

Part 2: Bathrooms

Remodeling Trends for Baby Boomers

By Bella Babot

Universal Design, Aging in Place and a Barrier Free Home are the keys to your ability to stay in the home you love.

Baby boomers want to stay in their home (Aging in Place), enjoy their beloved community and neighbors and create a safe haven to call home for their "sunset years."

In the Winter 2014 issue of *ActiveOver50*, we focused on remodeling trends for kitchens. In this article, we focus on remodeling trends for bathrooms.

- In the bathroom, the trend is for doors that go away. Whether they fold to the side, swing up, recess in or otherwise open, getting them out of the way while one is accessing what's behind them makes the surrounding area significantly easier to maneuver around.
- A curbless shower without elevation changes (no tiled "curb" at the entrance to the shower to trip over); a seat to sit on while showering with a removable, adjustable shower head.
- Grab bars would discreetly be included in the shower/bath area, and unless you tell your guests what they are, they simply look like an elegant fixture that seamlessly blends in with the others.
- Rooms just for the toilet are on trend again and require enough space in the toilet area for a person in a walker or wheelchair to turn around. A separate room for a toilet can be a unique design element in your bathroom if you have the room to enclose it.

There are so many choices in toilets! The trend is definitely comfort or right-height seats and, given the choice, the



many additional options becoming available include heated and self-closing seats, personal hygiene, dual-flush, etc. When designing the area around the toilet, leave enough room for a clear turning radius for a wheelchair or space for a walker.

This is not only a Universal design feature, it's actually much more comfortable for anyone using the toilet. (Have you ever tried to reach behind you to get to the toilet paper because the space is too cramped next to the toilet for a paper holder?)



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- No-threshold showers/barrier free showers are on trend and getting "hotter." The shower spray should be planned carefully based on the size, position, direction and amount of water flowing, the extent of waterproof layer, the slope of floor, type and location of drains plus the plan for doors, curtains or open entries. This is a wonderful and luxurious choice that looks beautiful and will ensure a safe entry to and from the shower.

When you make any remodeling improvements in your home, make sure those modifications include barrier free design details so that all of your extended family and friends can comfortably gather at your home and enjoy being with you and your family.

Harrell Remodeling is a full service design+build residential remodeling company based in Mountain View, CA. For more information, call 650.230.2900. Visit harrell-remodeling.com.