

Assisted Living Tour Checklist

12 Essential Questions to Ask on Every Tour — So Nothing Gets Overlooked

A Complimentary Resource from Senior Care Connect DMV

Touring an assisted living community is one of the most important steps in finding the right care for your loved one. It can also feel overwhelming, especially when you are meeting with staff, taking in the environment, and processing a great deal of information all at once.

This checklist is designed to help you stay organized, ask the right questions, and compare communities objectively after each visit. Print one copy per facility, bring a pen, and take notes as you go.

How to Use This Checklist

Print one copy for each facility you plan to tour.

Bring this checklist, a notepad, and if possible, a trusted family member or friend.

Do not feel pressured to make a decision during the tour. Take your time.

Use the Facility Comparison Scorecard at the end to compare communities side by side.

Before You Arrive

Fill in the details below before each tour so your notes stay organized.

Facility Name: _____	Date of Tour: _____
Address: _____	Contact Name: _____
Care Type Offered: _____	Starting Monthly Cost: _____

The 12 Essential Questions

Ask these questions on every tour. The checkbox column is for you to mark off each question as you cover it. Use the notes pages at the end to capture detailed responses.

A. Staffing & Safety

#	Question to Ask	Why It Matters
<input type="checkbox"/>	What is the staff to resident ratio during the day, evening, and overnight?	<i>Understaffing is one of the leading causes of poor care outcomes. Ratios vary widely between communities.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	What is your staff turnover rate, and how long have most caregivers been here?	<i>High turnover disrupts continuity of care and can signal deeper management or culture issues.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	What training do caregivers receive, and how often is it updated?	<i>Proper training in dementia care, fall prevention, and emergency response directly affects resident safety.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	What is your protocol when a resident has a fall or medical emergency?	<i>You want a clear, immediate, and documented response plan — not a vague answer.</i>

B. Medication & Health Management

#	Question to Ask	Why It Matters
<input type="checkbox"/>	How are medications administered, tracked, and stored?	<i>Medication errors are a serious risk in senior care. Ask specifically who oversees this process and how errors are handled.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is there a nurse or licensed medical professional on site, and during what hours?	<i>Around the clock nursing coverage significantly improves health monitoring and emergency response.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	How do you coordinate care with a resident's personal physician or specialist?	<i>Smooth communication between facility staff and outside providers helps prevent care gaps.</i>

C. Memory Care (If Applicable)

#	Question to Ask	Why It Matters
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Is memory care offered in a dedicated, secured unit?	<i>Wandering is a serious safety risk for residents with dementia. A secured, purpose built unit provides essential protection.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	What specific training do staff receive for dementia and Alzheimer's care?	<i>General caregiver training is not sufficient for memory care. Look for specialized certifications and ongoing education.</i>

D. Quality of Life & Community Culture

#	Question to Ask	Why It Matters
<input type="checkbox"/>	What does a typical daily schedule look like for residents?	<i>A well structured day with meaningful activities supports cognitive health, mood, and social engagement.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	May we see a sample menu and observe a mealtime?	<i>Nutrition and dining quality have a direct impact on health and quality of life. Trust what you see — not just what you are told.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	What is your policy if a resident's care needs increase over time?	<i>Understanding the transition or discharge policy helps you plan ahead and avoid unexpected disruptions to care.</i>

What to Observe During the Tour

Beyond the questions you ask, pay close attention to what you see and feel during the visit. First impressions and gut instincts matter.

<input type="checkbox"/>	What to Look For	Green Flag / Red Flag
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cleanliness of common areas, hallways, and restrooms	✓ Fresh, clean, no odors ✗ Odors, visible stains, or clutter
<input type="checkbox"/>	How staff interact with current residents	✓ Warm, respectful, by name ✗ Dismissive, hurried, or impersonal
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resident mood and engagement	✓ Alert, active, engaged ✗ Withdrawn, unattended, or distressed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Outdoor spaces and natural light	✓ Accessible, maintained, inviting ✗ Locked off, neglected, or dark
<input type="checkbox"/>	Noise level and overall atmosphere	✓ Calm, homelike, pleasant ✗ Chaotic, institutional, or overly quiet

<input type="checkbox"/>	Visibility of activities or programming in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vibrant, varied, resident driven <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No programming visible or residents idle
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Tour Notes

Use this space to capture staff responses, observations, and any follow up questions during or after the tour.

Staffing & Safety Notes	
Medication & Health Notes	
Memory Care Notes	
Quality of Life Notes	
General Impressions & Follow Up Questions	

Facility Comparison Scorecard

Use this scorecard to compare up to three communities side by side after completing your tours.

Category	Facility 1	Facility 2	Facility 3
Facility Name			
Address / Location			
Overall Impression (1–10)			
Staff Friendliness (1–10)			
Cleanliness (1–10)			
Food Quality (1–10)			
Activities Offered			
Monthly Base Cost			
Additional Fees			
Move In Timeline			
Notes / Concerns			

Not Sure Which Community Is the Right Fit?

We're Here to Help.

Senior Care Connect DMV helps families throughout Maryland, DC, and Virginia find the right assisted living, memory care, or in home care solution — at no cost to your family. We will personally guide you through the search, coordinate tours, and help you compare your options.



Call or Text: 301-968-6860



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About This Resource

This checklist is intended as a general guide to help families prepare for assisted living tours. It does not constitute medical, legal, or financial advice. Senior Care Connect DMV is a free placement and guidance service for families in Maryland, Washington, DC, and Virginia. We do not charge families for our services.

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