



# The SAFE Home Evaluation Checklist

## *A Guide for Navigating the "Next Chapter" with Confidence*

### **S – Safety: Minimizing Risk**

*Focus on the "invisible" hazards that impact independence.*

- **Lighting:** Are all entryways, stairs, and hallways brightly lit with easy-to-reach switches (or motion sensors)?
- **Floor Transitions:** Are floors level? Remove or secure all area rugs and eliminate high thresholds between rooms.
- **Bathroom Security:** Are there reinforced "blocking" behind walls for future grab bars? (Towel racks are not safety handles!)
- **Visibility:** Can the home address be easily seen from the street by emergency responders?

### **A – Access: Moving Without Barriers**

*Evaluating how easy it is to get in, out, and around.*

- **The "No-Step" Entry:** Is there at least one entrance without stairs (via garage or ramped walkway)?
- **Clear Pathways:** Are hallways and doorways at least 36 inches wide to accommodate a walker or wheelchair if ever needed?
- **Thresholds:** Are exterior door sills low-profile (1/2 inch or less) to prevent tripping?
- **Outdoor Terrain:** Are walkways paved, non-slip, and well-maintained?

### **F – Fits Needs: Lifestyle Alignment**

*Ensuring the home supports how life is lived today and tomorrow.*



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- **Main-Level Living:** Are the primary bedroom, full bath, and laundry all located on the first floor?
- **Reach Zones:** Are kitchen cabinets and closet shelves at a height that doesn't require a step stool?
- **Flex Space:** Is there a room for hobbies, a home office, or a live-in caregiver if necessary?
- **Social Connection:** Is the home located near family, medical care, or community centers to prevent isolation?

### E – Ease of Use: Effortless Operation

*Reducing the physical "work" of maintaining a home.*

- **Lever-Style Handles:** Are door knobs and faucets levers (easier for arthritic hands) rather than round knobs?
- **Low-Maintenance Materials:** Are the exterior and landscaping "lock-and-leave" friendly (e.g., composite decking, irrigation)?
- **Smart Technology:** Does the home have a programmable thermostat and a video doorbell for security?
- **Appliances:** Is the microwave at counter height? Is the washer/dryer front-loading and elevated?

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### The "Authoritative Neighbor" Tip:

"Don't look at this list as a 'to-do' list of repairs. Look at it as a roadmap. If a home checks most of these boxes, it's a partner in your independence. If it doesn't, we simply have a puzzle to solve, whether that's a smart renovation or finding a new space that fits you better."

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