HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST TO IDENTIFY HOME HAZARDS TO PREVENT FALLS

Use the checklist to find and correct/fix the hazards for every room/area in your home that could cause you to trip or fall. All items are potential risks for falls but if a wheelchair is not used, some items may not apply.

Steps to use the checklist

Step 1:
Go to each room/area of your home with this checklist. Look for the hazards/items that are listed below the picture on each page (Some items may not relate to your home).

Step 2:
If the problem is present in your room/area, check off in the appropriate box. After checking all of the problems, add them up and write the total in the big box. (Each item that gets a checkmark is a potential hazard).

Step 3:
Then go through the solutions and take the necessary action to fix those problems that are a potential hazard. Make sure that you look at assistive devices and helpful products that are indicated in the solutions section. Having them can make your home safer.

Step 4:
Add the total number of hazards in all the rooms/areas to get a grand total.

Step 5:
Write down what action you are planning to take and have already taken to prevent falls in the Action Log for your records.

Step 6:
It may be a good idea for you to ask your family and friends for a home safety modification and assistive device for your birthday or holiday present. Also talk with your friends about home safety. It can be a great gift for them to know how to prevent future falls.
Entrance to Front Door and Front Yard

The list identifies all of the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home, place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

1. Lack of railings or unstable railing
2. Unsafe steps (too steep/cracked)
3. Unmarked or raised threshold
4. Lack of lighting at night
5. Lack of a ramp for a wheelchair
6. Uneven/cracked pavement
7. Ice or snow on driveway/walkway
8. Lack of an outdoor grab bar

Other__________________________________________________________

Total number of problems

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page
Solutions for the Problems in Entrance to Front Door and Front Yard

1. Lack of railings or unstable railing
   Add at least one railing, ideally one on each wall.
   Have unstable railing stabilized.

2. Unsafe steps (too steep, cracked, chipped, etc.)
   Have damaged or broken steps repaired.

3. Unmarked or raised threshold
   Mark end of steps or thresholds with contrasting tape or paint color to increase awareness of change in height.

4. Lack of lighting at night
   Add an outdoor light fixture.
   Add a sensor light that automatically turns on and off.

5. Lack of a ramp for a wheelchair
   Have a remodeler or home contractor construct a ramp that will allow wheelchair access in and out of the home.

6. Unsafe pavement (uneven or cracked)
   Have uneven or cracked pavement repaired.
   Avoid these areas if possible when walking to and from the home.
   You may contact local government for repair if it is a sidewalk or driveway end.

7. Ice or snow on driveway or walkway
   Use snow melter.
   Have snow/ice removed by a neighbor or service.

8. Lack of an outdoor grab bar
   Add an outdoor grab bar next to the door.
Entrance to Back/Side Door

The list identifies all of the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home, place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

1. Lack of railings or unstable railing
2. Unsafe steps (too steep/cracked/chipped)
3. Unmarked or raised threshold
4. Lack of lighting at night
5. Lack of a ramp for a wheelchair
6. Uneven/cracked pavement
7. Ice or snow on walkway
8. Lack of an outdoor grab bar

Other__________________________________________________________

Total number of problems

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page
Solutions for the Problems
Entrance to Back/Side Door

1. Lack of railings or unstable railing
   
   Add at least one railing, ideally one on each wall.
   Have unstable railing stabilized.

2. Unsafe steps (too steep, cracked, chipped, etc.)

   Have damaged or broken steps repaired.

3. Unmarked or raised threshold

   Mark end of steps or thresholds with contrasting tape or paint color to increase awareness of change in height.

4. Lack of lighting at night

   Add an outdoor light fixture.
   Add a sensor light that automatically turns on and off.

5. Lack of a ramp for a wheelchair

   Have a remodeler or home contractor construct a ramp that will allow wheelchair access in and out of the home.

6. Unsafe pavement (uneven or cracked)

   Have uneven or cracked pavement repaired.
   Avoid these areas if possible when walking to and from the home.
   Contact local government for repair if it is a sidewalk or driveway end.

7. Ice or snow on walkway

   Use snow melter.
   Have snow/ice removed by a neighbor or service.

8. Lack of a outdoor grab bar

   Add grab bar next to the door.
The list identifies all of the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home, place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

- [ ] 1. Uneven or slippery flooring
- [ ] 2. Cluttered area
- [ ] 3. Dark or poor lighting
- [ ] 4. Lack of access to ceiling light

Other_______________________________________________________

Total number of problems  

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page
Solutions for the Problems in Hallway or Foyer

1. Unsafe flooring (slippery, uneven carpeting, etc.)

   Make sure floor surfaces are dry.
   If you have a carpet, make sure that the patterns are not too busy.
   Have carpet stretched or removed to eliminate wrinkles or bumps.
   Add a carpet runner to slippery hallway or foyer and secure to the floor.

2. Cluttered area

   Eliminate clutter on floors by removing and/or organizing items.
   Example: shoe tray, hooks for umbrella.

3. Dark or poor lighting

   Increase wattage to allowable limits in lights.
   Add additional overhead or wall lighting.

4. Lack of access to ceiling light

   Ask another person to change the light.
   Add removable wall lights to poorly lit areas.
The list identifies all of the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home, place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

1. Presence of throw or scatter rug
2. Presence of clutter
3. Presence of electric cords across the floor
4. Poor lighting
5. Presence of unstable furniture
6. Presence of unstable chair
7. Difficult to access light switches
8. Not enough space to move around

Other_______________________________________________________

Total number of problems

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page.
Solutions for the Problems in Living Room

1. Presence of throw or scatter rug

Remove a scatter rug or use double-sided rug tape or a rug pad to secure the rug to floor.

2. Presence of clutter

Eliminate clutter on floor surfaces by placing items on shelves or in storage. Consider donating or throwing out the items you no longer use. Avoid carpets with confusing patterns.

3. Presence of electric cords across the floor

Run your cords behind furnishings. Use extension cords to accomplish this. Rearrange items that must be plugged in to areas near an outlet.

4. Poor lighting

Increase wattage to allowable limits in lamps/lights. Add additional lamps or wall/overhead lights.

5. Presence of unstable furniture (chair, table, etc.)

Place a block under the shorter leg. If the chair or table is broken, have it repaired or replaced.

6. Presence of unsafe chair (too low, too high, without arms)

If the chair is too low, add a furniture leg riser to raise the height. A chair that is too high or without arms should not be used, as it will not provide you with sufficient stability to get in and out of the chair.

7. Difficult to access light switches

Add “clapper” light switch control to lamps. There are other remote control switching options for operating the lights. Rearrange furnishings to allow quick access to wall switch or lamps.

8. Not enough space to move around

Remove clutter or excess furniture that prevents you from moving around the room easily. Some items may be rearranged, but you may want to donate or throw out other items you don’t really need or use.
The list identifies all of the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home, place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

- 1. Cabinet too high or low
- 2. Not enough counter space
- 3. Using a stool or a chair to reach things
- 4. Not enough room to maneuver
- 5. Presence of throw/ scatter rug
- 6. Slippery floor
- 7. Poor lighting
- 8. Presence of a pet underfoot when preparing meals

Other

Total number of problems

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page
Solutions for the Problems in Kitchen

1. Cabinet too high or too low
   Move items to the shelves closest to the counter.
   Add hooks to the wall for pots and pans you use frequently.

2. Not enough counter space
   Make sure available counter space is cleared of clutter. Use Lazy Susan.
   Move kitchen table closer to counter for additional work space.
   Use a rolling cart for added work space.

3. Using a stool or a chair to reach things
   Move items to lower shelves.
   Replace the stool with a sturdy step ladder.

4. Not enough room to maneuver
   Eliminate clutter or excessive furniture (extra kitchen chairs, etc.) to add space.
   Remove a leaf from the table and push it closer to the wall.

5. Presence of a throw/scatter rug
   Remove a scatter rug or use double-sided rug tape or a rug pad to secure the rug to floor.

6. Slippery floor
   Do not walk on a wet floor.
   Wear comfortable shoes that fit well or socks with a non-skid sole.
   Change flooring surface to one that is less slippery.

7. Poor lighting
   Increase wattage of bulbs to allowable level.
   Add under counter lighting.
   Add additional overhead lighting.

8. Presence of a pet underfoot when preparing meals
   Remove the pet from the kitchen while cooking and add a pet gate to the entry ways of the kitchen.
   Put the pet outside or in a crate.
The list identifies all of the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home, place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

1. Presence of clutter
2. Presence of electric cords across the floor
3. Unsafe carpet (uneven, torn, curled up)
4. Presence of throw/scatter rug
5. Height of bed (too low/high)
6. Lack of a telephone near the bed
7. Lack of nightlight
8. Arrangement that causes difficulty to reach items (TV remote, lamp)
9. Lack of device to get in/out of bed

Other _________________________________________________________

Total number of problems ________________________________

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page
Solutions for the Problems In Bedroom

1. Presence of clutter

   Eliminate clutter on floor surfaces by placing items on shelves or in storage. Consider donating or throwing out the items you no longer use.

2. Presence of electric cords across the floor

   Run your cords behind furnishings. Use extension cords to accomplish this. Rearrange items that must be plugged in to areas near an outlet.

3. Unsafe carpet (uneven, torn, curled up, etc.)

   Have carpet stretched or removed to eliminate wrinkles or bumps.

4. Presence of throw/scatter rug

   Remove all scatter and throw rugs or use double-sided rug tape or a rug pad to secure the rug to floor.

5. Height of bed (too high or low)

   Too low (your knees are above your hips when sitting on the edge of the bed): Use bed risers under bed legs to raise height.
   Too high (your legs do not touch the floor when sitting at the edge of the bed): Remove bed frame or use a lower profile mattress or box spring.

6. Lack of a telephone near the bed

   Place a cordless phone or cell phone next to your bed at night or during naps. Use a remote control for TV and VCR.

7. Lack of a nightlight

   Place at least two nightlights in the bedroom to illuminate the room at night. Add additional nightlights along the hall or path to the bathroom. Also add one nightlight in the bathroom.

8. Arrangement that causes difficulty to reach commonly used items such as a TV remote, medications, lamp, glasses, magnifier, etc. at night

   Place these items on your bedside table. If you don’t have a table, you may put a rolling cart or shelving unit next to the bed.

9. Lack of a device to help getting in and out of the bed

   Purchase a half bedrail or a bed cane that can slide between mattress and box spring.
Bathroom

The list identifies all of the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home, place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

1. Presence of unsafe bath rugs
2. Lack of grab bars in the tub
3. Lack of grab bars in the shower area
4. Lack of grab bars near the toilet
5. Toilet is too high or low
6. Slippery tub (lack of bath mat, etc)
7. Claw foot/tub that is too high to get into
8. Lack of bath chair in the shower area
9. Clutter
10. Incorrect placement of grab bars

Other ____________________________________________________________

Total number of problems ________________________________

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page
Solutions for the Problems in Bathroom

1. Presence of unsafe bath rugs.
   Use a bath rug with non-skid bottom.

2. Lack of grab bars in the tub
   Add a bath grab bar on the wall or a clamp-on grab bar to the tub.

3. Lack of grab bars in the shower area
   Add grab bars to the wall near the shower and on the wall where the bath faucets are.

4. Lack of grab bars near the toilet
   Add a grab bar on the level next to the toilet or toilet safety grab bars that attach at the toilet seat screws.

5. Toilet is too high or too low
   Add a raised toilet seat for seats that are too low.
   Consider a lower profile toilet if it is too high.

6. Slippery tub (lack of bath mat, etc.)
   Add a rubber bath mat or adhesive non-skid decals to the bottom of the tub.

7. Claw foot or other type of tub that is too high to get into easily
   Add a tub transfer bench to slide into the tub area or replace with a lower tub.

8. Lack of bath chair or tub transfer bench in the tub or shower area
   Add a bath chair along with grab bars to the tub or shower area. A tub transfer bench is helpful if you have difficulty stepping into the tub area, because you can sit and slide over into the tub area.

9. Clutter
   Remove clutter from all floor areas. Inexpensive plastic cabinets or rolling units can be purchased to store bath items.

10. Incorrect placement of grab bars
    If permanently installed, hire a qualified professional to change the grab bars to the correct location and angle.
The list identifies all of the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home, place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

1. Lack of or poor lighting
2. Lack of railings
3. Clutter
4. Steps too steep
5. Slippery steps without tread/ carpet

Other_________________________________________________________

Total number of problems

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page.
Solutions for the Problems in Staircases

1. Lack of or poor lighting
   - Increase wattage to allowable limits in lights.
   - Add additional overhead or wall lighting.

2. Lack of railings
   - Add at least one railing down the entire length of the wall, ideally one on each side.

3. Clutter
   - Eliminate clutter on floors by removing and/or organizing items in areas near the stairs.

4. Steps too steep
   - Use railings for stability.
   - Walk slowly up and down stairs with lights on.
   - Have others carry heavy or large items up or down the stairs.
   - Reduce daily use of stairs to reduce risk of falls.

5. Slippery steps without tread or carpet
   - Add adhesive stair treads or carpet runner.
The list identifies all of the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home, place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

1. Poor or lack of lighting
2. Lack of railings
3. Clutter
4. Steps too steep
5. Slippery steps without carpet /luminous light
6. Presence of cords across the floor
7. Same colored floor at bottom of stairs

Other_________________________________________________________

Total number of problems

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page
Solutions for the Problems
in Laundry Room

1. Lack of or poor lighting

   Increase wattage to allowable limits in lights.
   Add additional overhead or wall lighting.

2. Lack of railings

   Add at least one railing down the entire length of the wall, ideally one on each side.

3. Clutter

   Eliminate clutter on floors by removing and/or organizing items in areas near the stairs.

4. Steps too steep

   Use railings for stability.
   Walk slowly up and down stairs with lights on.
   Have others carry heavy or large items up or down the stairs.
   Reduce daily use of stairs to reduce risk of falls.

5. Slippery steps without tread or carpet or luminous light

   Add adhesive stair treads or carpet runner.

6. Presence of cords across the floor

   Run cords behind furnishings. Use extension cords to accomplish this.
   Rearrange items that must be plugged in to areas near an outlet.

7. Same colored floor at bottom of stairs

   Have the bottom of the stairs painted a different color so that you aware of the last step.