

## Low Mortgage Rates' Days Are Numbered

Interest rates on mortgages have been on the rise, so if you've thought about refinancing your mortgage, now may be the time.

A research brief (<https://bit.ly/2PZ43ic>) by the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University (JCHS) says, "With interest rates moving upward to 4.6 percent in June 2018 and the Federal Reserve signaling further rate hikes, the window for homeowners to lock in lower interest rates and reduce their long-term costs of homeownership may be closing."

Researchers looked at Survey of Consumer Finances data to see how many homeowners have refinanced their mortgages to take advantage of historically low interest rates.

Though many who stayed in the same home between 2007 and 2016 refinanced, 4.5 percent of all homeowners in 2016 (3.3 million) still had a pre-2008 mortgage with an interest rate of 5 percent or more. Another 5.9 million homeowners had mortgages originated in later years that had interest rates of at least 5 percent.

If you haven't refinanced, there's still some time to shop around for a better rate.

Find refinancing tips at HouseLogic:  
<https://bit.ly/2FtMSRK> and <https://bit.ly/2A4uCbH>

## Housing Crisis Looms for Older Americans

The Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University also sees challenges ahead for housing the country's growing population of older adults.

For one, affordable, accessible housing in age-friendly communities is in short supply according to its *Housing America's Older Adults 2018*, a report that is a supplement to its annual *State of the Nation's Housing Report*.

The older segment of baby boomers, who soon will be turning 80, will need more accessible than is currently available. And those now in their 50s and 60s may not have enough money to deal with the one-two punch of rising housing and healthcare costs.

And though aging-in-place is a much discussed and desirable option for all baby boomers and seniors, accessibility becomes a challenge.

The JCHS report notes that difficulty climbing stairs or walking are the most common disabilities and that those mobility problems only increase with age. The current housing stock is ill-prepared to service those with mobility issues, especially people who need a wheelchair.

It cited the latest research from 2011 that showed that only 3.5 percent of U.S. houses had the features – single-floor living, no-step entry, and

extra-wide hallways and doors -- needed for successful aging-in-place.

Other challenges include a wealth gap between older homeowners and renters and the growing numbers of older adults living in low-density areas with limited transportation options.

"Responding to these challenges will require a coordinated response from the nation's public, private, and nonprofit actors," say JCHS.

And for you, the report's findings may provide an incentive to do some aging-in-place home upgrades now. *Before you need them.*

## Senior Lyfts

The inability to get out and around is one of the issues that forces people to move, even if they prefer to age in place.

GreatCall Rides may be a welcome option, if you no longer drive and have limited access to reliable public transit.

GreatCall Rides specializes in rides for seniors, and it's a partnership between Lyft, the ride-share company, and GreatCall, which provides easy-to-use mobile devices for seniors.

The service works on GreatCall's devices – its Jitterbug Flip and the Jitterbug Smart2 cell phones.

By dialing "0," you get connected to a live operator who books your ride and gives you the cost and wait time.

The ride's price is added to the GreatCall bill, meaning you don't need to carry a credit card or cash to pay for rides.

Learn more: <https://bit.ly/2ceNhlm>

## Yes, Exercise is Good

*Exercise is good. A sedentary lifestyle is unhealthy.*

Those are the main takeaways from the just-released *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition* (<https://bit.ly/2z8RLKi>), published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

*The findings probably don't tell you things that you haven't already heard. Move more. Sit less.*

*Exercise, after all, can help to stave off so much of what everyone fears about aging, including the biggies – cardiovascular disease, diabetes, dementia, cancer, and debilitating falls. In addition, it can reduce anxiety and improve sleep and quality of life.*

*To benefit from exercise, you don't need to become a gym rat. The new guidelines say that even small changes and bursts of activity like taking the stairs, and parking farther from and walking to your destination all contribute to better health.*

*The American Heart Association infographic (<https://bit.ly/2PAiv0y>) summarizes some of the recommendations:*

- Get at least **150 minutes per week** of moderate-intensity aerobic activity (brisk walking, dancing, tennis, and biking slower than 10 miles per hour) or 75 minutes per week of vigorous aerobic activity, or a combination of both, preferably spread throughout the week.
- Add moderate- to high-intensity muscle-strengthening activity (such as resistance or weights) on at least two days per week.
- Spend less time sitting. Even light-intensity activity can offset some of the risks of being sedentary.