The Caregiver's Kitchen Table

One page of ideas you can use this month, from one caregiver to another.

Issue 1
January 2027
Free to copy and share

Things I Didn't Know Existed

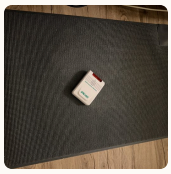
I care for my mom at home. Caregiving often involves trial and error and raises many questions about how to meet needs. These are everyday helpers I wish someone had told me about sooner. I describe them by type, not brand, so you can find what fits your own home.



Stair cane (two-handle frame)

A free-standing frame with handles at two heights. No tools or installing. It gives something steady to hold where there's no rail.

Mom's walker doesn't fit in our bathroom, so she was leaning on the towel bar. This gives her something solid to hold, and it can go to the stairs if we ever need it.



Floor mat alarm

A mat beside the bed or chair. When someone steps on it, a portable chime goes off wherever you are.

I wasn't sleeping, afraid she'd get up and fall without my hearing her. The chime sits by my bed, set on medium, and it wakes me. On nights she won't go to bed, I move the mat to the hallway.



Door alarm

Two small pieces: one on the door, one on the frame. It sounds when the door opens.

One night Mom said she was thinking of going outside to look for her husband, who passed away years ago. I bought the loudest alarm I could find.



Video baby monitor

A camera in their room and a small screen by your bed. Check on them without getting up.

I love being outside, but I kept going in to check on her. Now I can see from the yard whether she's asleep or up.



Indoor camera with phone app

Plugs in and sits on a shelf or mounts on a wall. Look in from your phone, day or night. It doesn't have to be the newest model.

I started when Mom was in assisted living and often missed her phone. I could look in, talk to her, and walk her through answering when a sibling called.

Before you buy

What you need depends on your person and your home. Needs change, too: some things help for a season and then aren't needed.

Read each product's safety notes, and ask their doctor or therapist about anything they'll lean on.

At home

I've learned to spot needs, research solutions and check with Mom's nurse, who comes in weekly.

In a facility

Before buying anything for their room, ask staff which aids are allowed. Some places have rules about alarms, cameras or equipment.

Full details, with more photos and what I've learned, are in this month's post on Substack. This page shares one caregiver's experience. It isn't medical advice.

Patricia Lynn, caregiver for her mom
Substack: patricialynn657032.substack.com
Printable caregiver tools on Etsy: etsy.com/shop/ShopPatriciaLynn

Substack

Etsy shop