

Home Safety Checklist

Use this list to prepare a residence for senior living.

General Safety precautions

- Make sure that there are working smoke detectors on every floor.
- Find a phone with large number pads and large speed-dial keys that can be programmed with important numbers.
- Post emergency phone numbers in large print on or near the telephone.
- Supply telephone with direct dialing system for emergency/important numbers.
- Hide house key outside or give to neighbor for emergencies.
- Put automatic door closing devices on doors to outside and alarms when needed.
- Notify local police department if your family member is memory impaired.
- Be certain that there is adequate lighting throughout the house and install nightlights.
- Check that all electrical cords are free of frays. Put childproof plugs in outlets.
- Be certain that no outlets or switches are unusually warm or hot to touch.
- Reduce clutter; Remove furniture that is hazardous and may move when leaned on.
- Put reflector tape on furniture corners, hallways, bedrooms to create a path to follow at night.
- Avoid polished floors that may be slippery, and put non-slip padding and grippers under rugs and runners.
- Put opaque tape on glass door and picture windows
- Remove or lock up sharp objects/breakable ones and remove all firearms from home.
- Keep electric fans out of reach. Cover radiators with radiator guards.
- Supervise or restrict smoking, use safety ashtrays and keep matches/lighters out of reach.
- Use flame-retardant mattresses, pillows, and sheets and plan procedure for fire evacuation.
- Store all prescription and over the counter medications safely away and clearly labeled.
- Lock up cleaning supplies, chemicals and poisons and install a carbon monoxide detector.
- Lock up valuables, important papers and documents and have system for safe mail retrieval.

- Be certain plumbing and utilities are working.
- Remove poisonous houseplants and have first aid kit easily accessible.
- Take away car keys when necessary and disarm/hide controls for automatic garage doors.
- Inform neighbors of any safety features in home that may restrict entry.

Entrance

- Ensure walkway is uncluttered and doorway accessible.
- Provide safe entry into the house or apartment with secure railing present.
- Provide viewing of visitors prior to entry when possible.
- Secure doors to outside with double key locks, or high or low locks.

Living Area

- Furnish with chairs/sofas that can safely get up/down.
- Adapt seating with additional firm cushions to raise seat.
- Provide auto raising lift chair to assist getting up when necessary.
- Be certain safe opening/closing of windows or key locked windows installed.
- Ascertain ability to operate the television and light switches.
- Keep cords out from under carpeting and furniture and clear of walkways.

Kitchen

- Maintain appliances in working order.
- Ascertain ability to manipulate sink faucets with hot water temperature settings reduced.
- Make sure electrical cords aren't dangling near water.
- Ascertain ability to open/close refrigerator/freezer/stove door/ and cabinets.
- Ascertain ability to reach dishes, pots, utensils, and outlets.
- Store sharp objects are safely away.
- Keep flammables away from the stove area.
- Remove small non-food items that could be swallowed.
- Cover stove burners, remove knobs/shut-off valves/ and install auto-pilots when needed.
- Unplug or put away kitchen appliances not in use.
- Disconnect or camouflage garbage disposals.

Bedroom

- Locate bedroom near bathroom or furnish bedside commode.
- Use night-lights to provide nighttime orientation.
- Ensure safe transfer in/out bed and remove bed frame if bed is too high.
- Rent or purchase a hospital bed if needed.
- Supply bumpers or padding to surround bed if needed.
- Install reverse locks on doors when needed.
- Use monitor to listen to activity especially at night.
- Remove carpeting if incontinence becomes a problem
- Install room darkening blinds or shades when needed.
- Be certain that phone and light is accessible from bed.
- Be certain that clothes in the closet/dresser are reachable.

Bathroom

- Install grab rails in tub or shower.
- Provide a tub bench or tub chair for sitting in tub.
- Install hand held shower nozzle.
- Remove any scatter rugs and furnish bath mat and non-skid strips in tub.
- Replace glass shower doors with unbreakable plastic.
- Install grab bars, safety frame, and/or raised seat on or near toilet
- Lock up razor blades, sharp objects, and store away electrical devices.
- Be certain that light switches, outlets and toilet paper are accessible.

Stairways

- Widen treads or shorten risers.
- Replace outdoor stairs with ramps.
- Install sturdy handrail or grab rails along both sides of stairs.
- Put reflector tape on edge of treads.
- Install barriers or gates at stairs if needed.
- Provide adequate lighting and ensure steps are free of clutter.