

# senior savvy

Design Tips

**DIRECT**  
**SUPPLY®**





# senior centric

When it comes to designing for Senior Living, you don't have to sacrifice style for functionality. Just keep in mind a few key considerations to help ensure your designs meet the demands of Senior Living.

If you need additional support for your Senior Living projects, turn to Direct Supply to help fulfill your design vision. Our dedicated team of Senior Living experts supports your Senior Living FF&E needs from product research to fulfillment to help bring your vision to life.



# spatial relations

Foster confidence and comfort with these senior-specific space considerations.

## Accessibility

Offer accessible waist-high storage, like cabinets and drawers, for frequently used items. Storage with fixed pulls is easier for residents with reduced dexterity to open compared to loose bail pulls or knobs. Select lamps with easy-to-operate switches and place them within reach of seating.

## Traffic patterns

Consider how residents will move throughout the space, especially those who use walkers or wheelchairs. Make sure to keep pathways clear and place stable, arm-height furniture that can be grasped by those walking for added balance.

## Fall-conscious flooring

Avoid unsecured accent or area rugs. Consider incorporating a floor inlay to define areas much like a traditional rug, but without the potential tripping hazard. Plan ahead for electrical cords by choosing outlet and furniture placement that keeps cords hidden and out of walkways.

## Diverse options

Add a variety of furniture in open common areas to create intimate spaces for private conversations and provide seating options for residents of every acuity level. Similarly, offer a mix of dining armchairs, bar stools and banquettes in dining spaces to accommodate a variety of preferences.





# form&function

Look for these senior-friendly features when selecting furniture to fulfill your design.

a

b

c

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- a. Woven performance fabrics like Crypton® resist stains and moisture for easy cleaning.
- b. Shallow seat depth accommodates residents with lower mobility.
- c. High-resiliency foam cushions offer firmness and support that helps residents with easier ingress and egress.
- d. Removable seat decking allows for easier cleaning to support the long lifespan of the furniture – something your client will appreciate.



- e. Seat & back fabrics allow you to use easy-to-clean vinyl on chair seats and a complementary performance fabric on chair backs for a stylish and functional look.
- f. Supportive arms extend to the front of the seat and offer a graspable surface to help facilitate easier ingress and egress.
- g. Ideal dimensions create increased accessibility and promote easier ingress and egress for most seniors.
- h. Stretcher bars help prevent legs from loosening for increased stability and longevity.

- i. In-line wheels or casters on front legs can assist residents when pulling up to the table and reduce stress on the chair frame.
- ≈ Use in-line wheels on hard flooring, such as VCT or laminate wood, to aid in forward and backward movements.
- ≈ Use casters to aid in 360-degree movement on carpet. Casters are best for residents with higher ambulatory levels.



# in focus

Try these top tips to serve seniors with reduced eyesight.

## Reduce glare

Avoid glass-top tables and reflective flooring.

## Delineate furnishings

Consider contrasting cording, piping or nailhead detail to outline furniture, and select window treatments that stand out from the wall.

## Color contrast

Help differentiate between major pieces of furniture, walls, drapes and floors with clear color contrast. This approach is also helpful for different pieces of bedding.

## Color palette

Blue and green tones are particularly difficult for aging eyes to distinguish. Consider using warm reds and golds which are much easier to see.

## Task lighting

Ensure there is suitable task lighting for activities like games, crafts or reading.

## Bold accents

Choose bright accessories and artwork with crisp imagery. Using a combination of materials and colors can help aging eyes better distinguish their environment.

## Natural light

Select window treatments that foster ample natural light. Not only does natural light provide improved visibility, it can also have a positive impact on sleep cycles and mood.





# engage the senses

Appeal to the senses to immerse residents in dynamic experiences.

## Touch

Create engaging spaces with tactile wall art that encourages interaction and conversation. Evoke memories of life events with stimulating textures like lace, fur and denim.

## See

Spark conversation with meaningful décor. Consider using iconic artwork or familiar photos of local landmarks in common areas, and incorporate space for personal photos in resident rooms.

## Taste

Bold dinnerware creates an appetizing backdrop for food. Primary colors are even proven to enhance appetite.

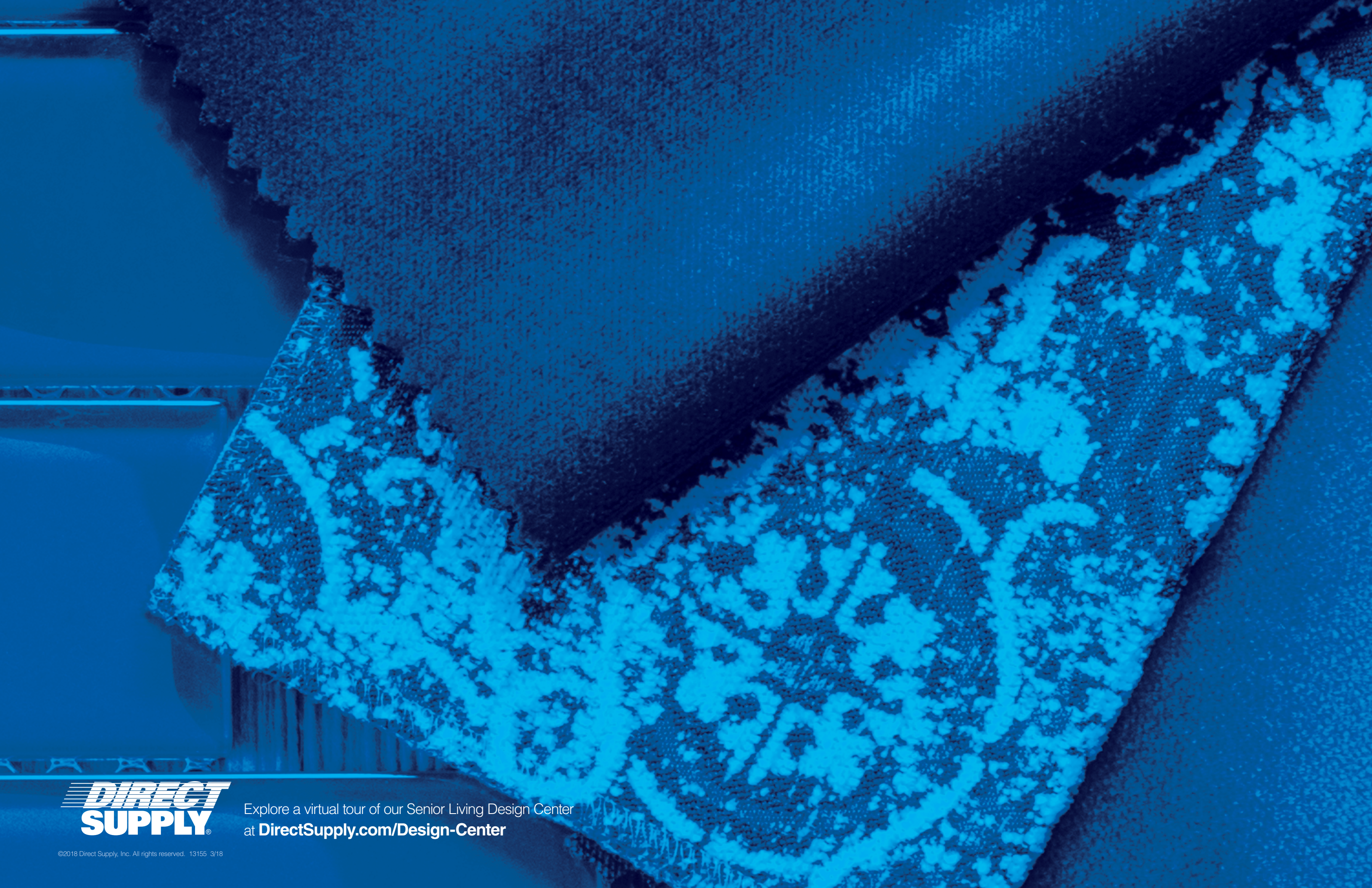
## Smell

Incorporate areas where your client can create comforts like the alluring aroma of fresh coffee or popcorn. Consider scented electric candles that offer the flicker and scent of real candles without the safety hazard of an open flame.

## Hear

Outfit multipurpose spaces with an entertainment system featuring a comprehensive sound system. Not only will residents be able to enjoy films, but these spaces are ideal for hosting guest speakers and special events.





Explore a virtual tour of our Senior Living Design Center  
at [DirectSupply.com/Design-Center](https://www.directsupply.com/design-center)