

Home Safety Checklist

A room-by-room walk-through for you or someone you help. Mark each item OK or Needs fix, then pick your top 3 fixes.

NAME / HOME THIS IS FOR

WALK-THROUGH DATE

DONE WITH (HELPER)

WARNING SIGNS: TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR SOON IF ANY ARE TRUE

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ I fell in the past year, even without getting hurt. ⁸ | ☐ I feel unsteady when I stand up or walk. ⁸ |
| ☐ I worry about falling, or I go out less because of it. ⁸ | ☐ I get dizzy or lightheaded, especially when I stand up. ² |
| ☐ I started a new medicine or changed a dose recently. ² | ☐ I hold on to furniture to get around the house. |

Ask for a fall-risk check. Ask whether a physical or occupational therapist can do a home visit. **A fall with a head injury, severe pain, or you cannot get up: call 911.**

How to use it: walk slowly through each room at the times you are most likely to fall: first thing in the morning, at night, and after taking medicines. Look at the floor.⁷

1 Entry and outside steps

What to check	OK	Needs fix
Path to the door is even, with no cracks or loose stones. ¹	☐	☐
Outside light at the door and steps works at night.	☐	☐
Handrails on both sides of the steps, solid when I pull on them. ¹	☐	☐
Steps are in good repair and not slippery when wet. ¹	☐	☐
There is a place to set bags down while I unlock the door.	☐	☐
House number is easy to see from the street for an ambulance. ⁷	☐	☐
Door locks work, and a trusted person has a spare key. ⁷	☐	☐

2 Stairs and steps

What to check	OK	Needs fix
Handrails on both sides, full length of the stairs. ¹	☐	☐
Light switch at the top and the bottom. ¹	☐	☐
Every step is solid and even. Carpet is tight, or there are non-slip treads. ¹	☐	☐
Nothing is stored on the stairs. ¹	☐	☐
Edges of steps are easy to see.	☐	☐
Things I use daily are on the floor where I spend most of my time. ⁷	☐	☐

3 Living areas and hallways

What to check	OK	Needs fix
Clear walking paths. I do not have to walk around furniture. ¹	☐	☐
No throw rugs, or each one has non-slip backing and lies flat. ^{1,2}	☐	☐
No cords or wires across walking paths. ¹	☐	☐
Nothing on the floor: papers, shoes, boxes, pet toys. ¹	☐	☐
Raised thresholds between rooms are marked or ramped. ⁷	☐	☐
Light switches are at room entrances, or lamps are easy to reach.	☐	☐
Chairs are sturdy, the right height, with arms to push up from.	☐	☐
Pets: I know where they are when I walk, and bowls are out of the path. ⁷	☐	☐

4 Kitchen

What to check	OK	Needs fix
Things I use often are between waist and shoulder height. No reaching high or bending low. ¹	☐	☐
No climbing on chairs. If I must use a step stool, it is sturdy and has a bar to hold. ¹	☐	☐
Spills are wiped up right away. Floor is not waxed or slippery.	☐	☐
Stove is never left alone while cooking. Towels are away from burners.	☐	☐
Fire extinguisher in the kitchen, and I know how to use it.	☐	☐

TRU-TIP • If a rug will not lie flat, it goes

Curled edges, scatter rugs without non-slip backing, and bath mats that slide are some of the most common things people trip on, and the easiest to fix. If a rug cannot be secured completely, remove it. The same goes for cords across a path and furniture that has crept into the walkway.^{1,7}

Bathroom, bedroom, and the night path

5 Bathroom

What to check	OK	Needs fix
Grab bars next to the toilet and in the tub or shower. Not towel racks, which cannot hold your weight. ^{1,3}	☐	☐
Non-slip mat or strips inside the tub or shower. ^{1,3}	☐	☐
Non-skid mat outside the tub, and the floor is kept dry. ³	☐	☐
Shower chair or bench, plus a hand-held shower head if helpful. ³	☐	☐
Raised toilet seat or safety frame if getting up is hard. ³	☐	☐
Soap and shampoo are within reach without bending or twisting.	☐	☐
Night-light in the bathroom. ⁷	☐	☐
Water heater set no higher than 120°F (49°C) to prevent burns. ³	☐	☐

7 Laundry, garage, basement

What to check	OK	Needs fix
Lights work, with a switch at each entrance.	☐	☐
Steps into the garage or basement have a rail. ¹	☐	☐
Laundry is on the main floor, or I have help carrying it.	☐	☐
Tools, hoses, and cords are off the floor.	☐	☐

9 The night path: bed to bathroom

What to check	OK	Needs fix
The path from bed to bathroom is lit at night by night-lights or motion lights, without needing an overhead switch. ^{1,7}	☐	☐
The path is clear and short. Nothing to step over, no rug edges, no pet beds. ⁷	☐	☐
I wear non-slip shoes or slippers with backs at night, not socks on smooth floors. ⁷	☐	☐

TRU-TIP • Walk your home at night, not at noon

Hazards hide because you see them every day. Walk the bed-to-bathroom path in the dark, the way you would at 3 a.m. Notice every rug edge, threshold, cord, and the cat in the hallway. The worst time is right after waking, when blood pressure is still adjusting.⁷

10 Ready if something happens

What to check	OK	Needs fix
Emergency info and medicine list are on the fridge. ⁷	☐	☐
Phone has my Medical ID / emergency info turned on.	☐	☐
I could call for help from the floor (see Tru-Tip, page 3). ⁷	☐	☐
Someone checks on me every day. ⁷	☐	☐
3 to 5 days of easy food, water, and medicines on hand. ^{7,9}	☐	☐

6 Bedroom

What to check	OK	Needs fix
A lamp or light I can reach from bed before I stand up. ¹	☐	☐
Bed height lets me sit with my feet flat on the floor.	☐	☐
Phone and a flashlight within reach of the bed. ⁷	☐	☐
Clear floor around the bed. No cords or clothes.	☐	☐
I sit on the edge of the bed for a moment before standing up. ²	☐	☐

8 Outdoors

What to check	OK	Needs fix
Walkways and driveway are even and free of leaves, ice, and hoses.	☐	☐
Someone is lined up for snow, ice, and yard work.	☐	☐
Mailbox and trash bins can be reached without a risky walk.	☐	☐

11 Fire and carbon monoxide

What to check	OK	Needs fix
Smoke alarms inside and outside each sleeping area and on every level. ⁴	☐	☐
I test smoke alarms every month. ⁴	☐	☐
Batteries replaced at least yearly. Alarms under 10 years old. ⁴	☐	☐
CO alarm near every sleeping area. Batteries checked each spring and fall. ⁵	☐	☐
Exit plan with two ways out of each room. Practiced twice a year. ⁶	☐	☐
Space heaters kept well away from curtains, bedding, and furniture. Outlets not overloaded.	☐	☐

TRU-TIP • Can you reach help from the floor?

Picture yourself on the floor of the room where you are most likely to fall, usually the bathroom or beside the bed. Could you reach a phone? Unlock it? Be heard by a voice assistant? Test what you can with a helper present. If the answer is no, add a layer: a wearable with fall detection, or a device you can reach from the floor.

Coverage is about reach from the ground, not owning the gadget.⁷

TRU-TIP • Ask the pharmacist, not just the doctor

Many common medicines can cause dizziness, sleepiness, or a drop in blood pressure when you stand up. Ask your pharmacist which of yours do, and when the effect is strongest. Never stop a medicine on your own. Ask your care team.^{2,7}

12 Medicines, eyes, and feet

What to check	OK	Needs fix
My pharmacist reviewed all my medicines, including over-the-counter, for dizziness or sleepiness. ^{2,7}	☐	☐
I know which of my medicines can make me dizzy, and when. ⁷	☐	☐
Eye exam in the past year. Glasses are current. ²	☐	☐
Shoes and slippers fit, have backs, and have non-slip soles. ⁷	☐	☐
Cane or walker is within reach and in good repair.	☐	☐
I do balance and leg-strength exercise, as my care team advises. ²	☐	☐

13 My next 3 fixes

What needs fixing	Who will help	By when	Done
			☐
			☐
			☐

OTHER THINGS I NOTICED, AND QUESTIONS FOR MY DOCTOR, PHARMACIST, OR THERAPIST

Want to go further? The SynquUp™ Emergency Life Binder by Chuck Kinney includes a full scored home safety checklist to track changes over time. Low-cost help with repairs: Eldercare Locator, eldercare.acl.gov or 1-800-677-1116.⁹ Free tools: chuckkinney.com/free