment
- Mail and paperwork system

◆ FINAL QUESTION

Ask yourself:

- If my mobility declined tomorrow, would this home support me — or challenge me?
- In the event my spouse needed care, could this house adapt?
- What if I needed to sell quickly, would it be market-ready?

Aging in place is not about fear.

It's about foresight.

Watch Geezers, Gadgets and Gizmos' Garrison and Alyson on WFSB-TV as they're hosted by Scott Haney (distinguished member of the Connecticut Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame) and Kara Sundlun (three-time Emmy Award-winning journalist). Watch it here:

<https://www.wfsb.com/video/2025/10/06/geezer-gadgets-gizmos/>



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