



equal-opportunity DESIGN



HANDS FREE

Eliminate hard-to-turn handles with the Wellspring Touchless faucet (\$740). Kohler; 800/456-4537; www.kohler.com

Universal design should not be associated with sterile or institutional environments, says Rosemarie Rossetti, Ph.D, of the Universal Design Living Laboratory in Columbus, Ohio. "It's for everybody," she says. "The design itself is exciting in terms of the careful use of space," she says. "[It's] careful design without extravagance."

The trend toward universal design is gaining popularity as consumers—specifically baby boomers—are choosing to stay in their homes as they grow older. Here are some easy way to incorporate universal design into your home:

- * Consider visitability. One entrance should be step-free, and doorways should be at least 36 inches wide.
- * "Rethink workflow patterns," Rossetti says. In the kitchen she recommends varying the height of countertops, having more than one sink, and allowing for plenty of room to move around.
- * Create an open floor plan by eliminating unnecessary doorways and letting rooms blend together to form open areas.
- * Have at least one bedroom and a full bathroom on the main level.



EASY ACCESS

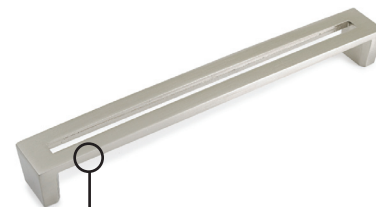
Eliminate bending over to take out the trash with this wastebasket rollout from the Kraftmaid Passport Series. Kraftmaid; 888/562-7744; www.kraftmaid.com

"We have to debunk the myth that it's a more expensive way to build a home and that it only applies to persons with disabilities. [Universal design] just makes it easier for everyone across the board. It certainly does not apply only to disabled people."

—Patricia Rizzo, residential applications specialist and manager of the Lighting Research Center's Residential Lighting Program at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

LIGHTING DESIGN TIPS

- * The biggest challenge with lighting for a universal setting is incorporating more light without glare. "You need more light, but you need it to be more shielded," says Patricia Rizzo, residential applications specialist. The best way to do this is to focus on indirect lighting, Rizzo says. Some other ideas include:
- * Use low-level LEDs to light up hallway floors.
- * Provide a strip of light behind each bathroom grab bar with LEDs.
- * If you have motion lighting at an entrance, make sure it's diffused so you won't be blinded.
- * Light switches should be no higher than 42 inches from the floor.



OVERSIZE DESIGN

It's easy to grasp long, flat hardware like the large Centinel pull in brushed nickel (\$18.50). Atlas

FURNISHING DOS AND DON'TS

- * Choose stable chairs that don't rock or swivel.
- * Avoid recliners. If you don't have leg strength you can't push the footrest back down.
- * Find furniture with wide armrests to hold onto as you transfer into a seated position.
- * In the kitchen pick a smooth floor surface, so if you're rolling across the floor with something hot in your lap it won't spill.
- * Choose carpets with a low density so wheels don't get slowed down. Find rugs with a rubber back so they won't slide, a low transition to the floor, and no fringe.



GRAND OPENING

The i-Series can opener (\$19.99) simplifies the process of opening cans. It sports nonslip handles and a magnet to grab the lid before it drops into your food. OXO; 800/545-4411; www.oxo.com



PERFECT FLOW

With the Pause Control handheld shower (\$50.75) it's simple to control the water pressure. Home Care by Moen; 800/289-6636; www.moen.com

SITTING PRETTY

The Pinoir Comfort Height toilet (\$390.75) is 17 inches high—the same height as a standard chair. Kohler; 800/456-4537;

WATER WISE

The ergonomic design of the Outdoor Pour & Store watering can (\$24.99) makes it easier to water plants. OXO; 800/545-4411; www.oxo.com

