Home Design Guide

SENIOR LIVING FOR COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE

SUNRISE
SENIOR LIVING

THE JOY OF EVERY DAY
At Sunrise Senior Living, each community is a unique home. We emphasize comfortable, convenient environments, from beautiful spaces to layouts designed for seniors’ needs. It’s one of the many things that make Sunrise the best choice in senior living.

Sunrise has created this design guide to help create inviting, comfortable personal spaces within your home and in our communities. Our team of interior design experts partnered with HGTV host and professional designer Emily Henderson to address design needs that include:

- Planning a Smooth Transition
- Strategies for Safety and Comfort
- Design Solutions for Aging Eyesight
- Creating Familiar Spaces for Memory Support
- Making Your Space Unique

Look for Emily’s senior-friendly design tips as you explore this guide.

Emily Henderson is the Season 5 winner of HGTV’s Design Star, and now hosts the channel’s Secrets from a Stylist. In each episode, she customizes a room layer by layer, creating a style unique to the occupant. Emily owns a design firm and writes the style blog StyleByEmilyHenderson.com, where she shares daily style secrets, trends and personal stories.
Dine with Multipurpose in Mind. Add flexibility with a dining table that has drop-leaf sides or shelves for extra storage.

Stylize Your Storage. Disguise storage in a chic ottoman with hidden compartments. Add a tray to the top and it becomes a coffee table, or place it at the foot of the bed with a stylish throw for extra seating.

At Sunrise, we do everything we can to ease each resident’s transition to their new home. Moving to a senior living community may be the right decision, but it can also be stressful. Meeting new neighbors, sleeping in a new bedroom and learning the ins and outs of the community takes time.

We encourage our residents to express their personal taste and style by bringing their own furniture and decorating their new apartment—right down to the paint color.

TIPS FOR DOWNSIZING

Over time, we all accumulate furniture, clothing and a variety of personal items. Moving is a good opportunity to identify what’s truly important to keep—and offer the rest to friends and family, or donate to a charitable organization.

… get the specifics on the size and layout of the new home. Plan to bring only those items that will fit comfortably.

… create a must-have list tailored to favorite daily activities—for example, avid readers may want to include bookshelves.

… get creative. Recreate the look of a previous home with fewer pieces, such as the loveseat (instead of the entire sofa set and chair).

Do

Don’t

… make packing decisions alone. Enlist someone who’s less emotionally attached to items that might not fit or be useful in a smaller home.

… leave loved ones out of the process. If you’re helping a senior move to a new community, let them make as many decisions as possible.

… waste money on new accessories. Sentimental photos, art, blankets and other mementos make a new home feel familiar.

Emily’s Tip

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Planning a Smooth Transition

Sunrise suggests this approach to furniture placement in our typical one-bedroom suite:

LEGEND

A. Bed
B. Nightstand
C. Dresser
D. Chair
E. End Table
F. Upholstered Chairs
G. Ottoman/Coffee Table
H. TV Console
I. Dining Table
J. Dining Chairs

Tip: For Downsizing

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Sunrise champions quality of life for seniors—and safety is a primary concern. Many seniors face physical challenges like limited mobility, balance, sight and hearing. Keep these tips in mind when decorating a new home:

**Finesse the Furniture.** Place major pieces so they can be used for balance while moving through the room, and keep pathways clear—particularly if walkers or wheelchairs are necessary.

**Improve Access.** Place frequently used items in waist-high cabinets and drawers. Keep phones near beds and sitting areas. Situate lamps for unrestricted access, and ensure switches are easy to operate. Switch dresser knobs to drawer pulls for easier grip.

**Prevent Falls.** Avoid unsecured scatter rugs. All rugs should be non-slip and contrast in color with the flooring beneath. Tuck electrical cords behind furniture or use cable management products, which are available in most office supply stores.

**Increase Visibility.** Create strong contrasts in color between major pieces of furniture, walls, drapes and floors. During the day, allow as much natural light as possible in living areas. At night, illuminate the path between bed and bathroom with motion-sensor nightlights.

**Create a Fall-Proof Bathroom.** Place seating in front of the sink and in the shower for easy, comfortable grooming. Install non-slip strips on the shower floor and grab bars near the shower, tub and toilet.

**Couch it in Comfort.** Start with a great sofa that’s both functional and stylish. Avoid couches and chairs that are low and deep—they may seem comfy, but can be hard to get in and out of. Also, nothing too delicate; think sturdy, well proportioned and upholstered for easy leaning.

**Create Chair Rail Chic.** Disguise a handrail as a chair rail design element. Paint the top half of the wall a lighter color than the bottom, and install the handrail where the colors meet. The result: sophistication and safety!

**Get Well Rounded.** Round furniture keeps layouts open and airy—and avoids the hazard of sharp corners. Rectangular glass-top tables are also hard to spot and can cause injuries.
Sunrise offers The View, a unique design program for our residents with vision challenges. The View package consists of design elements such as dark curtains to outline windows, light switch plates that contrast with the walls, large-print wall calendars, talking clocks and large-button phones.

Create strong color contrasts between major pieces of furniture, walls, drapes and floors. The same applies to different pieces of bedding—and even in the bathroom, where the toilet seat should be noticeably darker or lighter than the floor.

Outline windows with curtain fabrics that stand out from the walls. Add cording to couches and chairs to better define these pieces.

Natural light not only helps keep things visible—it improves sleep cycles.

Keep reading areas well lit. Adhesive under-cabinet lighting in the kitchen helps with food preparation as well.

Did you know that aging eyes are less able to distinguish blues and greens? Keep the color palette warm with reds and golds.

Nightlights and motion-sensor lights—especially between the bedroom and bathroom—make for easier navigation and reduce the risk of falls.

Artwork and other accessories should be bright, crisp and clear.

Position reflective furniture to minimize glare. Avoid glass-top tables, which reflect light and can also be difficult to see in dim rooms.

Sunrise encourages and empowers independence. Our visually impaired residents will find it easier to navigate on their own with the help of these design tips:

1. Create strong color contrasts between major pieces of furniture, walls, drapes and floors. The same applies to different pieces of bedding—and even in the bathroom, where the toilet seat should be noticeably darker or lighter than the floor.
2. Outline windows with curtain fabrics that stand out from the walls. Add cording to couches and chairs to better define these pieces.
3. Natural light not only helps keep things visible—it improves sleep cycles.
4. Keep reading areas well lit. Adhesive under-cabinet lighting in the kitchen helps with food preparation as well.
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Emily’s Tip

Light the Way. Put sconces near the bed to free up nightstand space and prevent fumbling for the switch. Paper or fabric shades eliminate harsh light that causes eyestrain. Tuck away cords to avoid tripping hazards.

Create Colorful Contrasts. Wall colors can be the most important decorating element in a room, and contrast is key. Walls, trim and floors should all stand out from each other. Neutral or warm palettes are best for a decline in eyesight.
At Sunrise, we know that Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of memory loss affect every one of our residents differently. Our team values each senior’s individual needs. We believe the home environment can also be a therapeutic tool to create security, promote self esteem and engage the senses.

**Smell**
- Familiar, pleasant scents like coffee or popcorn can serve as calming aromatherapy.
- While flame candles present a fire hazard, scented electric candles mimic the flicker of a real flame and release a pleasant aroma.

**Taste**
- Primary colors enhance appetite. Solid yellow bowls and dishes contrast best with food.
- Cups and bowls with two handles improve ease of use.
- No faking—plastic fruits, vegetables, or even berries on silk plants can be confused with real food.

**Sight**
- Familiar photos and meaningful décor can spark memories and conversation.
- Busy patterns can create frustration and confusion; avoid designs with dark spots that may be misinterpreted as dirt or holes.

**Touch**
- Textures stimulate memory; items upholstered with touches of lace, fur and even denim can evoke particular life events.
- Tactile wall art encourages touch and sparks conversation.

Sunrise offers Reminiscence Neighborhoods for our residents with memory loss. These secure areas incorporate many of the sensory elements mentioned here. Reminiscence Neighborhoods are also designed so that resident suites are located next to living and dining areas, promoting easy navigation and social interaction.
Making Your Space Unique

Above all, Sunrise builds and designs its communities to warmly welcome each and every resident. Once safety, convenience and overall support are incorporated into the design, it’s time for the fun part: individual style.

LET PERSONALITY SHINE

• Décor should reflect the resident’s tastes and interests—from quilting to figurine collections to favorite artists.
• Personalized interiors also provide conversation starters for visitors.

ENCOURAGE SOCIAL INTERACTION

• Ensure plenty of guest seating.
• Group furniture in a way that encourages conversation, such as placing seating in a semicircle.
• Display interesting art, awards, photos and other personal items in a way that sparks conversation. Stack photo albums where visitors will feel comfortable flipping through them.

At Sunrise, we hang a personalized shadow box outside each suite to showcase residents’ unique stories, talents and interests. The piece not only encourages conversation with neighbors—it also enhances our residents’ feeling of familiarity and belonging.

Emily’s Tip

Use Simple, Meaningful Accessories. Drape a handmade blanket on a sofa, or fill decorative baskets with favorite mementos.
Personalize Wall Art. Everyone loves to see favorite memories displayed on their walls. Opt for larger, framed photos instead of small pictures. Choose a palette of frames and arrange in a grid for a beautiful impression.

Give Bedding a Boost. Texture variety makes a bed warm and inviting. Balance the pillows at the top with a throw at the foot, and add cashmere, faux fur or chenille. Consider a soft, upholstered headboard for an inexpensive way to create a rich look.

Sunrise believes growing older doesn’t mean that home should be any less comfortable, stylish or inviting. We encourage our residents and their families to use this guide to create homes that celebrate the past, present and future!

For more tips from Sunrise and Emily Henderson, and to see a list of Emily’s recommended products, visit: SunriseSeniorLiving.com/Design
The Sunrise Design Team is a full-service, in-house interior design firm with expertise in aesthetically pleasing, functional and safe home design for seniors. With the utmost dedication to our Principles of Service and Core Values, the team creates homes that incorporate:

- Thoughtfully selected design features, finishes, furniture, fabrics, window treatments and more
- Space planning and placement of lighting, art and accessories in a manner that best meets seniors’ needs
- Full compliance with relevant building codes and furnishing standards