

Your Home Safety Checklist: A Room-by-Room Guide for Aging in Place

A practical walk-through to help you identify fall risks and make simple, meaningful changes—so you can stay comfortable, independent, and safe in the home you love.

Before You Start

Grab a pen and walk through each room slowly. For every question, check YES if the item is already addressed, or NO if it needs attention. At the end, you'll have a clear to-do list of priority fixes—most of which take under 15 minutes and cost less than \$20.

A quick note: Fall prevention is the single most important thing you can do. According to the CDC, falls are the leading cause of injury among older adults, yet most falls are preventable with simple home modifications. Occupational therapists consistently recommend starting with the highest-traffic areas: bathroom, kitchen, and bedroom.



Entryways & Stairs

Check Item	YES	NO	Notes
Are there sturdy handrails on both sides of all stairs?	☐	☐	
Are handrails secure (no wobbling) from top to bottom?	☐	☐	

Are steps even, well-lit, and
free of cracks or loose
material?

☐☐

Is there a non-slip doormat
at each entrance?

☐☐

Can you enter and exit your
home without stepping
over a high threshold?

☐☐

Are outdoor walkways
clear of leaves, ice, or
debris?

☐☐

Quick Fix: Install handrails on both sides of all staircases—this is one of the most effective, low-cost modifications you can make.

Living Room & Hallways

Check Item	YES	NO	Notes
Are all area rugs and runners secured with double-sided tape or non-slip backing?	☐	☐	
Do all carpets lie flat (no curled edges, wrinkles, or bumps)?	☐	☐	
Are walkways clear of furniture, cords, and clutter?	☐	☐	
Can you walk through the room without tripping over pet toys, shoes, or magazines?	☐	☐	
Are lamp, extension, and phone cords tucked away from foot traffic?	☐	☐	
Can you turn on a light without walking into a dark room?	☐	☐	

Is there adequate lighting
near seating areas and
entryways?

☐☐

💡 Quick Fix: Curled rug edges are the #1 trip hazard occupational therapists see.
Double-sided carpet tape costs about \$5 and takes 5 minutes to apply.

Bedroom

Check Item	YES	NO	Notes
Is the bed at a comfortable height—easy to get in and out of?	☐	☐	
Is there a lamp or light switch within reach of the bed?	☐	☐	
Is the path from the bed to the bathroom completely clear?	☐	☐	
Is there a phone within easy reach of the bed in case of a fall?	☐	☐	
Are there nightlights along the path to the bathroom?	☐	☐	
Is the pathway free of cords, rugs, or furniture that could trip you at night?	☐	☐	

 **Quick Fix:** Place a lamp and phone right next to your bed. Install inexpensive plug-in nightlights along the route to the bathroom.

Kitchen

Check Item	YES	NO	Notes
Are frequently used items stored at waist height—no reaching up or bending down?	☐	☐	
Is the fire extinguisher visible, accessible, and not buried behind clutter?	☐	☐	
Are non-slip mats placed in front of the sink and stove?	☐	☐	
Do you avoid standing on chairs, boxes, or unstable items to reach high shelves?	☐	☐	
Are sharp knives and heavy pots stored safely and easy to access?	☐	☐	

 **Quick Fix:** Rearrange your cabinets so everyday dishes, glasses, and pots are between hip and shoulder height. This eliminates dangerous reaching and bending.

Bathroom (*Highest-Risk Room*)

Check Item	YES	NO	Notes
Are grab bars installed near the toilet and inside the shower/tub?	☐	☐	
Are grab bars securely anchored into wall studs (not just suction cups)?	☐	☐	
Is there a non-slip mat inside the tub or shower?	☐	☐	
Is there a non-slip mat just outside the tub or shower (the moment most slips happen)?	☐	☐	
Are small, loose bath rugs replaced with flat, non-slip options that don't curl?	☐	☐	
Is there a raised toilet seat or grab bar near the toilet for easier sitting/standing?	☐	☐	

Is the bathroom floor free
of slick spots and water
puddles?

☐☐

 Quick Fix: Grab bars are the single best modification you can make in a bathroom. Install them beside the toilet and inside the shower—anchored into wall studs for safety. A non-slip mat outside the shower catches wet feet at the most dangerous moment.



General Safety (All Rooms)

Check Item	YES	NO	Notes
Do you have working smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms?	☐	☐	
Are all stairways, hallways, and entryways well-lit?	☐	☐	
Do you have automatic nightlights in bathrooms, hallways, and bedrooms?	☐	☐	
Are spills cleaned up as soon as they happen?	☐	☐	
Do you wear supportive, non-slip footwear inside the house (not just socks or slippers)?	☐	☐	

💡 Quick Fix: Automatic nightlights cost under \$10 and provide safe navigation during nighttime trips to the bathroom.

Your Priority Action List

Based on your "NO" checks above, list your top 3 priorities here:

1.
2.
3.

Start with the cheapest and easiest fixes first—securing rugs, adding nightlights, and rearranging cabinets. Then move to bigger projects like grab bar installation.

Recommended Products (Budget-Friendly)

<i>Product</i>	<i>Why You Need It</i>	<i>Approx. Cost</i>
Double-sided carpet tape	Secures loose rugs and prevents tripping	\$5–\$10
Plug-in nightlights	Lights the path to the bathroom at night	\$8–\$15
Non-slip bath mat (inside tub)	Prevents slips on wet surfaces	\$10–\$20
Non-slip mat (outside tub)	Catches wet feet at the most dangerous moment	\$10–\$20
Grab bars (wall-anchored)	Provides support near toilet and in shower	\$20–\$40 each
Raised toilet seat	Makes sitting and standing easier	\$25–\$50

When to Call a Professional

- Grab bar installation: Always anchor into wall studs—not drywall or tile alone. If you're unsure, hire a handyman or occupational therapist.
- Electrical work: If you need additional outlets or lighting, consult a licensed electrician.
- Stair railings: Ensure both sides are securely mounted and meet local building codes.

 Did you know? If your doctor prescribes occupational therapy and you have Medicare or Medicare Advantage, you may be eligible for a home safety assessment at no cost. An occupational therapist can identify hazards, recommend modifications, and help you implement them.

Share This Checklist

Know a neighbor, friend, or family member who could use this? Pass it along! Small changes make a big difference—and fall prevention saves lives.

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