

Home Safety Checklist for Seniors

General Home Safety

- Keep floors clear of clutter, watch for loose carpet or rugs, and ensure surfaces are non-slip.
- Look for uneven or changes in floor level, and make sure they are well marked (or leveled, if possible).
- Make sure rooms are arranged safely and walkways have enough space, especially for a walker or wheelchair.
- All stairs should be non-slip and have a sturdy handrail on both sides.
- Ensure adequate lighting throughout the house and place nightlights where needed.
- Heating and air conditioning units require maintenance and should be working correctly.
- Ensure electrical outlets are working and properly grounded.
- Consider removing sharp objects like razors or scissors. In addition, it may be better for your senior to use an electric razor for shaving to minimize the risk of cuts.
- Have a telephone available for emergencies and emergency contact numbers that are easily accessible.

Kitchen Safety

- Keep frequently used dishes and food items within easy reach to prevent reaching and climbing.
- Remove slip hazards from the floor, including loose rugs, and ensure the floors are not slippery.
- Consider using appliances with shut-off features.
- Clean up any spills immediately.
- Color code or label hot (red) and cold (blue) faucets.
- To prevent hot scalding water, set the hot water heater to 120 degrees F.
- If the oven or stove use is a concern, remove knobs or install a hidden circuit breaker.

Bathroom Safety

- Use non-skid mats or secure rugs with non-slip rubber pads or double-sided tape.
- Add a non-slip mat or decals to the bottom of the shower or tub.
- Install grab bars near the toilet, shower, and anywhere else needed.
- A raised toilet seat makes getting on and off the toilet easier.
- Consider using a handheld showerhead and a shower chair.
- Color code or label hot (red) and cold (blue) faucets.
- To prevent hot scalding water, set the hot water heater to 120 degrees F.

Living Rooms Safety

- Keep walking areas free from debris and clutter.
- Secure rugs and flooring that may cause tripping.
- Make sure electrical cords are not in walking paths and are secured to the floor.
- Ensure good lighting in all living spaces, including hallways, especially at night.
- Make sure all stairways have sturdy handrails.

Mobility Safety

- Encourage the use of assisted devices such as canes, walkers, or wheelchair, and make sure walking paths to keep are easy to navigate.
- Ensure your senior has sturdy shoes with rubber soles to prevent slipping. Velcro or slip-on shoes can prevent issues with loose shoelaces and may be easier for seniors to put them on.
- Be mindful that pets can be a tripping hazard.

Bedroom Safety

- Keep shoes, clothing, and personal items in easy-to-reach locations.
- Ensure adequate lighting, especially if your senior may get up at night to use the bathroom. Consider using nightlights or motion sensor lights.
- Keep walk areas clear of loose rugs and clutter.

Doors and Window Safety

- Ensure windows and doors can open and close and that they have locks your senior can operate.
- Check if the doorbell is working and that your senior can hear it throughout the house.
- Front doors should have a peephole or view panel so seniors can see who is at the door before opening.
- Hide a key outside or make sure someone has an extra in case your senior locks themselves out of the house.

Fire Safety

- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors (per your city code), check to make sure they all work, and change the batteries annually.
- Have fire extinguishers in easily accessible areas, and ensure people know where they are and how to use them.
- Consider removing lighters and matches if open flames, like fireplaces and candles, are concerning.
- Restrict or supervise smoking in the house as smoking can be a fire hazard if contact is made with anything flammable.

Medication Safety

- Keep a current list of your senior's medications, including over-the-counter medicines, supplements, and drug allergies. Keep this list someplace where it is easily accessible. Have their physician or ask a pharmacist to review the list for drug interactions.
- Ensure you and your senior are aware of potential side effects and any possible drug interactions.
- Ensure your senior is taking the correct dosages at the right times. A pillbox organizer may be helpful, and some seniors may need supervision when taking medications.
- If your senior struggles to swallow their medications, ask their physician if they can be ordered in a different form, such as liquid form. Don't crush medications unless the physician or pharmacist says it is okay because some medicines may become ineffective or harmful.

Outdoor Safety

- Make sure walkways are clear of debris, leaves, ice, or snow.
- Fix any loose or uneven steps.
- Make sure there is a sturdy railing next to walkways and stairs.
- Ensure there is adequate outside lighting.
- If needed, add a ramp to the front and back doors.