

Your Guide to Independent Living

Make your home safer

Complete the activities on this checklist to make your home safer.

Stairs and Steps

- Have light switches at the top and bottom of the stairs. Make sure the stairs are well lit.
- Check that your stairs are in good repair, are free of clutter, and have a non-skid surface.
- Mark the edges of the steps with contrasting coloured non-skid tape or paint.
- Make sure there are sturdy handrails on at least one side of all stairways.
- Remove your reading glasses when you go up and down the stairs.
- Never rush up or down the stairs.

Bedroom

- Have a light within reach of your bed. Consider a flashlight or a lamp with a 'clap-on' adaptor.
- Beds should be at a good height for easy movement on and off. Firmer mattresses will make getting in and out easier.
- Have a cordless phone by your bed.
- Make sure there is a clear path from your bed to the bathroom.
- Keep your bedding clear of the floor so it is not a tripping hazard.
- Keep your walking aid handy and within easy reach of the bed.
- Sit on the edge of your bed for a minute before getting up after a rest.

Kitchen

- Place frequently used items in easy-to-reach locations. Store heavier items in lower cupboards.
- Avoid use of floor wax, or use a non-skid wax.
- Always wipe up any spills immediately to avoid slipping.

Living Areas

- Make sure all walking areas are clear of telephone or electrical cords.
- Position your furniture accordingly to keep pathways clear to and from areas that you need access to.
- Have a cordless telephone within easy reach.

Bathroom

- Use slip-resistant mats around the shower and bath. Use paint-on or self-adhesive slip-resistant strips in the shower and bath.
- Soap, shampoo, and towels should be placed within easy reach so that you don't have to bend or reach for them.
- Have grab bars installed around the bath, shower, and toilet.
- If you have trouble getting on and off the toilet seat, consider an elevated toilet seat.
- Consider using a bath seat so you can take a shower or bath sitting down.