

PREVENT FALLS, FIRES AND INJURIES FOR \$25 OR LESS? YES!
STAYING POWER'S BUDGET TIPS FOR AGING IN PLACE

The newly published book [*Staying Power: Age-Proof Your Home for Comfort, Safety and Style*](#) celebrates changes on the cheap. It's a treasure trove of ideas that defy the common complaint home adaptations are "too expensive."* Many "fixes" involve everyday items people have around the house or they can pick up locally. Below are many examples, price-shopped in popular big-box stores over the Internet. For more comprehensive lists of problem-solving home adaptations, see the book.

Prevent Falls

For \$25 or less, try an 18-inch grab bar, half a dozen rolls of friction tape, four packs of safety treads, a plastic laundry basket to hold shoes by the front door or stow toys, or a couple of boot trays to keep the floor dry and shoes out of the way.

For \$50 or less, get a shower chair or bath bench ... motion-sensitive exterior floodlights ... a ready-made slipcover to make an easy chair stand out against the wall or floor.

For \$100 or less, spring for a ready-made slipcover to make the whole *sofa* stand out!

Prevent Fires and Heat-Related Injuries

For \$25 or less, pick up a pair of insulated oven mitts; try extra-long BBQ mitts ... or try flameless candles or tea lights for entertaining.

For \$100 or less, get a handheld shower head (plus a little more for a wall bar mount), or an anti-scald valve for the hot water tank (ask a plumber to install).

Make Life Easier

For \$25 or less, try a rocking T-shaped knife or easy-grip bread knife (www.arthritissupplies.com) ... wall switch extender (also good for little grandkids) ... pneumatic uplift seat cushion (power options cost a bit more) ... half a dozen rocker switches for the lights ... a few automatic night lights or a lighted doorbell ... sheer drapery panel to cut glare or insulated drapery panel to muffle ambient sound ... or a pair of colorful hand weights to build upper-body strength.

For \$50 or less, get D-shaped cabinet handles for up to a dozen kitchen cabinets ... a loud and/or vibrating timer, maybe with a clock ... a big-button phone that amplifies sound ... an adjustable elevated toilet seat.

For \$100 or less, get a ready-made roll-out shelf for kitchen cupboards.

For \$250 or less, improve something you do all day long and get a good quality ADA-compliant single-lever faucet or tap for the kitchen or bathroom

*Fears of high cost probably come from thinking about major renovations. At that point, people have to weigh the cost of changes against the costs of a move – or a serious injury or a limited life. According to the National Association of Home Builders (U.S.), costs for major renovations such as entry ramps and kitchen upgrades vary widely by area, contractor and specifications, making it hard to provide firm numbers on the cost of common big age-proofing projects. Stair lift installations and roll-in showers, can cost thousands of dollars, but costs vary widely depending on the circumstances. For any custom work, estimates are needed.