



Welcome!

Home Improvements for Aging in Place
February 4, 2017



County of Henrico
Department of Community Revitalization

Home Improvements



Henrico County Dept. of
Community Revitalization



in partnership with

Rebuilding Together Richmond

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Agenda

- Understand the benefits of home modifications
- Identify common and feasible home modifications
 - Entrances
 - Bathrooms
 - Bedrooms
 - Kitchens
 - Living Spaces
- Break – visit exhibitors
- How to find and hire a contractor

What are Home Modifications?

- Adapting the environment in order to:
 - make performing tasks easier
 - reduce accidents
 - support independent living



What are Home Modifications?

- Low-cost and simple changes to the home
- Adding special features or assistive devices such as grab bars
- Extensive structural renovations and repairs



Why should you consider Home Modifications?

- Remain safely in own home despite age related changes
- Improve accessibility to allow older or disabled family and friends to visit
- Prevent falls from hazards such as
 - lack of handrails
 - poor lighting
 - tight spaces



Entrances



Steps

- Secure or add handrails at steps
- Add tread or textured paint to steps
- Construct shallow and wider steps



Handrails

- Ideal intermediate modification if a ramp is not feasible
- Improves safety for everyone - homeowner or visitor



Step Alternatives

- Graduated walkways
- Ramps
- Wheelchair lifts
- Elevators



Photo courtesy of Concrete Change, for Universal Design for the Home, Quarry Books, 2008

Zero-barrier Entrance







BEFORE



AFTER

Door Thresholds

- Thresholds over $\frac{3}{4}$ in. may increase
 - risk of trips
 - difficulty of navigating wheelchair
- Rounded thresholds are easier to navigate than square edge thresholds
- Should be easy to see



Threshold Ramps

- Portable threshold ramps can make exiting/entering home easier
- Rubber threshold ramp has a capacity of 850lbs
 - The cost of this ramp is <\$200
- These portable aluminum ramps are available for thresholds up to 6 ¼" high



Ramps

- Ramps may be temporary or permanent
- Make sure they are professionally installed
- Consider placing the ramp at the back entrance of the home if possible
 - Safer/more discrete
 - Helps deter opportunists



Ramps

- Example of a low profile, attractive ramp
- Porch/landing is large enough to allow someone in a wheelchair to open the door



Photo courtesy of Concrete Change, for Universal Design for the Home, Quarry Books, 2008

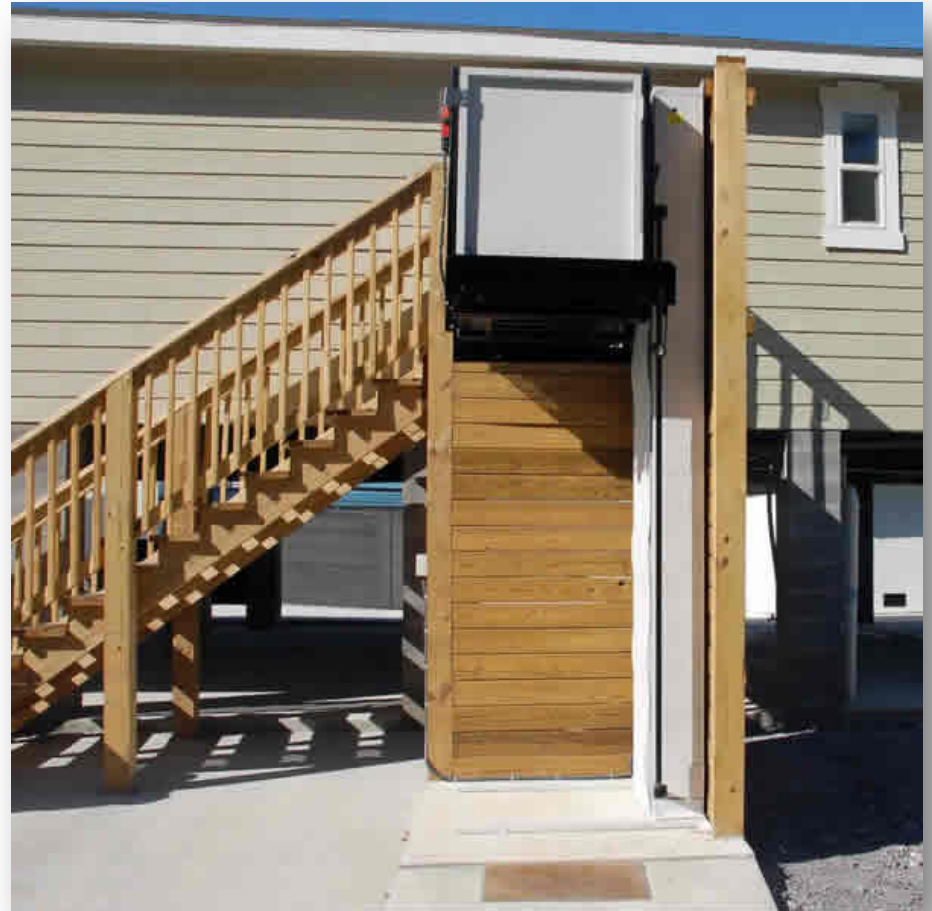
Wheelchair Lifts

- Consider for very specific needs
- Shown is a vertical lift for a deck that has:
 - call/send controls
 - manual hand-crank for lowering in an emergency (no power)
 - a removable “stay-dry” platform canopy and a cold weather package



Wheelchair Lifts

- Example of tall tower vertical platform lift
 - When entrance is on 2nd floor, may potentially be the only way access entrance
 - Some types of this lift will need a cover in certain weather conditions
 - Cost: ~\$5,000



Exterior Lighting

- Lighting needs to be reasonable for your home and neighborhood
- Motion detectors are great
- Ensure that your street numbers are visible
 - At night (without exterior lighting)
 - During the day from the street



Bathrooms



Bathrooms

- Tub/shower combination
- Shower
- Grab bars
- Tub bench
- Shower seat
- Comfort height toilet
- Maneuvering space for a wheelchair
- Sink style



Bathing

Walk in shower with seat and handheld shower



Bathing

Pre-fab shower insert

- Fits into the space where your tub/shower was located
- Include a seat that can be positioned on either side of the shower or removed
- Price: ~\$1,000



Bathing

Transfer tub bench



Tub seat with back



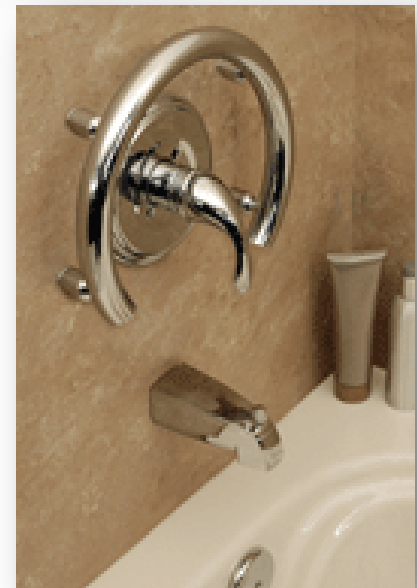
Bathing

Walk in tub with seat



Grab Bars

- Grab bars may serve more than one function
- Consult with an occupational therapist or certified aging in place specialist (CAPS) for optimal placement
- Grab bars should be professionally installed if possible to ensure secure placement



Grab bars

- Textured grab bars provide better grip
- Alternatives to installed grab bars:
 - Clamp on tub rail
 - Suction cup grab bars



Grab bars

Optimal grab bar placement:

- Vertical grab bar at entrance of shower
- Horizontal or diagonal at inside wall of shower



Grab bars near toilets



Toileting



Comfort or handicap toilet (17-18")

- easier toilet is the comfort height toilet
- cost starting at \$200



Alternatives

Toilet safety rails



Elevated toilet seat



Bedside commode (3 in 1)



Sink layouts

- Pedestal or wall mounted sinks increase space for wheelchair use
- Ensure that plumbing is covered/insulated to prevent burns



Bedroom



Bedroom

- Clear pathways
- Night lighting
- Bed height from floor
- Firm vs soft mattress
- Adjustable bed
- Bed rails/handles



Kitchen



Kitchen



Optimizing reach:
Pull out and
pull down shelves



Kitchen

Task Lighting



Oven door lock



Kitchen



Living Spaces



Living Spaces

- Furniture height
 - Ideal is 16-17" floor to seat height
- Lighting
 - Improve visibility
 - Reduce glare
 - Task lighting



Living Spaces

- Flooring
 - Non slip tread
 - Remove “throw” rugs
 - Eliminate any height disparities (rug wrinkles, thresholds)
 - Remove cords



General/Miscellaneous



Offset Hinges

- Maximize existing doorways without changing the width
- Enlarge door opening by swinging the door completely clear of the opening.
- Maximizes the space of doorway opening
 - (Doesn't widen doorway)



Stairways



- Well-lit
- Dual handrails
- Non-slip surface

Stair Lifts



Lever Handles

Easier to use

- Do not need to be grasped like a round doorknob
- Round knobs may be difficult if you have any hand strength limitations such as arthritis
- Unlatch with your elbow if your hands are full or grasping is difficult



Night Lights

Consider placing inexpensive lights in the bedroom, hallways and bathroom to help prevent falls



Electrical Outlets and Switches

Outlet height

- Traditional height
- Raised in areas of most use



Switch height and type

- Maximum height of 48"
- Use of rocker style switches
- At bottom and top of indoor stairs



General

- Alarms
- Visible house numbers on your house
- Doorbells and peepholes
- Medication organizers or dispensers
- Adaptive equipment and gadgets



Financial Resources

Livable Homes Tax Credit

Provides a \$5,000 state tax credit for the purchase of a new residence with accessible features and up to 50% of the cost of retrofitting an existing home, not to exceed \$5,000.

www.dhcd.virginia.gov/lhtc 804-371-7124

Accessibility Rehabilitation Forgivable Loan

The Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta provides up to \$12,000 to pay for accessibility improvements of an existing owner-occupied home. Eligible improvements include exterior ramps and sidewalks, bathroom and kitchen renovations, door widening, floor replacement, and more. Loan is available to borrowers earning 80% or less of the area median income.

www.fhlbatl.com/docs/cis/ahp-setaside-brochure.pdf

Other Resources

Accessibility Grant for Rental Units

Up to \$2,000 per rental unit for accessibility improvements is available to tenants with disabilities who earn 80% or less of the area median income.

www.vhda.com/Renters/Pages/AccessibleRentalHousing.aspx

1-804-782-1986

Rebuilding Together

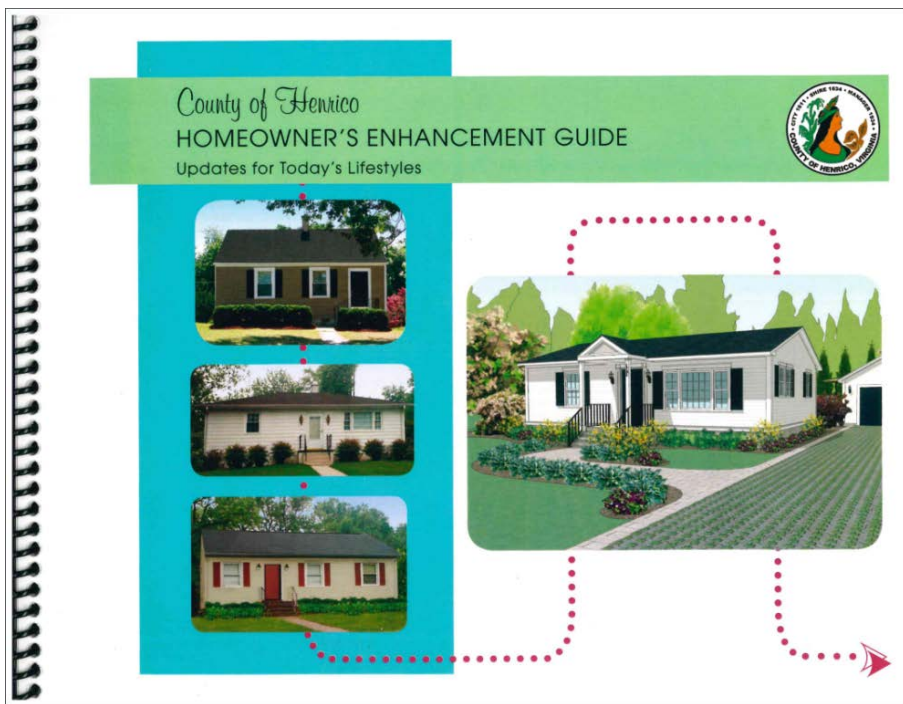
With a dedicated team of volunteers, Rebuilding Together repairs and rehabilitates homes free of cost for those in need, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, military veterans, and families with children.

www.rebuildingtogether.org

Other Resources

County of Henrico Homeowner's Enhancement Guide:

available at <http://henrico.us/revit/housing-assistance/homenhance/>





BREAK

Please visit our exhibitors!

