



# Senior Transportation Mobility Planner

Older adults can expect to live well beyond their ability to drive safely. For the first time in history, we must plan for the possibility of our driving retirement just as we plan for our retirement from work.

While seniors as a group are generally safe drivers, increasing age is generally associated with a decline in the functional abilities important for driving, including vision, reaction time, and dividing attention between tasks.

AAA's Senior Transportation Mobility Planner is designed to help you start planning today, for a fun, mobile and enriching life tomorrow. Together we will cover three main areas to maximize your freedom and safe mobility:

1. Simple Preventative Steps: Mental & Physical Fitness
2. Build Comfort in Using Alternatives to Driving
3. Take Advantage of Useful Resources

# 1. Simple Preventative Steps: Mental Health & Physical Fitness

There are a wide variety of options for you to exercise your mind and body. Solve a few puzzles, try simple stretching exercise techniques and follow a low-impact, home-based strength training routine to extend your personal mobility.

## Mental Health

While older minds may be just as sharp as younger ones, they often react more slowly. On the average, the human brain begins to slow down slightly beginning around age 30. Getting older doesn't have to result in cognitive decline, if you exercise your mind.

Using problem-solving skills, even in non-driving situations, can help improve your mental fitness and flexibility. When choosing a mental fitness activity, consider options that provide variety, challenge and novelty. Activities like jigsaw puzzles, crosswords or Sudoku can be fun, interactive and help keep your mind sharp.

## Physical Fitness

Scientific research shows that after age 30, sedentary people begin to lose their capacity to do physical activity more quickly than those who remain active — so keep moving!

Effective exercise programs should do three things: (1) challenge your heart and lungs aerobically, (2) stretch and strengthen your muscles, and (3) loosen your joints to help with flexibility. Brisk walking, routine housework and gardening all count!

The National Institute on Aging recommends a series of exercises and stretches to improve neck, shoulder, trunk, back and overall body flexibility. Access them for free at [www.go4life.nia.nih.gov/exercises](http://www.go4life.nia.nih.gov/exercises).

## Don't Forget!

- Schedule an annual physical exam with your primary care physician.** Medical conditions like dementia, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease can impair driving, but can be properly managed to reduce risk, so aim to diagnose health issues early.

Annual exam date: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Review your medications.** Some prescribed and over-the-counter medicines can impair driving. Use AAA's free tool, Roadwise Rx, to screen your medicines for potential issues. Get started now at [www.AAA.com/RxDrugs](http://www.AAA.com/RxDrugs).

Date medicines screened: \_\_\_\_\_

Red flags identified:  Yes  No

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- Schedule an eye exam for safe driving.** Good eyesight is more than just being able to read the eye chart. Ask your eye doctor about contrast sensitivity, too. This will gauge your ability to see at dusk, dawn or at night.

Eye exam date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Build Comfort Using Alternatives to Driving

Driving is just one way to stay mobile. Depending on where you live, there could be a variety of ways to get around without driving. Even if your goal is to drive less often, check into transportation services available in your community.



### **Ridesharing Services**

On-demand ride services like Lyft and Uber have potential to improve mobility and quality of life for older adults. The best part is that you can schedule a ride in under 60 seconds to pick you up from your home. With a personal smartphone and a short tutorial, you can schedule your first trip!

### **Public Transportation**

If you never or rarely use city buses, trams and subway systems, doing so can be intimidating. Build up your comfort level by practicing with a friend or family member. Gaining comfort today can make using public transit less intimidating tomorrow.

### **Paratransit Services**

If you have a disability that prevents you from using fixed-route buses or other forms of mass transit, paratransit services featuring specially equipped shuttles might be the right transportation service for you.



## Local Transportation Services

If you cannot afford a taxi or have trouble walking to a bus stop or getting into a shuttle van without assistance, consider using low-cost, community-based transportation services called supplemental transportation programs (STPs). These services use traditional passenger vehicles, and volunteer drivers to provide affordable, scheduled rides for older adults.

## Rides with Friend & Family

Many older adults try to limit asking friends and family for rides, but it is the most frequent way non-drivers get around. Consider sharing rides with friends or neighbors traveling to the same places you need to go. It is a great way to get around without driving yourself. It is also very cost-effective and great for the environment!

**Remember:** Most older adults will tap into a variety of these transportation options to meet their needs. And, the ways in which you get around this week might be different next week. Keep an open mind and keep your transportation options diverse!

**Start now! Find local transportation options by zip code that meet your unique needs. Easier to Chat? Contact a mobility manager who will assist you at no charge.**

### Rides in Sight

1-855-607-4337

[www.ridesinsight.org](http://www.ridesinsight.org)

### Eldercare Locator

1-800-677-1116

[www.eldercare.acl.gov](http://www.eldercare.acl.gov)

## 3. Take Advantage of Useful Resources

The final stop in AAA's Senior Transportation Mobility Planner involves several great resources to give you comfort and peace of mind.

- 1 Register for a Driver Refresher Course.** It is important for senior drivers to know how to adjust for slower reflexes, weaker vision and other changes. It is also important to know the benefits and limitations of the latest in vehicle technology, such as adaptive cruise control and lane-departure warning systems.

AAA's Roadwise Driver™ is a course that can be taken online or in a classroom to help you keep driving knowledge fresh and get the most out of your vehicle, while reducing risk to you, your passengers and others on the road. Register today at [www.AAA.com/RoadwiseDriver](http://www.AAA.com/RoadwiseDriver).

Course date: \_\_\_\_\_

- 2 Develop a Written Plan for Driving Retirement.** While it may not be the case for you, most older adults will eventually age out of driving due to medical issues, or traditional age-related declines in health and fitness. Planning for this scenario may not sound fun, but you should want to play an active role in how your family chooses to manage it.

AAA and the American Occupational Therapy Association teamed up to develop a Driver Planning Agreement. It allows your family to plan together for future changes in driving abilities before concerns develop. To access the free tool, visit [www.AAA.com/DriverPlanningAgreement](http://www.AAA.com/DriverPlanningAgreement).

- 3 Get a professional driving assessment.** Think about getting a professional driving assessment the same way you look at visiting your doctor for annual wellness checkups. It is an objective way to identify and manage any driving-related challenges. Learn more at [www.seniordriving.aaa.com/evaluate-your-driving-ability/professional-assessment](http://www.seniordriving.aaa.com/evaluate-your-driving-ability/professional-assessment).



Thank you for using AAA's Senior Transportation Mobility Planner. For more information, please visit

[SeniorDriving.AAA.com](http://SeniorDriving.AAA.com).