

# 20 Design Trends to Convert 55+ Shoppers into Buyers

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## 1) Location

The active adult buyer desires a location that allows them to socially engage in their surroundings. Familiar places that provide shopping, healthcare and entertainment are ideal, along with being in close proximity to grandchildren.



## 2) Security

Safety is a strong desire for the 55+ buyer. Thoughtfully consider options such as a gated and/or fenced in community with well-lit sidewalks and streets.



## 3) Clubhouse

Starting with the community offerings, a clubhouse is the first impression that can leave a potential buyer dismissed or enthusiastic to further explore. Within the clubhouse, consider features such as a catering kitchen, outdoor amenities (pool, fireplace, etc.), a fitness center, and a gathering area or card room. Options such as these promote wellness and social engagement.

## 4) Community Gardens

If the size of the community can accommodate, raised beds, herb gardens and potting sheds are standout features that appeal to the hobby-driven active adult.



## 5) Walking Trails

This is the MOST desired community amenity for the 55+ home buyer. Making the path wide enough for two, paving the path so it's maintenance free, adding benches for rest and dog waste bins to accommodate furry friends are all details to consider.



## 6) Storage! Storage! Storage!

After a lifetime of accumulation, the 55+ buyer is demanding designated spaces to store their "stuff." Cater to this need with solutions such as attic storage (choose safety by using well-lit stairs over ladder pull downs), walk-in closets, pantries and creatively designed nooks and crannies.

## 7) Low Maintenance Exteriors

A "lock and leave" lifestyle goes beyond yard maintenance. One area to focus on is roofing – is it durable and are there areas where leaf collection could occur? Keeps those overachievers off their ladders!

## 8) Entertaining Kitchens

For the active adult, cooking is now fun, as they aren't rushing to get dinner ready for the family! Give this buyer a luxury kitchen equipped with a large island for entertaining, plenty of storage, updated appliances and trendy finish options. Wine display and beverage bars are standout features to consider if the home's space can accommodate them.



## 9) Outdoor Living

The outdoor space is way more than a patio for the active adult buyer. The indoor, outdoor relationship needs to be an extension of the home to cater to entertainment and relaxation demands. Wall-to-wall glass doors, a continuation of flooring materials and thoughtful merchandising (even on smaller, urban patios) create a striking, seamless flow from indoor to outdoor spaces. Also, think about installing fences as they provide necessary privacy when entertaining or enjoying a night cap on the back patio.



## 10) Finishes – Low Maintenance

With a desire to socialize, travel and focus on hobbies, the active adult buyer shouldn't have to focus on home upkeep. Large format tile that requires less grout and is non-slip, as well as easy care countertops that won't stain, chip or scratch (quartz, quartzite, corian), are all simple solutions to create little maintenance.

## 11) Spa Like Baths

For the bathroom, it's all about the shower and storage. Design considerations for the shower are spa glass, no-step entry, linear drainage, hand held and rain shower heads, oversized shower seating, ample light and large, non-slip tile.

## 12) Pet Centric

With pets being surrogate children for the active adult, it's important to designate areas for four-legged friends to sleep, bath and feed. But, be sure to keep these items out of the way. No tripping over the dog bowl! Along with these design ideas, installing fences is a must for this member of the family.



## 13) Dual Use Rooms

With a majority of these buyers downsizing, flex rooms allow for spaces to serve multiple purposes such as a home office, guest suite, "snore" room, his/her space or a hobby room. Murphy beds are a unique space saving solution.

## 14) Livable Lifestyle

Allow the 55+ buyer to gracefully age in place with features such as aesthetically pleasing grab bars and doors that are a minimum 2'8". If the home has stairs, lead them to minimal use rooms such as storage, grandkids' room, or a man cave. And make sure they are well-lit (potentially even with floor lighting).

## 15) Grandkids

Appeal to grandchildren by designing "kid friendly" bedrooms (think built-in bunks) and offer activities within the community that are tailored towards children.

## 16) His and Her Spaces

The 55+ home buyer needs their personal space. Whether a man cave, hobby room or even a small nook, give them “me time” by carving out his and her areas.

## 17) Lighting – Natural and Artificial

With their “mature” eyes, both natural and artificial lighting is key for the 55+ buyer. Strategically locate windows so that natural light is fully maximized. Potential residents should walk into a home that feels light and bright! To master artificial lighting, think about light layering. Overhead, recessed, ambient, decorative and under/over cabinet lighting all create an impactful, well-lit space.

## 18) Customization

Active adults are experienced buyers and driven by a “last home” mentality. As this house is for *them*, they are anxious to create “their space” with a wide variety of updated options and floor plan variations.



## 19) Style and Personalization

This buyer doesn't want to feel as though they're living in a time capsule. Create a classy, sophisticated feel with chic finishes, updated appliances and elegant merchandising that will “wow” potential residents. Also, keep the home light and bright!

## 20) Working From Home

As the active adult may be working, semi-retired or volunteering, it's important that they have a designated work area. This doesn't need to be a full room, but can be creatively designed in an additional, unused space or nook.