

Checklist for a Safer Home

Review this checklist to make your home safer and help prevent falls.

FLOORS

Look at the floor in each room of your home.

- When you walk through a room, do you have to walk around furniture?**

Ask someone to help move the furniture so your path is clear.

- Do you have throw rugs on the floor?**
Remove the throw rugs or use double-sided tape or a non-slip backing so the rugs don't slip.

- Are papers, magazines, books, shoes, boxes, blankets, towels or other objects on the floor?**
Pick up anything on the floor and keep the floor free of all objects.

- Do you have to walk around or over electrical cords or wires?**

Coil or tape electrical cords and wires to the wall so you can't trip over them. Have an electrician install another outlet if necessary.



STAIRS AND STEPS

Look at the stairs you use both inside and outside your home.

- Are papers, shoes, books or other objects on the stairs?**
Pick things up off the stairs and always keep stairs free of obstacles.

- Are some steps broken or uneven?**
Have someone fix loose or uneven steps.

- Is there a light over the stairway?**
Have a handyman or an electrician install an overhead light at the top and bottom of the stairs.

- Has the bulb in the light in the stairway burned out?**
Have someone help change the light bulb.

- Is there only one light switch for your staircase (only at the top or the bottom of the stairs)?**
Have a handyman or an electrician install a light switch at the top and bottom of the stairs. You can even get light switches that glow in the dark. Use reflecting tape at the top and bottom of the stairs so you can see them better.

- Are the handrails loose or broken? Is there a handrail on only one side of the staircase?**
Ask someone to help fix loose handrails or install new ones. Make sure handrails are on both sides of the stairs and that they extend the entire length of the staircase.

- Is the carpet on the stairs loose or torn?**

Make sure that the carpet is firmly attached to every step or remove the carpet and attach non-slip rubber treads on the stairs.

KITCHEN

Carefully inspect your kitchen and eating area.

- Are the things you use most often on high shelves?**
Move items in your cabinets and keep the things you use most often on the lower shelves.

- Is your step stool unsteady?**
Get a new, steady step stool with a bar to hold on to. Never use a chair as a stepstool.

BEDROOM

Look at your bedroom.

- Is the light near the bed difficult to reach?**
Place a lamp close to the bed where it is easy to reach.
- Is the path from your bed to the bathroom dark?**
Install a night-light so you can see where you are walking. Some night-lights turn on automatically after dark.

BATHROOMS

Look at all your bathrooms.

- Is the tub or shower floor slippery?**
Put a non-slip rubber mat or self-stick strips on the floor of the tub or shower.
- Do you have some support when you get in and out of the tub or up from the toilet?**
Have a handyman or carpenter install grab bars inside the tub and next to the toilet.

OTHER SAFETY TIPS

- Keep emergency phone numbers in large print near each telephone.**
- Put a phone near the floor in case you fall and are unable to get up.**
- Get up slowly after you sit or lie down.**
- Consider wearing an alarm device that will bring help in case you fall and can't get up.**



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