

THINGS TO CONSIDER

are not ideal for people with bad hips or who have difficulty sitting or balancing in a seated position.

WALK-IN TUBS

Some of the biggest confusion about aging in place centers on bathroom choices. One example is the hugely popular walk-in tub, which at first might seem like a brilliant idea.

Think about how you take a bath: You generally fill the tub with water before you climb in. But with a walk-in, you enter first and close the door — then you sit there waiting for the water to fill. When you're done, you have to drain out all the water before you can reopen the door to exit. Manufacturers recognize the issue because they list speedy drain times in their advertising. But not everyone is comfortable with this arrangement.

Beyond that, walk-in tubs are pricey — around \$10,000 installed — so consider the difficulties and limitations before you shell out the money. **The best solution is a curbless shower, with no hurdles to overcome when entering or exiting.**

BUILT-IN SHOWER SEATS

These are an increasingly common feature, yet are often not utilized the way they were intended because most seats are placed too far from the showerhead and controls. As a result, most are typically used to prop up your foot while shaving your legs or as a big shelf. A movable seat is a better (and less expensive) solution. You can adjust the placement to your needs or remove it to maximize maneuvering space. To optimize a seat, you also need a handheld shower handle that you move instead of moving yourself back and forth. This should be mounted on an adjustable grab bar, not mounted on a slide bar that won't support you.



Aging in place is almost universally accepted as a good idea because the benefits are so clear: the freedom and dignity that come from staying in your own home, the ability to make your own decisions, the maintenance of friendships and community ties.

by Louis Tenenbaum, a carpenter and former contractor, is one of the nation's leading speakers and consultants advocating aging in place.

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