



HOME SAFETY FOR SENIORS

(http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/SafeSeniors/sen_safeseniors_w001.asp)

Please use these tips to make your home safe for everyone who enters:

- 1) **Remove or secure all scatter rugs.** Remove all rugs that are not secured or slip resistant. Loose rugs are easy to trip over and can slide out from under anyone. This is the cause of many ground-level falls.
- 2) **Use non-skid wax and floor cleaners** to reduce the chances of falling.
- 3) **Use brighter lighting.** Good lighting is important to safe navigation around the house. Brighter lighting in the kitchen can reduce the risk of cuts and burns. Use at least 100 watt bulbs for reading to reduce eye strain. Place night lights throughout the home, especially on the route to the bathroom.
- 4) **Rearrange low furniture** where necessary to enhance safe mobility. Consider family members with hearing impairments when arranging conversation areas.
- 5) **Electrical cords should be hidden.** Move lamps and other appliances close to the walls so that the electrical cords don't lie in traffic areas where they can be tripped over. If you must extend an electrical cord across a traffic area, use duct tape to secure the cord flat against the floor. **DO NOT** cover the cord with a rug; this will only disguise the obstacle and can create a fire hazard.
- 6) **Use bathmats.** Using a non-slip mat in the bathtub or shower will greatly reduce the risk of slip and falls in the tub. Wet floors, bathtubs and shower stalls can get very slippery. Also, make available a secure hand-hold or handle for getting into and out of the tub or shower.
- 7) **Lower water temperature** in hot water heaters to reduce chance of scalding.
- 8) **Install raised toilet seats** and grab bars to make bathrooms safer.
- 9) **Oxygen equipment.** Keep the shut-off key for your oxygen equipment near your bed or chair in case of fire. Keep a duplicate key on a chain or nylon string attached to your portable tank in the event you need to evacuate your room or residence quickly.
- 10) **Heavy objects.** Place large, heavy objects on lower shelves to reduce the risk of pulling them down on top of you. Secure to the wall all tall shelving units, bookcases and heavy appliances. Hang pictures and mirrors away from beds.
- 11) **Chemical storage.** Ensure all hazardous products are stored in a separate location from medicines, eye cleansers and other personal care items. **DO NOT** mix cleaning products. Noxious, even deadly, fumes can be generated when household chemicals are mixed together.
- 12) **Stairs and entrances.** Make sure that stairwells and entry paths are kept well-lit and clutter-free. Stairs can be difficult to navigate, going up or down, and a sturdy handrail is a must. By-passing stairs altogether with a lift or ramp when needed is a major safety improvement.

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