

Smart Features to Address Specific Needs and Health Issues



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited upper body range of motion: back, neck, shoulder, arms 		Goal: Good visibility with limited twisting necessary. Seating comfort to support possible back pain.
Tilt and telescoping steering wheel	Helps the driver find a comfortable position, alleviating neck and shoulder pain.	<i>Examples of Vehicles to Look for:</i> Toyota Avalon Ford Fusion Subaru Legacy Mazda 3 sedan Hyundai Sonata
Large, wide angle mirrors with good visibility	Help the driver compensate for limited range of motion or difficulties twisting to check for blind spots while merging or backing up.	
Comfortable, heated seats with lumbar support	Can assist those with back pain.	
Adjustable seat belts	Assist drivers in reaching for or buckling and unbuckling.	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-statured 		Goal: The ability to reach pedals comfortably without being too close to the steering wheel and its airbag, as well as achieve a good line of sight over steering wheel.
Six-way adjustable seats	Upward seat adjustments help shorter drivers obtain line of sight above the steering wheel.	<i>Examples of Vehicles to Look for:</i> Toyota Avalon Ford Taurus Honda Accord
Tilt and telescoping steering wheel	Helps ensure drivers can be positioned at least 10 inches from the front airbag.	
Adjustable foot pedals	Helps smaller drivers reach the pedals, while maintaining a safe distance from the airbag mounted in the steering wheel hub.	



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Decreased leg strength •Limited knee range of motion •Hip or leg pain 		Goal: Ease of entry and egress from vehicle
Seat height and comfort	Ideal seat height for individuals with leg-strength issues is between mid-thigh and lower buttocks. For many, concave bucket seats with high bolsters make it difficult to exit a vehicle.	<i>Examples of Vehicles to Look for:</i> Ford Edge Honda Element Dodge Caravan Toyota Highlander
Power Seats	Easier to enter and exit vehicles and adjust seats for leg room.	
Low door threshold	Vehicles with higher door sill heights require additional leg strength to clear the entrance, making entry and exit more difficult.	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Vision affected by glaucoma, cataracts or other conditions •Problems with high-low vision contrast or depth perception •Diminished night vision •Slow recovery from glare 		Goal: Added comfort, confidence and safety due to protection from glare and easy-to-see vehicle controls.
Visors and extendable visors	Help drivers adjust to glare. Mature drivers are more affected by and slower to recover from glare.	<i>Examples of Vehicles to Look for:</i> Hyundai Azera Mazda 6 Scion Xd Chevrolet Impala
Larger audio and climate controls with contrasting text	Easy-to-see controls make drivers more confident and less distracted.	



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Arthritic hands •Diminished fine motor skills •Painful or stiff fingers 		Goal: A vehicle that has all power capabilities, thereby limiting the twisting of wrist while using keys or managing dashboard elements.
Four-door models	Require less strength to open and close than two-door models, which have longer, heavier doors.	<i>Examples of Vehicles to Look for:</i> Toyota Camry <i>(model without navigation)</i> Chevy Malibu <i>(keyless ignition not available)</i> Ford Fusion <i>(model without navigation; keyless ignition not available)</i>
Thick steering wheel	Requires less hand and wrist strength to grip and handle.	
Keyless entry and keyless ignition	Helps avoid pain or difficulty that can occur by turning a key in the lock or ignition.	
Power mirrors and seats	Easier to adjust for drivers with limited strength or arthritis.	
Dashboard controls with buttons or large knobs	Easier to manipulate than knobs, especially as drivers age and fine motor skills diminish.	

Inexpensive assistive devices to assist with individual needs	
Larger, angled rear and side mirrors	Minimize blind spots.
Pedal extenders	Maintain driver's line of site and safe distance from the airbag.
Steering wheel covers	Improve grip for drivers with arthritis in the upper extremities.
Cushions and seat pads	Improve line of sight and provide comfort for those with back or hip pain.

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Smart features for all mature drivers	
Proven crashworthiness.	Check crash test and rollover ratings from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, www.safercar.gov , and the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, www.iihs.org/ratings .
Side and dual-stage/threshold airbags.	Side airbags protect the torso, pelvis and head. Dual-stage and dual-threshold airbags are recommended because senior drivers risk injury if airbags deploy with too much force. The force with which airbags inflate depends on crash severity, distance from the driver and passenger and weight of the driver and passenger.
Head restraints and extra padding.	Head restraints move forward to cushion the head, reducing the risk of neck injuries when a car is hit from behind. Interior crash protection, such as extra padding, also can minimize injuries in a crash.
Antilock Brakes.	An antilock braking system, or ABS, prevents wheels from locking during emergency braking. Drivers using ABS can stop the car and retain control without “pumping” the brakes, which can be challenging for older drivers.
Dynamic stability control.	Dynamic stability control helps prevent loss of control in a turn, especially on slippery roads, enabling drivers to compensate for slower reaction times and make quick corrections.

