

# Preparing Your Home After Upper Limb Loss

You will naturally be glad to get home, but you may be worried about how your home will support you. Here are some changes to consider when you return home. Keep in mind, you don't have to make lots of changes to your home right away. Take it slow. Your needs and preferences may change over time.

## BATHROOM ACCESSIBILITY

**Showers and sinks.** Use non-slip mats inside and outside the shower or bathtub to prevent falls. Replace traditional faucets with single-lever models for easier control. Consider touchless or sensor-activated faucets to reduce the need for manual dexterity. Replace screw-top containers with pump bottles or consider automatic dispensers for shampoo, conditioner, soap, shaving gel, and whatever else you may need. Use a long-handled body washing brush or sponge. This can be attached to a surface in your shower via suction cups or a gooseneck clamp.

**Teeth brushing.** An electric toothbrush can be easier to hold and use compared to a manual one. Look for models with larger handles or those that can be attached to a universal cuff. Many electric toothbrushes have a flat back to allow for easier toothpaste application using only one hand. Consider a touchless, automatic toothpaste dispenser. When it comes to flossing, one-handed flossers can make flossing easier.

**Grooming.** An electric shaver can be easier to handle and provides a closer shave with less effort. Use shaving aids like razor stands



or holders to keep your razor steady. When applying make-up, brushes with larger handles or grips can be easier to hold. Clippers designed for one-handed use can make trimming nails easier. If you brush your hair with one hand while using a hair dryer with the other hand, that process is still feasible with a hair dryer stand. Utilize tools like button hooks, zipper pulls, and dressing sticks for easier dressing. If you have trouble getting your prosthesis through the sleeve of a shirt or jacket, try slipping a plastic grocery bag over your prosthesis first to make the process easier.

## KITCHEN TWEAKS AND ADAPTATIONS

**Organize and simplify.** Minimize clutter by keeping countertops clear and storing frequently used items within easy reach. Consider pull-out shelves to ease accessibility. Consider buying precut vegetables and meats to simplify meal preparation at home.



For more information, scan the code  
or visit [HangerClinic.com/ULResources](https://www.hangerclinic.com/ULResources).

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**Adaptive equipment.** Non-slip mats can be used for a variety of purposes, from gripping to keeping cutting boards and bowls steady. One handed cutting boards use suction cups and spikes to hold food in place. Utensils with larger handles can be easier to grip. Consider electric can openers, jar openers, and food processors to reduce the need for manual strength. A wheeled cart can be used to transfer items around the kitchen, to the table, or to assist in moving groceries around. Plastic and metal dishes can be used to reduce the risk of breaking if dropped.



## LIVING ROOM AND BEDROOM MODIFICATIONS

**Smart devices.** Consider smart home devices like smart plugs and switches to automate tasks and make them more accessible. Incorporate voice-activated assistants like Amazon Alexa or Google Home to control lights, appliances, alarms, and entertainment systems.

**Ease and safety.** It can be more difficult to catch yourself in a fall. Keep pathways clear and store frequently used items within easy reach. Ensure rugs have non-slip backing and furniture is sturdy to prevent falls. Use handles and knobs that are easier to grasp and turn.

## OUTSIDE CONSIDERATIONS

- Invest in adaptive gardening tools designed for one-handed use and gripping aids for better control of tools and equipment.
- Consider installing automated watering systems to simplify plant care.
- Ensure outdoor areas are well-lit to improve visibility and safety, especially at night.
- Install motion sensor lights for automatic illumination when you enter the area.
- Choose outdoor furniture that is stable and easy to get in and out of.

## OTHER LONG-TERM REMODELING CONSIDERATIONS

Some cities provide financial assistance to individuals who become disabled and need their home remodeled to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. To find out what might be available, check on your city and county websites. There are also non-profit organizations that can help you find free or low-cost help. Note: it is important to work with a contractor who is trained and experienced in making similar home modifications.

The National Directory of Home Modification and Repair Resources can help you find qualified and affordable resources for home modifications. Search for resources by scanning the code or visiting [HomeMods.org/national-directory](https://www.HomeMods.org/national-directory).



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