

Assisted Living Comparison Guide

Finding the Right Home in Houston



How to find the community that's best for you .



Included Within:

- Know what level of care your parent actually needs before you tour
- Compare communities side by side with a built-in scoring tool
- Handle the emotions that come up — for your parent and for you
- Questions that reveal what a community won't volunteer
- Red flags that most families miss until it's too late

What is Assisted Living?



Assisted living offers a supportive lifestyle that combines comfortable housing, personalized assistance with daily needs, delicious dining, and a wide range of convenient services and amenities. It's an ideal choice for those who cherish their independence but would benefit from a helping hand with tasks such as dressing, bathing, and managing medications

It might be time to look at assisted living communities when:

- Daily tasks like bathing, getting dressed, and cooking have become physically strenuous
- Home maintenance, including cleaning and yard work, is now difficult to manage
- Complex health conditions are affecting your lifestyle or mobility
- You're experiencing anxiety, depression, or feelings of loneliness
- Early cognitive impairment is beginning to impact your daily life



Comparing and Choosing the right community



Not all assisted living communities are the same.

Supportive services and lifestyle amenities can vary significantly from one community to the next. Factors like location, environment, lifestyle fit, and cost all play an important role. That's why it's essential to do your homework — take tours, ask the right questions, and know exactly what to look for when comparing different options.

We're here to help you make the best possible decision for yourself or for a loved one

Use this guide to help keep track of the communities you visit and to compare what each one has to offer. Print any or all of the pages and to take them with you to the community or use this to complete on your computer, tablet or phone.



Types of Assisted Living Facilities

Choosing the right senior living community starts with understanding the different options available. From active, independent lifestyles to communities that provide daily support or specialized medical care, each type serves a unique purpose. Here is a short summary of the different types of facilities. Knowing these differences helps families match their loved one's current needs — and future needs — with the most appropriate setting. I hope this helps the conversations ahead.

- **Independent Living (or Active Adult/55+ Communities):** For active, self-sufficient seniors (typically 60+). Focuses on maintenance-free housing, amenities, social activities, and community without daily care assistance. Residents handle their own daily activities but want fewer homeownership responsibilities.
- **Assisted Living:** Provides help with activities of daily living (ADLs) like bathing, dressing, medication management, meals, and housekeeping. Residents live in apartment-style units with some independence and on-site support. Many have tiered "levels of care" (e.g., low/basic, medium/intermediate, high/advanced) based on individual needs.
- **Memory Care:** Specialized secure units or standalone facilities for individuals with Alzheimer's, dementia, or other cognitive impairments. Offers 24/7 supervision, structured routines, secure environments, and cognitive therapies in a safe, often locked setting.



- **Skilled Nursing Facilities (Nursing Homes or Long-Term Care):** Provides 24/7 medical/nursing care, rehabilitation (short-term), wound care, therapy, and support for chronic conditions or post-hospital recovery. Higher medical oversight than assisted living.
- **Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) or Life Plan Communities:** Offer a full continuum on one campus—typically independent living, assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing. Residents can "age in place" by moving between levels as needs change, often with entrance fees or contracts.

Understanding Houston Costs

SUMMARIZING HOUSTON FACILITIES:

Type of Senior Housing	Typical Houston Monthly Range	What's Typically Included	Best For	Notes / Houston Context
Independent Living	\$2,000 – \$4,000 (median ~\$2,800)	Apartment-style housing, meals, housekeeping, transportation, social activities, maintenance	Active seniors needing little to no daily assistance	Lowest cost; many luxury options in areas like The Woodlands or Memorial. Texas median ~\$2,895.
Assisted Living	\$4,200 – \$6,000+	Meals, housekeeping, personal care (bathing, dressing, meds), 24/7 staff, activities	Moderate help with daily activities	Varies most by care level; add-on fees common.
Memory Care	\$5,300 – \$8,000+	Specialized dementia care, secure unit, higher staffing, cognitive programs	Alzheimer's/dementia requiring 24/7 supervision	Often a locked wing or standalone community.
Skilled Nursing Facility / Long-Term Care	Semi-private: \$6,000 – \$8,000 Private: \$8,000 – \$10,000+	24/7 medical/nursing care, therapies, meals, full assistance	High medical needs, post-hospital recovery, or advanced frailty	Houston-specific: ~\$200–\$264/day (semi ~\$6k, private higher). Texas is among the lower-cost states nationally.

Key Factors Affecting Costs in Houston:

- **Level of care:** Base rates assume moderate needs; extra hours of personal care or specialized services (e.g., incontinence, wandering prevention) add \$500–\$2,000+/month.
- **Room type and amenities:** Studios cheaper than 1–2 bedrooms; upscale communities with resort-style dining, spas, or on-site medical add premiums.
- **Location:** More affordable in suburbs; higher near medical centers.
- **Inflation & contracts:** Most communities raise rates annually (5–8%). Some offer all-inclusive pricing; others itemize.

Amenities & Services

Living life on your own terms, while feeling a true sense of belonging and purpose — that’s what it really means to feel at home.

This feeling becomes even stronger when you’re supported by the right amenities and services that nurture your physical, social, and emotional well-being. From vibrant social events and convenient housekeeping to reliable transportation and the assistance you need to maintain your independence, these thoughtful options help you thrive every day.



Check boxes where applicable.

Amenities & Services	Community Name	Community Name	Community Name	Your Notes
Outdoor Areas				
Pet Friendly				
Scheduled Transportation				
Fitness				
Salon/Barbershop				
Housekeeping				
Laundry/Linens				
Library				
Game Room				

Amenities & Services (continued)

Amenities & Services	Community Name	Community Name	Community Name	Your Notes
Art Studios				
Guest Suites				
Heated Pool				
Vegetable Garden				
Theatre				
Garage				
Covered Parking				
Putting Green				
Hobby Rooms				

Feel Free to Write In Amenities / Services that are important to you

Dining

Food does more than sustain you or nourish your body — it's one of life's great pleasures. In some assisted living, you may be able to find and enjoy chef-prepared meals and savor delicious, high-quality entrées whenever you choose.

A friendly dining team is always welcome and staff that takes the time to truly know your personal preferences and dietary needs may be important for you.



Check boxes where applicable.

Dining	Community Name	Community Name	Community Name	Your Notes
Flexible Dining Options				
Accommodating Menu Options				
Restaurant Style Dining				
24 Hr Snacks/ Beverages				

Health & Wellness

Health and happiness go hand in hand. Holistic wellness matters because it focuses on your unique potential to achieve personal goals — no matter what physical or emotional challenges you may face. A truly personalized approach to holistic health supports you as you grow and evolve, helping you meet your individual needs and expectations at every stage of life.



Check boxes where applicable.

Health & Wellness	_____ Community Name	_____ Community Name	_____ Community Name	Your Notes
Individual Care Plans				
24 Hr Health Monitoring				
Medical Services Offered On Site				
Dental?				
Home Health?				
Podiatrist				
Other?				
On Site Rehab (PT, OT, Speech)				

Feel Free to Write In Amenities / Services that are important to you

Health & Wellness (continued)

Check boxes where applicable.

Health & Wellness	Community Name	Community Name	Community Name	Your Notes
Easy access to hospitals and medical offices				
Transportation to medical appointments				
Dedicated Staff for Health and Wellness				
Health & Wellness Resources				
Team to Resident Ratio				

Feel Free to Write In Amenities / Services that are important to you

Engagement

Socialization plays a powerful role in improving mental health, mood, cognition, and memory. Living in a community that offers daily opportunities to build meaningful relationships and participate in engaging programs can help you enjoy a happier, healthier, and more fulfilling life.



Check boxes where applicable.

Engagement	Community Name	Community Name	Community Name	Your Notes
Group & Individual Engagement				
7 Days/Week Programming				
Group Outings				
Off - Site Events with Transportation				
Dedicated Staff				

Feel Free to Write In Amenities / Services that are important to you

Apartments

Before you give up homeownership, housekeeping, and maintenance chores for the ease of apartment living, it's important to find a place you can truly make your own. You may want to choose from a variety of floor plans— each offering a comfortable, secure, and welcoming space that feels like home. Your living environment should also extend to beautiful secure outdoor areas, a game room, and other engaging amenities that enrich daily life.



Check boxes where applicable.

Apartments	Community Name	Community Name	Community Name	Your Notes
Preferred Floor Plans				
Kitchenette Spaces				
Preferred Views				
Downsizing Resources				
Moving Resources				
Standard Amenities				
Safety Features				
Handicap Accessible Restrooms				

Feel Free to Write In Amenities / Services that are important to you

Safety & Security

Feeling secure is an essential part of feeling truly comfortable and supported. That's why a good assisted living community provides around-the-clock support from caring team members on site, giving you peace of mind knowing help is always available when you need it. For added security, a reliable visitor and vendor management system should also be in place.



Check boxes where applicable.

Safety & Security	Community Name	Community Name	Community Name	Your Notes
Security Features				
On Site Nursing 24/7				
Concierge On Site 24/7				
Security On Site 24/7				
Emergency Response System Inside Rooms				
Easy Access to Hospitals / Medical Offices				

Feel Free to Write In Amenities / Services that are important to you

Pricing & Fees

Cost is an important factor when choosing an assisted living community. The right community not only meets your needs and fits your lifestyle — it also fits comfortably within your budget.

When your monthly rate includes a broad range of services and amenities, you receive greater value while still enjoying personalized options tailored to your preferences.



Check boxes where applicable.

Pricing & Fees	Community Name	Community Name	Community Name	Your Notes
Community / Entrance Fee				
Refund Policy				
Monthly Fee Structure				
All Inclusive or Fee for Service				
Level of Care Fee Structure				
Utilities Included				
Wifi				
Cable				
Electricity / Water				

Overall Impressions

First impressions matter.

When you visit a community, pay attention to the overall atmosphere and whether residents and team members seem genuinely happy, engaged, and welcoming. Take time during your tour to observe what each community offers and whether the lifestyle, services, and amenities feel like a good fit for your individual needs and preferences.

Check boxes where applicable.

Overall Impressions	Community Name	Community Name	Community Name	Your Notes
Greeting				
Professional? Happy?				
Caring?				
Resident Interactions				
Do I Feel Comfortable?				
Could I Live Here?				
Is this a Good Value				
Clean? Any Off Putting Smells?				

Additional Tips:

- Ask to join a resident event
- Ask for downsizing resources
- Make a dining reservation
- Ask for residence agreement
- Visit more than once at different times

Additional Questions

Choosing the right assisted living community is a deeply personal decision. To help you make the best choice for yourself or a loved one, here are some important additional questions to ask during your research and tours. These questions address key areas such as daily life, care, safety, costs, and family involvement.

- What does a typical day look like for residents, and how much flexibility is there in daily routines?
- How do you create and update personalized care plans for each resident?
- What is the staff-to-resident ratio during day and night shifts?
- How are medications managed, and what training do staff members receive?
- What levels of care are available if my needs (or my parent's needs) change over time?
- How does the community support residents who want to maintain as much independence as possible?
- What transportation services are offered for medical appointments, shopping, or outings?
- Are pets allowed, and what are the guidelines for bringing a beloved pet?
- How does the community handle emergencies, including medical situations or inclement weather?
- What kinds of social, recreational, and wellness programs are offered on a regular basis?
- Can I (or my parent) continue seeing our current doctors and healthcare providers?
- What is included in the monthly rate, and what services may have additional fees?
- How does the community welcome and involve family members in activities and visits?
- What is the process for moving in, and how do you support new residents during the transition?
- How do you handle feedback or concerns from residents and their families?
- What is the community's policy on aging in place, and how do you support residents as their needs evolve?

Red Flags to Consider

As you walk the halls, observe interactions, and ask questions, trust your instincts. A warm, engaged environment where residents look cared for and happy is the goal. Below are 10 key red flags to note during your visits. Spotting even one or two doesn't always mean you should rule out a facility immediately, but multiple flags warrant deeper investigation, follow-up questions, or crossing it off your list. These insights draw from common issues reported in Texas facilities and Houston-area experiences.

- Persistent unpleasant odors or visible uncleanliness Lingered urine/feces smells, dirty floors, cluttered hallways, or overflowing trash are major warning signs of poor housekeeping and potential neglect. While occasional odors can occur, consistent issues (or heavy chemical masking scents) often point to understaffing or cost-cutting that affects resident health and dignity.
- Signs of chronic understaffing Look for unanswered call lights, residents waiting long periods for help, caregivers appearing rushed or overwhelmed, or very few staff visible on the floor. In Houston facilities, understaffed hallways have been a frequent complaint. Ask about current staff-to-resident ratios and turnover rates—high turnover often leads to inconsistent care.
- Residents who appear neglected, withdrawn, or unengaged If most residents are parked in wheelchairs in hallways with little interaction, look unkempt, or seem overly sedated, this can indicate insufficient personal care or activity programming. Engaged residents chatting, participating in activities, or moving about independently are a positive counter-sign.
- Lack of meaningful activities or a “ghost town” atmosphere Empty activity rooms during scheduled times, residents left alone for long stretches, or only passive entertainment (e.g., a TV with no interaction) suggest limited programming. Quality communities in the Houston area offer varied, resident-led activities—ask to see a current monthly calendar and observe one in progress.
- Evasive or unclear answers about costs, contracts, or care levels If staff dodge questions about base rates, extra fees for personal care, annual increases, or what's truly included, proceed with caution. Hidden costs or pressure to sign quickly without full disclosure are common pitfalls. Request itemized pricing in writing and compare it to your earlier research.

Red Flags to Consider (Continued)

As you walk the halls, observe interactions, and ask questions, trust your instincts. A warm, engaged environment where residents look cared for and happy is the goal. Below are 10 key red flags to note during your visits. Spotting even one or two doesn't always mean you should rule out a facility immediately, but multiple flags warrant deeper investigation, follow-up questions, or crossing it off your list. These insights draw from common issues reported in Texas facilities and Houston-area experiences.

- **Poor maintenance or obvious safety hazards** Broken elevators (a recurring issue in some Houston-area communities), dimly lit hallways, cluttered exits, or outdated emergency systems are red flags for safety and management problems. For memory care, unsecured doors or inadequate wandering prevention are especially concerning.
- **Negative or indifferent staff-resident interactions** Staff who seem dismissive, rude, or disengaged with residents (or with you) signal deeper cultural issues. High management turnover or reluctance to introduce you to the executive director or nursing staff should also raise concerns.
- **Missing, expired, or hard-to-find licensing and inspection reports** Every Texas assisted living or memory care community must be licensed by HHSC (Texas Health and Human Services). Ask to see the latest survey/inspection report and any recent complaints. In Houston (HHSC Region 6), facilities with repeated violations or recent license actions are worth extra scrutiny—reputable communities share this information transparently.
- **High-pressure sales tactics or rushed tours** If the tour feels overly sales-oriented, you're discouraged from visiting unannounced, or there's urgency to decide before you've seen other options, it's a red flag. Good communities welcome multiple visits, including at different times of day (e.g., mealtimes or evenings).
- **Inadequate specialized care for memory care needs (if applicable)** For memory care tours, watch for insufficient dementia-specific training, lack of secure perimeters, or one-size-fits-all programming that doesn't address wandering, agitation, or cognitive needs. Staff should be able to clearly explain their approach and show evidence of specialized protocols.

Final Tip: After every tour, jot down your immediate impressions while they're fresh. Compare notes across communities using a simple checklist. If something feels "off," trust that instinct—Houston has plenty of excellent options. Consider bringing a trusted family member or senior advisor on tours for a second set of eyes. The right fit will feel like a welcoming extension of home, not just a facility.

How can we pay for this?

Paying for assisted living is one of the most common concerns families face when considering this next chapter. For many, the family home represents their largest asset — and selling it can provide the financial resources needed to comfortably cover assisted living costs while reducing ongoing maintenance and expenses.

There are two realistic paths most Houston families take when selling a home to fund a senior living move: a traditional financed sale or a cash sale. Both can work well, but they differ in speed, effort, and flexibility.



The **Cash Sale Option** offers the fastest and simplest route for families who need to move quickly. With a cash buyer, you can often skip repairs, staging, and lengthy waiting periods. Many cash buyers can close in as little as 7–30 days, giving you greater control to coordinate the timing perfectly with your loved one’s move-in date at the assisted living community. This path minimizes stress, eliminates double housing costs, and helps protect savings during the transition.

The **Traditional Path** typically takes longer (usually 60–90 days from listing to closing) but can sometimes result in a higher sale price. This route involves working with a real estate agent, preparing and staging the home, listing it on the market, and navigating inspections, appraisals, and negotiations. It gives families more time to thoughtfully prepare the home and align the closing date with the senior living timeline. Even with this option we have creative strategies to maximize price.

MoveMomTX.com provides BOTH options



Call or text Dan 281.845.1260 or dan@movemomtx.com



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Value Comparison Form

	Your Choice	Current Residence
Monthly Expense		
Housing Rent/Mortgage		\$
Property Taxes		\$
Association Fees		\$
Home Maintenance		\$
Services		
24-Hour On-site Team		\$
Housekeeping		\$
Laundry and Linens		\$
24-Hour On-site Nurse		\$
Emergency Response System		\$
Courtesy Check-in System		\$
On-site Concierge		\$
Complimentary Transportation		\$

	Your Choice	Current Residence
Utilities		
Electric		\$
Trash Removal		\$
Water and Sewer		\$
Heating and Air Conditioning		\$
Appliance Maintenance and Repair		\$
Basic Cable		\$
WiFi		\$
Amenities		
Fitness_Center		\$
Salon & Barbershop		\$
Restaurant-style Dining		\$
Theater Programming		\$

Totals Your Choice \$ _____

Current Residence \$ _____

Next Steps & Add'l Resources

You've Toured—Here's What to Do Next

After touring, most families are deciding between 1–3 communities.

Next steps :

- Eliminate any that didn't feel right, Focus on Top Choices, and Compare care, cost, and overall fit - Not just appearance.
- 👉 Don't keep searching endlessly—clarity comes from deciding, not touring more places.

The right community only works if it fits your timeline.

Next step:

- Confirm current or upcoming availability, Understand move-in timelines, and Ask what is required to secure a spot
- 👉 Good communities fill quickly—timing matters.

ALIGN THE MOVE WITH YOUR PLAN

Choosing a community is only part of the process.

You still need to coordinate:

- The move-in timeline
 - Downsizing and logistics
 - What to do with the home
- 👉 This is where most families start to feel overwhelmed.



The Senior Move Roadmap - Houston Edition



Is it Time?



Have the
Conversation



Make the Plan



Understand
the Costs



Choose the
Right Place



Prepare the
Home



Make the
Move

Choosing a community is a big step—but coordinating everything around it is where most families need help.

If you're in Houston and trying to:

- align the move with your timeline
- figure out what to do with the home
- or just make sure you're making the right next step

I'm happy to help you map out a simple plan so everything works together smoothly.

Call or Text 281.845.1260

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