

Learn more at www.AgingWisdom.com

Aging in place: Remodeling your kitchen



If your goal is to “age in place,” now is the time to consider some remodeling. And no room demands more physical agility than the kitchen. It’s impossible to foresee how your body may change over time. But making a few thoughtful accommodations now could extend your comfort and independence. Plus, such an investment may well forestall or eliminate a move to assisted living. That’s spending wisely!

Thinking of the most likely issues to arise as we age—you may be feeling some of these already!—consider these kitchen improvements:

Visual impairments

- **Lighting.** Overhead ceiling lights are notorious for creating shadows. Install under-the-cabinet lighting to illuminate food-prep areas.
- **Pullout shelves.** Whether in a cabinet or refrigerator, pullouts allow you to bring items stored in the nether regions into closer view. Lazy susans can also help in this regard.

Bone and/or joint issues: Arthritis and/or osteoporosis affect bending, lifting, and gripping.

- **Microwaves.** Relocating a microwave to countertop level reduces the need to lift heavy bowls up or bring hot containers down.
- **Stovetops.** Stove controls on the front edge eliminate reaching across the stovetop. Look for flat-top burners or continuous-grate burners so pots can be slid across without lifting. Induction ranges win for safety, efficiency, and cleaning.
- **Sink and faucet.** Get a sink with a single-handle faucet and pull-out spray hose. Better yet, a hand-wave/motion-sensor faucet. Minimize heavy carries by placing the sink near the stove; the extendable hose can then fill pots in place.
- **Drawer pulls.** Replace small knobs with loops, levers, or D-shaped bar pulls.

Balance and fatigue

- **Side-by-side refrigerator.** Reduce the need to bend and reach by giving commonly used freezer items a mid-height shelf, just like items in the refrigerator space.
- **Multi-height counters.** Create a workstation that has knee space underneath to permit sitting while you work.

For expert advice on remodeling, you can also consult a certified aging-in-place specialist.

Weighing the pros and cons of aging in place? Give us a call at 206-456-5155.



Aging Wisdom —
Your Experts in
Aging Well

206-456-5155

Aging Wisdom supports individuals and families in King and south Snohomish Counties as they plan for aging.



Learn more