



Real Estate Advice

by
Kirsten Sharpe,
REALTOR

Cell
574.339.7959

February 2018



What is Aging in Place?

You may have lived in your home for 10, 15 or maybe even 20 years and while the house hasn't changed, you have. As you age, some activities and chores around the house aren't as easy as they used to be. Maybe you're not as nimble climbing stairs with a load of laundry in your arms. You may find dim lighting makes it difficult to see trip hazards or read the mail as dusk approaches. A recent surgery, accident or even arthritis can bring attention to obstacles in your home that didn't affect you in the past.

Since we can't fight the aging process (although we do our best by eating well and exercising), we may want to physically change our environment. Moving to a home that is more suited to your needs is one solution, but you may not be in a financial position to move. Or maybe you don't want to move, which is in line with AARP's statistic that 87% of individuals over 65 prefer to remain in their house.

So if you want to stay in your home, here are some modifications you can make:

- Improve lighting in the kitchen, hallways, entry way and bathrooms
- Replace round doorknobs with lever style door handles for easier grip
- If bending down is getting difficult, install pull-out shelves in kitchen and bath cabinets
- Add grab bars, especially in the shower area
- Replace a bathtub with a walk-in shower to eliminate stepping over the tub edge
- Install a taller toilet
- If your bathroom sink/vanity is low, which it often is in older homes, you can have a taller vanity installed to alleviate bending over as far
- When stairs become difficult, move the master bedroom and the laundry room to the main floor if possible
- If you like to garden but the crouching and bending is too painful, have raised flower beds installed so you can still enjoy the outdoors

Be sure to evaluate the costs and benefits of staying in your house versus moving to one that may be better suited. Ask yourself if the changes you are making can be reversed so your house will still attract younger buyers when you do decide to move.

