

HOME FROM HOME

A new model of nursing homes

In this issue

WELL-THOUGHT-OUT SPACES AND ACTIVITIES

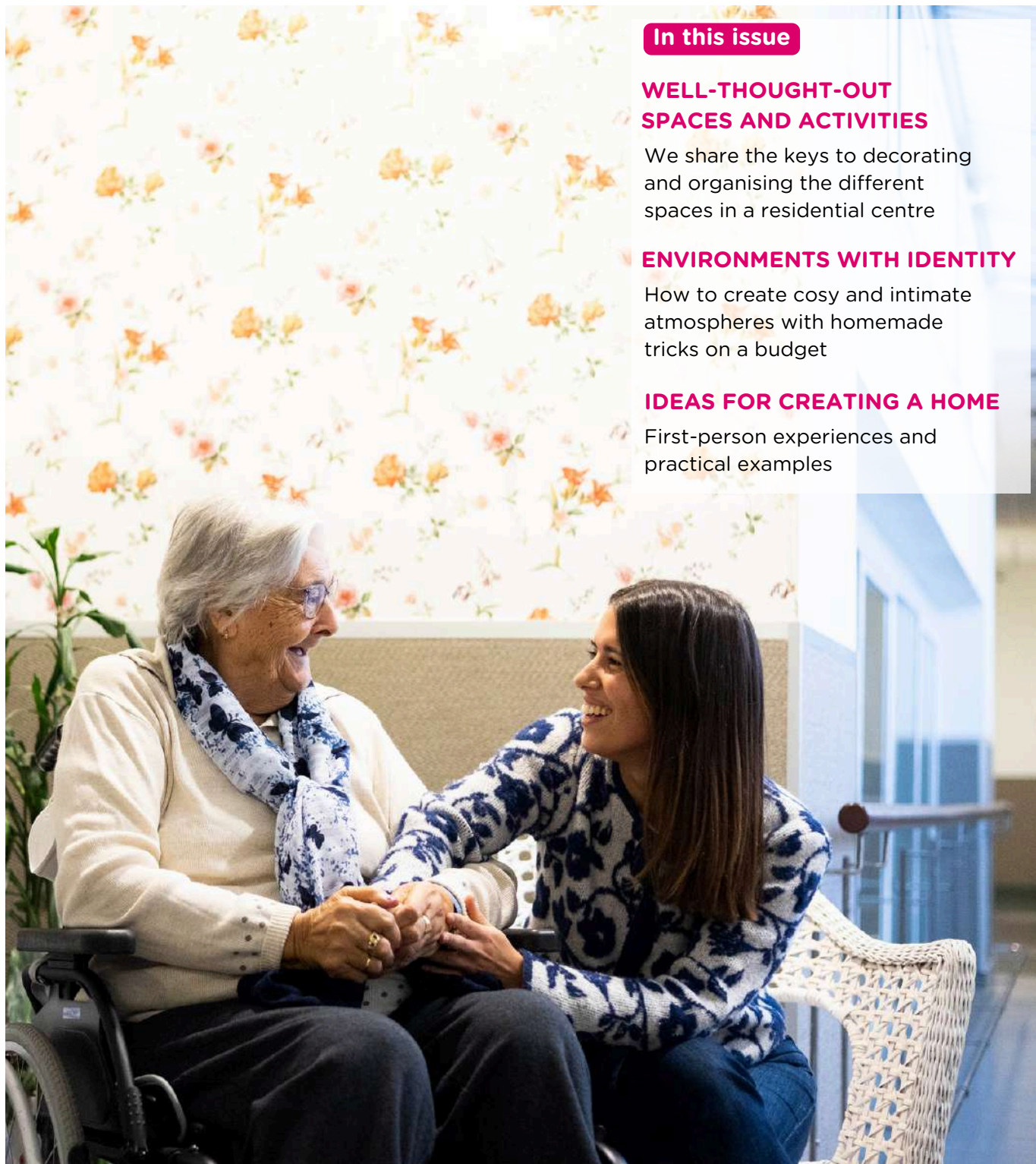
We share the keys to decorating and organising the different spaces in a residential centre

ENVIRONMENTS WITH IDENTITY

How to create cosy and intimate atmospheres with homemade tricks on a budget

IDEAS FOR CREATING A HOME

First-person experiences and practical examples



Final version. This document is the result of the work carried out within the «Home-from-home» project, incorporating the contributions of all key actors. Como en Casa” project, incorporating the contributions of all key actors.

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The 'Home-from-home' project is funded by the Ministry of Social Rights and Agenda 2030 in the framework of the Spanish Government's Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan and the European Union's Next Generation EU funds.

Preliminary reflections

The architectural design, decoration and ambience of a building and its surroundings influence our well-being, and they are also a reflection of our culture and evolve over time.

Different local contexts, climate, construction techniques, lifestyles, fashions and people's own history condition the design and use of spaces.

A very illustrative example that can be found in our immediate environment is the design of office buildings, which have evolved from individual offices limited by opaque partitions or cubicles separated by panels, to open spaces to encourage interaction between departments and work teams.

The decoration of a space - whether indoor or outdoor - also reflects characteristics of the person, or the social group, that makes use of the space. Attention to detail, incorporating decorative objects that represent memories of a personal experience or photographs of loved ones, are elements that contribute to the creation of pleasant and homely atmospheres, which increase the feeling of well-being.

Nowadays we talk about neuroarchitecture or sensory stimulation, environmental design techniques that have been applied for decades in the world of marketing and have now been studied and used in greater depth in other sectors.

In the specific context of the design of residential care homes and accommodation for the elderly, certain parameters take on greater importance, even on a symbolic level.

From an aesthetic point of view, the beauty of a building, especially in terms of facilities and services, and its integration into the surrounding environment are a reflection of the respect for the people who occupy and use it.

But also, from a functional point of view, the type of rooms and spaces that are incorporated into the building, and the relationships and connections between them, are the result of placing more value on some aspects than others, normally prioritising concern about all kinds of risks and efficiency in basic tasks that are indisputably necessary, but which barely contribute value or meaning to people's lives on their own.



Furthermore, considering the prospects of greater longevity of the population and the prevalence of dementia in our country, as well as the emerging alternatives for providing care at home, it is foreseeable that we will progressively encounter a greater number of people requiring a greater level of care.

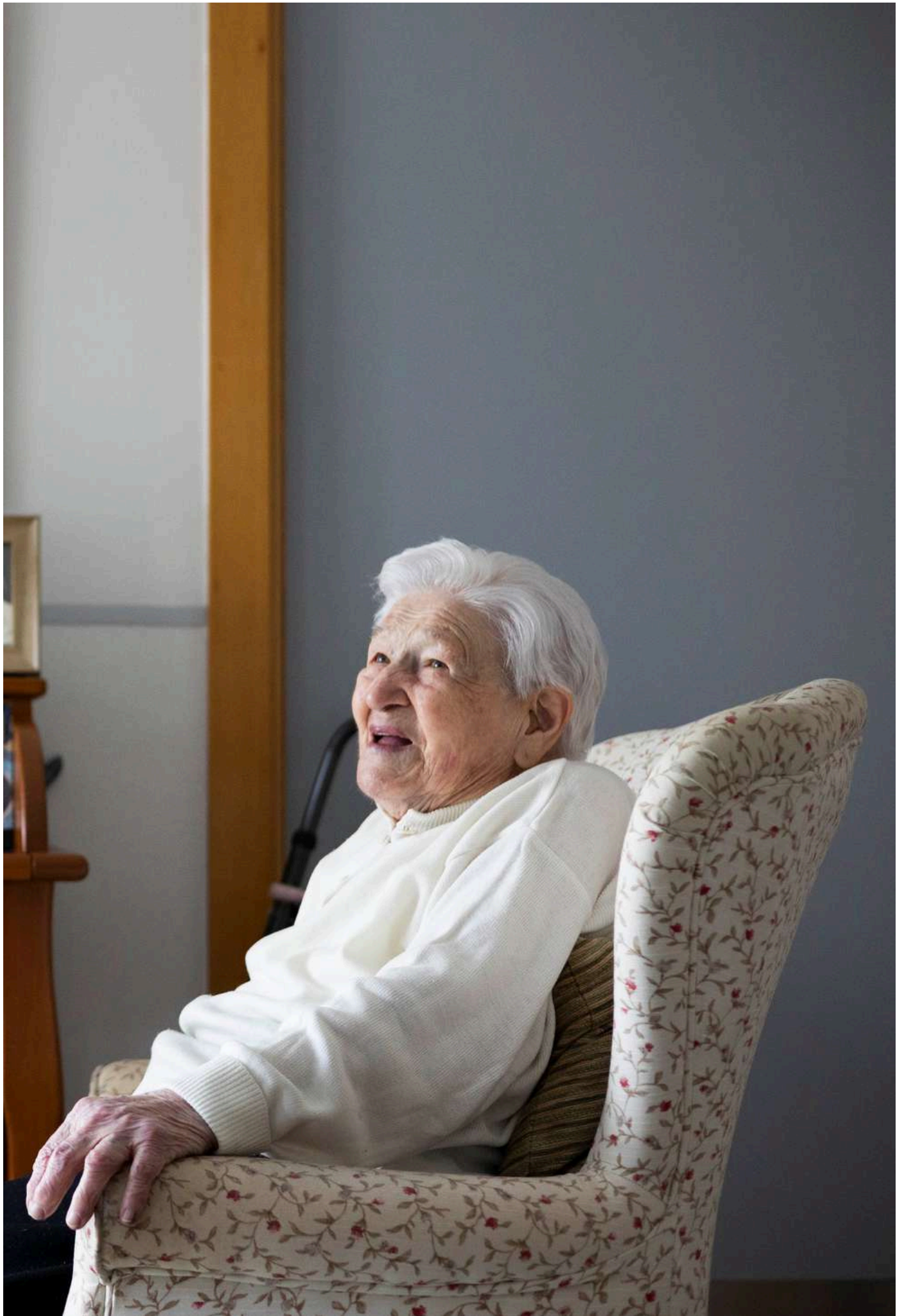
With greater cognitive impairment, dependency levels increase and mobility is reduced. And this means that environmental stimuli take on a much greater role as generators of well-being.

This magazine combines knowledge

from the fields of interior design, sustainability and habitability, as well as knowledge acquired from case studies of good practices, our own experience and, above all, scientific evidence that links design features of environments with positive results.

In short, the aim is to convey to society the value of environments and their relationship with our well-being and quality of life, as well as to provide the keys to decoration and spatial organisation that, without great investment high aspirations, help us to work on the environments in our day-to-day lives.





«Home-from-home» project

The «Home-from-home» project is one of the 20 pilot projects within the framework of the "State deinstitutionalisation strategy for a good life in the community" launched by the Secretary of State for Social Rights of the Ministry of Social Rights and Agenda 2030 and with funding from the Next Generation Funds and the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan.

The **shared objective** of all the projects is to **boost the transformation of community services and the model of support and care**, focusing on each individual's rights and life project.



For more information on the Statewide Deinstitutionalisation Strategy for Good Community Living you can scan this QR code. ◀



In Spain there are currently more than **5,500 care homes** for the older people where around **390,000 people** live, not counting other types of facilities or resources, such as day centres or retirement homes.

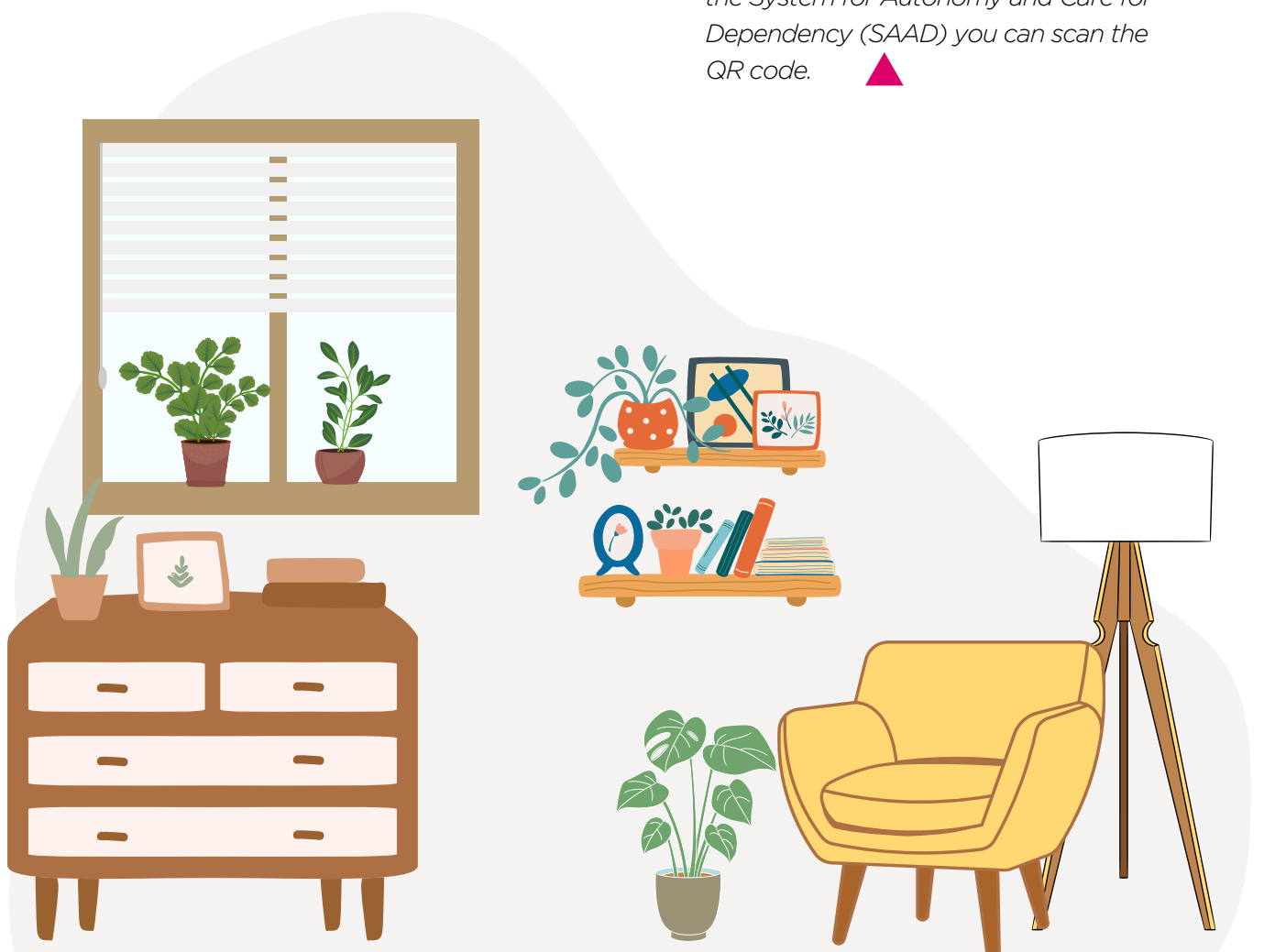
The design of these facilities and spaces has been conceived with an **institutional and impersonal character** that has significantly conditioned **isolation and segregation** from the community. Not only because of the location, but also due to the image and characteristics of the surroundings and spaces, making these spaces an unpleasant place to spend time with family and friends.



This motivation and the recent publication of the "Agreement on Common Criteria for accreditation and quality of the centres and services of the System for Personal Autonomy and Care of Dependent Adults (SAAD)" (2022) have conditioned the research of the "Home-from-home" project. As a result, one of the fundamental axes has been precisely the environments and settings. Different parameters have been analysed and evaluated, as well as accompanying the action groups to enable them to develop skills to work on the environments, regardless of whether they have the budget for a more far-reaching architectural intervention.



For more information on the Agreement on Common Criteria for the accreditation and quality of the centres and services of the System for Autonomy and Care for Dependency (SAAD) you can scan the QR code. ▲



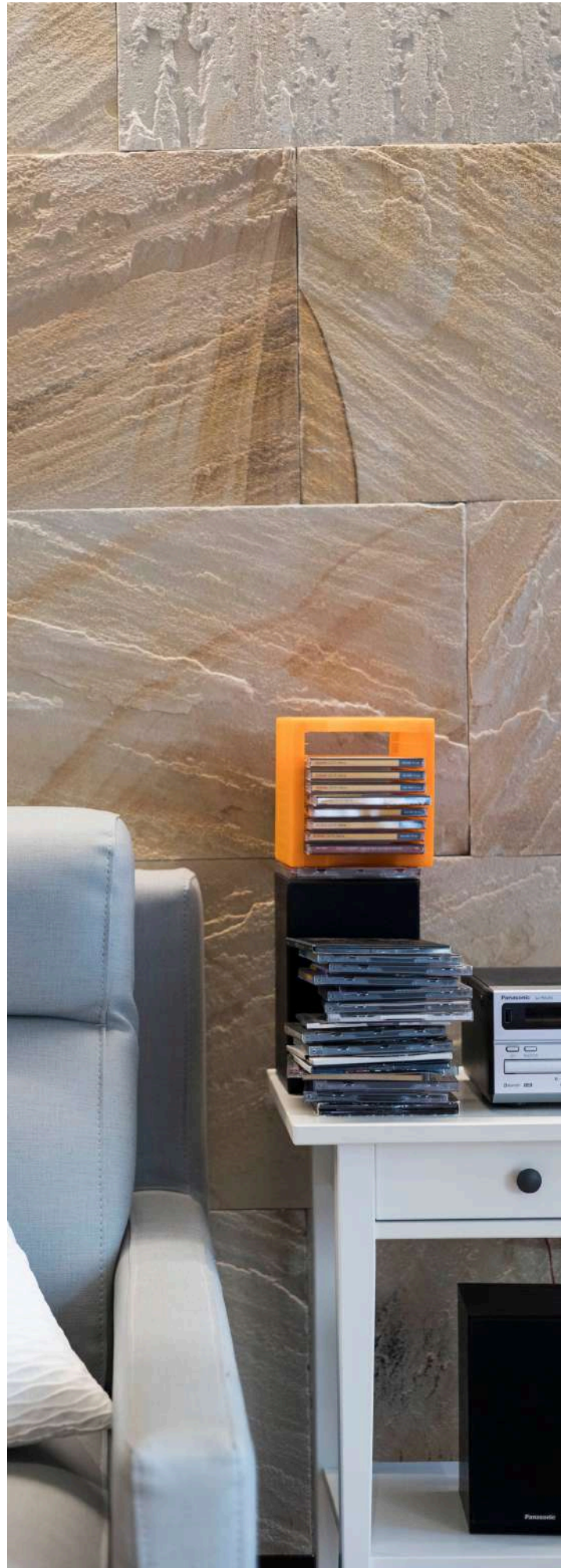
— *How to work on the environments*

When discussing the design of an environment, architectural or interior design projects often come to mind. However, to begin the transformation of spaces into more homely environments in our centres, or even in our homes, it is not necessary to start with a major renovation project.

It is true that a more far-reaching transformation would help greatly, but it is a job that must be carried out by the right professionals. For this reason, an interactive tool is proposed, a wheel of ambiances, which serves to improve by making changes in ambiances that also have a great impact.

This reflection, which is developed through a dynamic adapted to the general public, invites the participation of residents, family members, carers, assistants, nurses, cleaning and maintenance technicians and the rest of the working staff.

The content of this magazine is a selection of knowledge linked to ambiances and general decoration which, with care and attention, can be applied progressively without the need for expert knowledge of interior design and without a large investment.



«Motivation, willingness to learn and enthusiasm are the keys to get down to work and transform our spaces so that they generate greater well-being.».

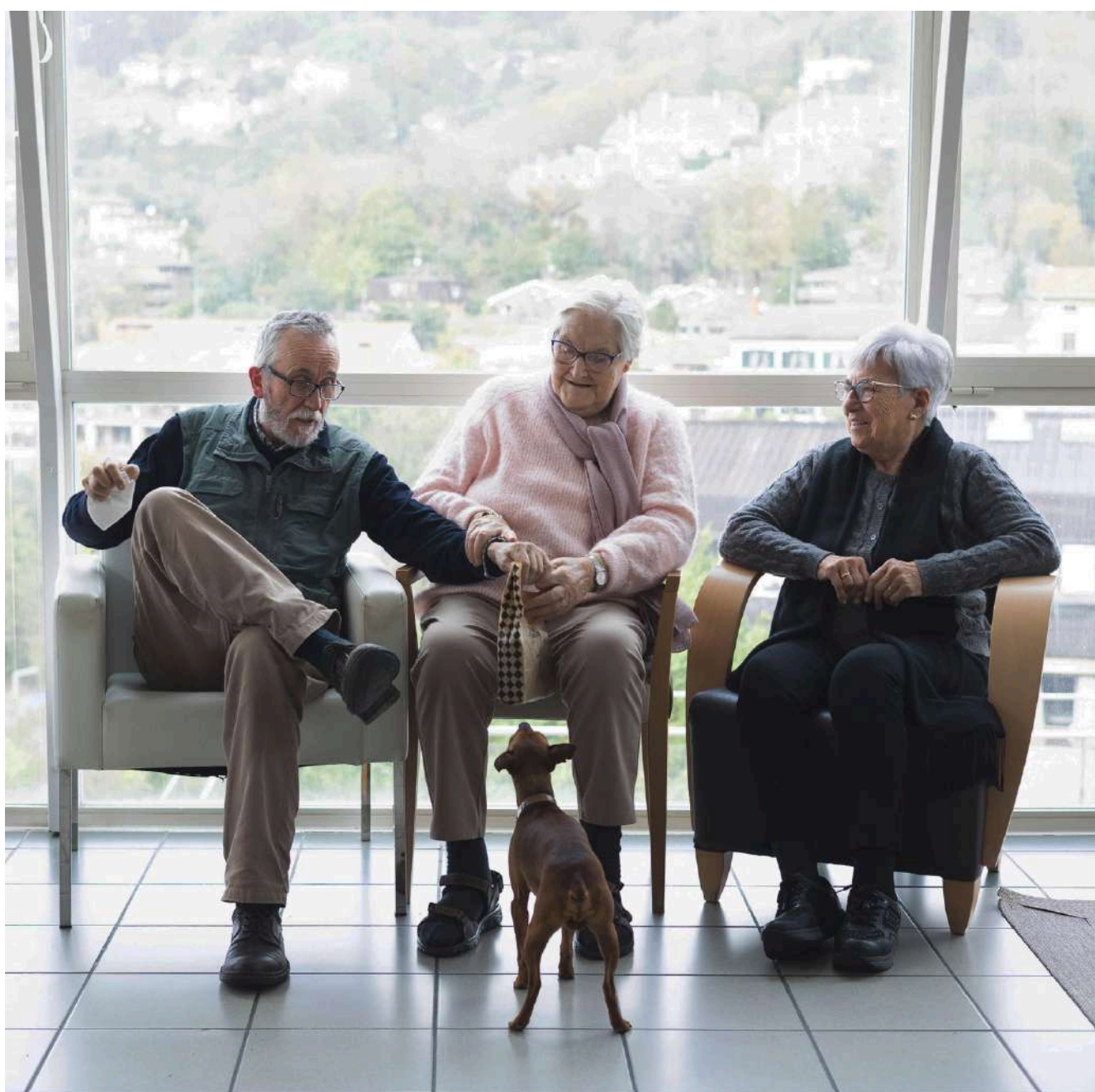
Firstly, the dynamic is structured by analysing the space where the intervention is to be carried out.

Ten main themes have been chosen to

focus on when designing the changes.

Each of the topics is assessed in a qualitative and personal way. However, general criteria and recommendations are included in the following pages.

We will see important recommendations on lighting, spatial organisation, the use of colours, circulation, contact with nature... tips and recommendations that will help us to observe the spaces with more criteria and make better decisions.



The wheel of ambiances

To carry out the assessment of a space, the following steps can be followed:

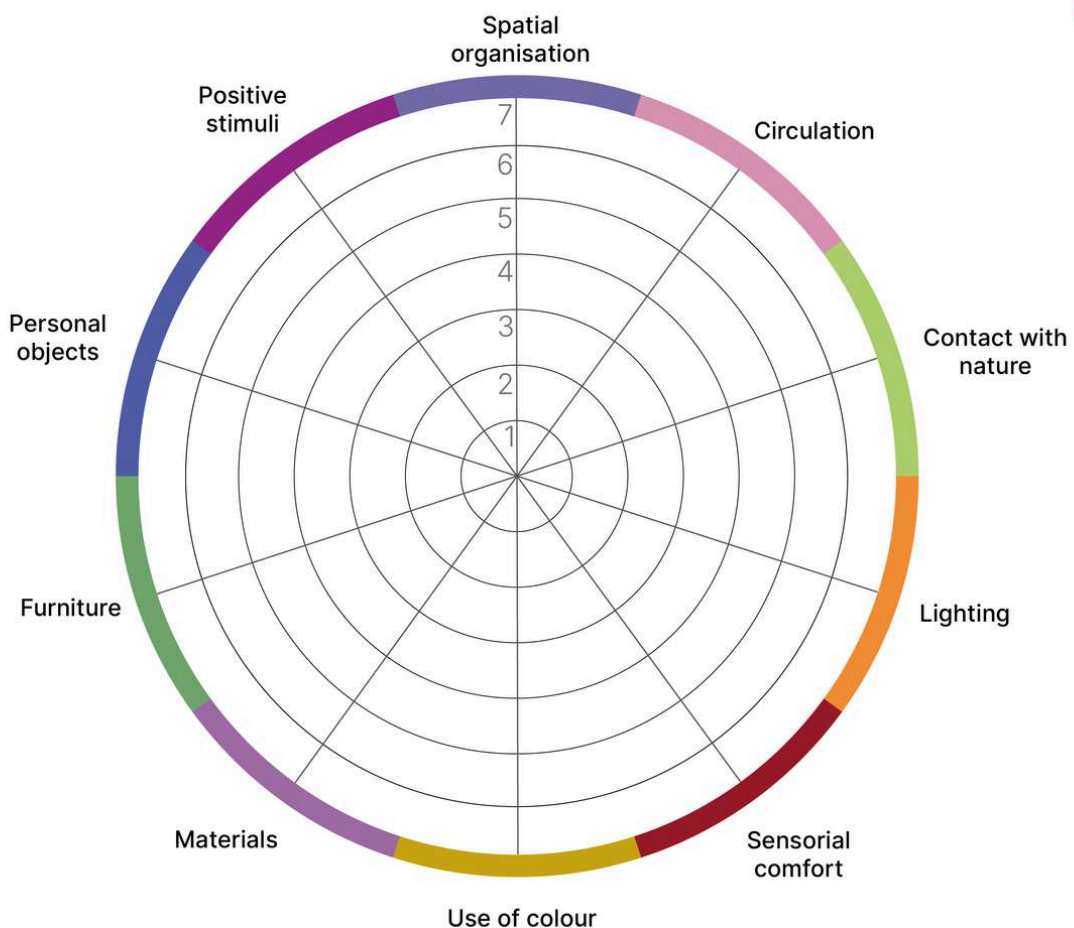
- 1 Choosing the space we want to assess, individually or as a team.
- 2 Before we start to assess the space, we should ask ourselves why we want to transform the space and what activity usually takes place in the room. This way, we will also have key information to know what we want to achieve with the ambience changes.

3 The wheel is made up of 10 different elements. We will rate each of them from 1 to 7, in a radial way, with 1 = negative and with a lot of room for improvement and 7 = optimal, with little room for improvement.

In this way, the wheel will be filled in for each theme until a complete diagram is obtained.

This diagram will allow us to easily compare in a visual way the perceptions -individual or collective- on each of the elements analysed.

This dynamic can be worked on individually or in groups, although it is recommended to start with an individual analysis and then share it with the group and think about the proposals together as a team.



Subsequently, for each of the major themes, different proposals can be worked on depending on the results obtained, the starting point of the space, the teams involved and the resources available.

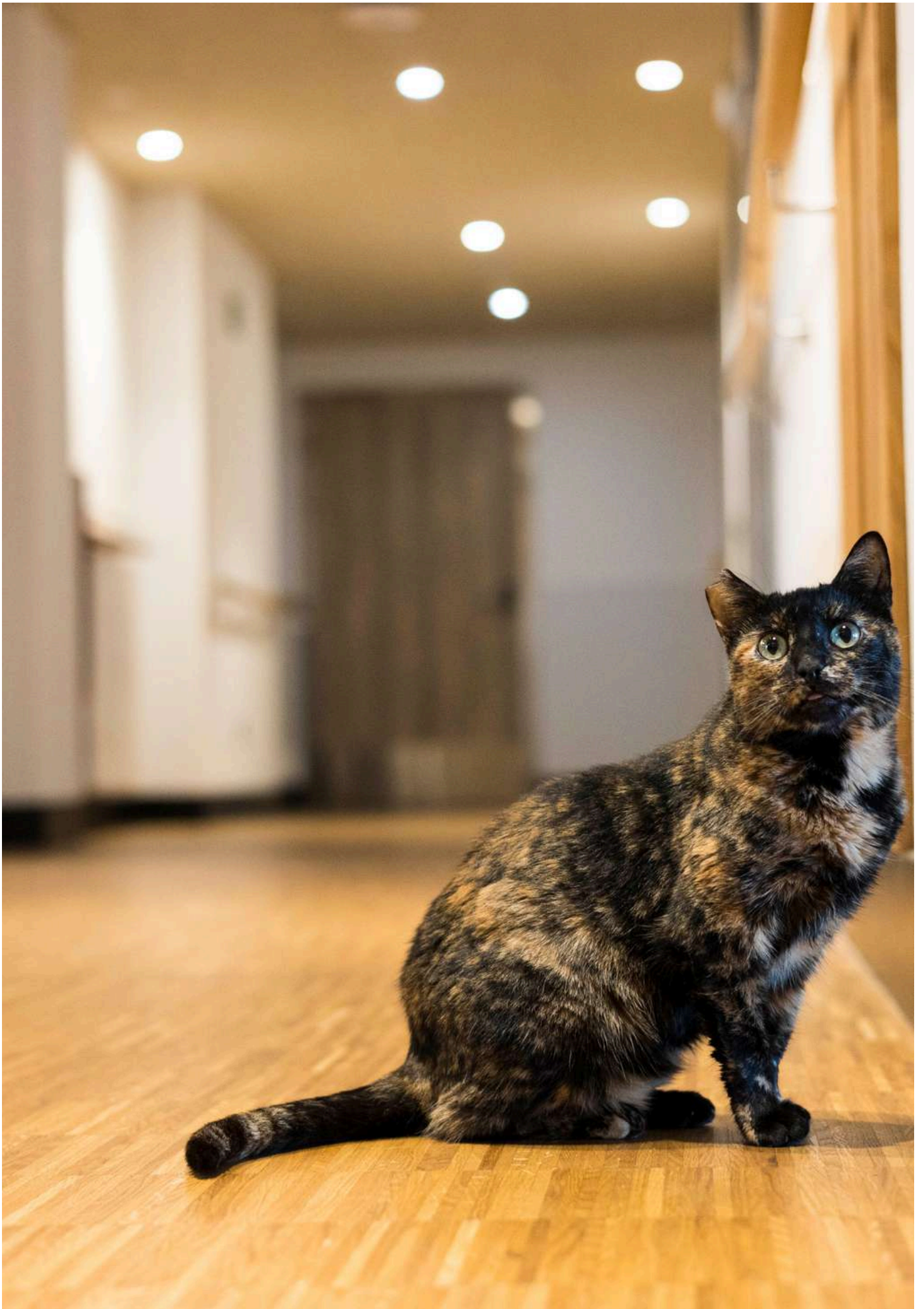
There are no right or wrong evaluations, but some of the questions may be redundant or obvious or cannot be applied to the space that has been selected. It does not matter, it is about reflecting on the spaces and seeing the potential they have to improve our well-being and quality of life.

This reflection will help us to make the most of every space in our building or outdoor spaces. Remember that you are part of the space you live in and it is also up to you to make it a homely, well-kept and tidy space.

Throughout the document you can find recommendations, examples and questions that we can ask ourselves when observing a space.

Shall we start? ■





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will find...*

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Spatial Organisation

Spaces to promote independence and well-being

The organisation and distribution of a room, a dining room, a living room or any other room can influence several aspects: facilitating our routines, feeling more or less secure, being relaxed or making the most of natural light or any other positive stimulus.

Is the room/lounge organised in a way that optimises its use?

- ▶ Here are some tips on how to organise your space. Take a look at the room you are in or at the photograph, to see if the recommendations we share are met:

- 1 Identify the main furniture in the room (bed, sofa, etc.). Ideally, this piece of furniture should be located away from the entrance, diagonally and with visual contact. In other words, it will make it easier to have visual control of what is happening in the room to improve the feeling of security.
Do you think that the organisation of the space responds to this criterion?

- 2 In the same way that we will facilitate visual control, we will prevent people from standing with their backs to doors or passageways.
Is the furniture that requires a good backrest (a sofa, a bed, an armchair, benches...) leaning against the wall?

- 3 Seating places (seats, armchairs or wheelchairs) should be placed with a view to interesting or pleasant stimuli, depending on the person's preferences, the time of day or the weather.
Do we have pleasant views from the sitting or lying position?





4

Co-living improves if each activity has its own space. If we are in a large living room or dining room:
Are the areas sufficiently differentiated to organise different activities without disturbing other people?

5

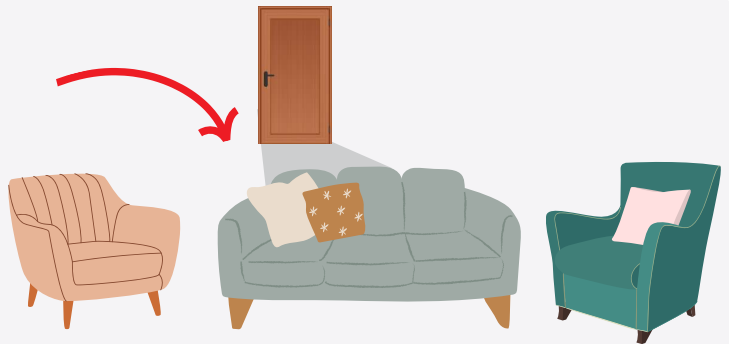
Order generates well-being and hiding support elements (wheelchairs, walkers, crutches...) can promote autonomy.
Is there a variety of storage to collect all the objects, as well as shelves or decorative shelves?

Practical tips



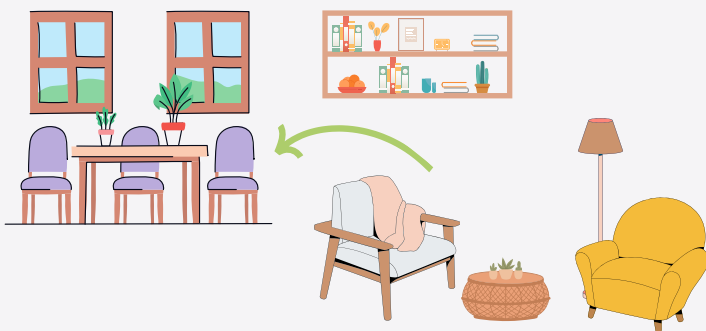
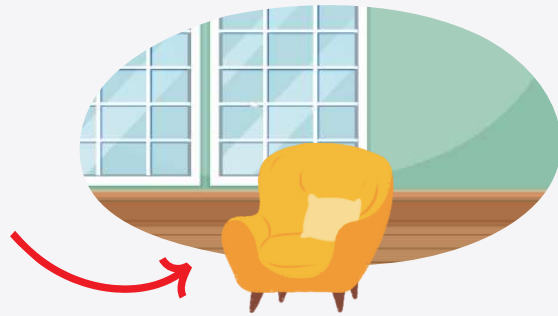
Avoid placing furniture with backrests facing away from the entrance door

Sitting with your back to a door creates a lot of insecurity, not knowing who might come in or feeling that someone is walking behind you.



Do not place any seat with its back to a passageway, such as corridors, stairs, etc.

Spaces that are too large or areas that are too wide can also lead to insecurity for the same reason.



Ensure the arrangement of the furniture respects the natural light points.

Near the window, place furniture where you need good natural light, such as a table or desk where you can read or write.



If you do not have natural lighting points, or not enough for the whole room, it is important to place artificial lighting points

In areas far away from windows, the lighting should be reinforced with auxiliary lamps, especially in those areas where activities are carried out.

Before and after



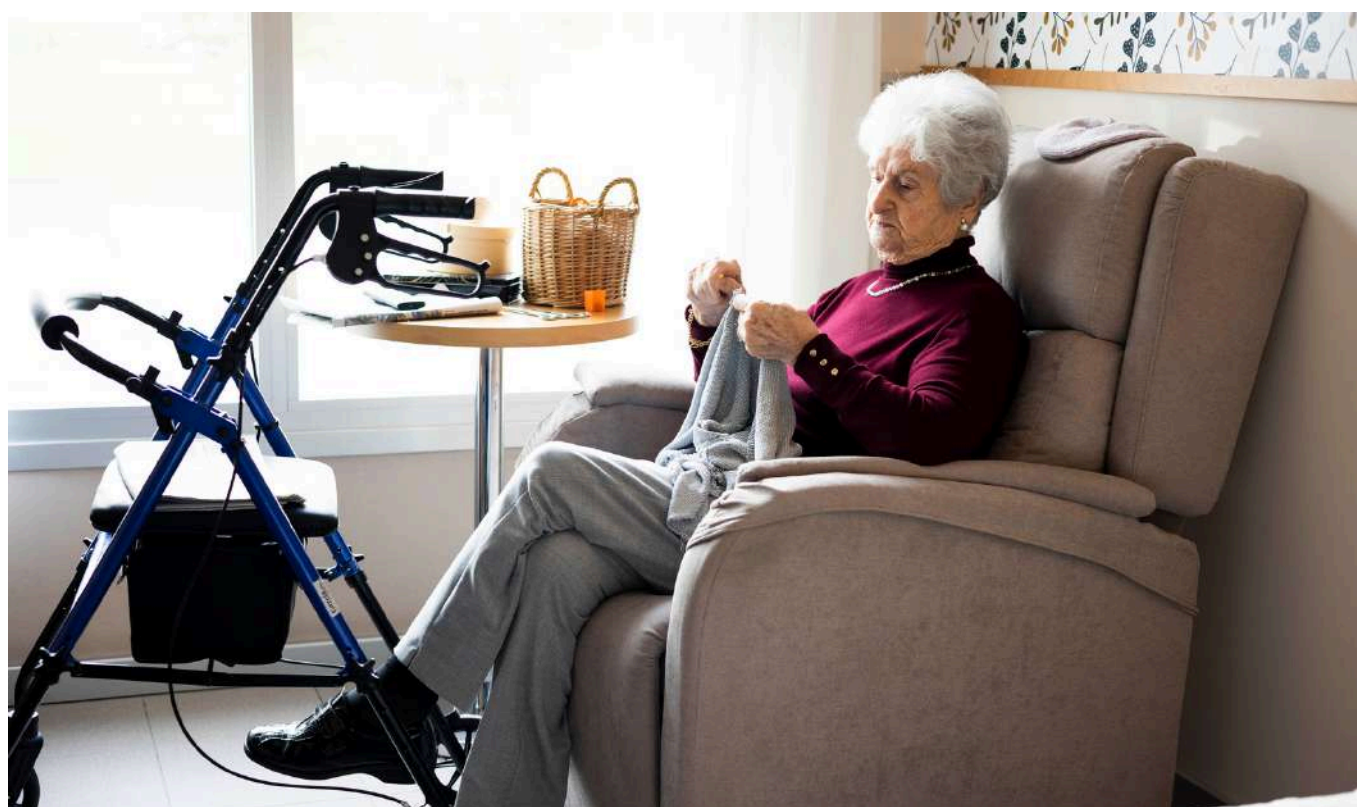
▲ It seems obvious, but sometimes we need a push to help us break with inherited inertia. This space was being used as a warehouse after the Covid-19 pandemic.



▲ After a work session on the ambiances, the result was the creation of a dining room with furniture that was already in the centre, and to put some care into setting the table.

▼ In this image we can see that the preferred area for activities where a good view is needed is near the window, with a comfortable sofa next to the wall from

where we have control of everything that happens in the room and with a side table to be able to work with our utensils.



Circulation

Corridors and spaces that encourage safe walking and strolling

The main routes, both in a room and in the corridors, must be kept free of obstacles that may interrupt or hinder passage. In addition, we need objects and elements to help us find our way around and reduce the endless corridor effect. Where possible, we should maintain circular or loop routes to allow for walkways. The lighting, choice of colour or where we place decorative elements can help orientation, help us to perceive shorter distances or encourage the use of one space or another.

Does the circulation work well for all the people who use the building: people who live in it, people who work in it or visitors?

▶ Here are some tips on how to work on circulation. Take a look at the room you are in or at the photograph, and see if the recommendations we share are met:

① We must always ensure an obstacle-free passage.
Can we add decoration without sacrificing comfort and safety?

② Are there furniture or decorative elements in the corridor that help to identify where we are?

③ Do the circulations have a purpose / do they make sense?
Are they decorated to make walking meaningful?

④ Hide doors or storage that we do not want people to notice.
Are service or staff access doors camouflaged with the wall colour?





5

Entrances and thresholds are areas that can help us to find our way around. Are there significant decorative elements that help to clearly identify the entrances to different rooms or to the living unit?

6

Is there a circular or loop circuit that allows for strolling?

7

Are there elements to lean on and rest during the journey?

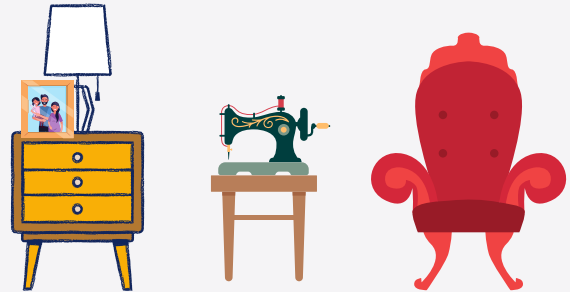
Practical tips

It is recommended that the decorative elements are meaningful. In other words, they should be related to the personal history or lifestyle of the people who live in the space.



It is important that the decoration relates to the people living in the centre.

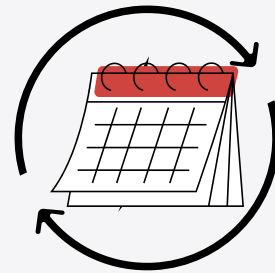
It is recommended that the decoration relates to the personal history or lifestyle of the people living in the space.



Regularly renew decorative objects

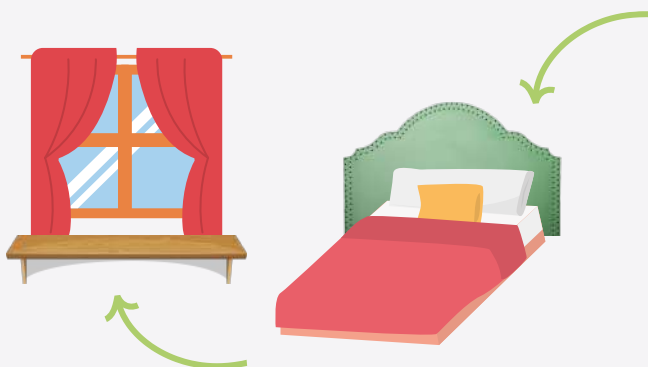
Spaces need to be personalised with objects that are meaningful to the people living in them at any given time.

It is important to make a review every few years or change the decoration according to the seasons and local festivities.



In addition to shelving, it is advisable to install display cabinets.

Display cabinets allow us to place objects of significance to the people who use the space safely and with less accumulation of dust.



Consider the type of security needed for the elements in each space.

There are many alternatives to meet the security criteria according to the specific needs of individuals: bolts, locks, padlocks, mechanisms with security locks, etc.

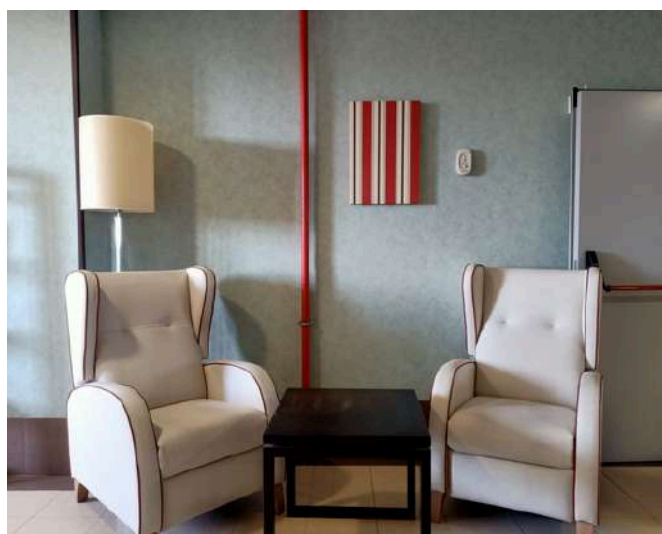
Consider the spaces that can be used as shelves without posing a risk to anyone, for example, window sills, radiator covers, headboards, shelves, etc.

Easy tip



▲ In this image we can see how the storage area in front of the television has been reduced and a low unit has been incorporated behind the sofa to create two different ambiances and prevent the back of the sofa from being exposed.

▼ The creation of small areas in strategic places, such as at the entrance to the building or at the main door of a living unit, helps to create anchors or spatial references that make it easier to recognise the different spaces.



▲ We can create small seating areas with a couple of armchairs, a small table and additional decoration. It is important to place elements on the wall plane or on the floor to delimit the area and create a complete atmosphere.

Note that different objects have been incorporated to create a complete corner: shelves or mirrors, decorative objects, and even a small rug that does not pose a risk to the passage of people.



Contact with Nature

It is important to see life

Being in a natural environment or outdoor space is a highly desirable positive stimulus, as one breathes fresh air, receives sunshine, perceives other sounds and smells, can do other kinds of activities, and all this has a positive effect on health. As dependency increases, contact with the outdoors can easily be reduced, because we are dependent on someone to take us there. It is recommended that spaces close to windows with interesting views be used or natural elements be incorporated in the décor to help bring some nature indoors. If there are balconies or terraces, encourage their use with outdoor activities.

Is there contact with pleasant outdoor spaces or natural elements included in the decoration?

▶ Here are some tips on how to encourage contact with nature. Take a look at the room you are in or at the photograph to see if the recommendations we share are being followed:



Contact with nature can be very varied, from a terrace or gallery, to a fireplace or still-life paintings, photographs or natural landscapes. Is there a diversity of natural elements in the environment? For example, is there a seating area next to windows with views to the outside or are there paintings with natural landscapes?



Whenever possible we will take the opportunity to introduce natural plants. Are the plants hardy, non-toxic, non-allergenic and with no thorns? Are they easy to maintain, and do the people living and working in the centre contribute to their maintenance?





3

Outdoor spaces are often underutilised.

Is access to these outdoor spaces made easy, are terraces, patios and gardens accessible and safe, and are activities held there?

4

It is important to consider that people may need to adapt spaces for comfort and safety. Above all, be careful to avoid dehydration and exposure to cold, heat or draughts.

Do outdoor areas have protective elements (umbrellas, pergolas), lighting and a variety of furniture (craft tables or raised benches, etc.)?

Practical tips



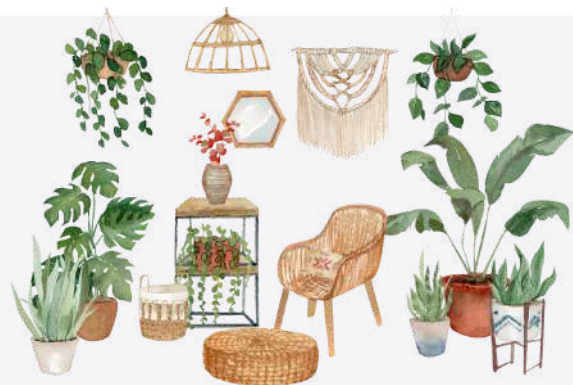
Not all spaces are accessible and safe for all people

Assess what risks there may be for people to participate in looking after communal balconies or terraces and find the best place to enjoy natural contact safely.



Don't underuse an outdoor space

Often outdoor spaces are not used due to lack of accessibility or complete absence of furniture or activities that take place in them. Find a way to create spaces that allow you to enjoy this area whenever you want.



Incorporate the activity of watering and maintaining plants as a shared responsibility of all people.

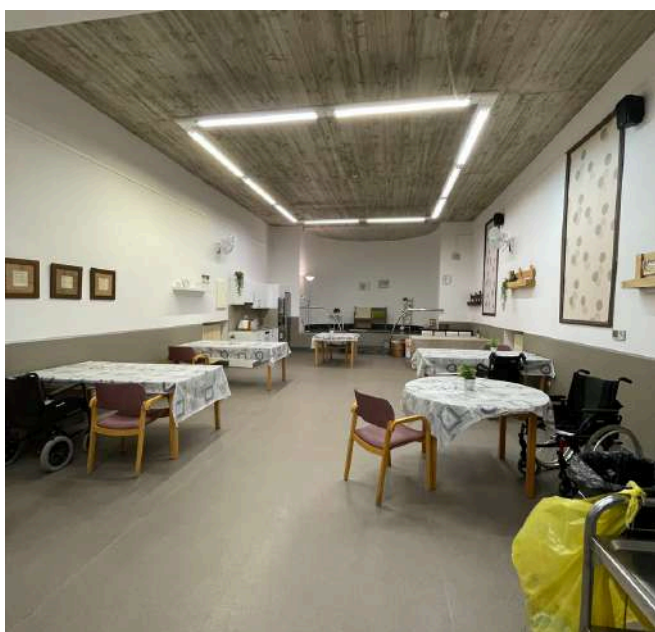
Watching the seasons change and caring for living things gives peace of mind and can be a very enjoyable pastime for many people.



The outdoor space should incorporate elements that make it more comfortable and interesting

There are different types of planters and decorative elements for outdoors that allow us to promote the use of these spaces with all the guarantees of safety and comfort.

Before and After



▲ The building's configuration may condition the possibilities of having views of the outside or access to a terrace. After the renovation of this space, artificial natural elements were incorporated.



▲ Note the new lighting in the form of windows with pictures of the street outside or the artificial tree that has been added in the centre of the room. The artificial natural elements help to create a much more pleasant and comfortable atmosphere.

▼ Contact with nature can be encouraged by using terraces and open spaces for everyday activities.

Beyond gardening, it is advisable to make use of outdoor spaces and seek activities that allow us to have contact with fresh air and natural light.



Lighting

Relationship to natural activity and sleep cycles

Good lighting is essential for us to be able to see our surroundings and carry out different activities with ease. Furthermore, our sleep cycles are also regulated by natural light.

Therefore, the first thing to do is to make the most of the natural light in the room. On the other hand, when it comes to choosing artificial lighting, we should give priority to warm tones of light and we will also try to design differentiated and cosy atmospheres. As with colours, the type of light can also relax or activate us, so we will try to use them correctly according to our daily schedules and routines. and daily routines.

Is there sufficient natural lighting and do artificial lights create a homely atmosphere?

▶ Here are some tips on the use of light points in different spaces. Take a look at the room you are in or at the photograph, and see if you follow the recommendations we share:

1

The colours and materials in a room also influence the brightness of the space.

Are the colours of the walls and ceilings light so that they are brighter?

2

Kitchens or bathrooms require a higher level of lighting.

Do work surfaces (tables, worktops, etc.) have a good level of lighting, evenly and without casting shadows?

3

We will keep windows and sources of natural light unobstructed.

Are there areas near or overlooking windows? Are windows high enough for a seated or bed-ridden person to see outside views?





4

Avoid using curtains or blinds that colour the natural light or elements that reflect intense tones.

Are the curtains translucent, do the windows have blinds or blackout curtains for naps, are there elements that tint the atmosphere of the room by reflecting the colour?

5

Each activity requires appropriate lighting.

Is there a variety of lamps and spotlights to create different atmospheres?

Practical tips



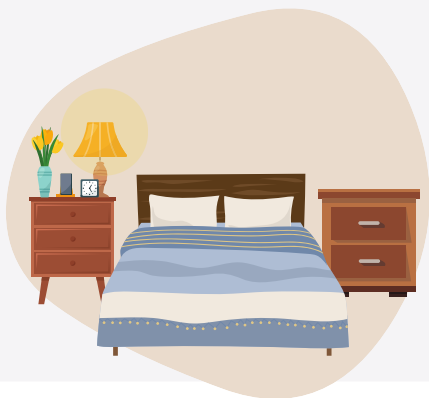
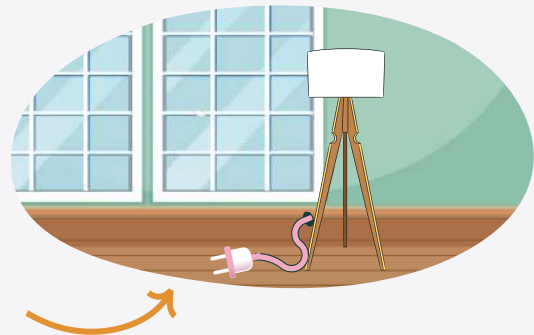
Determine the programme of activities for each space according to the orientation of the window and the room

It is important to be aware of the orientation of windows, as light - and radiation - will not enter in the same way depending on whether the facade is south, east, west or north.



Be careful with the arrangement of lamps and cables

It is important that auxiliary lamps and wiring are not located in passageways, to prevent them from falling or being knocked over by the objects themselves. They must also have switches that are easy to find.



Use warm lighting for bedrooms

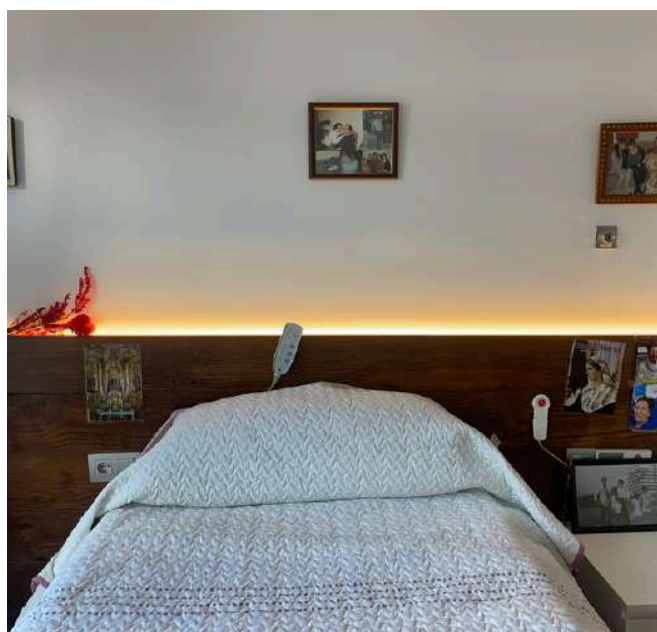
A warm lamp near the bed makes going to bed or getting up much calmer and more relaxed.



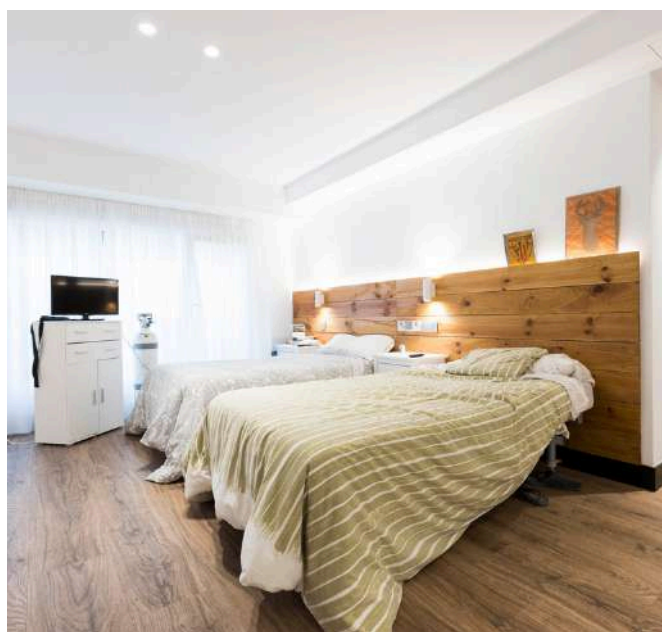
Provides sufficient variety of lighting (direct and indirect) and lamp types to differentiate spaces

Choose the lighting according to the activity planned for the specific space. We can combine floor, table and ceiling lamps.

Easy tip



▲ Some people need to have some light near the bed to feel safe or to get up at night. It is important that this light is not too strong and does not shine directly into the eyes.



▲ Indirect lighting can be incorporated into existing furniture, such as the headboard of the bed or shelves, as well as auxiliary lamps or wall lights.

▼ Having spaces with differentiated lighting circuits allows light to be adjusted throughout the day and according to the person's needs. In addition, it may be necessary to incorporate a lamp for specific activities.

Notice that the lights in this kitchen are turned off because it is not being used; however, there are two different spaces according to the level of light needed. These light needs will vary according to the time of day and season of the year.



Sensorial Comfort

Temperature, sound and smell

Being in a comfortable situation means that we spend less energy adapting to our environment and therefore feel more comfortable and at ease in a place. Older people may feel cold or heat differently, as well as being more or less sensitive to variations in temperature or to certain sounds or smells. For this reason, it is important to work on the environments considering these elements, eliminating negative stimuli and favouring positive stimuli.

Do we feel that people are comfortable and at ease in the space they are using?

▶ Here are a few tips. Take a look at the room you are in or at the photograph, to see if the recommendations we share are met:



Sometimes, if communication is difficult, not being comfortable can manifest itself in stress or behaviours that attract our attention. We are talking about unmet needs, which can be multiple, but the environment can have an impact. **Observe the environment and the people in the room: are there any disturbing noises? Is the temperature adequate and pleasant? Is the light warm enough to rest or do any activity with good lighting?**



Attention should be paid to areas near windows or terraces. Between summer and winter there can be significant temperature contrasts. Depending on the season, these areas can be very pleasant or overheated.

Are there fixed or mobile protections on the windows and can they be regulated depending on the weather that day?





3

Natural sounds such as running water, the sound of the sea or the chirping of birds are positive stimuli that can be incorporated indoors by means of water fountains or loudspeakers.

Are relaxing sounds used in the background, is there a calm and soothing atmosphere in general, and is there a specific room for relaxation?

4

The sense of smell activates memories and memories with great intensity. It is important to incorporate odour-enhancing elements in rooms and to use air fresheners or diffusers with scents that are pleasant and mild.

Do people have soaps or air fresheners in their rooms or cupboards? Are people asked about smells that bring back good memories? Are scents or air fresheners used?

Practical tips



Appropriate stimuli throughout the day and the year

We must be careful to use the different stimuli in a personalised way for each person and taking into account the time of day or year. For example, the fireplace will be reserved for winter evenings on the coldest and darkest days.



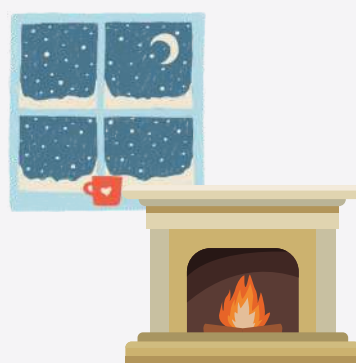
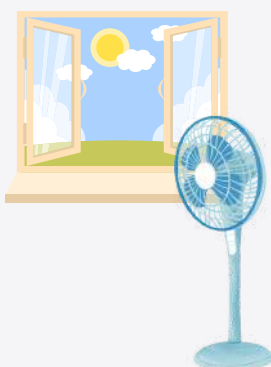
Smaller spaces, controlled acoustics

The scale of the spaces and the capacity they can hold has a significant influence on the ambient noise that will exist in them. Spaces, as well as being reduced in smaller seating areas, should incorporate elements that help to reduce reverberations and bad acoustics.



Relaxing visualisations of music, meditation or dynamic images of natural spaces can also be programmed on televisions

Audio-visual technology can be used to create sensory stimuli in an integrated and standardised way in space and design.



The sensation of a comfortable temperature in a space can be conditioned by several factors

We must make sure that the person is not getting too hot or too cold. We may have blankets to keep away the cold in winter or incorporate fans or humidifiers in the hotter, drier summer months.

Easy tip



▲ We can incorporate aroma diffusers or essential perfumes as decorative elements while at the same time playing with different olfactory stimuli or camouflaging unpleasant or intense smells.

▲ Small kitchens in living units allow us to participate in multiple ways and enjoy the smells and sounds of preparing the different meals of the day.

▼ Acoustic comfort can be a sensitive issue. Having music or television playing in the background can disturb focusing one's attention or following a conversation. In addition, the style of music or personal preferences can be very

different from one person to another. It is, therefore, recommended to always confirm that everyone agrees to listening to the radio or music or to use headphones or earphones, which also make it easy to adjust the volume in a fully personalised way.



Use of Colour

The right stimulation for each space

The colour of a space can influence our mood. In general, we will use cool tones if we want to encourage a calm area (green, blue, etc.) or warm tones if we want to encourage activity and interaction (orange, hazelnut, pink, salmon...). It is advisable to use soft tones that are not too intense. On the other hand, it is important to think about the contrast between the different planes (floor-wall-furniture), as there are often visual or cognitive disabilities that make it difficult to perceive a space or object.

Do the colours of the room meet accessibility and aesthetic criteria?

▶ Here are some tips on how to use colour in different environments. Take a look at the room you are in or at the photograph, and see if you follow the recommendations we share:

① We must remember that we want to create homely environments.
Are the chosen shades colours that we would put in our homes?

② Is there sufficient contrast between critical surfaces and planes: floor with walls, doors or skirting boards/plinths; steps; seat with the rest of the toilet; handles or knobs with regard to furniture; tableware with regard to tablecloths or table, etc.?

③ Cooler tones (greens, blues, etc.) are recommended in rooms where relaxation and calm activities are to be encouraged.
What colours do we identify?





4

Warmer tones (pink, beige, orange, etc.) are recommended for rooms where activity is required.
What colours do we identify?



5

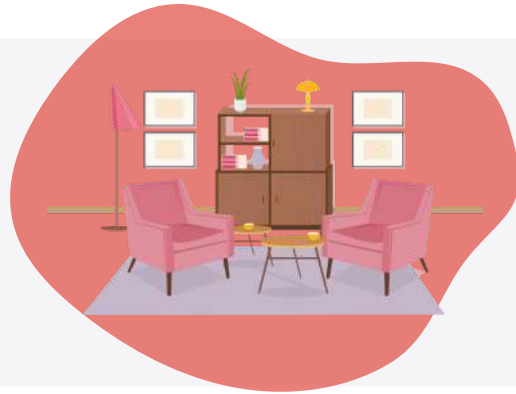
Intense colours can tire us more easily and should be reserved for textiles or decorative objects.
Are the wall tones soft, light, bright colours?

Practical tips



Notice how little contrast there is between the armchairs and the wall or how difficult it is to distinguish between the floor and the wall

For people who are less able to see or who suffer from visual distortion or hallucinations, this can be a problem.



Use colour contrasts to help identify furniture and objects in the room

Notice how the sofa contrasts with the other tones around it. This will help people to identify and recognise objects and the environment more easily.



Use cooler tones for rooms where you want to promote relaxation and calm

Cool colours remind us of nature, the sea... and help to create an atmosphere of tranquillity. Use these colours in objects, furniture or walls.



If you are looking for a space to encourage activity, use warmer tones

Warmer tones such as yellow, orange, salmon or red are associated with more energy and activity. Always within a range of soft and not too intense tones, we will try to choose these tones in living rooms intended for more stimulating activities or games, or in visiting spaces, for example.

Easy tip



▲ Note how little contrast the dominoes have with the tablecloth. Both are white and for some people it can be difficult to distinguish the dominoes on the table and to follow the game easily.

▼ We can combine different colours and add more intense tones on occasion. In this living room, we can see that the colours are soft, in pastel shades of blue and beige, but with more intense tones in the cushions, plants and pots and decorative elements.



▲ The games mat helps to provide a uniform background and sufficient contrast to the cards. The same applies to other situations: tableware and table, switches or sockets and the wall, handles on cupboards or doors, etc.

▼ This photo is a reception room in a home. We can see how the mustard colour - which conveys joy and energy - has been incorporated on the wall, and in the rug. On the floors, we try not to have too much contrast between different surfaces and maintain a continuous tone.



Materials

Reinforce the presence of natural textures

A homely space usually has the presence of materials of natural origin: wood, stone, textiles, esparto grass, water, ceramics, etc. These elements can be found in furniture, a fireplace, pots, tiles, tablecloths, decorative water fountains, etc.

Incorporating different textures into the design of a space is also considered a positive stimulus. All this should be selected whilst ensuring that they are durable or easily washable materials and making a selection of 4 or 5 tones/materials that help us to combine all the elements with an aesthetic feel.

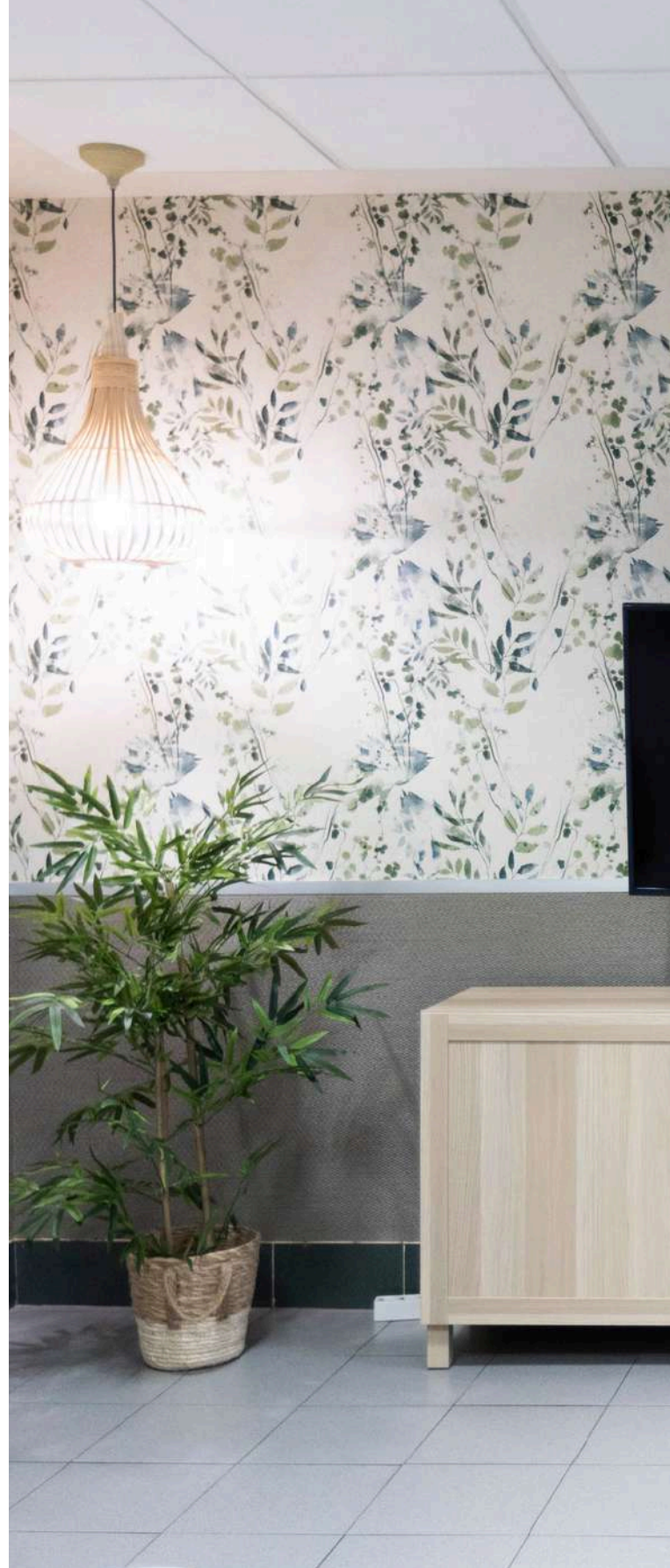
What opportunities do we have to incorporate more diversity of textures?

▶ Here are some tips on the use of materials in different spaces. Take a look at the room you are in or at the photograph, and see if you follow the recommendations we share:

1 It is important to remove glare or reflections from surfaces because they can be very distracting or confusing for people with dementia or vision problems.

Are all surfaces matt and do not produce glare or reflections?

2 Wood is a natural material with excellent properties. Do you identify wood on any surface or furniture?



3 Check the materials in the image room. the image. Also take into account textiles, decorations, furniture, etc. How many different ones can you identify?



Wood



Green / Nature



Dark grey



Light grey



4

Mirrors help to create a sense of depth in space but their reflection can be confusing, e.g. for people who no longer recognise themselves.
Are mirrors removable?

5

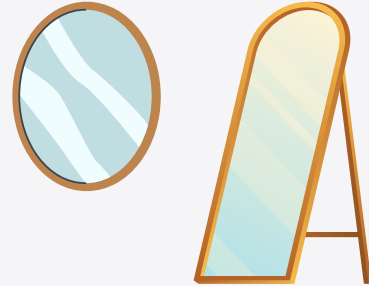
The variety of furniture and materials allows the individual to choose what is most comfortable for them.
Is there enough variety of chairs to sit on, with different textures and materials, or tables with different finishes?

Practical tips



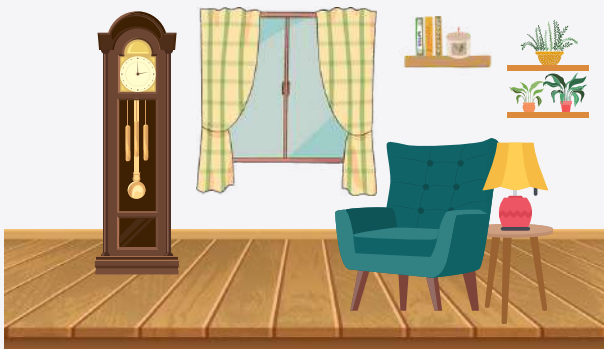
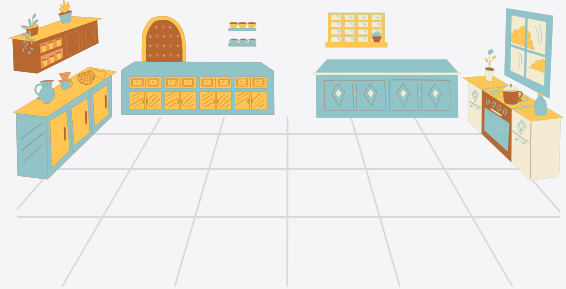
Position mirrors so they can be easily covered or removed

Although mirrors can help generate a feeling of depth in spaces and provide luminosity, their reflection can confuse people who suffer from hallucinations or who have stopped recognizing themselves. For this reason, we will avoid built-in or fixed mirrors on the walls and we will assess their location to avoid unwanted reflections.



Be careful with wood in certain areas

We should avoid the use of wood on surfaces highly exposed to cleaning or disinfectant products that deteriorate them or on surfaces where we cook or prepare food.



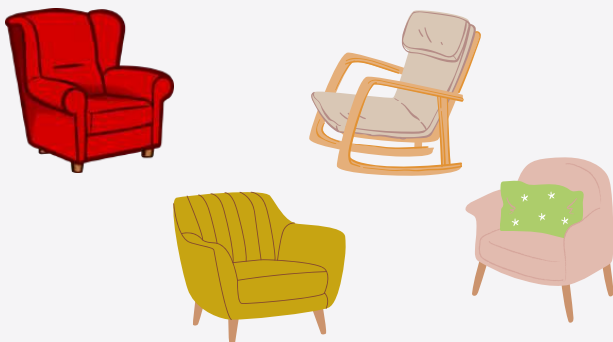
Use wood for large and cozy spaces

Wood has good acoustic properties, and can be placed on floors, walls, ceilings or furniture, improving the visual and acoustic comfort of the space.



Offers enough variety in furniture so that people can choose

We should choose seats with armrests and with rounded backs and corners. As for colour, ideally it should contrast with the floor or wall, so that it is more easily identified and recognized.



Before and after



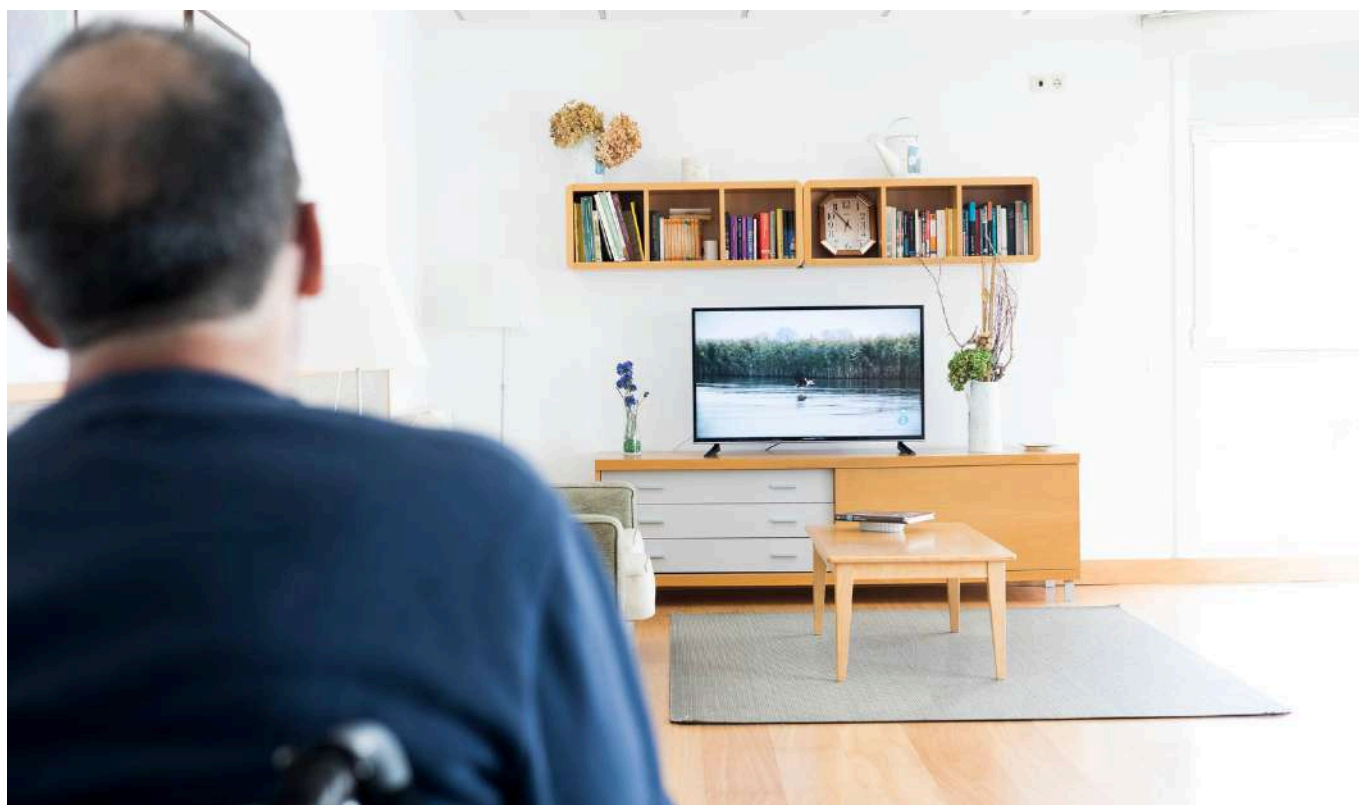
▲ This living room belonging to a co-living unit has been renovated with small environmental changes that have created a friendlier and more welcoming space.

▼ Light colors on walls, floors and ceilings can help us brighten interior spaces. We will combine colors, textures and materials to create balanced environments, without overloading with



▲ Notice that a new texture has been incorporated into the wall, the furniture has more variety, colors and textures, and we can see objects that have been added as decoration.

too much intensity. It is recommended that the surfaces be more neutral and in soft tones, and we add intense colors in the furniture, textiles or decoration.



Furniture

Reflection of a lifestyle

The selection of furniture must first respond to functionality. Another important feature is ergonomics with comfortable, safe and durable furniture; with a varied selection according to the different environments provided in a room, and it must be easy to wash and maintain. It is also important to think about storage furniture, to incorporate it into the decoration and to help organize and store objects. And, above all, we should try to choose homely furniture, and also leave space so that the residents and their families can help decorate the centre, the co-living unit and their room with some furniture that is meaningful to them.

Is the furniture homely, in good condition and does it remind us of a house?

▶ Below, we give you some keys about the use of furniture in different spaces. Look at the room you are in or at the photograph, to see if the recommendations we share are met.

1

It is important to take into account the need or not to anchor the furniture and always try to choose rounded corners.

Is the furniture in the room securely anchored?

2

It is very common to find televisions in central areas that attract all the attention, but not everyone likes to watch them.

Is the television in a closed space or a space that can be easily isolated?

3

Sometimes we have different needs in the same space depending on times and dates of the year. For example, eating in pairs or individually versus group celebrations. Are tables easy to move and combine for group events?





4

Not everyone has the same style or the same tastes. Ideally, the furniture should create a homely environment that is familiar to the people who live there.

Does the decoration and furniture respond to the lifestyle of the co-living unit? Has some of the furniture been brought by the people themselves or their relatives?

5

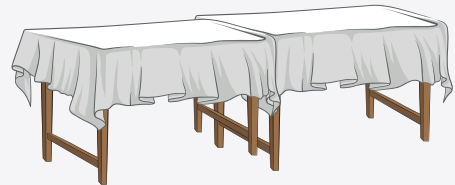
Storage furniture is a great ally to avoid having work materials, supports or medications in sight. Do we have enough storage spaces?

Practical tips



In dining rooms or multipurpose rooms, we should opt for small tables to easily reconfigure the space

It is important that they can be joined or separated depending on the activity or event that is going to take place in the space; snacks, celebrations, dinners or meals with family, visits, etc.



Do not place the television in the center of a living area

This way we will prevent all attention from focusing on the television, and we will encourage the carrying out of other activities in the space and the interaction and socialization of the people who are there.



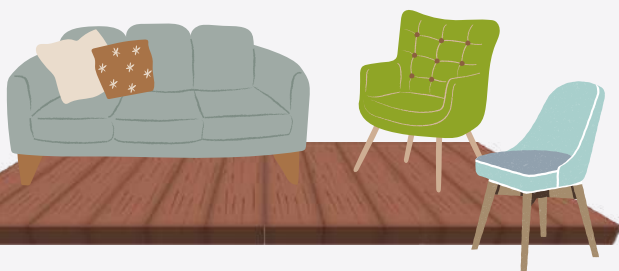
Use furniture owned by the people themselves

The furniture in our home usually has a story behind it: the trunk we inherited from the family, a sofa as a wedding gift, a birthday plant... It is important to incorporate those memories into the decoration and not only look for functionality and aesthetics.



The furniture in the room must be safe, stable and varied

We will always choose ergonomic furniture with rounded corners to prevent people from getting hurt when using it or from trying to get up and falling due to lack of stability.



Before and after



▲ When we have to furnish a large space, we face the challenge of dividing it by creating differentiated areas that improve the environment and allow different activities to be carried out throughout the day.

▲ Notice how the wall covering around the television and the fireplace configures a differentiated area in the center of the room, allowing other tables on the sides to be in the room, but without needing to participate in the same activity.

▼ We can create differentiated areas in the same room. It is important to choose the furniture and place it based on what captures the vision of those who enter the room or the visual control that we want to have of the space once we are inside. In this photo, the corner next to the window,

with the sofa, the flowers and the television can be an area that allows you to spend the afternoon with different possibilities to entertain yourself. The cabinet integrated into the wall for storage goes unnoticed by those who do not need to use it.



Personal Objects

Activities, memory and identity

Personal objects play a fundamental role in reinforcing a person's identity, maintaining connections with their life story, respecting and promoting ties with family and friends, and, ultimately, helping to make them feel at home. It is recommended to work with people and their families in decorating the bedrooms and common areas of the cohabitation unit. On the other hand, the existence of shelves or shelves in the room can help the person «colonize» the space more easily.

Do you see the diversity and variety of personal objects in the person's room?

▶ Below, we give you some tips on the use of personal items in different spaces. Look at the room you are in or at the photograph, to see if the recommendations we share are met:

1

If there are fixed shelves or shelves in the room, it will be easier for people to use them and start filling them with their personal items.

Do we see personal objects decorating the room? Where are they located?

2

Sometimes we don't decorate spaces because we don't feel like we own them, because we think the stay will be too short or because we reject the idea of it being our new home.

Are activities and workshops carried out with the people who live in the center and their families so that they themselves can help with the decoration of the different spaces?

3

Crafts made from cardboard or papers glued to the wall or furniture can create an unhomely appearance and also deteriorate quickly.

Can we promote more homely, standardized, careful and lasting decoration?





4

Each person is a world, with a unique history and memory.

Can you easily tell whose room it is by its decor? Are the living units differentiated by styles according to the tastes and preferences of the people who live in them?

5

It is advisable to place personal objects that evoke pleasant and beautiful memories in a clearly visible place in our daily routine. Where do we spend the most time? Where would you put your favorite object?

Practical tips

Prevents large common spaces from being empty

Choose furniture of a size appropriate to the dimensions of the room, including height. We can divide large dining rooms with shelves, vertical slats or sideboards that help us divide the space allowing views and visual control.



Decoration is not synonymous with crafts or drawings stuck on the wall

Let's think about our homes and where we usually place crafts, and the space and time that we usually leave them as decoration. We can reserve some cork or panel to hang some of these objects, but we will try to renew them periodically.



We should encourage people and their families to bring their personal items to decorate their room or part of the common areas

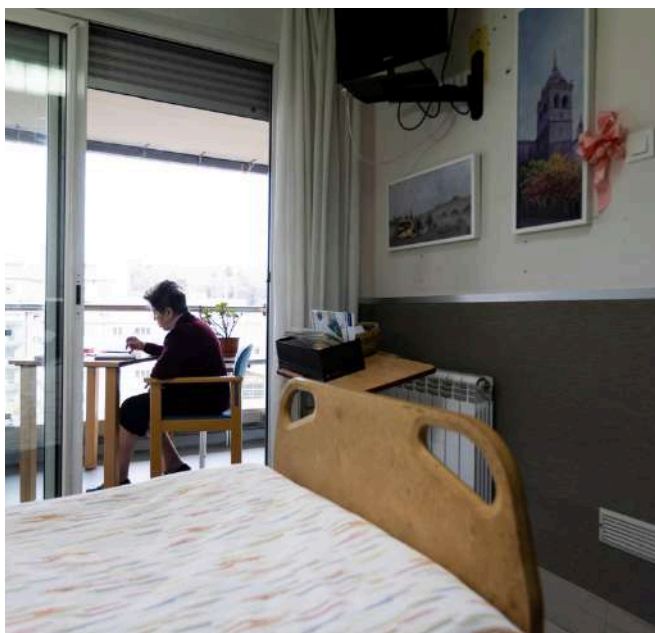
It is advisable to accompany families in the moving process so that the space feels like a home right away. This will increase the feeling of home and improve the well-being of the person who recognizes their own personal and significant objects.



Decoration can help to have references of time and space

Christmas decorations, vases with spring flowers, bowls with fruit... are common decorative elements in our homes that help us have a reference to the time of year and seasons.

Easy tip



▲ Some people need a special space to practice the activities they are passionate about. It is important that they can maintain this activity and provide them with the necessary space to carry it out, since it has an influence on the person's quality of life and their way of perceiving it.

These two people need different spaces: on the one hand, to paint we need good light, a comfortable table and chair, and a space that inspires us. On the other hand, to play the guitar we need to be in a space with privacy and where we are sure that we are not bothering anyone.

▼ Personal objects take on great importance in the decoration of rooms and reflect the lifestyle of the person who lives in them. In this photo, we can see how the study table is located next to the window

for better lighting and the wall in front of the table keeps the person's diplomas and titles because they are the most valuable memories for them.



Positive stimuli

What makes us feel at home

The change of model implies a change of outlook in the environments as well. Normally, we find ourselves looking for efficiency in cleaning, in tasks, and avoiding all kinds of risks, leading us to forget to create spaces for living. Therefore, it is important to give value to small details and routines on a daily basis, where each action and each activity is an opportunity for stimulation and to maintain activity levels in a natural and normalized way.

Can we continue our daily routines in the new home? Do we give value to the decorative objects and ornaments that are in the spaces?

▶ Below, we give you some keys. Look at the room you are in or at the photograph, to see if the recommendations we share are met:

① Continuing to carry out daily activities and tasks helps us to maintain our autonomy. At the times when we need help, we can participate in another way or with less intensity, but still participate. *Are there adapted kitchens to be able to continue with our usual tasks? Can we do our laundry and hang out our clothes somewhere? Are the wardrobes adapted to be able to easily pick up and take out clothes?*

② Each person has a routine that must be respected as much as possible once they move to the new accommodation. It is necessary to reserve spaces with greater privacy differentiated from common rooms, as well as rooms where they have the possibility of being alone. *Are there areas prepared for family visits, couples or intimate friends? Can people use the kitchen or dining room at flexible times?*





3

The accessibility and usability of spaces, furniture and equipment are very important to ensure that people can remain active and participate.

Are appliances at a suitable height without having to raise your arms or bend too much? Do the shelves allow you to take or place different objects, such as tablecloths or dishes?

4

Participation and assignment of tasks according to preferences and abilities.

Are there any preferred activities of any of the people who live in the co-living unit? Can the different activities be organized between the people who reside there or a distribution of tasks? Did we identify anyone who was especially willing and encouraged to participate and collaborate?

Practical tips



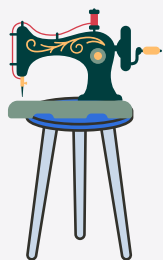
Be careful with the use of vinyl or prints with realistic objects

People who have cognitive impairment may misinterpret the objects they perceive. We should try to avoid excessively realistic prints on tablecloths, walls or blankets (fruit, animals, flowers), or vinyl that simulate bookcases to hide doors, to give some examples that we usually find. We should try to choose neutral patterns or with motifs that do not cause confusion.



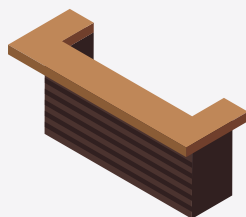
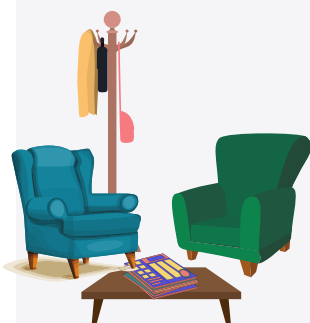
Diversity of spaces and possibility of choice

There must be sufficient variety of spaces to be able to choose throughout the day which room we want to be in: accompanied or in a group or alone, receiving visits from family or friends, being able to relax, resting or reading, doing some physical or artistic activity, etc.



Life in a co-living unit is made up of the people who live and work in it, so it is necessary to create and renew the spaces from time to time

It should be periodically reviewed whether the objects in the room are in a good level of maintenance, whether they need repair and whether they continue to be meaningful and representative of the lifestyle of the people who reside there.



The reception spaces are the first impression we get

The space corresponding to the entrance of the building or the rooms leading to the living units are key spaces that can help us identify the space as homely or not, with elements that help us orient ourselves. For example, a couple of chairs or armchairs to sit on and decorative elements that help us identify the space as a reception place (a coat rack, umbrella stand).

Spot the differences



▲ These two images show an identical living room from two different co-living units in the same building. Look at the details of both, beyond the renovation (wooden floor, lighting, fireplace...), the furniture of both has been chosen by

different teams. In one we can see all the identical armchairs lined up along the wall, while in another we see different colors, a slight turn of the armchair that helps create a more intimate space or cushions, paintings or plants.

▼ A multitude of details and decorative elements can be incorporated into a space to personalize it and make it more homely. Vases with stuffed flowers, photo frames, hanging pots, placemats and colored

napkins, cushions or photographs. It is recommended to do this work as a team, including the people who live in the cohabitation unit and their family members or caregivers.



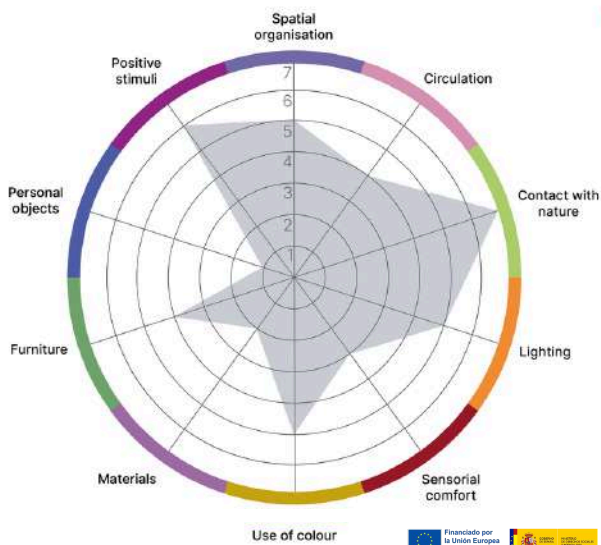
Radical change. Before and after

We end this issue with an example of the transformation of a double room in a residential care home.

▼ If we assess the original space, we can identify a fairly aseptic environment, with no decorative elements, direct white light on both the ceiling and the headboards and an isolated and unattractive auxiliary chair to spend the afternoon.

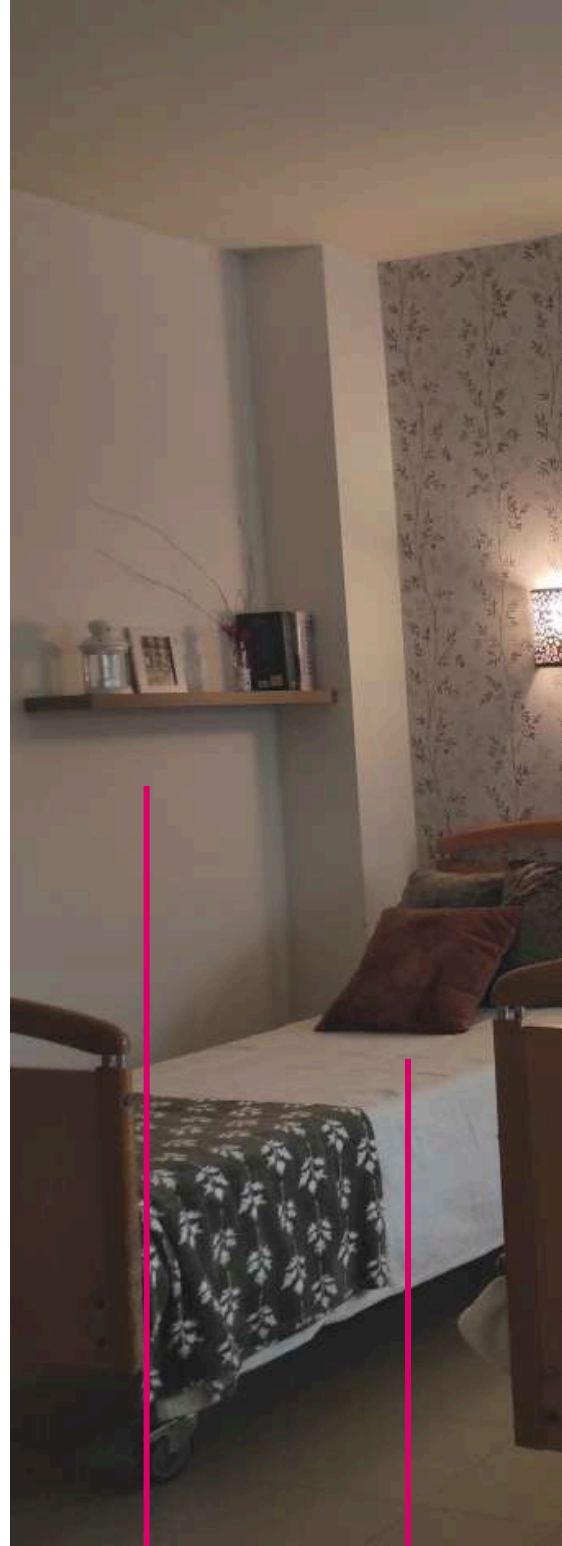


▼ Non-intervention room assessment.



Financiado por la Unión Europea

Once the room renovation is complete, it is time to create a meaningful and unique environment in which the person feels that the new space resonates with their identity.



Shelves
15€/unit x2

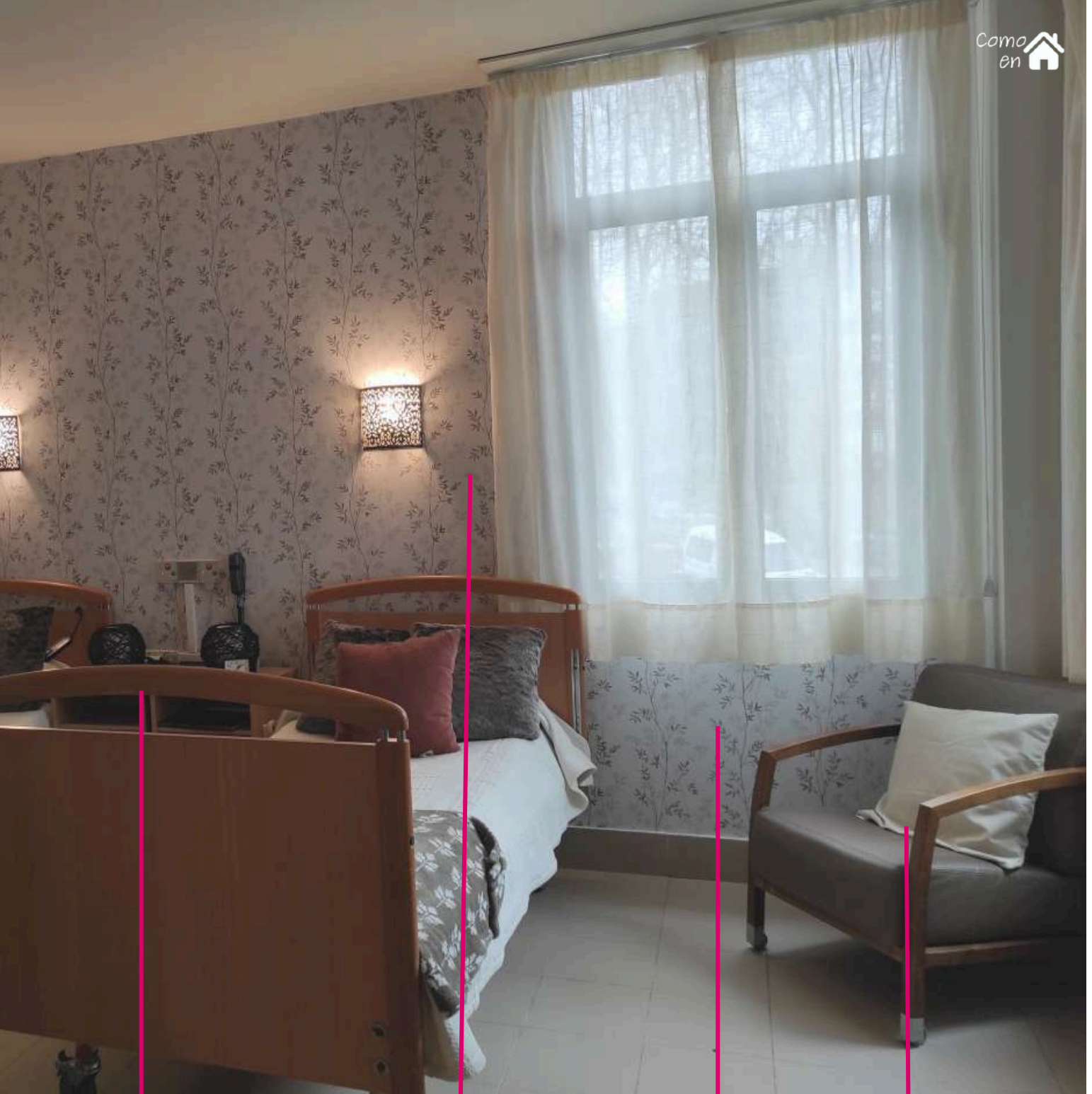
Quilts
15€/unit x2

Blankets
10€/unit x2

Cushions
15€/unit x6

30€

140€



Bedside lamps

20€/unit x2

Wall lamps

20€/roll x2

Wallpaper

34€/roll x2

Adhesive

15€

Chair

Reused from
another
room

**TOTAL
INVESTMENT
(APPROX.) PER
ROOM**

40€

40€

83€

0€

335€

Have a go!

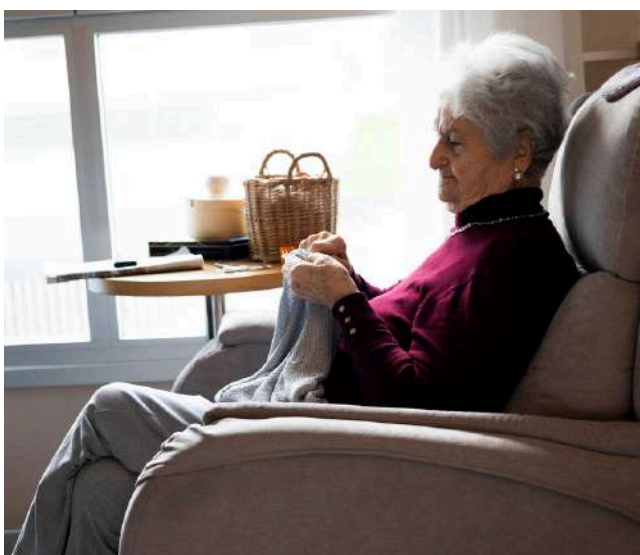
Throughout these pages we have shared **experiences, evidence and design and decoration** recommendations that can facilitate creating a **homely atmosphere**, whether in the common areas of a coexistence unit, in the rooms or in the homes themselves.

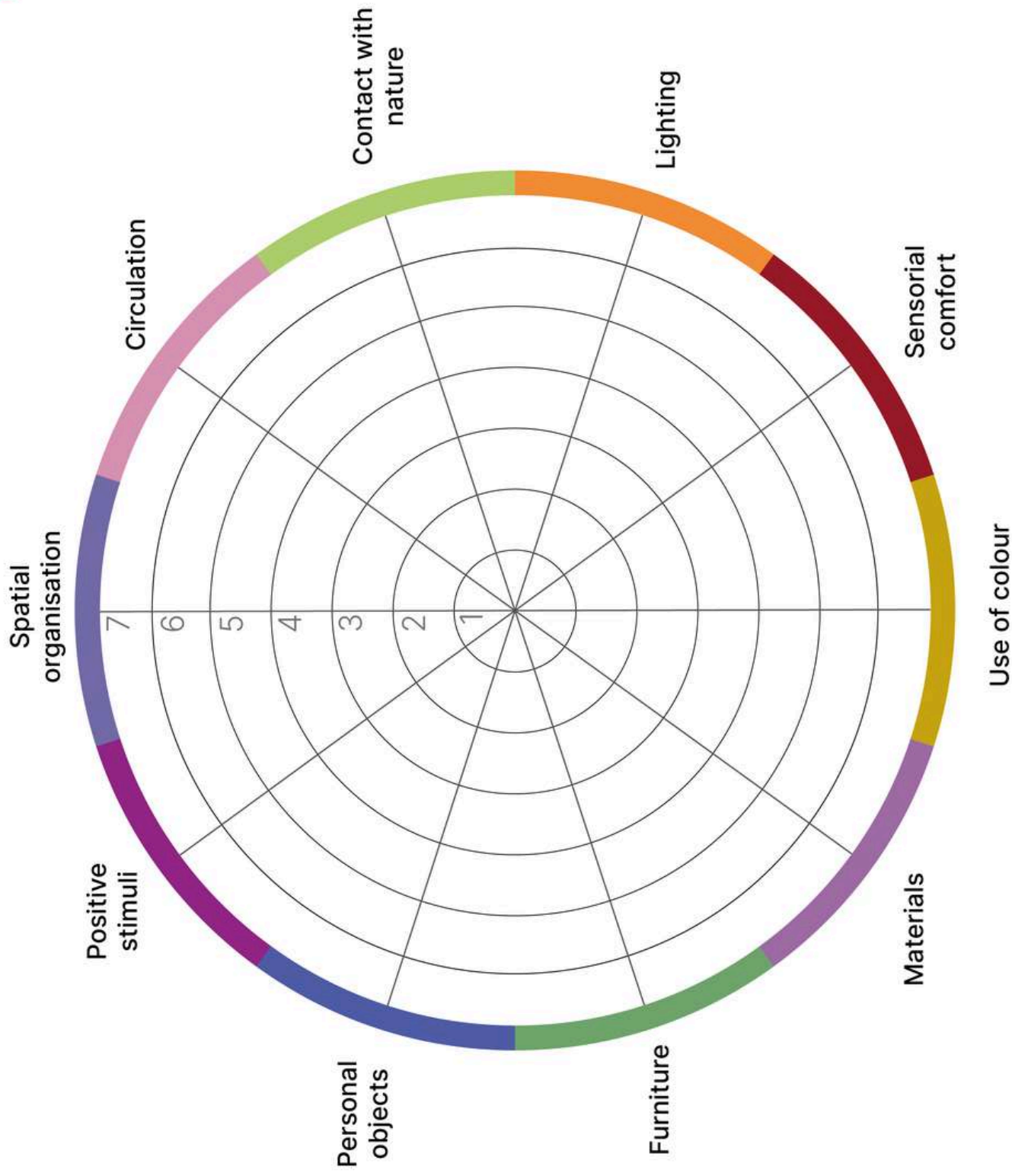
Remember to ask yourself **what the main function of the space you want to transform or decorate is**, and think about how it can be improved so that the planned activities can take place there.

Observe how the spaces are working, how they could be more pleasant or how we could make the most of them. And, above all, take into account who lives, works and visits that space and uses it daily. The decoration of each space **should give us clues about the tastes and lifestyles** of the people who live there.

When in doubt, use common sense and ask yourself: would I put this in my house?

And now: Let's get to work! ■





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THANK YOU

This magazine is the result of a participatory review of the «Home-from-home» project to develop recommendations that can facilitate creating more homelike environments in residential centers and accommodation for older people.

For more than six months we have shared a first version of the magazine with all the teams that have been part of the project, and all the suggestions and recommendations have been incorporated. In total, more than 60 people have shared ideas and materials with us to complete the final version. To all of you, we want to thank you for your help and contributions.

If you are part of an association, foundation, residential center, accommodation for seniors... and you want to receive a paper copy, write to us at info@matia.eus including the subject [#HomoFromHomeMagazine](https://twitter.com/HomoFromHomeMagazine) and we will contact you.



Work document. Final version.
*The document is the result of the **Home-from-home** project, incorporating the contributions of all key agents.*



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