



Checklist for Senior Citizen Safety

Every year senior citizens are injured from household accidents. Here's a checklist designed to help you make any home safer for elderly loved ones.

Lighting. Dark hallways and poorly lit stairwells lead to accidents. Check that all lighting fixtures are working properly and replace dim lights with high wattage light bulbs.

Switches. Are all light switches easy for an elderly person to reach? Can light switches be found in the dark? If not, have self illuminated light switches installed. Have them mounted at waist level.

Outlets. Are your electrical sockets at the right height? Can they be accessed easily without moving heavy furniture? Do they require bending? If they're not up to snuff have a licensed electrician upgrade them.

Appliances. Grandma might be fond of the appliances she's had for the past 20 years, but are they still safe and operational? Many of today's appliances are lighter and easier to use. Consider replacing outdated appliances with today's safer and more energy-efficient products.

Wires. Look around the house for old, frayed electrical wires. Check for wires running under carpets or rugs and overloaded extension cords.

Stairs. Are steps are free from clutter and any carpeting is securely tacked down? Are the handrails in good shape?

Floors. Highly polished wood floors and shiny tiled bathrooms may look lovely but present a real risk of causing a slip and fall. Where possible install wall-to-wall carpeting or anti-skid mats.

Throw rugs. While they make a decorative touch they also present a tripping hazard. Fasten throw rugs, or better yet remove them.

Telephones. Is there a working telephone extension in every frequently used room, especially the bathroom?

Bathrooms. The bathroom can be particularly dangerous for an elderly person. You can dramatically reduce the chance of the accident by installing grip bars in shower stalls and near toilets and bathtubs.

List. Keep a list of emergency phone numbers in a large, easy-to-read font by every telephone extension.

Locks. While everybody wants to feel safe in their home, make sure that they don't present a fire hazard. A good lock keeps intruders out but does not obstruct exits.

Medicines. Go to the medicine cabinet and properly dispose of expired medications. If you're elderly loved one has any type of cognitive impairment than you will need to safeguard prescription medicines from improper use.

Emergency Plan. If an elderly person is too weak or confused to get to a telephone the consequences can be severe. Get an [emergency medical alert](#) pendant that can be used to call for help.

For more senior citizen safety tips visit ElderKind.com.