

Home Safety

Older adults have a high risk of accidents — especially falls — around home. It's a risk that increases with age.

For an older adult, even a minor accident can result in a serious disability or even death.

Up to half of these accidents occur in or around the home. Many could have been prevented by simple modifications, such as handholds and lighting, or simple repairs to floors, steps, doorways, or furniture.

Creating a safer, more "user-friendly" living environment helps prevent falls and other accidents. In some cases, it is all that is needed to preserve an older person's independence and security.

Checklist

1. Your home has adequate lighting inside and outside for you to see where you are walking, find items in closets, drawers, and cabinets, and easily enter and leave the house at night.
2. There are grab bars to help you get in and out of the shower or bath and on and off the toilet.
3. There are handrails on both sides of indoor and outdoor stairways.
4. Rugs and carpets are secured to the floor with carpet tacks or a non-skid backing, and have no holes, snags, or upturned edges.
5. Bare floors (wood, tile, or concrete) are not polished or slippery.
6. Tile floors are in good repair (no chipped, broken, loose, or missing tiles).
7. Inside and outside walkways, hallways, and pathways are free of clutter and obstacles.
8. Smoke alarms are installed and working.

9. Carbon monoxide detectors are installed and working.
10. Lamp, appliance, and extension cords are out of walking areas.
11. Cabinets and shelves are easy to reach without stepladders, stepstools, or other assistance.
12. Concrete or brick stairs and walkways are in good repair (no chips, cracks, uneven surfaces, or missing bricks or stones).
13. Outdoor walkway areas are cleared of snow, leaves and puddles.
14. There are telephones in all rooms where you spend time, OR you have a cordless phone or cell phone
15. Personal Emergency Response System (PERS):
(A PERS is a small device worn on your wrist or your neck that allows you to signal for help through a 24-hour communications center.)

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