

# HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST

## REMAIN INDEPENDENT IN YOUR OWN HOME

### Support Network & Communication:

#### 1. Neighbors and Community:

- Talk to neighbors and friends. Having a support system can help you stay independent longer.

#### 2. Regular Check-ins:

- Set up a system for regular check-ins by friends, family, or caregivers.

#### 3. Emergency Communication System:

- Set up an easy-to-use emergency communication system, such as a phone with large buttons and labeled contacts.
- Keep a list of emergency contacts and important information in an easily accessible place (like the refrigerator).
- Reduce scam risk. Utilize a spam filter for the phone or set up a phone that will only allow calls from known numbers.
- Have a plan ready in the event of a power outage, including easily accessible rechargeable flashlights. Ask a neighbor to check in if the area loses power or ask a family member to sign up to receive outage alerts.

- Consider an ID bracelet or wallet insert containing emergency contact and medical information. Consider not having your phone password protected and designate emergency contacts (ICE).

#### 4. Clear Signage:

- Label rooms, cabinets, and drawers with clear and easy to read signs.

#### 5. Staying Engaged:

- Work out a plan to stay engaged with the hobbies you love while minimizing risk.

### Routine and Organization:

#### 1. Daily Routine:

- Establish a consistent daily routine.
- Use visual cues (e.g., schedules, signs, calendars) to help with daily tasks.
- Use large digital clocks to display the date and time.

#### 2. Medication Management:

- Create a system for organizing and taking medications, possibly using pill organizers, automated dispensers, or daily medication checklists with enough space to initial after each dose.

#### 3. Chores:

- Modify chores to make them easier.

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- Seek help for chores that are too challenging or pose a fall risk (e.g., taking out the garbage, adding salt to the water softener, shoveling snow, mowing the lawn, replacing lightbulbs, etc.).
- Conduct regular safety checks:
  1. Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors monthly.
  2. Fire extinguisher is present and charged.
  3. Test your smoke detector to discover if/where your pet hides in case you need to evacuate quickly.

### 4. Pets:

- Consider the responsibilities and fall risks associated with owning a pet.
- Consider getting additional help to take care of the pet.

## General Safety:

### 1. Remove Trip and Fall Hazards:

- Secure or remove rugs.
- Secure loose wires and cables.
- Ensure clear pathways without clutter.
- Fix any uneven outdoor walking areas.
- Ensure steps have a handrail. Install a ramp if the steps are too challenging
- Ensure outdoor walking areas are free of trip hazards.

### 2. Vision and Lighting:

- Install bright and consistent lighting.
- Use motion-detecting lights in hallways, bathrooms, and bedrooms.

- Avoid confusing patterns on the floor.
- Mark the edges of steps with brightly colored tape.

### 3. Limit Risk:

- Remove or lock up firearms and ammunition.
- Remove or lock up power tools.
- Ensure that a telephone is accessible on every floor of the home.
- Consider smart home technology for thermostat controls.
- Adjust water heater temperature to avoid risk of scalding.
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in the kitchen, bedrooms, and on every floor.
- Hide a spare key or use a lock box in case you are locked out.
- Consider a “NO SOLICITING” sign and a security camera.
- Lock up propane tanks and gas cans.
- Lock up toxic materials (e.g., paint, fertilizer, pesticides, etc.).

### 4. Furniture & Mirrors:

- Ensure that all furniture is stable, anchored, and won't tip over easily.
- Move or modify furniture with sharp edges and make sure it's comfortable and has sufficient padding.
- Cover or remove mirrors if they cause confusion or distress.

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## Kitchen Safety:

- Label cabinets and drawers for easy identification.
- Keep commonly used items within easy reach.
- Clean out the junk drawer.
- Limit access to any unnecessary sharp utensils.
- Install automatic shut-off devices and safety knobs on stoves.
- Consider locking certain appliances if necessary.
- Insert a drain trap in the kitchen sink to catch anything that falls in by accident.
- Consider disconnecting the garbage disposal.
- Install smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors and test regularly.
- Keep a fire extinguisher and/or fire blanket in the kitchen with easy-to-follow instructions.



*Print and cut here to post this checklist in each room of your home!*

## Bathroom Safety:

- Use non-slip mats in the bathroom to prevent falls.
- Install grab bars near the toilet and in the shower.
- Use non-skid adhesive strips in the tub or shower.
- If there are multiple showers in the home, use the one that is easiest to get in and out of.
- Use a shower stool.
- Consider installing raised toilets that are easier to get up from.
- Clean out the medicine cabinet.
- Dispose of unused medications at local police stations or participating pharmacies.
- Use a night-light.

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## Bedroom Safety:

- Use easily distinguishable and comfortable bedding.
- Install a grab rail to get in and out of bed.
- Ensure there's a clear path to the bathroom at night.
- Use motion-activated nightlights.
- Label drawers and closets.
- Ensure all dressers are anchored, and won't tip over easily.
- Designate a place to keep cell phone, hearing aids, glasses, and dentures at night.



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## Laundry Room, Garage, & Basement Safety:

- Ensure washer and dryer are in good working order.
- Clearly label the controls with large, easy-to-understand instructions.
- Post a reminder on or near the dryer to clean the lint trap before each use.
- Consider removing iron.
- Use a laundry basket with wheels.
- Do not climb stairs with the laundry basket. If the laundry room is on different floor than the bedroom, consider getting assistance with doing laundry.
- Consider removing or locking up harmful chemicals.
- Consider storing power tools and keys to snow blowers, riding mowers and vehicles in a locked cabinet.