

HOME SAFETY FOR OLDER ADULTS CHECKLIST

Exterior

Quick Fixes

- Put bright lighting throughout the property.
- Stabilize railings on both sides of the stairway.
- Clear leaves and debris from walkways.
- Put low-profile mats by the doorways.
- Fix doorknobs that are hard to turn and locks that stick.

Bigger Projects

- Install solar or motion-detection lights.
- Set up a home security system.
- Eliminate stairs by putting in a ramp.
- Repair uneven sidewalks.

Safety Tip

- As you get out of the car, test the ground for slipperiness.

Interior

Quick Fixes

- Replace traditional lightbulbs with brighter LED lighting.
- Put nightlights in every room.
- Get rid of throw rugs from high-traffic areas or replace them with vinyl rugs made with slip-resistant material. Tack down puckered carpets.
- Make sure heaters are at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn.
- Remove wiring or cords that cross high-traffic areas.
- Put a landline or phone charger in the kitchen and near chairs.
- Remove clutter and tripping hazards.
- Move furniture out of the way.

Bigger Projects

- Put in motion-detection lighting.
- Set up fall-detection devices throughout the house.
- Widen doorways and hallways.

Safety Tips

- Turn on the light before you go into a room.
- Watch out for sleeping pets in walkways.
- Heavy chairs with strong armrests provide the best support.

Stairs

Quick Fixes

- Put down nonslip stair treads.
- Stabilize hand railings.

Bigger Projects

- Add sturdy hand railings to both sides of the steps.
- Install a stair lift.

Safety Tip

- Know the number of steps in each flight and count them as you go up and down.

Kitchen

Quick Fixes

- Move often-used items within easy reach.
- Keep fire-resistant potholders by the stove.
- Store anything flammable away from the stove.
- Buy a fire extinguisher.
- Put a nonslip mat by the kitchen sink.

Bigger Project

- Replace aging appliances with ones that have auto-shutoff features.

Safety Tips

- Avoid wearing clothing with long, loose sleeves while cooking.
- Wipe up grease spills immediately.
- Never leave cooking food unattended.
- Disconnect small appliances when not in use.
- Post vital information and contact numbers on the refrigerator.

Bathroom

Quick Fixes

- Mount grab bars near the toilet and in the shower or tub area.
- Add a nonslip mat on the tub or shower floor.
- Put a bath bench in the shower or tub.
- Use nonslip mats around the bathing area.
- Replace low toilets or toilet seats with higher ones.
- Tighten towel rods.
- Replace the showerhead with a handheld shower hose.

Bigger Project

- Install a walk-in tub and shower.

Safety Tip

- Use liquid soap with pumps instead of bar soap.

Bedroom

Quick Fixes

- If the bed is too low, place bed risers under the bed legs to add height.
- If the bed is too high, remove the bed frame or use a thinner mattress.
- Use bed railings.

Bigger Projects

- Install easy-to-reach shelving.
- Install a fire door and a sprinkler system.

Safety Tips

- Keep the area around the bed free from clutter.
- Tuck your shoes under the bed at night.
- Turn on the light before getting out of bed.

Maintenance

- Have the furnace, air conditioner and thermostat serviced regularly.
- Replace the smoke and carbon monoxide detector batteries once a year.
- Set the water heater thermostat to 110 degrees or lower.