



Home Safety Checklist

Livable Homes: Evaluating Our Homes for Comfort, Safety and Independence

The majority of falls among older people occur in or near the home. A number of potential home hazards are those you can find and fix to keep your home a safe place for you to live.

Use this checklist to find possible problem areas in your home. Check yes or no for each item. Be sure to look at both pages. Skip any items that don't apply to you. If you answer "yes" to any of the questions, consider the recommendation listed and make needed changes as soon as possible.

Question	Yes	No	Recommendations
Floors			
1. Do you have throw rugs on the floor?			Remove the rugs or use nonslip backing or double-sided tape to keep the rugs from slipping.
2. Do you have to walk over or around cords or wires?			Tape or coil the cords/wires next to the wall so you don't trip on them.
3. Do you have objects or clutter on the floor?			Keep objects off the floor.
Stairs and Steps			
4. Are the handrails loose or available only on one side of the stairs/steps?			Fix loose handrails and install them on both sides of the stairs.
5. Do you have only one light switch available for the stairway (at top or bottom of the stairs)?			Have an electrician install switches at the top and bottom of the stairs. Get light switches that glow.
6. Is the carpet on the steps ripped or loose?			Fix the carpet so it is firmly attached to each step.
7. Is the lighting dim over the stairway?			Have an electrician put in lights at the top and bottom of the stairs.
8. Do you have clutter or objects on the stairs?			Pick up items from the stairs and always keep them clear.

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Kitchen			
9. Do you use a chair instead of a stepstool?			Use a steady stepstool with a grab bar.
10. Are items you use often on the high shelves?			Move items used often to lower shelves (above waist level).
Bathrooms			
11. Do you need support when using the bathroom?			Install grab bars inside and outside of the tub/shower and next to the toilet.
12. Is the floor of the tub or shower slippery?			Place a nonslip rubber mat or self-stick strips on the floor of the tub/shower.
Bedrooms			
13. Is the light by the bed hard to reach?			Put the lamp close to the bed so it is easy to reach.
14. Is the path from the bed to the bathroom dark?			Use a night-light that turns on automatically after dark.

By reviewing these questions and making needed changes, you will make your home a safer place to live. Because most falls occur in the home, completing this home safety checklist is a wise investment in time.

For more information about evaluating your home environment for comfort, safety and independence, go to the North Dakota State University Extension Service website at www.ag.ndsu.edu/extension or check with your county Extension office.

References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2011). *Check for Safety: A Home Fall Prevention Checklist for Older Adults*.

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