



An ADU for U Design Competition Universal Design Checklist

An inclusive, adaptable, safe, and comfortable guide to help design for people of all ages and abilities. Inspired by the [AARP HomeFit Guide](#). (* denotes required room for design submission)

Entry Features

- ☐ Provide at least one step-free entrance.
- ☐ Ensure accessible routes connect parking, sidewalks, and building entrances.
- ☐ Minimize or eliminate threshold height changes.
- ☐ Design pathways to accommodate wheelchairs, strollers, walkers, and rolling carts.
- ☐ Provide weather protection at entrances.
- ☐ Ensure entry doors provide a minimum 32-inch clear opening.
- ☐ Use lever-style door hardware.
- ☐ Separate locking mechanisms from door handles.
- ☐ Consider the height of peepholes and/or video doorbells.
- ☐ Provide highly visible address numbers.
- ☐ Design entry lighting for safety and visibility.
- ☐ Use stable, slip-resistant walking surfaces.

Bedrooms*

- ☐ Provide lighting controls near room entrances.
- ☐ Incorporate pathways suitable for nighttime navigation.
- ☐ Include convenient access to electrical outlets and charging locations.
- ☐ Provide operable windows that support ventilation and emergency egress.
- ☐ Maximize access to natural daylight.
- ☐ Provide carbon monoxide protection where required.

Bathrooms*

General Accessibility

- ☐ Provide sufficient clear floor space for maneuvering.
- ☐ Consider wheelchair-accessible sink designs.
- ☐ Design mirrors to serve users of varying heights.
- ☐ Consider comfort-height toilet options.

Safety Features

- ☐ Provide structural backing for future grab bar installation.



- ☐ Install GFCI-protected outlets near water sources.
- ☐ Use slip-resistant flooring.
- ☐ Include motion-sensor or low-level nighttime lighting.

Bathing Areas

- ☐ Utilize lever-style plumbing controls.
- ☐ Specify adjustable handheld showerheads.
- ☐ Consider shower seating options.
- ☐ Design zero-threshold shower entries wherever feasible.
- ☐ Provide adequate moisture and drainage control.

Kitchen*

Accessibility & Reach

- ☐ Design cabinet space so frequently used items are within easy reach.
- ☐ Incorporate pull-out shelving and drawers where possible.
- ☐ Use easy-grip cabinet and drawer hardware.
- ☐ Consider seated work areas.
- ☐ Provide varied counter heights where feasible.

Appliances

- ☐ Provide appliance locations that minimize bending, reaching, and lifting.
- ☐ Locate microwave ovens at safe, accessible heights.
- ☐ Use front-mounted appliance controls.
- ☐ Appliance configurations should improve accessibility.

Safety

- ☐ Provide task lighting at sinks, cooktops, preparation areas, and islands.
- ☐ Use lever, touch, or sensor-operated faucets.
- ☐ Consider slip-resistant flooring and standing surfaces.
- ☐ Provide an accessible location for a fire extinguisher.

Storage

- ☐ Maximize visibility and accessibility of stored items.
- ☐ Minimize dependence on upper cabinets for daily-use items.
- ☐ Design pantry storage to prevent excessive bending or reaching.



Living Area*

- ☐ Provide unobstructed circulation routes.
- ☐ Design rooms to accommodate mobility aids.
- ☐ Ensure ample ambient and task lighting.
- ☐ Locate switches and controls within accessible reach ranges.
- ☐ Manage locations of outlets to reduce trip hazards.
- ☐ Design window coverings that are easy to operate.

Hallways

- ☐ Maintain at least 36 inches of clear passage width.
- ☐ Provide adequate lighting throughout circulation routes.
- ☐ Include night lighting along major travel paths.
- ☐ Avoid obstructions and clutter.

Stairs

- ☐ Provide handrails on both sides of stairways.
- ☐ Extend handrails beyond top and bottom risers.
- ☐ Design stair surfaces to be slip resistant.
- ☐ Provide visual contrast at stair edges.
- ☐ Include lighting controls at both ends of stairways.
- ☐ Consider future accommodation of chair lifts or elevators.

Dining Areas

- ☐ Allow clear circulation paths around eating areas.
- ☐ Design dining spaces that can accommodate multiple uses and varied household needs.
- ☐ Ensure adequate lighting for dining, reading, and work activities.

Closets & Storage

- ☐ Provide adequate, reachable lighting inside storage areas.
- ☐ Use adjustable shelving systems.
- ☐ Organize storage to reduce climbing, crouching, and reaching.

Laundry Areas



- ☐ Locate laundry facilities on the primary living level whenever possible.
- ☐ Minimize lifting, carrying, and stair travel.
- ☐ Provide adequate task lighting.
- ☐ Ensure dryer venting is accessible for maintenance.
- ☐ Include smoke and carbon monoxide protection where appropriate.

Garage & Utility Spaces

- ☐ Provide automatic garage door operation.
- ☐ Ensure adequate general and task lighting.
- ☐ Design clear pathways between vehicles and entries.
- ☐ Provide smoke and carbon monoxide detection where appropriate.
- ☐ Label electrical panels clearly.
- ☐ Use low-profile or flush thresholds.
- ☐ Incorporate organized storage systems to reduce floor clutter.

Outdoor Spaces & Shared Areas

Circulation

- ☐ Maintain smooth, continuous pedestrian routes.
- ☐ Keep pathways free of trip hazards.
- ☐ Design pathways to be a minimum of 3 feet wide where feasible.
- ☐ Provide accessible routes between key destinations.

Accessibility

- ☐ Provide handrails where grade changes occur.
- ☐ Consider ramps where step-free access is not available.
- ☐ Design ramps to meet ADA slope recommendations.
- ☐ Incorporate bicycle storage where appropriate.