



A HOME FALL PREVENTION CHECKLIST FOR OLDER ADULTS

KEY SAFETY TIPS:

- Keep emergency numbers in large print near each phone
- Put a phone near the floor in case you fall and can't get up
- Think about wearing an alarm device that will bring help in case you fall and can't get up

FLOORS: Look at the floor in each room.

1. When you walk in a room, do you have to walk around furniture? If yes, **ask someone to move the furniture** so your path is clear.
2. Do you have throw rugs on the floor? If yes, **remove the rugs or use double-sided tape or non-slip backing** so the rugs won't slip.
3. Are papers, magazines, books, shoes, boxes, blankets, towels, or other objects on the floor? If yes, **pick up things that are on the floor and keep objects off the floor.**
4. Do you have to walk over or around cords or wires (cords from lamps, phone, or extension)? If yes, **roll up or tape cords/wires next to a wall** so you can't trip over them. Consider having an electrician put in another electrical outlet.

STAIRS & STEPS: Look at the stairs you use both inside and outside your home.

1. Are papers, shoes, books, or other objects on the stairs or steps? **Pick up things on the stairs, and keep objects off the stairs.**
2. Are some steps broken or uneven? **Fix the loose or uneven steps.**
3. Are you missing a light over the stairway? **Have a handyman or electrician install an overhead light** at the top and bottom of the stairs.
4. Has the stairway light burned out? Have a friend or family member **change the light bulb.**
5. Is there only one light switch for your stairs (either top or bottom)? Have a handyman or electrician **install a light switch where it is needed.** Consider a switch that glows in the dark.
6. Are the handrails loose or broken? Is there a handrail on only one side of the stairs? **Fix loose handrails or put in new ones** so they are on both sides of the stairs and as long as the stairs.
7. Is the carpet on the steps loose or torn? **Make sure carpet is attached to every step or remove carpet and put in non-slip rubber treads on stairs.**

KITCHEN: Look at your kitchen and eating area.

1. Are the things you use on high shelves? Ask friends or family to **place things on lower shelves or cabinets** (about waist high).
2. Is your step stool unsteady? **Get a stool with a bar to hold on to**, not a chair.

BEDROOMS: Look at all your bedrooms.

1. Is the light near the bed hard to reach? **Place a lamp close to the bed.**
2. Is the path from your bed to the bathroom dark? Put a night-light so you can see where you're walking. Consider night-lights that go on by themselves after dark.

BATHROOMS: Look at all your bathrooms.

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

OTHER THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT FALLS

1. **Regular exercise** makes you stronger and improves balance and coordination.
2. Have your doctor/pharmacist **look at all your medicines**, even over the counter medicines. Some medicines can make you sleepy or dizzy and some should not be mixed with others.
3. **Have your vision checked** at least once an year. Poor vision can increase your risk of falling.
4. **Get up slowly after you sit or lie down.** Some medicines/ conditions can make you feel light-headed or dizzy with quick position changes.
5. **Wear sturdy shoes with non-slip soles** and avoid slippers and athletic shoes with thick soles.
6. **Paint a contrasting color on the top front edge of all steps**, so you can see the stairs better.
7. **Improve the lighting in your home by using brighter bulbs.** Use lamp shades to reduce glare.
8. **It is safest to have uniform lighting in a room.** Add lighting to dark areas. Hang light weight curtains to reduce glare from bright windows and doors.