



Home Safety Checklist

You may want to walk through the home, room by room, and use this checklist to identify trip hazards and other risks. It may be useful to let the resident come along and take part in the assessment, testing what is a challenge and what is not. Tick any relevant action points and create a to-do list. For more information and tips on ageing well at home, please visit www.safeathome.co.nz

Disclaimer: The content of this checklist does not constitute professional advice and is for general informational purposes only. For specific and personalised advice we recommend consulting with a qualified professional, e.g. an occupational therapist, electrician, or a builder. There are some affiliate links within the text, which means we may earn a small commission if you make a purchase through our provided links. These commissions come at no additional cost to you, and it helps us create more of this type of content to share.

General

	Risks:	Actions:	✓
Furniture position	1. Do you have to walk around furniture to walk through a room? 2. Is there too much furniture causing clutter and limiting access?	1. Move furniture to create clear paths. 2. Remove furniture that is no longer needed, to free up access. Downsize any larger pieces of furniture to make more space.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Lighting	1. Is poor lighting causing the resident to not be able to see clearly, e.g. where they are placing their feet, potentially stumbling on obstacles? 2. Is there close access to light switches?	1. Use free-standing lights to add lighting where needed. Up the wattage of the light bulbs, or change to more efficient LED lights (which also will draw less power), will provide more efficient lighting. Use sensor lights for automatic lighting when dark. Have bedside lamps for lighting at night. 2. Have an electrician to install light switches at top and bottom of stairs, and where needed e.g. by bed, and in easy to reach locations.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Rugs	1. Are rugs slipping around or crinkling, increasing the risk of slips or falls? (Check each rug.) 2. Do the rugs have rolled corners, tend to be	1. Attach double-sided tape or add non-slip rug pads underneath, to anchor the rug. 1 and 2. Remove rugs – this is usually the safest option.	<input type="checkbox"/>

	wrinkled up, or frayed, with the risk of feet snagging, causing a fall?	2. Replace with safer style rugs.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loose cords	Are there loose cords on the floor which may cause someone to trip or fall?	https://amzn.to/3Kqbs4v cords along the walls where there is no foot traffic. Have an electrician add another outlet if needed for closer access. Secure cords with a flush cord organiser .	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Clutter	Are there loose items placed on the floor which may be trip hazards?	Keep the floors clear of any loose items (such as boxes, magazines, shoes, blankets etc). If each item has its place/home there is less risk of clutter I.e. trip hazards.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stairs and steps	1. Are there slippery steps which may cause a fall (inside and outside)? 2. Is there clutter (books, ornaments, shoes etc) on steps causing a trip hazard? 3. Are there poorly fitted, or no hand rails? 4. Are the stairs poorly lit? 5. Are there light switches at the top <u>and</u> the bottom of the stairs, or does the resident have to walk in the dark to turn them on/off? 6. Are the stairs in a single colour, making it difficult to see where one step ends and the next begins?	1. Add non-slip paint or non-slip strips . 2. Do not use the stairs for storage and remove items from steps that may pose a risk of trips. 3. Safely secure, or add, hand rails to stairs and steps. A professional installer may be required. 4. Upgrade to better lighting with more illumination at the top and bottom of stairs. 5. Have an electrician add light switches to the top and bottom of stairs to allow for lights to be turned on and off from both ends. 6. Paint stairs, or at least the edge of the steps, in a contrasting colour to the floor, making it easier to see where to place feet, and prevents missteps. Add non-slip stair treads in a contrasting colour.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Comments / To-do:

Bathroom

	Risks:	Actions:	✓
Bathroom floor	Are the floors slippery, in particular when wet?	<p>Use a quality non-slip bath mat where the floors may get wet.</p> <p>Ensure the resident wipes dry any floors that have become wet, using e.g. a towel, mop, or long handled squeegee.</p> <p>If possible, change to non-slip flooring – tiles are usually not as safe as non-slip linoleum.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Shower	Is the resident unsteady when getting in and out of the shower, with the risk of slipping or falling?	<p>Ideally the shower floor should be flush with the main floor – if possible, install walk-in shower with no steps.</p> <p>Add grab-bars in the shower and outside the shower, for the resident to hold on to. There are also grab-bar towel rails available. Only use approved grab-bars and have professionally installed.</p> <p>Use a shower stool in the shower rather than standing up if balance is an issue.</p> <p>To prevent slipping in the shower, non-slip strips can be added to the shower floor.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Bath	Is it difficult to get in and out of the bath tub?	<p>Remove the bath tub if the resident is unable to independently enter and exit the bath tub, and replace with walk-in shower. Or use shower instead, if one is available.</p> <p>Use a bath-board to make make entering and exiting easier – ensure safe install so it doesn't slide!</p> <p>Install grab-bars to the wall behind the bath, to support entering and exiting bath.</p> <p>Add non-slip strips to the bathtub, or a non-slip rubber mat to prevent slips.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Toilet	Is it difficult getting on and off the toilet?	<p>Install grab-bars by the toilet. There are also toilet roll holder / grab-bar combos available.</p> <p>A raised toilet-seat can assist with getting on and off. They come free-standing or attached, with and without arm-rests, and in different widths.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Comments / To-do:

Bedroom / Dressing

	Risks:	Actions:	✓
Bed	Is the bed too high or too low to be able to get in and out of it safely?	Adjust the height of the bed by upgrading to an electric, height adjustable bed. Add furniture raisers under each bed leg to add height to the bed (or sofa / arm chairs).	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Dressing	Does the resident have tendencies to be more light headed in the mornings? Does getting dressed, leaning forward, or moving fast, cause a loss of balance?	Having a chair in the bedroom / dressing area is useful to allow for slower paced dressing, while seated. Sometimes a reacher / grabber can assist with reaching items on the floor or on a shelf, rather than leaning over, or using a stepping stool. A long shoe-horn is also useful, as there is less of a need for bending.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Lighting	As above, is there adequate lighting for night time, when toilet visits are likely?	Add a night light by the bed-side for easy access, a touch light may make it easier to turn on/off. Add sensor lights which will be activated when moving around.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Comments / To-do:

Kitchen

	Risks:	Actions:	✓
Everyday items	Are items commonly used stored in awkward spaces, making it more difficult to reach, with a risk of falls or injuries from falling objects?	<p>Store items used frequently close by, within reach at waist level, to reduce the need to climb, bend or reach for them.</p> <p>Use a reacher instead of bending or using a ladder.</p> <p>Avoid using ladders or stepping stools, but if one is needed, use a sturdy one.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Food prepping and doing dishes	Is there a good setup for food prepping, or does this cause fatigue due to prolonged standing and moving around?	<p>Sit on a stool / chair when prepping or doing dishes to reserve energy and retain balance.</p> <p>Electric can opener makes opening cans easier.</p> <p>A Dycem nonslip pad or Dycem material helps opening jars and bottles and prevents items from slipping away.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Cooking	<p>Is there a risk of forgetting to turn off stove or cooktop?</p> <p>Is there a risk of burns from touching hot surfaces / dropping hot food?</p>	<p>Air fryers and microwaves have timers and switch off automatically, so may be safer to use.</p> <p>Have an electrician install an oven / stove timer to cut power after a certain period of time.</p> <p>Use quality oven mittens to prevent heat going through causing burns to hands or dropping hot food on oneself.</p> <p>Induction cooktops, while still able to burn, may cause less a severe injury if touched.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Transfer of items / food	Are there risks of becoming unsteady when carrying food and other items from one area to another, with the risk of losing balance or dropping items?	<p>An apron with pockets is a good tool to use to carry items, such as a phone, or any smaller objects that needs to be transferred, freeing up hands, allowing the resident to focus on walking.</p> <p>Using a trolley on wheels may allow transfers of plates and other items, in a safer and more stable way.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Comments / To-do:

Personal Safety

	Risks:	Actions:	✓
Living alone	Is the resident able to contact someone if there is a (medical) event?	<p>Carry a cordless phone / mobile phone in a pocket (or apron). <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Keep emergency numbers at hand so relevant people can be contacted in a timely manner. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Sign up for a medical alarm and wear associated bracelet / neckless at all times (except for with bathing/showering). <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Have arrangements to contact a designated person on a regular basis, for check-ins, to ensure all is well. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Invest in coded lock on the door, so relevant people can unlock and enter, or leave a key with a trusted neighbour, or hide outside, if safe to do so. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
Safety	Could a stranger walk into the house as doors are unlocked?	<p>Ensure doors are locked at all times to prevent strangers from entering. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Add a "No Soliciting" sign on door. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Discuss a "stranger danger" plan. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Invest in a door chime, so the resident can hear if someone is at the door. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Invest in a peephole or door camera, so the resident can see who is outside. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
Fire / Gas leaks	Are there smoke / carbon monoxide detectors in the house to warn against gas leaks / fire?	<p>Install a smoke / carbon monoxide detector in each room. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Create an evacuation plan – where to go and what to do in case of a fire / gas leak. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Ensure all alarms have working batteries – check every 6 months. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	

Comments / To-do:
