

# A Place of My Own Checklist

Source: *It's My Choice* by William T. Allen ([allenseha.com](http://allenseha.com)); Minnesota Governors Council on Developmental Disabilities 2017

## Ideas on how to use A Place of My Own Checklist:

### ASK, OBSERVE, ASK OTHERS

First, try asking people who can read or understand words or sign to complete the checklist on their own or with help.

Second, observe people who do not read or understand words or sign very well and act as their advocate (or choose some one else) in completing the checklist.

Third, ask others who know the person well (like a friend or relative or service coordinator) to help complete the checklist.

If you are thinking about finding a place of your own, here is a way to look at a house or apartment where you might want to live. It will help you decide what is good about the place and what could be better. The best way to use this checklist is as follows:

- Make sure you get a chance to see the house or apartment and the immediate neighborhood.
- If you need assistance with the checklist, ask a friend, relative or your service coordinator or someone else you feel comfortable with.
- Write notes about what you find out about the place in the box provided.
- Think about all of these things before you decide if you want to live in the house or apartment. You may be looking at several different places – use this checklist to decide which house or apartment is best for you.

## A PLACE OF MY OWN CHECKLIST

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The place is close to stores, banks, places to eat and other places I will need to go.

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The place is clean inside and outside.

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The place is in an area of my choice.

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The place is near and easy to get to the bus.

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The neighborhood feels safe and I'm comfortable when I leave the house or apartment.

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The rooms in the house or apartment are easy to get around in and you can move around in a wheelchair.

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The place is in good repair.

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I can afford the deposit that I need to give the landlord.

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I read over the rental agreement or had someone help me understand it.

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The stove is gas or electric and it works well.

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There is a refrigerator that works well.

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There is a dishwasher that works well.

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The heater/air conditioner works well.

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The neighbors are friendly and supportive.

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If I am living with roommates, we have talked about our own "house rules."

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I have my own bedroom or the place has enough privacy for me.

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The place has ramps and enough space to get through with a wheelchair.

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My own question:

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# Some “ideal” house elements to consider

## HOUSE LAYOUT:

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- One level or ranch style home
- Can be divided into separate areas with distinct spaces
- Large open spaces that make it easy to navigate
- Open/airy floor plan with spaces that flow into each other

## HOUSE MOVEMENT

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- Wide hallways, doorways and doors
- Easy to open doors
- Doorways without saddles or sills that interfere with free movement
- Level floors that are easy to roll on
- Tough, durable surfaces that will not get damaged by a power chair

## BATHROOM

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- Large and accessible
- Roll in shower at least 5 feet by 5 feet
- Hand held shower head
- More than one shower
- Bathtub with lift
- Raised or side opening bathtub
- Whirlpool or spa tub
- Accessible toilet with raised seat, armrests and room for a rolling toilet chair, and a lift
- Grab bars
- Bathroom sink with adjustable heights
- Lever/faucets with anti-scald controls
- Space underneath sink for wheelchair user
- Pull lever soap dispenser

## BEDROOM

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- Accessible closets and other storage
- Room by the bed for transferring safely from a wheelchair

## KITCHEN

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- Large, open floor plan
- Accessible features: lower sinks, counters and cabinets; sink and counter cut outs or knee openings; drawers and cabinets with accessible hardware
- Ice/water dispenser in the refrigerator door
- Higher or adjustable table

## GETTING IN AND OUT

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- Ramps or on grade entries
- Power lifts
- Multiple wheelchair entries
- Fire exits

## GARAGE

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- Attached to the house
- Large enough for conversion van and maneuverability
- Equipped with a ramp



# Housing Checklist

## Ideas on how to use the Housing checklist:

### ASK, OBSERVE, ASK OTHERS

First, try asking people who can read or understand words or sign to complete the checklist on their own or with help.

Second, observe people who do not read or understand words or sign very well and act as their advocate (or choose someone else) in completing the checklist.

Third, ask others who know the person well (like a friend or relative or service coordinator) to help complete the checklist.

The Housing Checklist was written so that people with developmental disabilities can become more involved in looking at the places where they live and find out what they like and what could be better. It can also be used by individuals and families who are thinking about places to live in the future.

Encourage people to look at the place where they live and complete the checklist on their own or with the help of an advocate or friend.

Give it to individuals and families who are thinking about living options for the first time.

Someone can read this to you or you can complete it online. Include time to review the checklist during the annual planning meeting or when talking about new places to live.

## FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT TO LOOK AT THE PLACE WHERE THEY LIVE NOW

Here is a way to look at the place where you live. It will tell you things that are good about it and things that could be better. The best way to use this checklist would be:

- Hold a meeting to tell other people who live in the house what you want to do and see if they will help you.
- Tell staff who work at the house what you want to do and ask when they can help you with the checklist.
- Look at each number, read the words and then ask “Is this the house where I live?”
- Check “yes” or “no.”
- Ask someone to write notes about what you find out in the box next to the words.
- When you are all done, share the good things with other people and staff.
- If there are things that could be better, ask staff and others if they will help change them.

## FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE LOOKING AT A NEW PLACE TO LIVE

The best way to use this checklist to look at a place where you want to live would be:

- Make sure you get a chance to visit the house and look around.
- Ask someone who lives or works at the house if they can help you with the checklist.
- Look at each number, read the words and then ask “Is this the house where I want to live?”
- Check “yes” or “no.”
- Ask someone to write notes about what you find out in the box next to the words.
- When you are all done, share the good things with other people and staff.
- If there are things that could be better, ask staff and others if they will help change them.
- Think about all of these things before you decide if you want to live in the house or not.

### AN EXAMPLE

Here are what two items from the checklist might look like when you are done:

	YES	NO	What we know about the house:
1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>There are houses all around this house. Some have families with children, others have one or two people living in them.</i>
22	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>After dinner I often walk around the block or play cards with my friends. On weekends, I go to the movies, or shopping, ride my bike or swim.</i>

1 The house is near other houses  
where people live

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2 The house is close to stores,  
banks, places to eat and so on.

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3 The house is clean inside and  
outside.

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4 There is room to move around in  
the house without bumping into  
other people.

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5 There is a way to get heat  
and air conditioning into each  
bedroom.

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6 The bedroom is big enough to  
have a place to keep things, like  
a closet and a chest of drawers.

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7 The beds are nice to sleep on  
and are big enough for each  
person.

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8 The house looks like a place for adults.

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9 The bathrooms work well and are easy to get to.

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10 You can have friends and family come to the house and you can talk to them privately.

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11 There are things to do at the house for fun and exercise.

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12 People can do things on their own like cook and wash clothes.

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13 People go to the doctor and the dentist regularly.

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14 The food tastes good and is good for you.

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15 People get to choose things, like what clothes to wear and when to go to bed.

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16 People do things in the community, like visit friends, go shopping or to parties.

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17 Everyone helps make up the house rules.

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18 People who live in the house select roommates.

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19 You can get your own mail and use the telephone and computer.

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20 If you don't want to let someone in your room, you don't have to.

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21 There are staff around when you need help.

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22 The staff know how to help when you need it.

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23 Staff can understand what you say and you can understand what they say.

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24 Staff have a van or car to take you places, like to the store or to the doctor.

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25 Staff talk to you in a nice way and use your first name.

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26 Staff are nice to your friends and family when they visit you.

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27 Everyone has an up-to-date written plan of goals and activities.

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YES NO If staff are present and/or provide services/support

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28 There is time each day to help you work on your preferred activities.

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29 People know their rights and staff can explain them.

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30 If staff help you with your money, they keep records of how it is spent and explain it to you.

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31 Other things you know about the house

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