

## **Making Your Homes More Accessible In the Future**

As Baby Boomers head toward retirement and the average lifespan of Americans increases, many people are now saying that as they grow older, they would prefer to stay in their current residence as long as possible. (<http://www.aarp.org/research/housing-mobility/accessibility/aresearch-import-741-2002-03.html>) But the natural effects of aging can limit their mobility, and they may find that what was easy to navigate when they were younger can be difficult if not impossible in their golden years.

Those of us in the homebuilding industry have taken note of this situation and created modifications to make it easier to enjoy every room in the house, not to mention conveniently access every room in the house. Here are some of the most affordable and simplest changes you can make right now to make your residence more pleasurable for you or older adults to navigate:

- Add a bench or shelf near the door as a resting place for visitors and packages.
- Install a handrail on the inside stair wall to supplement the outside hand rail.
- Put non-skid treads or a secured-in-place runner to eliminate a trip hazard on uncarpeted stairs.
- Replace standard switches with easier-to-use rocker switches at entryways and throughout the home.
- For the entry doors at your house, install a motion sensor light to make sure it is illuminated whenever you are outside at night.

There are many other ways to adjust your home and change it into something more accessible, and they will continue to appear as this issue remains a central concern as the population ages. For exact guidelines on how you can transform your residence, visit here ([http://www.bobvila.com/HowTo\\_Library/Accessibility-Articles-C291.html](http://www.bobvila.com/HowTo_Library/Accessibility-Articles-C291.html)), here (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/02/17/AR2006021701037.html>) and here ([http://www.abledata.com/abledata\\_docs/icg-hous.htm](http://www.abledata.com/abledata_docs/icg-hous.htm)). The costs of these improvements range widely, so you may have to make some judgment calls to determine what is essential for you and your family.

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