

STEP 1: DON'T TOUR WITHOUT THIS Assisted Living

TOP 5 ESSENTIALS

1. Determine what you can afford now and in the FUTURE as needs change (they will!).
2. Schedule tour during morning hours and stay for lunch for dining experience (and hopefully some tasty food!)
3. Ask any and ALL questions. Try to imagine the worst-case scenario (health changes, mobility changes, change in management, etc.) and ask those questions. Sounds grim, but will definitely save you heartache or surprises in the future.
4. Ask about cost increases as need for more care escalates. Prepare for every possibility.
5. Make a second visit, this time without an appointment. Was your impression the same this time?

CHECKLIST

Location

	Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Notes/Compromise
Facility's location is convenient to areas that are important to you (doctors, family, shopping)			
Parking availability for guests and residents			
Neighborhood safety and appearance			

Safety

	Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Notes/Compromise
Facility has necessary door alarms, Wanderguards, security, front desk personnel			
Building is prepared for emergencies (smoke alarms, fire drills, evacuation plans)			
Proper and necessary lighting			
Building has installed working grab bars, handrails, elevators			

Rooms/Apartments

	Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Notes/Compromise
Room choice assignment (size, location, furnishings)			
Necessary procedures to protect personal belongings			
Cleanliness of shared bathrooms			
Rooms equipped with working call system			
Necessary grab bar by bed and in bathroom			

Staff and Management**Acceptable Not Acceptable Notes/Compromise**

Staff speaks language compatible with resident			
Staff meets assistance with daily care during nights, weekends, holidays			
Nurse is on staff or on-call			
Staff interaction with residents and other staff members is friendly and helpful			

Residents**Acceptable Not Acceptable Notes/Compromise**

Observe residents for compatibility of age ranges			
Observe residents for compatibility of ethnicities			
Check for compatibility of religious backgrounds			
Observe residents' agility level for compatibility			
Observe friendly interactions between residents			

Care**Acceptable Not Acceptable Notes/Compromise**

Management of resident who develops Alzheimer's or Dementia while living in facility			
Necessary care levels are provided for now and if more care is needed in future			
Processes for assessing and monitoring residents is clearly explained			
Necessary medication assistance is provided			
Facility will arrange for prescription delivery and needed supplies (e.g., incontinence supplies)			
Facility clearly discloses how they determine it is no longer appropriate to house the resident			
Facility will help arrange home health services if necessary			

Meals**Acceptable Not Acceptable Notes/Compromise**

Necessary diet accommodated			
Availability of snacks			
Dietitian or nutritionist on staff			

Activities**Acceptable Not Acceptable Notes/Compromise**

	Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Notes/Compromise
Daily exercise offerings			
Quality of activities programming			
Transportation for appointments, shopping, activities, emergencies			
Spiritual services			

Facility Features & Aesthetics**Acceptable Not Acceptable Notes/Compromise**

	Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Notes/Compromise
Odor of environment			
Temperature			
Amenities (beauty shop, activities room, fitness equipment, computer)			
Noise level			
Outdoor gardens/patio			
Pet policy			
Resident rooms/apartments			

Costs**Acceptable Not Acceptable Notes/Compromise**

	Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Notes/Compromise
Waiting list			
Upfront costs (deposit, additional fees)			
Services included in monthly rate			
Additional costs for care and supplies			
Criteria for fee increase			
Refund policy			
Move-out policies			

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

1. Review the contract and policies carefully and consult with an Elder Law attorney if necessary
2. Make sure you question the facility if you found that complaints were filed against them
3. Check with the Better Business Bureau and Long-term Care Ombudsman for complaints against facility
4. Be sure to obtain copies of the facilities visit and family vacation policies