

## Appliances

When selecting or installing a new appliance consider the following:

- Front-loading washers and dryers are easier to use for people of all heights or with disabilities.
- Select appliances with easy to read control buttons and/or have an audible clicking sound when being set, making use easier for the hearing impaired.
- Select ovens and microwaves with side-hinged doors; provide a pull-out shelf directly below or next to the oven to help when removing hot food.

## Miscellaneous

- Move electrical outlets and jacks so they are 18"-24" above the floor for easier access.
- Lower light switches and thermostats to 42"-48" above the floor for easier use for people of all heights.
- Change flooring to wood, vinyl, laminate, non-slip tile, low-pile carpet to prevent slipping.

## Multi-Story Residences

In cases of multi-story residences or homes with grade/elevation changes such as "sunken" living rooms or stepped entryways, barriers may be reduced in severity in the following ways:

### Interior

- Install a residential lift, elevator, or chair-lift on a stairway.
- Install permanent or portable ramps or wedges for uneven living spaces.
- Add dual-height peep holes in front doors.

### Exterior

- Add a ramp next to or covering the stairs.
- Create a new entry point using a ramp.
- Install effective lighting.

**For more information on universal design features you can include in a residential building please contact:**

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**Community  
Development  
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**Universal  
Design**  
Features for  
Residential

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## Universal Design Features

There are numerous Universal Design Features. The following are some suggested alterations that can make a home easier to use:

### Doorways

- Maximize doorway widths (32" minimum; 36" preferred) by either:
  - ◊ Replace door hinges with "swing-clear" type.
  - ◊ Replace regular doors with pocket doors.
  - ◊ Replace exterior "French doors" with a sliding door.
- Lower threshold transitions to ¼"-½" and/or add angled wedges to ease movement between rooms.
- Change door knobs to lever style handles, which can be operated with a forearm, elbow or wrist.
- Install a second "peep hole" in the front door 42"-48" above the ground for people of all heights.

## Kitchens and Bathrooms

### • **Showers**

- ◊ Install adjustable height showerheads with hand-held feature.
- ◊ Install single control lever type faucet handle.
- ◊ Lower threshold transition into stall.
- ◊ Install grab bars/handles, contrasting color to the wall for easier access.

### • **Sinks**

- ◊ Replace multiple handle faucets with single control lever type sink hardware.
- ◊ Add insulation to exposed water lines beneath sinks to prevent accidental scalding.

### • **Toilets**

- ◊ Increase toilet seat height to 16"-17" off the floor by installing a new toilet, toilet seat or adding an insert at the base of the toilet.

### • **Vanities/Countertops and Cabinets**

- ◊ Create countertops of differing heights: 42"-45" standing height, the standard 36" work surface height, and 30"-32" height for users in seated positions.
- ◊ Create an area of a countertop with leg space underneath for users in seated positions.
- ◊ Change cabinet hardware to "U" shaped pulls for easier grasping.



### Building Permits:

For information on obtaining building permits please contact the Community Development Department Building Division

Building Division

General Information: 707 678-7000

Inspection Requests: 707 678-7005

Facsimile: 707 678-0960