



Homes For All Ages + Abilities

A Guide to Universal Design



Universal Design means you can update, remodel or build a home that can be used safely and with ease by the most people. Universal Design is for everyone.

This Guide will help you imagine the ways you can update, remodel or build a home using Universal Design ideas.

When you update, remodel or build:

- Plan for changing life needs.
- Install easy-to-use features.
- Increase your home's value.

Universal Design meets the needs of Bowdoinham.

- Our older adults want to stay in town.
- Younger families want housing that's safe and flexible as family needs change.
- Everyone wants housing that adapts to family, friends, and visitors with different needs and abilities.



Universal Design access to Gazebo at Bowdoinham's Waterfront.

Examples: Universal Design for Homes

UPDATE



Install single handle faucets for ease of use.

REMODEL



Use pocket doors.

BUILD



Construct an open floor plan.

More Examples to update, remodel or build:

Entrance p. 4-5
Kitchen p. 6-7
Bathroom p. 8-9

Entrance Ideas

UPDATE



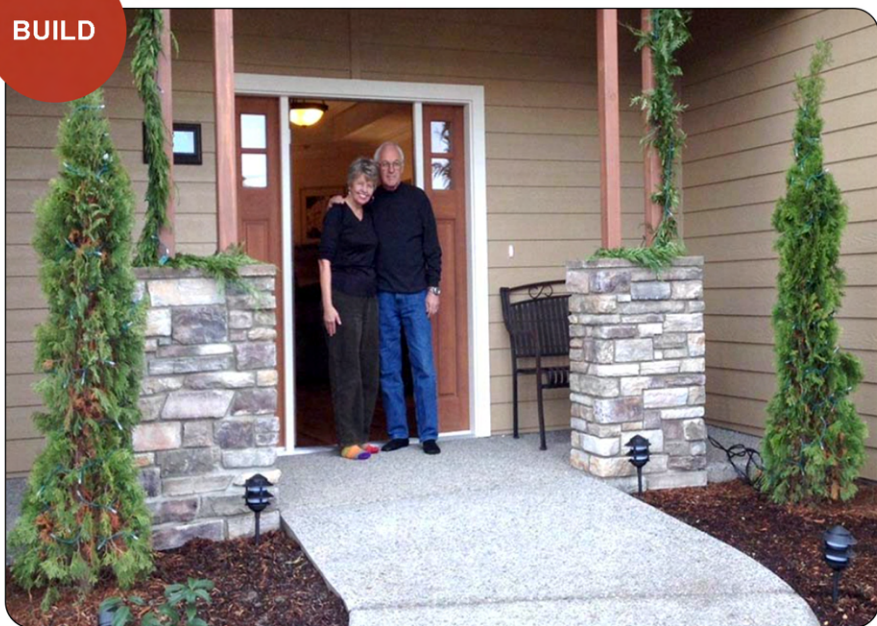
Install a keypad lock.

REMODEL



Install a ramp at one entrance.

BUILD



Create a no step entry.



When building a new home, involve your contractor as early as possible. For example, to create a grade level entry, site location is critical. If your house design works well with the site, a grade level entry does not need to increase costs. For a few more loads of fill, you can eliminate ramps and stairs at the entrance.



Doug Tourtelotte
Contractor

Kitchen Ideas

UPDATE



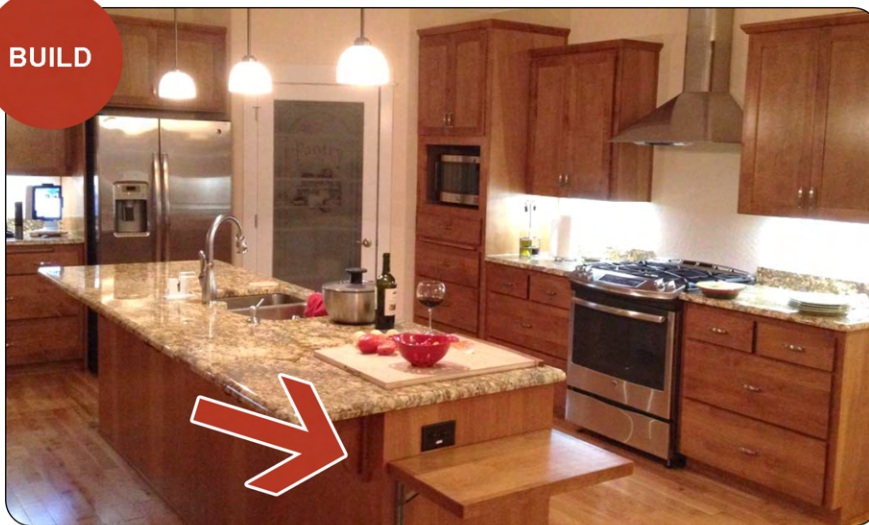
Replace knobs with pulls on drawers and cabinets.

REMODEL



Replace cabinets with pullout drawers.

BUILD



Include multi-level work stations.



I'm delighted with the recent changes I made to my kitchen. I switched my lower cabinets to drawers, attached pull handles to cabinets and drawers, and added task lighting and windows. I love the way these changes all make it easier and more cheerful to use the kitchen, even though I didn't know I was adopting Universal Design! In the future, I plan to add a lever-style handle to the outside kitchen door.



Kate Cutko
Bowdoinham Resident

Bathroom Ideas

UPDATE

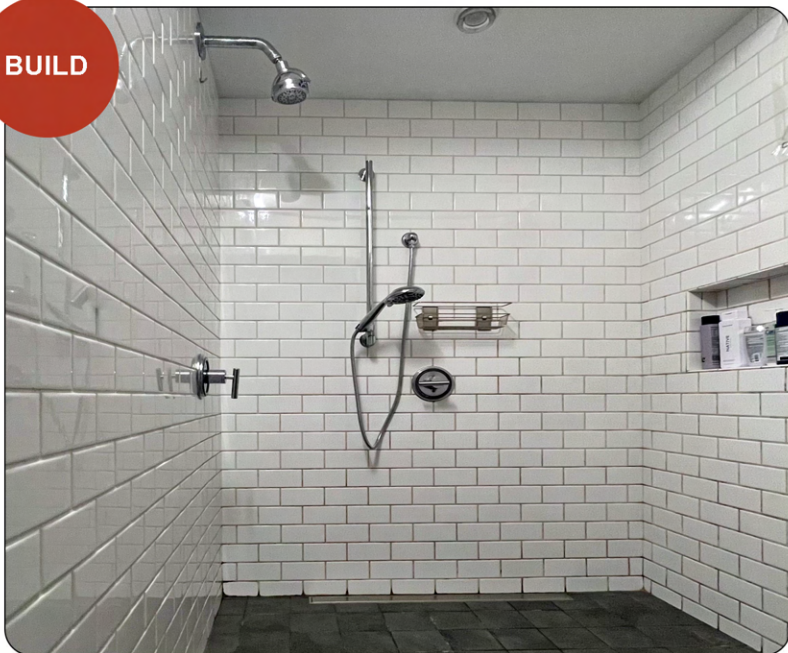


Install grab bar by toilet.

REMODEL



Install sink with open space below.

BUILD

Install doorless shower with no-step entry.



When we made changes to our home, we paid special attention to planning out the kitchen and bathroom and installed wider doorways. We used all the Universal Design ideas in this booklet plus some others. Guests of all abilities can easily enter and feel comfortable in our home and so do we! My advice: When you make changes to your own home, pay special attention to planning out the kitchen and bathrooms and install wider doorways.



Wayne Sanford
Bowdoinham Resident

You can start small and learn as you go.

- Think about your home and what might make it work better for your family, friends, and visitors.
 - Start with 1 or 2 easy changes you could make.
 - If you're not sure where to start, check the Resource List on the back or talk with Bowdoinham's Older Adults Services Coordinator.
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HOME CHECK: Ask yourself

- ✓ Can someone using crutches, a walker or a wheelchair easily get into your home?
- ✓ Is your kitchen set up so you don't have to bend or reach beyond your comfort?
- ✓ Can old and young and people of all abilities use your bathroom with ease and safety?
- ✓ Are there Universal Design ideas in this guide you could use to make your home more welcoming for all?

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We installed a front ramp to make it easier for my husband Bob to come and go once he had limited mobility. After he passed, I decided to keep it because older family and friends preferred it over the stairs and it was easier when carrying heavy loads. And we may need it for ourselves in the future!



Barbara Cree Rollins
Bowdoinham Resident

Universal Design is for everyone.

Universal Design ideas are used in many ways to create:

- Home features
- Open spaces
- Buildings
- Consumer products

The aim is to serve as many people as possible with a single solution. Great design works for all ages and abilities.

Bowdoinham is using Universal Design ideas as we upgrade public spaces and buildings.

Resources To Learn More

14 Quick tips to update, remodel, or build using Universal Design ideas from Better Homes & Gardens:

<https://www.bhg.com/home-improvement/advice/planning/25-things-to-know-about-universal-design/>

Universal Design ideas for the kitchen and bathroom with full-color illustrations: Google this title and click to the publication: Remodeling Today for a Better Tomorrow

32 page AARP publication with detailed design ideas to create a home "suitable for any resident, of any age or physical ability". The HomeFit Guide is an in-depth guide for all rooms and areas of a typical house, aimed at readers with a strong interest in Universal Design.

<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/housing/info-2020/homefit-guide-download.html>

A guide to hiring a capable remodeling contractor published by the National Association of the Remodeling Industry. This guide could also be used by contractors to guide conversations with homeowners.

<https://remodelingdoneright.nari.org/homeowner-resources/best-practices/universal-design-remodeling>

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For further information, contact Bowdoinham's Older Adult Services Coordinator at 207-666-5531 or age-friendly@bowdoinham.com.