BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Moving to Assisted Living

Wi-Fi, TV and phone in a new apartment —
explained in plain English, one step at a time

A plain-English guide for residents and families

Take your time — you can't break it

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

Wi-Fi, TV & phone for assisted and senior living · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your guide to the tech side of moving into assisted living or a senior community: the building's Wi-Fi, the TV, the phone, and keeping family close. Read it in any order and at your own pace. Every community runs things a little differently, so this guide tells you what to ask, what usually works, and what to do when it doesn't. It's written for the person moving and for the family members helping.

Part 1 — Getting Ready

1 A Note from Bill
2 What Changes When You Move In
3 Questions to Ask Before Move Day
4 Packing the Tech: What to Bring, What to Leave

Part 2 — Wi-Fi in the Building

5 How Building Wi-Fi Works
6 Getting Phones & Tablets on Building Wi-Fi
7 When the Sign-In Page Won't Show Up
8 Your Own Internet Service in the Apartment
9 A Travel Router: Sign In Once for Everything

Part 3 — The TV

10 Bringing the TV: Size, Stand or Wall
11 What to Watch: Building Cable, Streaming or Antenna
12 Roku on Building Wi-Fi
13 Fire TV, Google TV & Apple TV on Building Wi-Fi
14 Moving Streaming Accounts Without Losing Passwords
15 A TV Setup That Stays Simple

Part 4 — The Phone

16 Keeping the Phone Number
17 Weak Cell Signal Inside? Turn On Wi-Fi Calling
18 Simpler Phones for a New Chapter
19 Setting Up the Phone for the New Place

Part 5 — Staying Close

20 Video Calls & Drop In on an Echo Show
21 Photo Frames, Calendars & Reminders
22 Updating the Address Everywhere

Part 6 — Setups That Stay Put

23 Labels, Cords & a One-Page Tech Sheet for Staff

24 When Something Gets Unplugged or Changed
25 Cameras, Privacy & Roommates

Part 7 — Staying Safe, Getting Help & Your Cheat-Sheet

26 Scams Aimed at New Residents & Families
27 When to Call Bill
28 Your Move-In Tech Cheat-Sheet

PART 1

Getting Ready

What changes with the phone, TV and internet when someone moves into assisted living, the questions to ask the community before move day, and what to pack. Start here.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. Moving into assisted living is a big step, for the person moving and for the family helping. There are boxes to pack, furniture to measure, forms to sign, and a hundred small decisions. In the middle of all that, the phone, the TV and the internet tend to get left until the very last day. Then the TV won't connect, the phone can't find a signal, and nobody knows the Wi-Fi password.

I'm Bill. I've spent more than 30 years working with technology, and these days I help folks here in Portage County feel at home with theirs. I wrote this guide so the tech side of a move can be calm and planned, and so the new apartment feels like home from the first evening: the favorite shows on, the grandkids a video call away, and a phone that simply works.

What this guide will do for you

- Give you the **questions to ask the community** about Wi-Fi, TV and phones before move day.
- Explain **building Wi-Fi**, including the sign-in pages that confuse TVs and tablets, and how to get past them.
- Help you decide what to do about the **TV**: the building's cable, streaming, or both.
- Sort out the **phone**: keeping the number, weak signal indoors, and simpler phones.
- Show you how to build a setup that **stays put**, even when staff clean, rearrange or unplug things.
- Point out the **scams** that aim at new residents and their families.

The big promise: you can't break anything

Nothing in here can damage a TV, phone or tablet. If a setting doesn't work out, you can change it back. The only real mistakes are rushing and guessing, so take it slowly, one room and one device at a time. And because every community runs things a little differently, I'll often say **ask the staff**. That isn't me dodging the question; their building rules really do decide some of it.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why this matters

Familiar shows, a working phone and easy video calls do a lot to make a new place feel like home. Getting the tech right early means fewer lonely evenings, fewer worried calls from family, and fewer trips back to fix the same thing.

And I'm only a phone call away

If anything in this guide leaves you unsure, call me at **(330) 200-8042**. There's no such thing as a silly question, especially in the middle of a move.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

What Changes When You Move In

At home, you chose your own internet company, your own cable or streaming, and your own phone service. In assisted living, some of those choices are made for the whole building. Knowing which is which saves a lot of confusion.

Things the community often provides

- **Building Wi-Fi.** Many communities offer Wi-Fi in apartments and common areas, sometimes included in the monthly fee and sometimes for an extra charge.
- **A TV package.** Many buildings have cable TV wired to each apartment, often with a set list of channels and sometimes an in-house channel with the activity calendar and menus.
- **An emergency call system.** Most communities have pull cords, wall buttons or a wearable pendant that calls staff. This is separate from your phone.
- **A room phone line.** Some buildings offer a phone line or jack in each apartment; many no longer do.

Things you usually bring or arrange yourself

- Your own TV, and any streaming stick or box you like.
- Your cell phone and its service. It moves with you; only the signal inside the building may change.
- Tablets, laptops, a smart speaker or display, and a digital photo frame.
- Your own internet service, if the building allows it and you want something faster or more private than the building Wi-Fi (Chapter 8).

GOOD TO KNOW

Every community is different

Independent living, assisted living, memory care and nursing homes all handle tech differently, and two buildings run by the same company can still differ. Nothing in this guide replaces the rules your community gives you in writing. When in doubt, ask the front desk or the maintenance staff.

The three tech questions that matter most

1. **How will the TV get its channels?** Building cable, the building Wi-Fi for streaming, or your own service.
2. **How will the internet work?** Building Wi-Fi with a sign-in page, building Wi-Fi with a simple password, or your own service.
3. **How will people reach you by phone?** Your cell phone, a home phone line, or both.

The next chapter turns those into a checklist you can take to the community's office.

CHAPTER 3

Questions to Ask Before Move Day

A short list of questions, asked a week or two before the move, can save a lot of frustration. Bring this chapter to a tour or call the office. Write the answers down; you'll want them on move day.

About the Wi-Fi

- Is there Wi-Fi in the apartments, or only in common areas? Is it included or an extra monthly charge?
- What is the **network name**, and is there a **password**?
- Is there a **sign-in page** (also called a splash page or login page) where you accept terms or enter a room number?
- Is there a limit on **how many devices** one apartment can connect?
- Can residents have their **own internet service** installed? Which companies serve the building?
- Is a small **personal router** or travel router allowed?
- Who do residents call when the Wi-Fi isn't working, and what are their hours?

About the TV

- Is **cable TV** included? Is there a channel list you can take home?
- Where is the **TV jack** (coax) in the apartment, and is there an outlet near it?
- Can TVs be **wall-mounted**? If so, who does it, and is there a size limit or fee?
- Is there an in-house channel for the menus, activities or announcements?

About phones and safety

- Is there a phone jack or room phone line? What does it cost?
- How is the **cell signal** inside the building? Which carriers do residents say work best?
- How does the **emergency call system** work, and does it depend on the internet or the phone?
- Are personal **medical alert** devices allowed alongside the community's system?
- Are **cameras** or video calling devices allowed in the apartment? Any rules about roommates?

TIP

Ask who the tech person is

Many communities have a maintenance lead, an IT contractor or a life-enrichment staff member who knows the building's Wi-Fi and TV quirks better than anyone. Getting their name and the best way to reach them is worth more than any manual, including this one.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

With these answers in hand, you'll know what to buy (and what *not* to buy) before the move, and move day becomes plugging things in instead of making phone calls.

CHAPTER 4

Packing the Tech: What to Bring, What to Leave

Apartments in assisted living are usually smaller than the house they replace, and outlets can be scarce. Bring what will be used every day, and leave the rest with family.

Usually worth bringing

- The cell phone, its charger, and a **spare charger** to keep by the bed.
- A TV that fits the space (Chapter 10), its remote, and the streaming stick or box if there is one.
- A tablet or laptop if it's used regularly, with its charger.
- A good **surge protector** (not a plain power strip) for the TV corner.
- Reading glasses, hearing aid chargers, and anything else that lives near the phone.
- A small notebook with the important passwords, kept somewhere private (Chapter 14).

Often best left behind

- The old home internet modem and router, which usually belong to the internet company and need to be returned (see below).
- The cable box from the old house, which also usually belongs to the provider.
- Big desktop computers and printers that won't fit, unless they're truly used.
- Extra remotes for equipment that isn't coming along.

Before you leave the old house

1. Call the old internet, TV and phone companies to **schedule the cancellation** for the day after the move, not before.
2. Ask each one what equipment must be **returned** and how. Keep the receipt or tracking number.
3. If you want to keep the **home phone number**, ask about moving or porting it *before* you cancel (Chapter 16).
4. Take a photo of the back of the TV and its connections. It makes setup at the new place much easier.
5. Put each device's cords in its own labeled zip-top bag.

HEADS UP

Canceling too early

If the old home phone line is canceled before the number is moved, the number can be lost for good. Move the number first, then cancel. The same goes for an email address from the internet company: some providers close it when service ends, so ask before you cancel.

TIP

Label everything

A strip of masking tape on each cord, saying what it belongs to, saves a lot of guessing later, for you, for family and for staff. Chapter 23 goes further.

PART 2

Wi-Fi in the Building

How building Wi-Fi works, getting phones and tablets connected, what to do when the sign-in page won't appear, and when your own internet or a travel router makes sense.

CHAPTER 5

How Building Wi-Fi Works

Building Wi-Fi is a lot like the Wi-Fi in a hotel. One system serves the whole building, and many residents share it. It usually works fine for email, video calls and streaming, but it has a few habits that home Wi-Fi doesn't.

The three kinds you're likely to meet

Kind	What you see	How easy for a TV
Open with a password	Pick the network, type a password, done. Just like home.	Easy
Sign-in page	You join the network, then a web page pops up asking you to accept terms, or enter a room number, name or code.	Tricky (Chapters 12 and 13)
Private network per apartment	Your apartment has its own network name and password, sometimes printed on a card.	Easy

What a sign-in page is

That pop-up page has a technical name, a **captive portal**. It holds your device "captive" until you sign in through a web browser. Phones, tablets and laptops have a browser, so they handle it. Many TVs and streaming sticks don't have a browser, which is why they get stuck. The good news: most streaming devices now have a way around it, and the rest can use the tricks in this part.

Other habits of shared Wi-Fi

- **Signing in again.** Some systems ask you to sign in again every day, week or month.
- **Device limits.** The building may let each apartment connect only a certain number of devices.
- **Devices can't see each other.** On many shared networks, your phone can't find your TV or printer in the same room. That's a privacy feature, but it can stop casting from a phone to the TV.
- **Busy evenings.** When everyone streams after dinner, the Wi-Fi can slow down.

GOOD TO KNOW

Why your phone can't find the TV

Shared networks often keep each device walled off from the others, so a neighbor can't see your devices. The side effect is that "cast to TV" and wireless printing often don't work on building Wi-Fi. A travel router (Chapter 9) or your own internet service (Chapter 8) solves this.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing which kind of Wi-Fi you're dealing with tells you right away whether a TV will connect in two minutes or needs one of the workarounds. That's half the battle on move day.

CHAPTER 6

Getting Phones & Tablets on Building Wi-Fi

Start with the phone or tablet. Once it's connected, it can help connect everything else.

On an iPhone or iPad

1. Open **Settings** and tap **Wi-Fi**.
2. Tap the building's network name.
3. If it asks for a password, type it carefully and tap **Join**.
4. If a sign-in page appears, read it and follow the steps: accept the terms, or enter the room number or code the staff gave you.
5. When the page says you're connected, tap **Done**. Open a website to make sure it works.

On an Android phone or tablet

1. Open **Settings**, tap **Network & internet** (on Samsung, **Connections**), then **Internet** or **Wi-Fi**.
2. Tap the building's network and enter the password if asked.
3. If the network needs a sign-in, a notification appears saying to **sign in to the network**. Tap it.
4. Finish the sign-in page, then open a website to check.

On a laptop

Click the Wi-Fi symbol near the clock, choose the building network, and connect. If a sign-in page is needed, the laptop usually opens a browser window for it. If not, open a web browser yourself and the sign-in page should appear.

TIP

Write down what the sign-in page asked for

Room number? Last name? A code? Accept-only? Jot it on the tech sheet from Chapter 23. You may need it again for each new device, and again whenever the system asks you to sign back in.

HEADS UP

Check that it's really the building's network

Shared buildings can have several networks with similar names, including neighbors' hotspots. Ask the staff for the exact network name and join only that one. Never type a credit card number into a Wi-Fi sign-in page unless the staff told you the Wi-Fi is a paid service and how it's billed.

CHAPTER 7

When the Sign-In Page Won't Show Up

Sometimes you join the network and nothing happens: no sign-in page, and no internet. This is very common and usually easy to fix. Try these in order, waiting a minute between steps.

On any phone, tablet or laptop

1. Open the web browser and go to a plain, simple website address. Typing **neverssl.com** is a common trick; it's built to let sign-in pages appear.
2. If that doesn't work, turn **Wi-Fi off**, wait ten seconds, and turn it back on.
3. **Forget** the network (in the Wi-Fi settings, tap the network or its info button, then **Forget This Network** or **Forget**), then join it again.
4. Turn off any **VPN** app for now. VPNs often block sign-in pages.
5. Restart the device and try once more.

An extra step on iPhone and iPad

In **Settings** > **Wi-Fi**, tap the blue **info** button next to the building network. Look for **Private Wi-Fi Address**. Some building systems get confused when this changes. Setting it to **Fixed** (or turning it off for this network only) often helps the sign-in stick, so you don't have to sign in again as often.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> **What that setting does**
>
> Your phone uses a made-up device address on each network for privacy. Some building systems remember devices by that address, so if it changes, they ask you to sign in again. Changing it for the building network only is a reasonable trade-off at home; on public Wi-Fi elsewhere, leave it on.

Still nothing?

- Ask a neighbor or staff member whether the Wi-Fi is down for everyone right now.
- Ask whether your apartment has hit its **device limit**; you may need to remove an old device.
- Ask whether the sign-in page needs a code that changes, such as a monthly code.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

These few steps fix most "connected but no internet" problems without a service call, which is especially handy on a weekend when the building's tech person is off.

CHAPTER 8

Your Own Internet Service in the Apartment

Some residents decide to skip the building Wi-Fi and get their own internet service, just like at home. It isn't for everyone, but in some situations it's the simplest answer.

When your own service is worth considering

- The building Wi-Fi is slow, unreliable, or weak in your apartment.
- You want to **cast** from a phone to the TV, print wirelessly, or use smart home devices that need to see each other.
- The building charges for Wi-Fi and your own plan costs about the same.
- Someone works from the apartment, or needs a dependable connection for medical devices or video visits with doctors.

Before you call an internet company

1. Ask the community whether residents may have their own service, and whether there are rules about installers, drilling or cables in the hallway.
2. Ask which companies already serve the building. Often only one or two can.
3. Find out whether the apartment already has a cable or fiber outlet that a technician can use.
4. When you call the company, give the full address **including the apartment number**, and mention that it's a senior living community.
5. Ask about any installation fee, monthly equipment fee, and whether there's a contract.

TIP

Ask about low-cost plans

Many internet companies have lower-cost plans for people on certain benefits. The federal **Lifeline** program also gives a monthly discount on one phone or internet service per household for people who qualify by income or through programs such as Medicaid, SNAP or SSI. Ask each company what they offer.

HEADS UP

Lifeline rules are changing

In 2026 the FCC opened a review of the Lifeline program, and eligibility checks may get stricter. If you already receive Lifeline, answer its yearly recertification notice so the discount doesn't stop.

GOOD TO KNOW

A cellular option

Cellphone companies also sell home internet that runs over their cell network, with a small box that plugs into an outlet. No installer is needed. It works well where the cell signal inside the building is strong, and poorly where it isn't. Ask about a trial period before you commit.

CHAPTER 9

A Travel Router: Sign In Once for Everything

A **travel router** is a small box, often about the size of a deck of cards, that connects to the building's Wi-Fi and then makes your own little private network in the apartment. You sign in to the building once, on the travel router, and every device in the apartment connects to *your* network instead.

Why families like them

- The TV, tablet, photo frame and smart speaker all connect to one network you control, with a password you chose.
- Devices that can't handle a sign-in page don't have to.
- Because it's your own network, the phone can usually see the TV again for casting.
- If the building counts devices, it usually sees the travel router as just one.

How setup usually goes

1. **Ask the community first** whether a personal router is allowed. Some buildings don't allow them because they can interfere with the building's Wi-Fi.
2. Plug in the travel router near the TV, and connect to its own network from a phone or laptop (the name and password are usually on a label).
3. Open its setup page or app, and choose to connect it to the building's Wi-Fi. This mode is often called **repeater**.
4. If the building has a sign-in page, open a web browser on the phone or laptop. The building's page should appear. If it doesn't, refresh the page or visit a simple address like **neverssl.com**.
5. Complete the sign-in. Now every device on your travel router shares that one sign-in.
6. Give your network a simple name and a strong password, and write both on the tech sheet.

HEADS UP

Not a fix for weak Wi-Fi by itself

A travel router can only pass along the building Wi-Fi it receives. If the signal in the apartment is weak, the travel router will be weak too. Placing it near the door, closer to the building's access point, sometimes helps.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

One sign-in instead of five, a TV that stays connected, and a network family can help with from afar because it's always the same name and password, even if the building changes theirs.

FROM BILL

A good job to hand off

Setting up a travel router involves a few technical screens. If you'd like a hand, I can set it up and connect everything in the apartment. $49 remote · $99 in your home.

PART 3

The TV

Choosing and placing the TV, deciding between the building's cable and streaming, getting Roku, Fire TV, Google TV and Apple TV onto building Wi-Fi, and keeping it simple.

CHAPTER 10

Bringing the TV: Size, Stand or Wall

The TV is often the most-used thing in a new apartment. A little planning makes sure it fits, can be seen comfortably from the favorite chair, and is plugged in safely.

Measure first

1. Ask for the apartment's floor plan, or measure the wall where the TV will go.
2. Find the **TV jack** (a round, threaded coax outlet) and the nearest **power outlet**. The TV usually needs to be near both if you'll use the building's cable.
3. Measure from the favorite chair to that wall. For most people, a TV that's comfortable to watch from 6 to 9 feet away is roughly a 40- to 55-inch screen.
4. Check that the stand or dresser is wide and sturdy enough for the TV's feet.

Wall mounting

Many communities allow wall mounting, but have rules about who does it and how. Some have maintenance staff do it; some require a licensed installer; some don't allow it at all because of fire-rated walls or the cost of repairs when you move out. Ask before you buy a mount.

STAY SAFE

Anchor the TV

A TV on a dresser can tip if someone leans on it or grabs it to steady themselves. Use the anti-tip strap that came with the TV, or one from a hardware store, and ask maintenance where it can be anchored. In a place where residents may use furniture for balance, this matters.

Power and cords

- Plug the TV and streaming device into a **surge protector**, not a cheap power strip.
- Don't run cords across walkways. Walkers and wheelchairs catch them, and they're a tripping hazard.
- Use the shortest cords that reach, and gather the extra with a soft tie.
- Never plug one power strip into another.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A TV that's the right size, at the right height, with cords out of the way, is easier to watch and safer to live with, and staff won't need to move it to clean.

CHAPTER 11

What to Watch: Building Cable, Streaming or Antenna

There are three common ways to get shows on the TV in assisted living. Many residents end up using two of them.

Option	Good for	Watch out for
Building cable	Local news, sports and familiar channels with no setup beyond a cable. Often included in the fee.	Fixed channel list; you can't add channels. Some systems need a box from the building.
Streaming	Netflix, YouTube TV, church services, old movies; whatever you already pay for.	Needs reliable Wi-Fi, which can mean a sign-in page (Chapters 12 and 13).
Antenna	Free local channels.	Often weak inside large buildings; some communities don't allow antennas outside.

Using the building's cable

1. Connect a coax cable from the wall jack to the TV's **Cable/Antenna** or **RF In** input.
2. On the TV remote, press **Input** or **Source** and choose **TV**, **Antenna** or **Live TV**.
3. Open the TV's settings and run a **channel scan** (sometimes called Auto Program or Channel Search). Choose **Cable** if it asks.
4. When it finishes, compare the channels with the building's channel list. Write down the favorite channel numbers.

> **TIP**
>
> **If the scan finds nothing**
>
> Some buildings send their TV signal in a way the TV can't tune by itself, and you'll need a small box from the building or its provider. Ask the front desk before buying anything.

Keeping your streaming

Streaming services are tied to your account, not your address, so Netflix, Prime Video and the like move with you. The exception is **live TV services** such as YouTube TV, which use your home location to decide which local channels you get. Update your home area in that service after the move so the local news is from the right city.

HEADS UP

Don't pay twice by accident

If the building's cable already includes the channels you watch, a separate live TV service may be money you don't need to spend. Compare the building's channel list with what you actually watch before renewing anything.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Choosing the right mix means the favorite channels are there on the first night, with no surprise bills a month later.

CHAPTER 12

Roku on Building Wi-Fi

Roku streaming sticks, boxes and Roku TVs have a feature called **Hotel & Dorm Connect**, made for exactly the kind of Wi-Fi sign-in page many senior communities use. You'll need a smartphone, tablet or laptop to finish the sign-in.

Before you start

- The Roku should already be set up and linked to your Roku account. If it's brand new, it may be easiest to set it up first at a family member's home, or on a phone's personal hotspot.
- Have the building's sign-in details ready (room number, code, or accept-only).
- Have your phone or laptop nearby and charged.

Connecting with Hotel & Dorm Connect

1. On the Roku, press **Home**, then go to **Settings** > **Network** > **Set up connection**.
2. Choose **Wireless**, then pick the building's network.
3. When the Roku connects and asks, choose **I am at a hotel or college dorm**.
4. Follow the instructions on the TV screen. They'll ask you to connect your phone or laptop to a temporary network the Roku makes, using the details shown on the TV.
5. On the phone or laptop, the building's sign-in page should open. If it doesn't, open the web browser yourself.
6. Complete the sign-in. The Roku returns to its **Network** screen, showing the building network and **Connected**.
7. Reconnect your phone to the building Wi-Fi when you're done.

TIP

If it times out or never offers the hotel option

Choose **Try again**. If the hotel and dorm choice never appears, the Roku may not support it, or the network may not use a sign-in page at all; in that case the Roku just needs the password. Using a laptop instead of a phone works for some people when a phone doesn't.

GOOD TO KNOW

You may need to sign in again

If the building asks everyone to sign in again periodically, the Roku will lose its connection too. Repeat these steps, or use a travel router (Chapter 9) so only the router needs signing in.

CHAPTER 13

Fire TV, Google TV & Apple TV on Building Wi-Fi

Each streaming brand handles building sign-in pages differently. Here's the honest picture for each, as of November 2026.

Apple TV

Apple TV can join a Wi-Fi network that needs a sign-in page, but you finish the sign-in on an iPhone or iPad.

1. On the Apple TV, open **Settings** > **Network** > **Wi-Fi**, and choose the building's network.
2. When the Apple TV notices a sign-in page, it offers options. Choose **Continue on iPhone or iPad**.
3. Follow the prompts on the iPhone or iPad to complete the building's sign-in.

Google TV Streamer and Chromecast

Google says its Chromecast and Google TV Streamer devices **don't support** networks that need a sign-in page through a web browser, typical of hotels, schools, dorms and businesses. If the building Wi-Fi just needs a password, it works normally. If it has a sign-in page, use a travel router (Chapter 9) or your own internet service (Chapter 8).

Amazon Fire TV

Fire TV devices have offered a sign-in screen for hotel-style networks for years, and on many building networks a sign-in page simply opens on the TV after you pick the network. If it doesn't appear, or opens to an error, use a travel router, or ask the building whether they can register the Fire TV for you.

Smart TVs with apps built in

Samsung, LG, Vizio and other smart TVs vary from model to model. Some can show a sign-in page; many can't. If the TV can't, a Roku stick (Chapter 12) or a travel router is usually the quickest fix.

TIP

Ask about registering the device

Some building Wi-Fi systems let staff register a TV or streaming stick ahead of time, so it never needs the sign-in page. They'll ask for the device's **MAC address**, a code found in the device's network or "About" settings. Write it down from the TV screen and hand it to the staff.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing ahead of time whether a streaming device can handle the building's Wi-Fi means you can buy the right one, or bring a travel router, rather than finding out on move day.

CHAPTER 14

Moving Streaming Accounts Without Losing Passwords

A new TV or a reset streaming stick means signing in to every app again. That's when people discover they don't know the Netflix password. A little preparation avoids a frustrating evening.

Before the move

1. List every service you watch: Netflix, Prime Video, YouTube TV, Peacock, a church's app, and so on.
2. For each one, write down the email address used to sign in. The password can go in a password manager or a private notebook.
3. Check that you can actually sign in to each service on a phone or computer. Reset any forgotten passwords *now*, while you still have time.
4. Make sure the email account itself works. Most password resets are sent there.

Signing in on the TV the easy way

Most streaming apps let you skip typing on the TV. The app shows a short **code** or a **QR code** on the screen. You go to the web address shown, on a phone or computer where you're already signed in, and enter the code. The TV signs in by itself.

SCAM ALERT

Activation codes and fake help lines

Only enter a TV code at the web address shown on *your own TV screen*. Search results and ads sometimes lead to look-alike "activation" websites that ask for a fee or for a phone call to "support." Streaming services don't charge to activate a TV. If a site asks for payment or remote access, close it.

HEADS UP

Keep the passwords private

A password list taped to the TV is handy, but in a building where many people come and go, it's better kept in a drawer or a password manager. Share it with one trusted family member.

CHAPTER 15

A TV Setup That Stays Simple

In a new place, the simpler the TV, the better. Every extra remote and every extra input is one more way for things to go wrong.

Simplify the remotes

- Aim for **one remote**. Many streaming remotes can also turn the TV on and off and control its volume.
- Put the extra remotes in a drawer, labeled, rather than on the side table.
- A big-button remote can help with low vision or arthritis.

Settings worth setting once

- **Closed captions**, if hearing is a challenge. Turn them on in the TV's or streaming device's accessibility settings.
- **Auto input switching** (often called HDMI-CEC, with brand names such as Anynet+ or SimpLink), so the TV switches to the streaming stick by itself.
- **Turn off the energy saver auto-off** if the TV keeps shutting off during long programs.
- A comfortable **volume level**, especially if a neighbor shares a wall.

TIP

TV listening help

Wireless TV headphones or a TV speaker that sits beside the chair can make dialogue clearer without turning the volume up for the whole hallway. Our separate guide on TV listening covers the choices.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

One remote, one input and captions that stay on mean fewer "the TV is broken" moments, for the resident and for family on the phone trying to help.

PART 4

The Phone

Keeping the phone number, fixing a weak signal inside the building, simpler phones, and setting the phone up for life in a new place.

CHAPTER 16

Keeping the Phone Number

For many people, the home phone number is decades old and known by every friend, doctor and pharmacy. It's worth a few minutes of planning to keep it.

Your choices

Choice	How it works	Good to know
Cell phone only	Friends and offices call the cell. The old home number is retired or moved to the cell.	Simplest. Make sure the cell signal is good inside the apartment (Chapter 17).
Move the home number	The home number moves to a new home phone service, such as a cellular base or internet phone service, or to the building's phone line if they offer one.	Ask before canceling the old line. Not every service can take every number.
Building phone line	Some communities offer a phone line in each apartment, sometimes with a new number.	Ask about cost, and how it works in a power outage.

Moving a number to a cell phone

1. Call the cell phone company first and ask whether they can **port** (move) the home number.
2. Have the old phone company's **account number** and any **PIN** ready. They're on the bill, or you can ask the old company.
3. Let the new company start the move. **Don't cancel the old line yourself**; the move cancels it.
4. Test by calling the number from another phone once the company says it's done.

TIP

Tell people the plan

Even if the number stays the same, send a short note to family, friends, doctors and the pharmacy with the new address and the best number to reach the resident. Chapter 22 has a list of who to tell.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Keeping a familiar number means old friends can still call, and nobody's appointment reminders go to a dead line.

CHAPTER 17

Weak Cell Signal Inside? Turn On Wi-Fi Calling

Large buildings with concrete, steel and fire-rated walls can block cell signals. It's common for a phone to show one bar, or none, in an apartment that's perfectly fine out in the parking lot. **Wi-Fi Calling** lets the phone make and receive regular calls and texts over Wi-Fi instead.

On an iPhone

1. Make sure the iPhone is connected to Wi-Fi (Chapter 6).
2. Open **Settings** and tap **Cellular**.
3. Tap **Wi-Fi Calling**, then turn on **Wi-Fi Calling on This iPhone**.
4. Tap **Enable**. You may be asked to enter or confirm an **address for emergency services**. Enter the new address, **including the apartment number**.
5. Open Control Center. When Wi-Fi Calling is working, you'll see **Wi-Fi** next to the carrier name.

On an Android phone

The setting's location varies by phone maker and carrier. Open the **Phone** app, tap the three-dot menu, choose **Settings**, and look for **Wi-Fi calling** under **Calls** or **Calling accounts**. Or search the Settings app for "Wi-Fi calling." Turn it on and enter the emergency address when asked.

STAY SAFE

Update the 911 address

When you call 911 over Wi-Fi, the address you registered may be used to send help. If it still shows the old house, help could go to the wrong place. Update it right after the move, apartment number and all. Apple notes that when cell service is available, the iPhone uses it for emergency calls.

TIP

If Wi-Fi Calling won't turn on

Your carrier has to support it, and some building Wi-Fi blocks it. Apple suggests turning it off and back on, restarting the phone, and trying a different Wi-Fi network. A travel router or your own internet service usually works better than building Wi-Fi with a sign-in page.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Calls that don't drop, texts that arrive, and family who can reach the resident in the evening without wondering why the phone goes straight to voicemail.

CHAPTER 18

Simpler Phones for a New Chapter

A move is a good time to ask whether the current phone still fits. Some people do better with a simpler phone, or with their familiar phone set up more simply.

Simplifying the phone you have

- **iPhone:** Apple's **Assistive Access** turns the iPhone into a few large buttons for calls, messages, the camera and photos.
- **Android:** Many phones offer a simpler home screen, such as **Easy mode** on Samsung Galaxy phones, with bigger icons and text.
- Remove apps that aren't used, and put the four or five that are on the first screen.

Our guide *Helping a Parent from Afar* walks through both of these step by step.

Phones made for simplicity

Several companies sell phones and plans designed for older adults. The best-known is **Lively** (the company formerly called GreatCall), which sells the **Jitterbug** flip phone and smartphone with big buttons and a simplified menu. Its higher-priced plans add features such as an urgent response button and caregiver alerts.

HEADS UP

Check current models and prices

Senior-phone models and plans change often, and in 2026 reports disagree about which Jitterbug models are current. Check prices, activation fees and what each plan includes on the company's own website or by phone before you buy, and check that its network has a good signal in the building.

TIP

Before switching phones

Make sure contacts and photos are backed up and will move to the new phone, and that the number will be moved (Chapter 16). A new phone in the same week as a move can be a lot of change at once; sometimes it's kinder to wait a few weeks.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A phone that matches how someone actually uses it gets used, which means more calls with family and less frustration.

CHAPTER 19

Setting Up the Phone for the New Place

A few settings, done in the first week, make the phone more useful in an emergency and easier to live with day to day.

A checklist for the first week

1. Add the community's **front desk**, **nurse station** and **maintenance** numbers to Contacts, with clear names like "Front Desk" followed by the community's name.
2. Mark the most important people as **Favorites**, so they're one tap away.
3. Fill in the **Medical ID** (iPhone, in the Health app) or **Emergency information** (Android), and set **emergency contacts**.
4. Update the address in the phone's own contact card ("My Card" on iPhone).
5. Update the **Wi-Fi Calling emergency address** (Chapter 17).
6. Make the text and ring volume comfortable, and consider a louder ringtone if the phone is often in another room.
7. Put a **charger by the bed** and one by the favorite chair, so the phone is never dead.

GOOD TO KNOW

The phone isn't the call system

The community's emergency pendant or pull cord calls staff in the building. The phone calls 911 and family. Both matter, and they do different jobs. Make sure the resident knows which to use for what, and wears the pendant if one is provided.

TIP

Quiet hours

If the resident naps or goes to bed early, a Focus or Do Not Disturb schedule can silence most calls while still letting Favorites through. That way family can always get through, but robocalls can't wake anyone.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Staff numbers at a tap, a Medical ID that first responders can see, and a charged phone add up to real peace of mind, for the resident and the family.

PART 5

Staying Close

Video calls and Drop In on an Echo Show, photo frames and reminders, and updating the address everywhere it matters.

CHAPTER 20

Video Calls & Drop In on an Echo Show

A smart display such as an Amazon **Echo Show** sits on a table, has a screen and a camera, and answers to your voice. For many residents it's the easiest way to see family: no phone to hold, no buttons to find.

What it can do

- **Video calls** by voice: "Alexa, call Susan."
- **Drop In**: a trusted family member can connect to the Echo Show without the resident answering. It's like walking into the room, so it must only be used with the resident's clear permission.
- Show a family **photo slideshow** when it isn't in use.
- Read out reminders, the weather and the time.

Setting up calling and Drop In

1. Set up the Echo Show on the building Wi-Fi (if there's a sign-in page, use a travel router, Chapter 9).
2. The resident's Amazon account owner opens the **Alexa** app on a smartphone, goes to **Communicate**, and signs up for Alexa calling and messaging if asked.
3. Each family member who'll call also installs the Alexa app and signs up.
4. To allow Drop In, open the family member's entry under **Contacts** in the Alexa app and turn on **Allow Drop In**. Both sides need to give permission to each other.
5. Test a video call with one family member before the move is finished.

HEADS UP

Menus vary

Amazon's menus differ between Echo Show models and between the original Alexa and the newer **Alexa+**. If a step doesn't match, look for **Communicate** in the Alexa app, or search Amazon's help for "Drop In."

GOOD TO KNOW

Alexa+ and Prime

Amazon's newer assistant, Alexa+, is included with an Amazon Prime membership and has been offered to others for $19.99 a month. The basic calling and Drop In features don't require Alexa+.

STAY SAFE

Dignity and permission

Drop In can turn on a camera and microphone without anyone answering. Talk it through with the resident and agree on when it's OK, for example only in the daytime, or only after a phone call first. You can turn Drop In off for a contact, or for the device, at any time in the Alexa app. Respect roommates and staff, too; Chapter 25 has more.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Seeing a familiar face at the end of the day, with nothing more than a spoken sentence, can make a new apartment feel much less lonely.

CHAPTER 21

Photo Frames, Calendars & Reminders

A few small screens can bring family into the apartment and keep the day on track.

A Wi-Fi photo frame

A Wi-Fi photo frame shows pictures that family send from their phones, from anywhere. Most need Wi-Fi with a simple password; some have trouble with a sign-in page. A travel router fixes that. If you set up the frame before the move, remember it will need to be connected to the new Wi-Fi. Our *Digital Photo Frames* guide covers the popular brands.

Calendars and reminders

- Ask for the building's **activity calendar** and meal times, and add the regular ones to the phone or smart display.
- Set spoken reminders on a smart speaker: "Alexa, remind me every day at 2 p.m. that bingo is in the lounge."
- Put family birthdays in the phone's calendar with a reminder a few days ahead.

HEADS UP

Medication reminders aren't a substitute for staff

In assisted living, staff often manage or help with medications. Reminders on a phone or speaker can help, but they shouldn't conflict with the care plan. Ask the nursing staff before adding any medication reminders.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

New photos showing up on the dresser and a gentle reminder before activities help a resident feel connected and take part in community life.

CHAPTER 22

Updating the Address Everywhere

After a move, the new address needs to reach the mail, the government, the bank and many websites. Doing it in one sitting, with a list, keeps checks and bills from going astray.

Mail forwarding with the Postal Service

You can file a change of address on the U.S. Postal Service's official website, **usps.com/move**, or at a post office. Online, USPS charges **$1.10** to verify your identity, paid with a card whose billing address matches the old or new address. At a post office counter, there's no fee.

SCAM ALERT

Look-alike change-of-address sites

Some websites look official but charge far more to file the same change of address. The real online fee is $1.10, and the real site is **usps.com**. If a site asks for more, close it.

Social Security and Medicare

If the resident gets Social Security or is on Medicare, the address is changed with **Social Security**, which updates Medicare too. You can do it online in a **my Social Security** account at **ssa.gov**, under the profile section, or by calling Social Security or visiting an office. People who receive SSI may need to call or visit instead.

The rest of the list

Who	How
Bank and credit cards	Their app or website, or a phone call to the number on the card.
Pharmacy and doctors	Phone or patient portal. Ask the pharmacy whether the community has a preferred pharmacy or delivery.
Medicare plan or supplement	Call the number on the plan card.
Pension, annuity, insurance	Phone or online account.
Online shopping (Amazon, etc.)	Update the default shipping address, apartment number included.
Streaming and phone companies	Account settings, especially live TV services (Chapter 11).
Ohio BMV and voter registration	For Ohio residents, the BMV and the Secretary of State's site handle address changes.
Family, friends, church	A short note or card with the new address and phone number.

TIP

Include the apartment number every time

Packages and mail without an apartment number often end up at the front desk, or back with the sender. Ask the office exactly how the address should be written.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Benefits, prescriptions and birthday cards keep arriving without a hiccup, and nobody has to chase down a missing check.

PART 6

Setups That Stay Put

Labels, tidy cords and a one-page tech sheet for staff; what to do when something gets unplugged; and cameras, privacy and roommates.

CHAPTER 23

Labels, Cords & a One-Page Tech Sheet for Staff

In assisted living, other people are in the apartment regularly: housekeeping, aides, maintenance, visitors. Nobody means to undo the setup, but a vacuum cleaner can pull a plug, and a helpful aide may press a button to "fix" the TV. A setup that explains itself is a setup that survives.

Label it

- Label both ends of every power cord: **TV**, **Roku**, **Wi-Fi box**, **Echo Show**, **phone charger**.
- Put a small sticker on the surge protector: **"Please keep plugged in."**
- Label the streaming remote **"Use this one"** and put the others away.
- If there's a travel router, label it **"Internet - do not unplug."**

Tidy the cords

- Run cords along the wall and behind furniture, never across the floor.
- Use a cord cover or soft ties to bundle them, so a vacuum can't catch them.
- Mount the surge protector or tuck it behind the TV stand, where it won't be kicked or switched off.

The one-page tech sheet

Write a single page and keep it in a drawer near the TV, with a copy for family. It helps the resident, aides and anyone who comes to help.

What	How
To watch TV	Press the power button on the black remote. If the screen says "No signal," press Home.
To watch cable channels	Press Input, choose "Live TV." Favorite channels: ____
Wi-Fi network & password	_____
Building Wi-Fi sign-in needs	Room number / code / accept only: ____
If the internet is out	Unplug the box labeled "Internet," wait 30 seconds, plug it back in.
Family tech helper	Name and phone: ____

What	How
Building tech contact	Name and phone: ____

TIP

Short and big

Use large print and short sentences. If the resident has memory changes, a photo of the remote with an arrow to the right button can work better than words.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

When staff or a visitor can fix the TV in one step from the sheet, the resident isn't left without it all evening waiting for family to call back.

CHAPTER 24

When Something Gets Unplugged or Changed

It happens to everyone: the TV says "No signal," the Echo Show is dark, or the Wi-Fi stopped working after the room was cleaned. Usually something was unplugged, or the TV input was changed. Here's the order to check, the same order you'd follow on the phone with family.

The TV says "No signal"

1. Press the **Input** or **Source** button and choose the right input (HDMI 1, HDMI 2 or Live TV). The input was probably changed by accident.
2. Check that the streaming stick or box is plugged into power. Many sticks need their own power plug, not just the TV's USB port.
3. Check that the surge protector is switched on and its light is lit.
4. Unplug the TV and the streaming device from power for 30 seconds, then plug them back in.

The Wi-Fi stopped working

1. Check another device. If the phone also can't get online, the problem is the Wi-Fi, not the TV.
2. If you have a travel router, make sure it's plugged in and its light is on. Unplug it for 30 seconds and plug it back in.
3. If the building asks for a periodic sign-in, sign in again on the phone (and on the travel router or Roku, if used).
4. If it's still out, ask the front desk whether the building's Wi-Fi is down.

The phone or tablet won't charge

- Try the other charger. Chargers by the bed and chair get bumped and unplugged.
- Check the outlet with a lamp. Some apartment outlets are controlled by a wall switch.

TIP

A gentle word with staff

If the same thing keeps getting unplugged, a friendly note to the housekeeping supervisor, with the label on the cord, usually solves it. Staff are busy and want to help; they just need to know.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Most "it's broken" calls are fixed in under five minutes with these steps, which spares the resident the worry and spares family a drive.

CHAPTER 25

Cameras, Privacy & Roommates

Some families want a camera in the apartment, to check in or for peace of mind. This is a sensitive subject, and the rules depend on the type of community, the state, and the resident's own wishes.

Start with the resident

The apartment is the resident's home. A camera should be their choice, or the choice of the person legally authorized to make decisions for them, and they should know where it is and when it's on. A video calling device with a camera that's only on during calls is often a gentler first step.

Then ask the community

- Are cameras allowed in resident apartments? Are there forms to fill out?
- Does the camera need to be visible, or a sign posted?
- What happens if there's a roommate?
- Are audio recordings allowed? Recording conversations can raise extra legal questions.

The Ohio picture

Ohio's **Esther's Law**, in effect since March 2022, lets nursing home residents or their representatives place an electronic monitoring device in the resident's room, with written consent, including from a roommate if there is one. As written, it covers nursing homes, not assisted living. A bill to extend it to assisted living and residential care was introduced in the Ohio Senate in 2025; check its current status, and ask your community what its policy is.

HEADS UP

This isn't legal advice

I'm a technology helper, not a lawyer. Rules differ from state to state and from community to community, and they change. Before placing a camera, read the community's written policy, and talk to the community or an elder law attorney if you're unsure.

STAY SAFE

Secure any camera you do use

Use a strong, unique password on the camera's account, turn on two-step verification, and keep the camera's app updated. Only share access with family members the resident has agreed to.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Handling cameras openly, with consent and within the rules, protects the resident's dignity and keeps a good relationship with the staff who care for them every day.

PART 7

Staying Safe, Getting Help & Your Cheat-Sheet

The scams that aim at new residents and their families, an honest word about when a hand is worth it, and a one-page summary to keep.

CHAPTER 26

Scams Aimed at New Residents & Families

A move creates a lot of paperwork, new phone numbers and unfamiliar calls, which is exactly what scammers count on. A new resident may not yet know which calls are normal. These are the ones to watch for.

Common ones after a move

- **Fake change-of-address websites** that charge far more than the Postal Service's $1.10 (Chapter 22).
- **"Your TV or internet will be cut off"** calls demanding payment by gift card or app, pretending to be the cable company or the building.
- **Fake tech support**: a pop-up or call saying the computer or Wi-Fi is infected, asking to connect remotely.
- **Fake TV activation sites** that charge to "activate" a streaming app (Chapter 14).
- **Family emergency calls**: someone pretending to be a grandchild in trouble, sometimes using a voice that sounds real.
- **Medicare and benefits calls** asking to "update" a Medicare number because of the move.

SCAM ALERT

The rules that stop almost all of them

Nobody legitimate asks for **gift cards**, wire transfers, cryptocurrency or payment apps to keep service on. Medicare and Social Security don't call to ask for your number. Never let a caller connect to your computer or phone. When in doubt, hang up and call the front desk or family at a number you already know.

Make it easy to check

1. Put the front desk and a family member in the phone's Favorites (Chapter 19).
2. Agree on a simple rule: "If anyone asks for money or passwords, I'll call you first."
3. Some families agree on a **family password**, a word only real family knows, to use on calls that claim an emergency.
4. Turn on the phone's spam call filtering, and let unknown numbers go to voicemail.

TIP

Tell the staff too

Front desk staff often hear about scam calls going around the building. If you get one, tell them. It may save a neighbor.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A clear rule and a quick call to check take the pressure off. Nobody will ever be upset with you for checking first.

CHAPTER 27

When to Call Bill

I've written this guide so families can handle most of a move on their own. But part of being helpful is being honest about when a hand saves time, worry or money. Here's my straight advice, with no pressure.

Times it's well worth a call

- **Move-in day setup**: the TV, streaming, Wi-Fi sign-ins, the phone and a smart display, all done in one visit, with labels and a tech sheet left behind.
- **A building sign-in page that won't cooperate** with the TV or a travel router.
- **Moving a phone number** or setting up Wi-Fi Calling when the signal inside is poor.
- **Family far away** who want someone patient to handle the setup while they join by phone or video.
- **After a scare**: a strange call, a pop-up, or someone who got into the computer.
- **You'd simply rather have a patient person handle it.** That's always a good enough reason.

What working with me is like

I work at the resident's pace, with no rushing, no talking down and no jargon. I explain what I'm doing in plain words, I ask before touching anything personal, and I'm respectful of the staff and the building's rules. I'll always tell you honestly when something isn't worth the money. Home visits are here in Portage County, Ohio; remote help reaches families wherever they live. I've been doing this work for more than 30 years.

FROM BILL

How to reach me

Call **(330) 200-8042**, or book a time at **billshometech.com/book**. My help is **$49 remote · $99 in your home**. This guide is free to read and share. Just mention that it's for a move to assisted living, and I'll plan the visit around the community's schedule.

GOOD TO KNOW

You may be greeted by Sophie

When you call or visit billshometech.com, you might first meet **Sophie**, my AI receptionist. She can answer quick questions and help you book a time. The actual help always comes from me.

Moving is hard work, and it's a lot of change at once. A little planning and patience go a long way, and you don't have to do it all alone.

— Bill

CHAPTER 28

Your Move-In Tech Cheat-Sheet

Keep a copy in the apartment and one with the family. The whole guide, boiled down.

The essentials

Task	How
Before the move	Ask the community about Wi-Fi, TV, phones and cameras (Chapter 3). Move the phone number before canceling the old line.
Phone on building Wi-Fi	Join the network; finish the sign-in page. No page? Visit **neverssl.com**, or forget and rejoin.
Roku	Settings > Network > Set up connection > Wireless > **I am at a hotel or college dorm**.
Apple TV	Settings > Network > Wi-Fi > pick network > **Continue on iPhone or iPad**.
Google TV / Chromecast	Can't do sign-in pages. Use a travel router or your own internet.
Weak cell signal	iPhone: Settings > Cellular > **Wi-Fi Calling**. Update the emergency address.
Address changes	**usps.com/move** ($1.10 online, free at the counter); Social Security updates Medicare.

Write it down once

Keep handy	
Community front desk	_____
Building tech or maintenance contact	_____
Wi-Fi network & password	_____
Wi-Fi sign-in needs	_____
Travel router name & password	_____
Favorite TV channels	_____
Streaming services & sign-in emails	_____
Phone carrier & account PIN	_____
Family tech helper	_____

When something's wrong, in order

1. TV says "No signal": press **Input** and pick the right one. Check the streaming stick's power.
2. No internet: check another device, unplug the travel router for 30 seconds, sign in again if the building asks.
3. Calls dropping: turn on **Wi-Fi Calling**.
4. Someone asks for money, gift cards or passwords: **hang up** and call family or the front desk.
5. Still stuck: call Bill at **(330) 200-8042**.