

# FIORI INTERIOR DESIGN

## Your Future Home Checklist



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# INTRODUCTION

*For the past several years, everyone my age (although I feel like a millennial, I'm the last of the Boomer generation) has a parent or someone they know struggling with something.*

*I live in a multi-generational home. My kids range in age from 13 to 25, and my mother-in-law, who lives with us, is a very young 94! I became a Certified Aging in Place Specialist four years ago. Had I known then what I know now, there are many things that I would have designed differently in my own home.*

*With that in mind, my next home will be my "future home". One that serves all ages and is designed using Universal Design principals. Because who doesn't want to live in a home that is beautiful yet also functions well, regardless of age or ability? And why not anticipate these changing needs now?*

*In this checklist, I've shared my specialized training and experience and have outlined all areas of your home to address so you can live an easier life.*

*From the exterior of your house to your main living spaces, here are my tips for designing your future home.*



# EXTERIOR

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*Community starts at the front door.*

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## ENTRY

- **Zero-step entry** (*great for either moms with newborns in strollers and those who are wheelchair bound*)
- **Flush threshold**, *max ½" in height and beveled on both sides*
- **Pitched entry**, *so rain doesn't seep in*
- **Overhang on your front entranceway**
- **36" doorway**, *for wheelchairs up to 32" in width*

## LIGHTING

- **Motion sensed outdoor lights**, *to automatically turn lights on at dusk and off at dawn*
- **Low electrical switches and outlets**, *15 – 48" high - easily reached by all*
- **LED lighting**, *ideal for longevity, energy savings and safety*

## SECURITY

- **Peephole on exterior door / camera system**
- **Intercom system**

## ACCESSIBILITY

- **Lever-style door handles** (*good for arthritic hands, and for opening the door with your elbow when your hands are full of groceries*)
- **Doggy door and invisible fence**
- **Bench by the front door**, *for a place to put groceries when your hands are full*

## MAINTENANCE

- **Low-maintenance / maintenance-free plants** (*no roses, sorry!*)
- **Composite deck** *which, unlike wood, resists fading and scratches and never needs to be painted or stained*

# INTERIOR

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*An open floor plan consisting of most (if not all) of your main living spaces on one level, including a primary bedroom and bathroom, will help you remain in your home with ease.*

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## THROUGHOUT THE HOME

- **36" doorways** throughout your home, just like the exterior doorway, for wheelchairs up to 32" in width
- **Low thresholds**, with a maximum of a quarter inch in height
- **Short and wide hallways**, also allows for wheelchairs and/or strollers
- **Lower windows**, or taller windows with a lower sill height, with easy-to-operate hardware that can be opened for cross-ventilation and fresh air
- **Energy-efficient windows** with low-E glass.
- **LED light bulbs**, check that the bulbs used for fixtures have the proper rating, are of the highest allowed wattage, and do not produce an excessive amount of glare (buy "soft light")
- **Rocker-style light switches**, as they are easier to use than traditional toggle light switches. Place them by each entrance to halls and rooms, no higher than 48" from the floor.
- **Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors** on each floor, ensuring they can be heard in all bedrooms
- **Touch-control lamps and devices**, that automatically turn on and off at set times
- **Hidden electrical cords** not only look better, but also prevent tripping!
- **Wireless remote-controlled window shades**
- **Bluetooth speakers** in all rooms. Alexa from Amazon is a great option.
- **Generator** in case of loss of electricity
- **Greater energy HVAC system**

## LIGHTING

- **South-facing property**, when possible. Lots of natural light is non negotiable.
- **Layered lighting** from the top down. Consider chandeliers, wall sconces, table lamps, and sensory night lights

## FLOORING

- **Non-slip tile** *in the entryway*
- **Non-slip, easy-to-care-for surfaces** *in all rooms. I recommend a large format-terrazzo-look tile, encaustic tile, or wood-look porcelain tiles. Linoleum is now offered in great patterns and textures, and concrete is a fashion-forward material.*
- **Temperature-appropriate flooring in main areas, ie, hardwood floors**

## COLOR

- **Contrasting colors** *throughout the home to avoid tripping, especially where there is a transition in height or a step in the floor*
- **A different color for each room,** *so that they are easily distinguishable from one another*
- **Solid colors and flat fields** *can help older guests make more sense of their space. Patterns can become confusing for older people as their visual perception may be off, making patterns feel three dimensional.*

## STAIRS

- **Non-slip carpeting**
- **Handrails** *on both sides, extended beyond the bottom step*
- **Contrasting color palettes** *that provide cues so those with low vision can differentiate a riser from a tread*
- **Light fixture** *illuminating the entire staircase, with a light switch at the top and bottom and connected to a backup generator.*
- **Sensored lights** *in nearby hallways and rooms*
- **Power outlet** *at the top and bottom of the staircase if you need to be able to install a chairlift in the future*
- **An elevator** *may not be an option in every home, but is worth considering. Multi-story homes can plan to have a pre-framed shaft in the form of stacked closets.*

# KITCHEN

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## CABINETS

- **Upper wall cabinets situated 3" below conventional height**
- **Extension glides** *for cabinetry*
- **Pull-out shelves** *for far-reaching corners*
- **Drop down shelves** *for upper cabinetry*
- **Glass front cabinets**

## COUNTERTOPS

- **Counterspace adjacent to or opposite from all appliances,** *for placing dishes*
- **Accented strip on edge** *to provide visual orientation to the workspace*
- **Matte or honed countertops** *instead of polished that will create a glare*
- **Open, under-counter seated work areas**
- **Two-height counters**

## APPLIANCES

- **Stove or cooktop** *with controls near the front of the device*
- **Use induction cooking**
- **Wall oven placed at eye-level** *no bending!*
- **Oven with dials on the front,** *for visibility and safety*
- **Microwave** *under cabinet*
- **Raised dishwasher** *with push button controls or dishwasher drawer*
- **Fridge with double doors and pull-out freezer**

## OTHERS

- **Install task lighting** *for the sink, stove and other work areas*
- **Lightweight, ABC-rated fire extinguisher** *in an easy-to-reach location*
- **Easy-to-grasp D-shaped handles,** *rather than knobs, on cabinets and drawers*
- **Level-touch or sensor-style kitchen faucet,** *ideally one that's pressure-balanced, temperature-regulated, and kept at or below 120°F for scald protection*
- **Hands-free soap dispenser**
- **5' turning radius**

# BATHROOM

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- **Comfort-height toilet**
- **Wall-hung sink** *with knee space beneath (and a panel to protect the user from the pipes)*
- **Electric bidet seat** *may improve home value and help you save on care and other medical expenses*
- **Easy-to-user, lever, touch, or sensor faucets** *for the sink, bathtub and shower*
- **“C” shaped Toilet paper holder** *designed to allow for single-hand changing*
- **Attractive grab bars** *(yes, they make them pretty!) in the bathtub, shower, and adjacent to the toilet*
- **Insulate exposed pipes** *beneath the sink to protect against touching a hot pipe*
- **Wi-Fi Nest-compatible thermostats** *with a full-color touchscreen interface that can be controlled from near or far to retain the desired water temperature*
- **Water heater at or below 120°F** *to avoid scalding*
- **Motion night-lights and/or illuminated light switches** *in the bathroom and the hallway leading to it*
- **Doors that swing out** *or a barn door*
- **Contrasting surfaces**, *such as the countertop edge being a different color than the cabinets below to help those with diminishing eyesight*



# FLOORING AND WALLS

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- **Rubber-backed rugs** *on the bathroom floor*
- **Heated floor tiles** *that are non-slip and non-glare*
- **Horizontal, high-contrast, colored tiles**, *especially in the shower, at about 60" above the floor can help to maintain balance and spatial orientation*
- **Blocking behind the wall** *even if you're not ready to install grab bars*

# SHOWER

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- **No-threshold shower** *with built-in or pull-down benches*
- **Linear drain**
- **Hand held, height-adjustable showerheads**
- **Non-slip tiles**

# LAUNDRY

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- **A front-load washer** *to reduce bending*
- **Raise washer and dryer** *a minimum of 12 - 15" above the floor*
- **Laundry chute**, *if your home has a second floor*

# LIVING SPACES

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- **Clear, wide passageways** *between carefully-arranged furniture*
- **Bed placement for easy access to bathroom**
- **Secure large area rugs to the floor** *with double-sided tape or non-slip mats*
- **Avoid reflective surfaces**

# LIGHTING

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- **Use natural light to the fullest** by opening curtains, blinds and shades during daylight hours
- **Wireless remote-controlled window shades**
- **Window treatment panels that are easy to open and close** and offer blackout lining
- **Layered lighting from the top down.** Consider chandeliers, wall sconces, table lamps, and sensory night lights

# FURNITURE

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- **Lightweight Tables**
- **Furniture casters or glides** on pieces for easy movement
- **Chairs and sofas with arms that easy to rise from,** cushions that are firm enough not to sink into yet are still comfortable – 25” arm height
- **Nanotex and Crypton fabrics are stain, odor and wrinkle resistant.** They outperform conventional fabric treatments, providing long-lasting protection and extending the life of the fabric. These treatments repel liquids and help retain the fabric’s natural softness, while allowing the fabric to breathe naturally

# STORAGE

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- **Adjustable rods and shelves in closets**
- **In-closet lighting**
- **Drawers** provide easier access than black-hole cabinets
- **Cabinet technology that improves access to upper cabinets,** a great help when reaching up high or down low becomes difficult

# GARAGE

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- ❑ **5' access aisle between cars, minimum**
- ❑ **9' roof** to accommodate some raised-roof vans
- ❑ **Ramp to doorway**, or at least the room to accommodate one. If code requires the floor to be several inches below the home's entrance to house for fume protection, you can slope the entire floor from front to back to eliminate the need for a ramp or step

# CARETAKER APARTMENT/SPACE

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*When designing your future home, I highly recommend allowing for a flex room that can be used for various purposes as your family changes.*

*For example, it can be used as a nursery or playroom when your kids are young, as a home office later, and eventually used for aging parents if combined with a full bath. It also offers an easy space for a caretaker to move in, if needed.*

*Your flex room should also include or plan for a full size bathroom for guests.*



# READY TO DESIGN YOUR FUTURE HOME?

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*Implementing all the elements on this checklist may seem daunting, but with the right help it doesn't have to be. As a Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS), I am proud to help multi-generational families, empty nesters and more design their next home.*

*My mission is to transform your home into an uplifting place – one where everyone, regardless of age, functions at their highest level.*

**Reach out for a consultation, whereby my team and I will help you discover the changes that need to be made to make your home livable for life.**



[www.fioriinteriordesign.com](http://www.fioriinteriordesign.com) | [info@fioriinteriordesign.com](mailto:info@fioriinteriordesign.com)  
201-848-9797 | Wyckoff, NJ  
*by appointment only*

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