

Home Safety Checklist

Tips to Stay Safely in Your Home

When choosing whether or not to stay in your home as you age, consider the risks. Falls are the leading cause of injury among adults aged 65 and older and account for more than 30,000 deaths each year.

Stay safe and in your home longer by exercising to improve strength and agility and getting your eyes checked annually. Then take steps to make your home safer.

General

- Use rugs with rubberized backing and secure area rugs with double-sided tape.
- Remove paper, clothing, shoes, cords, and other items from floors and stairs.
- Ensure all rooms and areas are brightly lit and bulbs are working.
- Repair or replace damaged flooring, carpet, steps, and stairs.
- Replace doorway thresholds with zero-threshold entries or use threshold ramps.
- Install dusk-to-dawn nightlights throughout for greater visibility at night.

Kitchens

- Keep items used most often on lower, easier-to-reach shelves.
- Use a step stool with a grab bar to reach less frequently used items.
- Place an ABC-rated fire extinguisher in an easy-to-reach location.
- Install task lights over the sink, stove, countertops and other work areas.

Bedrooms & Living Spaces

- Tighten or install handrails on both sides of stairways/steps.
- Clear a wide path by moving or getting rid of furniture and other clutter.
- Place a lamp or light switch within easy reach of the bed.

Bathrooms

- Install grab bars next to the toilet and inside the tub/shower.
- Add a walk-in bath or shower seat with handheld showerhead for easy entry/exit.
- Use non-slip mats or strips in the bathtub and on shower floors.
- Install comfort-height toilets or toilet seat risers with grab bars.

Other Tips

- Invest in wearable alert systems to bring help when you can't get to the phone.
- Discuss with doctors the side effects of medications, such as sleepiness or dizziness.
- Wear well-fitting, supportive shoes both inside and outside your home.
- Keep a large-print list of emergency and contact numbers near each phone.
- Keep a flashlight or headlamp in each room in case the power goes out.

Sources:

- "Keep on Your Feet—Preventing Older Adult Falls," CDC.com
- AARP Homefit Guide, AARP.org

"To truly modify a 2,000-square-foot house not built for accessibility can be an \$80,000 to \$100,000 project..."

Dan Bawden, Legal Eagle Contractors, Co. & Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist

For more extensive home modifications, find a Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAPS) through the National Association of Home Builders. Visit NAHB.org and search "CAPS."

The AARP offers a free guide with smart ways to make a home comfortable, safe and fit for older adults. Visit AARP.org and search "homefit."



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