



What to Look for in Assisted Living: A Checklist

Accommodations

What to Look For:

- Clean and comfortable living quarters with nice furnishings and natural lighting.
- Mobility assistance modifications such as grab bars, ramps, and wheelchair accessibility.
- Attentive staff who are readily available to assist with housekeeping, grooming, bathing, and other daily tasks as needed.

What to Ask:

- What types of living arrangements are available? Private rooms, shared rooms, apartments?
- Are the accommodations furnished, or can residents bring their own furniture and personal items?
- What is the process for submitting maintenance requests? How quickly are issues typically resolved?
- Do you offer housekeeping and/or laundry services?

Who to Talk to:

- Administrators

Care Quality

What to Look For:

- Staff who are kind, compassionate, and engaged with residents.
- Clinicians of various specialties to support residents' care needs.
- Residents with more comprehensive care needs are consistently with caregivers rather than by themselves.
- Residents look content, well-groomed, and comfortable.
- Residents are wearing clean clothes.
- Staff are consistently available to help residents.

What to Ask:

- What support is available for activities of daily living, like bathing, dressing, and medication management?
- Is there a registered nurse on staff 24/7?
- How are resident care plans developed? How often are they reviewed and updated?
- What specialized care options are available? Do you offer memory care services for residents with dementia or Alzheimer's?
- What is the process for handling medical emergencies and coordinating with healthcare providers?

Who to Talk to:

- Administrators
- Directors of Nursing
- Family members of other residents

Dining

What to Look For:

- Meals look fresh, nutrient-dense, and tasty.
- Dining areas that are clean, comfortable, and provide a pleasant atmosphere.
- Residents look like they're enjoying their meals.
- Residents are socializing with each other and enjoying each other's company.

What to Ask:

- Can I see a sample menu of your facility's food offerings?
- How often does the menu change?
- Are there staff dietitians or nutritionists to ensure meals are balanced and nutritious?
- Can the kitchen accommodate special dietary requirements such as low-sodium, diabetic-friendly, or vegetarian diets?
- Is there an option for a pureed diet for those who suffer from dysphagia?
- Can residents choose their mealtimes and are there flexible dining areas?
- How are resident preferences and feedback collected and addressed?
- Are guests allowed to join residents for meals?
- How does the facility handle food allergies and cross-contamination concerns?
- Are there themed meals or special dining events to enhance the dining experience?

Who to Talk to:

- Staff dietitian or nutritionist
- Administrators
- Chefs
- Food service providers



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Amenities

What to Look For:

- Communal spaces apart from dining areas.
- Convenient onsite offerings, like a barber shop and gym.
- Well-maintained (i.e., no weeds or trip hazards) outdoor spaces that residents can enjoy safely.
- The assisted living building feels more like a community rather than a traditional facility.

What to Ask:

- What amenities do you offer?
- Are fitness facilities available? Do you offer custom exercise programs or personal trainers?
- Do you offer transportation services? How often can residents access this service?
- Are there any on-site services such as a beauty salon, barber shop, library, or movie theater?
- Is there a communal space for family gatherings or private events?
- Do you have Wi-Fi? Is it free for residents?
- Are spiritual services or religious activities available onsite or nearby?
- Do you offer free parking?

Who to Talk to:

- Administrators



Activities

What to Look For:

- Residents are social with each other and with staff.
- Residents appear happy and engaged.
- Residents are actively participating in activities rather than isolated in their rooms.

What to Ask:

- What are your policies on visitation and communication with family members?
- What types of activities or programs do you offer and how often do they occur?
- Can you personalize activities based on different abilities?
- Can I see a sample activities and events calendar?
- How does the facility encourage resident participation in activities?
- Are there opportunities for residents to suggest or lead activities and events?
- Does the facility offer outings or trips to local events, attractions, shopping, etc.?
- Can family members participate in or attend activities or events?

Who to Talk to:

- Activities Directors
- Administrators



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