

Home Safety Checklist



One-fourth of Americans aged 65+ fall each year. Use the checklist below to eliminate tripping hazards in your home.

Floors:



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

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

Do you have throw rugs on the floor?

- *Remove the rugs or use double-sided tape or non-slip backing so rugs won't slip.*

Are there papers, books, towels, shoes, magazines, boxes, blankets or other objects on the floor?

- *Pick up things that are on the floor. Always keep objects off the floor.*

Do you have to walk over or around wires or cords?

- *Coil or tape cords and wires next to the wall so you don't trip over them.*

Stairs and Steps:



Are there papers, shoes, books, or other objects on the stairs?

- *Pick up things on the stairs. Always keep stairways clear.*

Are some steps broken or uneven?

- *Fix loose or uneven steps.*

Are you missing a light over the stairway?

- *Have an electrician install an overhead light to illuminate the stairway.*

Do you have only one light switch for your stairs?

- *Have an electrician put in a light switch at the top and bottom of the stairs.*

Has the stairway light bulb burned out?

- *Have a friend or family member change the light bulb.*

Is the carpet on the steps loose or torn?

- *Make sure the carpet is firmly attached to every step, or remove the carpet and attach non-slip rubber tread to stairs.*

Are the handrails loose or broken? Is there a handrail on only one side of the stairs?

- *Fix loose handrails or have new ones installed. Make sure handrails are on both sides of the stairs and extend the length of stairway.*

Kitchen:



Are the things you use often on high shelves?

- *Move items into your cabinets. Keep things you use often on the lower shelves (about waist level if possible).*

Is your step stool unsteady?

- *If you must use a step stool, get one with a bar to hold on to. Never use a chair as a step stool!*

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Bathroom:



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 to avoid slipping.

Do you need some support when you get in and out of the tub or up from the toilet?

- Have grab bars installed next to and inside the tub and next to the toilet.

Bedroom:



Is the light near the bed hard to reach?

- Place a lamp close to the bed where it's easy to reach.

Is the path from your bed to the bathroom dark?

- Use a night-light so you can see where you're walking at night.

6 Steps to Prevent a Fall



1 - Find a good balance and exercise program.

Look to build balance, strength, and flexibility.



2 - Talk to your health care provider.

Ask for an assessment of your risk of falling. Share your history of recent falls.



3 - Regularly review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist.

Make sure side effects are not increasing your risk of falling.



4 - Get your vision and hearing checked annually and update your eyeglasses.

Eyes and ears are key to keeping you on your feet.



5 - Keep your home safe.

Remove tripping hazards, increase lighting, make stairs safe, and install grab bars in key areas.



6 - Talk to your family members.

Enlist their support in taking simple steps to stay safe. Falls are not just a senior issue.

Information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).