

5 Ways to Prevent Falls in Your Loved One's Home

1. Check all stairs & steps both inside and outside of the home.

- **Always keep objects off the stairs:** Papers, shoes, books, or any other object placed or stored on steps can be a dangerous tripping hazard.
- **Keep steps in good condition:** If any steps are loose or uneven they should be fixed immediately. Carpet can often become loose or torn. It may be a good idea to remove carpet altogether and replace with non-slip rubber treads.
- **Handrails should be on both sides of stairs:** Fix loose handrails or put in new ones. Make sure handrails run the full length of the stairs.

2. Keep all floors clean and organized.

- **Create clear paths:** When you walk through a room, do you have to walk around furniture? Minimize the amount of furniture in rooms and arrange appropriately to create clear pathways.
- **Remove throw rugs:** Throw rugs can often create a tripping hazard by sliding or curling. Remove the rugs or use double-sided tape to secure rugs safely.
- **Keep wires and cords hidden:** Cords from lamps, telephones, televisions, or extension cords should be coiled or taped next to walls to avoid tripping over them. Electricians can often install extra outlets or hide cords behind walls and objects.

3. Keep all kitchen items within reach.

- **Avoid storing items on high shelves:** Keep things that are used often on the lower shelves. Approximately waist high for easy access.
- **Have a sturdy step stool handy:** If you must use a step stool, be sure to get one with a bar to hold on to. Never use a chair as a step stool.

4. Organize bedroom and check bed height

- **Beds should be easy to get into and out of:** A bed that is too high can result in falling.
- **Place a lamp near bed:** The lamp should be easy to reach.
- **Install a night light:** Some nightlights go on by themselves after dark and will make it easier to see if you need to get out of bed in the middle of the night.

5. Install handles and non-slip mats in bathrooms.

- **Tubs, showers, and floors can be slippery:** Put a non-slip rubber mat on the floor of the shower.
- **Have grab bars next to and inside of the tub, and next to the toilet:** Support may be needed when getting in and out of the tub, or up from the toilet.