



Redefining  
SENIOR  
LIVING

# ROOM-BY-ROOM DOWNSIZING TIPS FOR SENIORS



For many seniors, retirement is an opportunity to kick back and enjoy a new phase after years of building a career and raising a family. It's also a chance to take stock and look back on a life well lived — and the life ahead to enjoy.

But a well-lived life comes with a lot of “stuff.” And that leaves many seniors looking for ideas on downsizing in retirement — and with mixed feelings.

## How to Downsize for Retirement

Understandably, there can be a range of emotions when it comes to downsizing in retirement. While some immediately realize that they'll need to pare down their belongings to live the life they want, others struggle with figuring out where to start.

The good news is that when you relocate to a senior living community, you're moving into a completely new type of space — one where the surrounding community acts as an extension of your personal apartment or villa. A community's common areas, from the restaurants and cafes to the art studio, fitness center and more, are a part of your new home.

Bottom line: With unlimited access to all those additional spaces, the process might feel less like downsizing and more like “right sizing.” In fact, you might feel like you are gaining space rather than losing it.

## A Room-by-Room Guide to Downsizing Your Home in Retirement

With all that in mind, let's explore some tips for downsizing your home in retirement, room by room.

### Kitchen and dining area

Few things accumulate faster in life than kitchen gadgets, glassware, dishes and flatware. Luckily for seniors exploring downsizing in retirement, these items often have less sentimental value and are among the easiest to part with.

You may choose to hang on to some heirloom serving pieces or trusty kitchen tools that have stood the test of time, but many communities for older adults, including Life Plan Communities, offer a huge perk: full-service restaurants that make the need for three daily home-cooked meals a thing of the past (if you wish!).

*Continued on pg.2*

*Continued from pg. 1*

Many senior living residents entertain visiting friends and family — for everyday meals and special occasions alike — in community restaurants, where they can show off the service and cuisine they enjoy in their home, without the housekeeping, prepping, cooking and cleaning up that come with it.

There's a good chance you will be able to pare down the number of place settings you own, as well as the sideboard or credenza taking up space in your formal dining room — and everything in it.

*Tip: Keep place-settings for four, and then take a minimalist approach for all your other cookware, utensils and serving pieces. You likely don't need five different wooden spoons; just one should work. Keep one of each, and donate the rest.*

### **Home gym**

Whether it's a treadmill collecting dust in a guest bedroom or a full set of trusty barbells you've used for years, many of us have gym equipment taking up space in our homes. Have a pool at home? Your days of emptying the filter and skimming leaves from the surface are over.

Today's senior communities not only have a treadmill and weights you can use, but they're frequently cleaned, professionally maintained, and often designed with seniors' overall health in mind. Many even have personal trainers on staff who specialize in functional fitness.

For example, Vi owns and operates 10 luxury Life Plan Communities that offer a comprehensive Living Well Program designed to support residents' mind, body,

and spiritual wellness, including fitness classes for seniors at every level of physical fitness and ability.

*Tip: With a world-class gym with the latest equipment available just beyond your front door, there's no need to have the movers pack up heavy and expensive-to-move gym equipment like stationary bikes and free weights. Consider gifting your home gym equipment to a family member or donating it.*

### **Den**

If you love to read or curl up with a movie, you know just how much shelves of space books and DVDs occupy in the home. Enjoy creating art? Brushes, pens, canvases and other supplies add to home clutter, too. Regularly host parties in your home? All those extra chairs and tables take up a lot of space.

Some of the best-loved common areas in Life Plan Communities and other senior-living communities are those designed to foster relaxation or help residents explore creative endeavors.

Many senior living communities have art studios, for example, stocked with paint, canvases and plenty of supplies to get those creative juices flowing. Some have theater spaces where residents are encouraged to stage performances, play readings and lectures. There are libraries filled with hardcover and paperback books, as well as periodicals for residents to read.

Still other communities offer movie theaters where residents can gather to enjoy movies on a bigger screen than most of them ever got to experience at home — in the comfort of their shared community!

*Continued on pg.3*

*Continued from pg. 2*

There are spaces for conversation everywhere, and opportunities for enrichment in common areas throughout these luxury communities. So while you may decide to part ways with some of the games, art supplies and reading materials in your home as you prepare for downsizing in retirement, what you will gain in a Life Plan Community may ultimately feel like upsizing!

*Tip: When you tour a community, ask the lifestyle director to show you the spaces related to the hobbies and leisure activities you enjoy — it's easier to downsize when you know you're actually upsizing to a community that offers plenty of spots beyond your apartment to relax.*

## **Garage**

Finally, there's the garage, another area of the home that can become a storage unit for junk, from old sports equipment to shovels and rakes.

Retirement communities offer full-service landscaping and other amenities, meaning your days of raking leaves and shoveling snow are about to be behind you. If something in your apartment needs repair, community staff address the issue for you.

Your car just might to be the only thing that needs to make the cut as you tackle culling the garage.

Many senior living communities, including Vi, even offer complimentary valet parking to residents and their guests — with a strict no-tipping policy — as a community perk. Vi also offers regular transportation for community events, shopping trips and more; you can come and go as you like, in

the way that's most convenient for you. You might be able to say goodbye to the standard garage space altogether.

Of course, if you're someone who loves to tinker in the garage with woodwork or other crafts, you don't have to give it up entirely: Depending on the type of retirement community you choose, you could move into a townhome or villa with a two-car garage so you can tinker to your heart's content.

*Tip: Use your toolbox as your guide! As you pare down the items at your workbench, limit the items you keep to what fits inside a standard-size toolbox. (Chances are, you don't need that arsenal of nails or 50-piece screwdriver set.) Donate your larger power tools to your local Habitat for Humanity or another nearby nonprofit organization.*

## **Ready to Right-Size? Consider Luxury Senior Living at Vi**

No matter how freeing the idea of downsizing your home in retirement may be, the task can still loom large once you get down to it.

### **We're here to help.**

Vi's 10 communities across the United States are designed to be resources for potential residents considering a move. We're here to help you tackle practical challenges like downsizing — but we also want to support you in overcoming information overload, making sense of the finances involved in a senior living investment, choosing the best-fit community for you, and more.

And if you need a hand customizing and personalizing your new living space after

*Continued on pg.4*

*Continued from pg. 3*

downsizing, we can help with that, too: Vi offers on-site move consultants who know our floor plans and specialize in making a house a home.

Once you experience the feeling of freedom that begins with streamlining your belongings, you may wonder why you waited so long to embark on this next phase of your retirement.



Redefining  
SENIOR  
LIVING