

HOME SAFETY SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL (HSSAT) V.4

Falls are the leading cause of injury, disability, nursing home placement, and death in adults over the age of 65 years. Yet, in the United States, one in every three older adults falls each year. In order to address this problem, the Occupational Therapy Geriatric Group at the University at Buffalo created the Home Safety Self Assessment Tool, as a part of combined effort with the Health Foundation for Western and Central New York, to disseminate information regarding how to prevent falls in Erie County. The HSSAT has been found to be useful in reducing the occurrence of falls at home through a study that was conducted at the Department of Rehabilitation, University at Buffalo. In Version 4, "How to" Home Improvement Instructions, with before and after photos, were added to existing Home Safety Check Lists and Solutions (V.3). Use of this tool as instructed in this book, helps to prevent future falls. An online version of this tool is available at www.agingresearch.buffalo.edu for download.

The HSSAT (V.4) consists of seven major sections:

1. The Home Safety Self Assessment Checklist and Solutions

Information on how to use this section can be found on page 3 of this manual.

2. Assistive Devices and Helpful Products to Prevent Falls

The products were selected based on their usability, quality, and rating by users.

The products are categorized to correspond to the Solutions on the Home Safety Checklist.

Picture credits for selected are listed at the end of the Checklist on pages 31 and 32.

3. Home Modification Services, Stores Carrying Durable Medical Equipment, and Organizations to Provide Free Services in Herkimer County

This section lists service providers in Herkimer County who perform home modifications such as installing grab bars and railings or widening the doorway of a bathroom. These service providers responded to our request to develop this list. They are insured and have experience in home modifications and remodeling and are willing to perform a small job at your home. Also listed are the stores that carry durable medical equipment and other products that are useful in preventing falls. Some stores do not have wheelchairs. Free services related to fall prevention in Herkimer County are also listed in this section. (Pages 34-38)

4. Tips for Fall Prevention

This one page list includes tips for fall prevention other than the risk factors discussed in the previous sections. (Page 41)

5. ADA Instructions for Home Environment

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) sets guidelines for accessibility to public places and commercial facilities by individuals with disabilities. This is not applicable to single homes but may be applicable for commercial apartments. In this section, six guidelines are selected. (Pages 47-53)

6. Action Log

This section is provided to keep a record of the home hazard removal process. (Pages 54-55)

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HOW TO USE HSSAT CHECKLIST TO IDENTIFY HOME HAZARDS TO PREVENT FALLS

Use the checklist to find and correct/fix the hazards for every room/area in your home that could cause you to trip or fall. All items are potential risks for falls but if a wheelchair is not used, some items may not apply.

Steps to use the checklist

Step 1:

Go to each room/area of your home with this checklist; look for the hazards/items that are listed below the picture on each page (Some items may not relate to your home).

Step 2:

If the problem is present in your room/area, check off in the appropriate box. After checking all the problems add them and write the total in the big box (Each item that gets a checkmark is a potential hazard).

Step 3:

Then go through the solutions and take the necessary action to fix those problems that are a potential hazard. Make sure that you look at assistive devices and helpful products that are indicated in the solutions section. Having them can make your home safer.

Step 4:

Add the total number of hazards in all the rooms/areas to get a grand total.

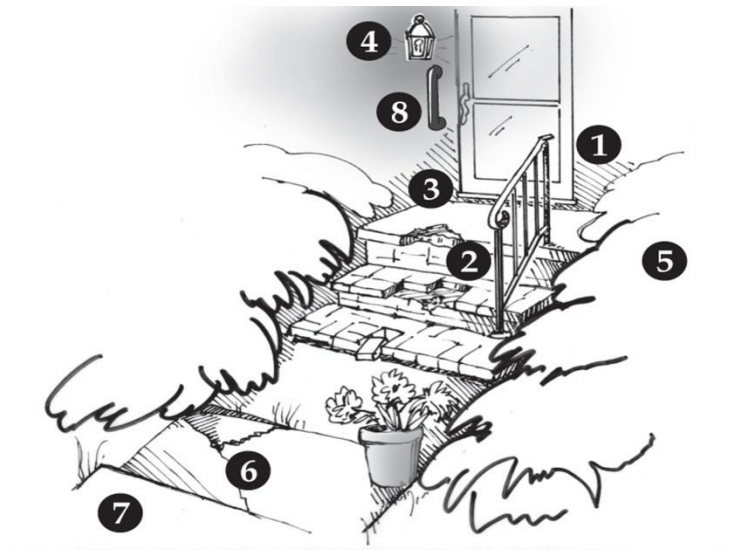
Step 5:

Write down what actions you are planning to take and have already taken to prevent falls in the Action Log for your records.

Step 6:

It may be a good idea to ask your family and friends for a home safety modification or an assistive device for your birthday or holiday present. Also, talk with your friends about home safety. It can be a great gift for them to know how to prevent future falls.

ENTRANCE TO FRONT DOOR AND FRONT YARD



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

_____ 1. Lack of railings or unstable railing

_____ 5. Lack of a ramp for a wheelchair

_____ 2. Unsafe steps (too steep/cracked)

_____ 6. Uneven/cracked pavement

_____ 3. Unmarked or raised threshold

_____ 7. Ice or snow on driveway/walkway

_____ 4. Lack of lighting at night

_____ 8. Lack of an outdoor grab bar

Other _____

Total number of problems _____

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

Solutions for the Problems in Entrance to Front Door and Front Yard

1. Lack of railings or unstable railing

Add at least one railing, ideally one on each wall. (See page 22, item 1)
Have unstable railing stabilized.

2. Unsafe steps (too steep, cracked, chipped, etc.)

Have damaged or broken steps repaired.

3. Unmarked or raised threshold

Mark end of steps or thresholds with contrasting tape or paint color to increase awareness of changes in height. (See page 22, item 2)

4. Lack of lighting at night

Add an outdoor light fixture if not present.
Add a sensor light that automatically turns on and off. (See page 23, item 3)

5. Lack of a ramp for a wheelchair

Have a remodeler or home contractor construct a ramp that will allow wheelchair access in and out of the home. (See page 23, item 4)

6. Unsafe pavement (uneven or cracked)

Have uneven or cracked pavement repaired.
Avoid these areas if possible when walking to and from the home.
Contact local government for repair if it is a sidewalk or driveway end.

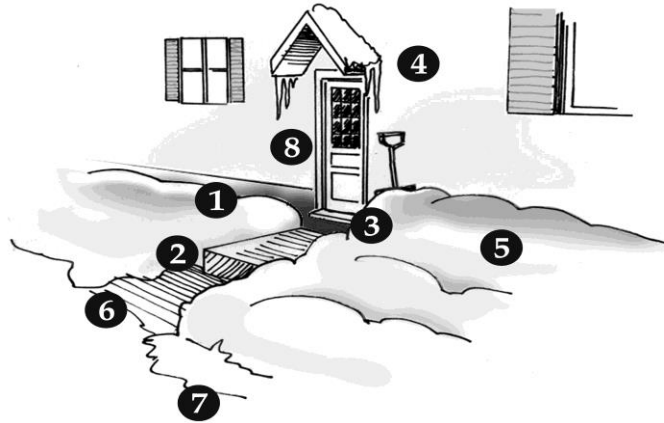
7. Ice or snow on driveway or walkway

Use snow melter.
Have snow/ice removed by a neighbor or service. (See page 23, item 5)

8. Lack of an outdoor grab bar

Add an outdoor grab bar next to the door. (See page 24, item 6)

ENTRANCE TO BACK/SIDE DOOR



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

_____ 1. Lack of railings or unstable railing _____ 5. Lack of a ramp for a wheelchair

_____ 2. Unsafe steps (too steep/cracked/chipped) _____ 6. Uneven/cracked pavement

_____ 3. Unmarked or raised threshold _____ 7. Ice or snow walkway

_____ 4. Lack of lighting at night _____ 8. Lack of an outdoor grab bar

Other _____

Total number of problems _____

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

Solutions for the Problems Entrance to Back/Side Door

1. Lack of railings or unstable railing

Add at least one railing, ideally one on each wall. (See page 22, item 1)
Have unstable railing stabilized.

2. Unsafe steps (too steep, cracked, chipped, etc.)

Have damaged or broken steps repaired.

3. Unmarked or raised threshold

Mark end of steps or thresholds with contrasting tape or paint color to increase awareness of change in height. (See page 22, item 2)

4. Lack of lighting at night

Add an outdoor light fixture if not present.
Add a sensor light that automatically turns on and off. (See page 23, item 3)

5. Lack of a ramp for a wheelchair

Have a remodeler or home contractor construct a ramp that will allow wheelchair access in and out of the home. (See page 23, item 4)

6. Unsafe pavement (uneven or cracked)

Have uneven or cracked pavement repaired.
Avoid these areas if possible when walking to and from the home.
Contact local government for repair if it is a sidewalk or driveway end.

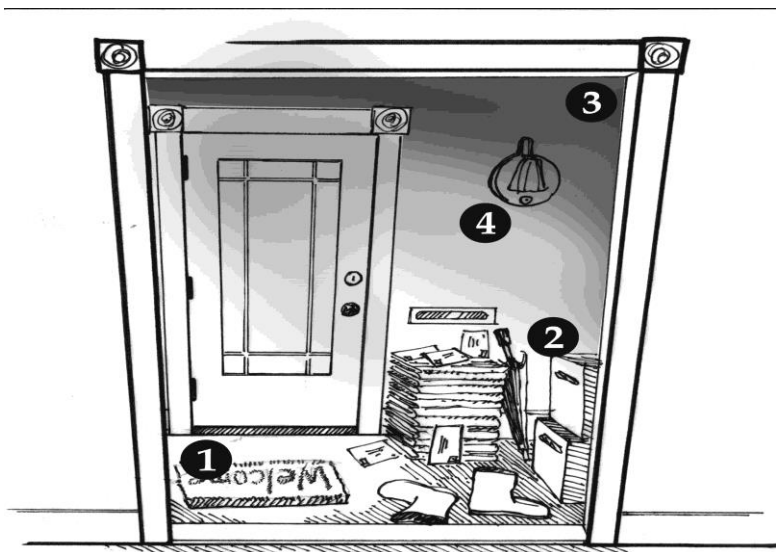
7. Ice or snow on walkway

Use snow melter.
Have snow/ice removed by a neighbor or service. (See page 23, item 5)

8. Lack of an outdoor grab bar

Add grab bar next to the door. (See page 24, item 6)

HALLWAY OR FOYER



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

_____ 1. Uneven or slippery flooring

_____ 3. Dark or poor lighting

_____ 2. Cluttered area

_____ 4. Lack of access to ceiling

Other _____

_____ Total number of problems

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

Solutions for the Problems in Hallway or Foyer

1. Unsafe flooring (slippery, uneven carpeting, etc.)

Make sure floor surfaces are dry.

If you have a carpet, make sure that the patterns are not too busy.

Have carpet stretched or removed to eliminate wrinkles or bumps.

Add a carpet runner to slippery hallways or foyers and secure to the floor.

(See page 28, item 17)

2. Cluttered area

Eliminate clutter on floors by removing and/or organizing items.

Example: shoe tray, hooks for umbrella.

3. Dark or poor lighting

Increase wattage to allowable limits in lights.

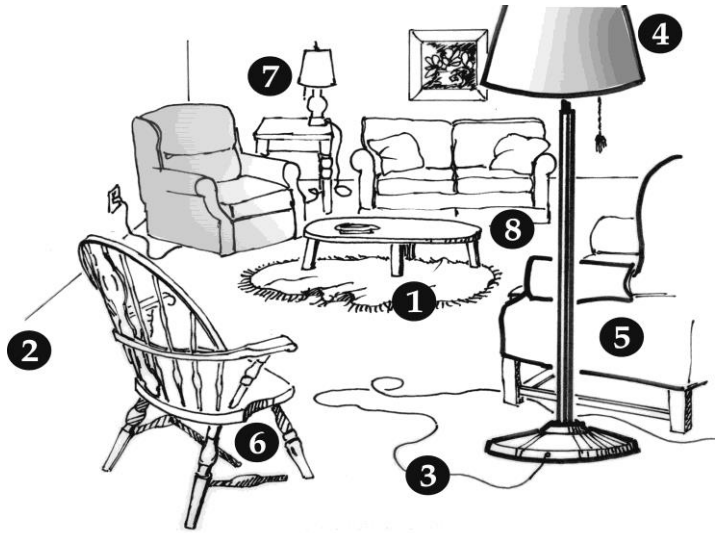
Add additional overhead or wall lighting.

4. Lack of access to ceiling light

Ask another person to change the light.

Add removable wall lights to poorly lit areas. **(See page 24, item 7)**

LIVING ROOM



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

- | | |
|--|--|
| _____ 1. Presence of throw or scatter rug | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Presence of unstable furniture |
| _____ 2. Presence of clutter | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Presence of unstable chair |
| _____ 3. Presence of electric cords across the floor | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Difficult to access light switches |
| _____ 4. Poor lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Not enough space to move around |

Other _____

Total number of problems

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page.

Solutions for the Problems in Living Room

1. Presence of throw or scatter rug (See page 24, item 8)

Remove a scatter rug or use a double sided rug tape or rug pad to secure the rug to the floor.

2. Presence of clutter

Eliminate clutter on floor surfaces by placing items on shelves or storage.
Consider donating or throwing out the items you no longer use.
Avoid carpets with confusing patterns.

3. Presence of electric cords across the floor

Run your cords behind furnishings. Use extension cords to accomplish this.
Rearrange items that must be plugged in to areas near an outlet.
(See page 25, item 9)

4. Poor lighting

Increase wattage to allowable limits in lamps/lights.
Add additional lamps or wall/overhead lights.

5. Presence of unstable furniture (chair, table, etc.)

Place a block under the shorter leg.
If the chair or table is broken, have it repaired or replaced.

6. Presence of unsafe chair (too low, too high, without arms)

If the chair is too low, add a furniture leg riser to raise the height.
A chair that is too high or without arms should not be used, as it will not provide you with sufficient stability to get in and out of the chair. (See page 25, item 10)

7. Difficult to access light switches

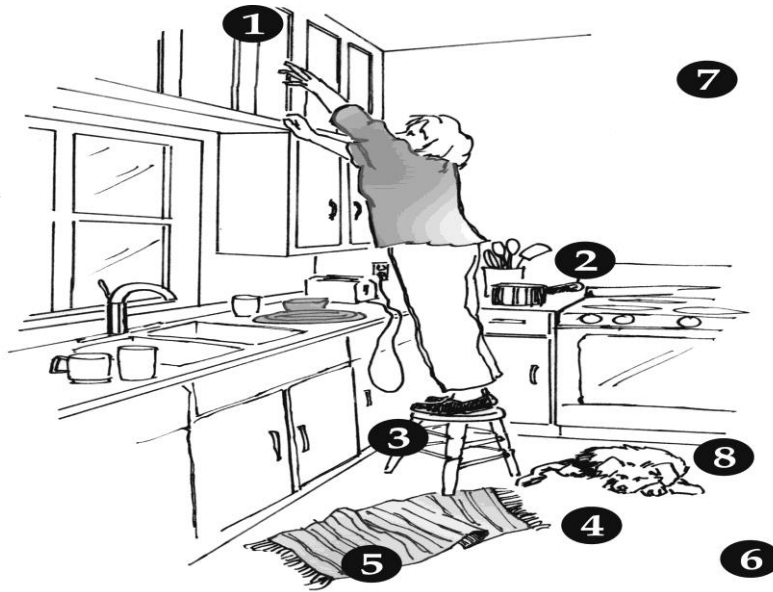
Add "clapper" light switch control to lamps. There are other remote control switching options for operating the lights.
Rearrange furnishings to allow quick access to wall switch or lamps.

8. Not enough space to move around

Remove clutter or excess furniture that prevents you from moving around the room easily.
Some items may be rearranged, but you may want to donate or throw out other items you don't really need or use.

For information on additional device, see page 25, item 11

KITCHEN



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

_____ 1. Cabinet too high or low

_____ 5. Presence of throw/ scatter rug

_____ 2. Not enough counter space

_____ 6. Presence of slippery floor

_____ 3. Using a stool or a chair to reach things

_____ 7. Poor lighting

_____ 4. Not enough room to maneuver

_____ 8. Presence of a pet underfoot when preparing meals

Other _____

Total number of problems _____

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

Solutions for the Problems in Kitchen

1. Cabinet too high or too low

Move items to the shelves closest to the counter.
Add hooks to the wall for pots and pans you use frequently.

2. Not enough counter space

Make sure available counter space is cleared of clutter. Use Lazy Susan.
(See page 26, item 14)
Move kitchen table closer to counter for additional work space.
Use a rolling cart for added work space.

3. Using a stool to a chair to reach things

Move items to lower shelves.
Replace the stool with a sturdy step ladder. (See page 26, item 12)

4. Not enough room to maneuver

Eliminate clutter or excessive furniture (extra kitchen chairs, etc.) to add space.
Remove a leaf from the table and push it closer to the wall.

5. Presence of a throw/scatter rug

Remove a scatter rug or use a double sided rug tape or rug pad to secure the rug to the floor.
(See page 24, item 8)

6. Presence of slippery floor

Do not walk on a wet floor.
Wear comfortable and fit shoes or socks with a non-skid sole. (See page 26, item 13)
Change flooring surface to one that is less slippery.

7. Poor lighting

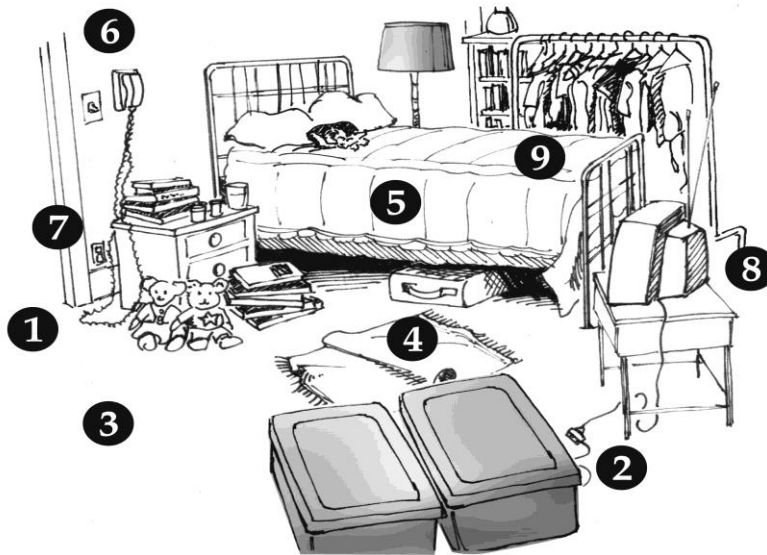
Increase wattage of bulbs to allowable level.
Add under counter lighting.
Add additional overhead lighting.

8. Presence of a pet underfoot when preparing meals

Remove the pet from the kitchen while cooking and add a pet gate to the entry ways of the kitchen. (See page 27, item 15)
Put the pet outside or in a crate.

For information on additional device, See page 27, item 16

BEDROOM



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

- | | |
|--|--|
| _____ 1. Presence of clutter | _____ 6. Lack of a telephone near the bed |
| _____ 2. Presence of electric cords across the floor | _____ 7. Lack of nightlight |
| _____ 3. Unsafe carpet (uneven, torn, curled up) | _____ 8. Arrangement that causes difficulty to reach items (TV remote, lamp) |
| _____ 4. Presence of throw/scatter rug | _____ 9. Lack of device to get in/out of bed |
| _____ 5. Height of bed (too low/high) | |

Other _____

Total number of problems _____

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

Solutions for the Problems In Bedroom

1. Presence of clutter

Eliminate clutter on floor surfaces by placing items on shelves or storage. Consider donating or throwing out the items you no longer use.

2. Presence of electric cords across the floor (See page 25, item 9)

Run your cords behind furnishings. Use extension cords to accomplish this. Rearrange items that must be plugged in to areas near an outlet.

3. Unsafe carpet (uneven, torn, curled up, etc.) (See page 28, item 17)

Have carpet stretched or removed to eliminate wrinkles or bumps.

4. Presence of throw/scatter rug (See page 24, item 8)

Remove all scatter and throw rugs or use a double sided rug tape or a rug pad to secure the rug to floor.

5. Height of bed (too high or low) (See page 25, item 10)

Too low (your knees are above the hips when sitting at the edge of the bed):

Use bed risers below bed legs to raise height.

Too high (your legs do not touch the floor when sitting at the edge of the bed):

Remove bed frame or use a lower profile mattress or box spring.

6. Lack of a telephone near the bed (See page 28, item 18)

Place a cordless type or cell phone next to your bed at night or during naps.

Use a remote control for TV and VCR. (See page 28, item 19)

7. Lack of a nightlight (See page 24, item 7)

Place at least two nightlights in the bedroom to illuminate the room at night.

Add additional nightlights along the hall or path to the bathroom. Also add one nightlight in the bathroom.

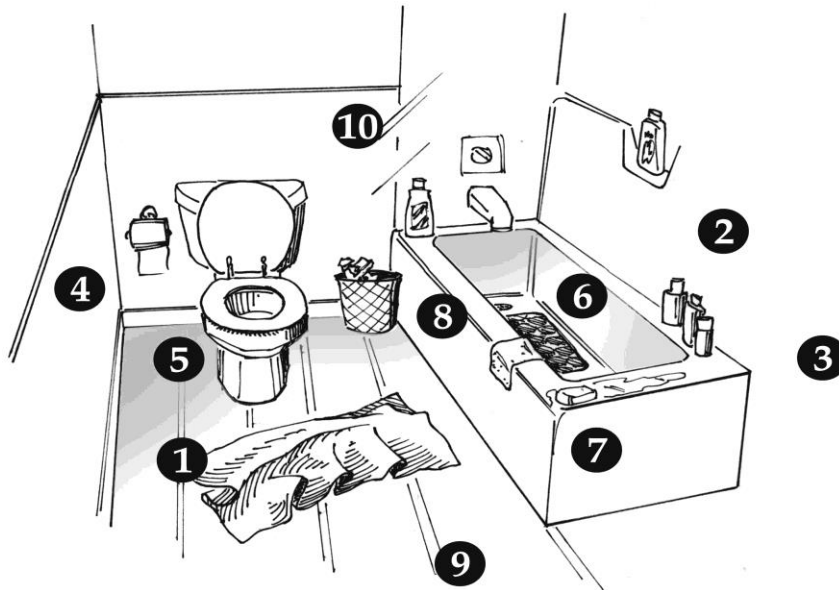
8. Arrangement that causes difficulty to reach commonly used items such as a TV remote, medications, lamp, glasses, magnifier, etc. at night

Place these items on your bedside table. If you don't have a table, you may put a rolling cart or shelving unit next to the bed.

9. Lack of a device to help get in and out the bed (See page 29, item 20)

Purchase a half bedrail or a bed cane that can slide between mattress and box spring.

BATHROOM



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

- | | |
|---|---|
| _____ 1. Presence of unsafe bath rugs | _____ 6. Slippery tub (lack of bath mat, etc) |
| _____ 2. Lack of grab bars in the tub | _____ 7. Claw foot/tub high to get into |
| _____ 3. Lack of grab bars in the shower area | _____ 8. Lack of bath chair in shower area |
| _____ 4. Lack of grab bars near the toilet | _____ 9. Clutter |
| _____ 5. Toilet is too high or low | _____ 10. Incorrect placement of grab bars |

Other _____

Total number of problems

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

Solutions for the Problems in Bathroom

1. Presence of unsafe bath rugs.

Use a bath rug with non-skid bottom.

2. Lack of grab bars in the tub (See page 29, item 21)

Add a bath grab bar on the wall or a clamp-on grab bar to the tub.

3. Lack of grab bars in the shower area

Add grab bars to the wall near the shower and on the wall where the bath faucets are.

4. Lack of grab bars near the toilet (See page 29, item 22)

Add a grab bar next to the toilet wall or toilet safety grab bars that attach at the toilet seat screws.

5. Toilet is too high or too low (See page 30, item 23)

Add a raised toilet seat for seats that are too low.
Consider a lower profile toilet if it is too high.

6. Slippery tub (lack of bath mat, etc.) (See page 30, item 24)

Add a rubber bath mat or adhesive non-skid decals to the bottom of the tub.

7. Claw foot or other type of tub that is too high to get into easily

Add a tub transfer bench to slide into the tub area or replace with a lower tub.

8. Lack of bath chair in the tub or shower area or tub transfer bench

Add a bath chair along with grab bars to the tub or shower area. A tub transfer bench is helpful if you have difficulty stepping into the tub area, because you can sit and slide over into the tub area.

9. Clutter

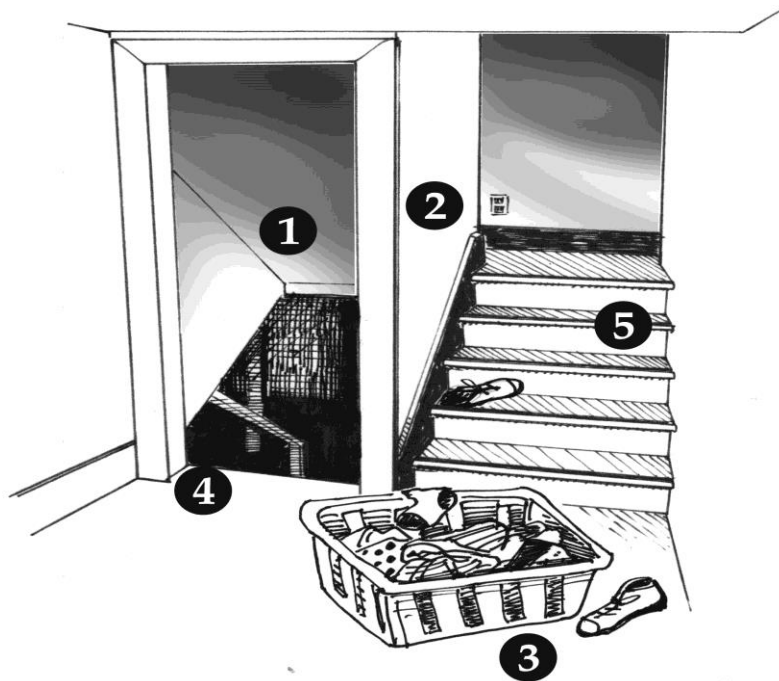
Remove clutter from all floor areas to drawers or closets. Inexpensive plastic cabinets or rolling units can be purchased to store bath items.

10. Incorrect placement of grab bars

If permanently installed, hire a qualified professional to change the grab bars to the correct location and angle.

*** See pages 30-31, items 25 & 26 and page 33, item 31**

STAIRCASES



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

_____ 1. Poor or lack of lighting

_____ 4. Steps too steep

_____ 2. Lack of railings

_____ 5. Slippery steps without tread/ carpet

_____ 3. Clutter

Other _____

Total number of problems _____

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page.

Solutions for the Problems in Staircases

1. Lack of or poor lighting (See page 32, item 30)

Increase wattage to allowable limits in lights.
Add additional overhead or wall lighting.

2. Lack of railings (See page 31, items 27 & 28)

Add at least one railing the entire length of the wall, ideally one on each side.

3. Clutter

Eliminate clutter on floors by removing and/or organizing items in areas near the stairs.

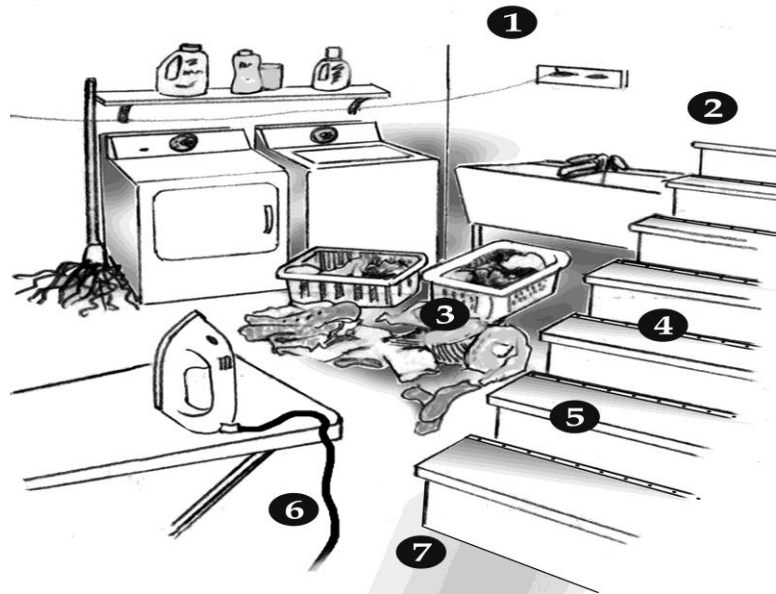
4. Steps too steep

Use railings for stability.
Walk slowly up and down stairs with lights on.
Have others carry heavy or large items up or down the stairs.
Reduce daily use of stairs to reduce risk of falls.

5. Slippery steps without tread or carpet or luminous light (See page 32, items 29 and 30)

Add adhesive stair treads or carpet runner.

LAUNDRY ROOM/BASEMENT



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. Poor or lack of lighting | _____ 5. Slippery steps without carpet / luminous light |
| _____ 2. Lack of railings | _____ 6. Presence of cords across the floor |
| _____ 3. Clutter | _____ 7. Same colored floor at bottom of stairs |
| _____ 4. Steps too steep | |

Other _____

Total number of problems _____

* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

Solutions for the Problems in Laundry Room

1. Poor or lack of lighting

Increase wattage to allowable limits in lights.
Add additional overhead or wall lighting.

2. Lack of railings

Add at least one railing the entire length of the wall, ideally one on each side.

3. Clutter

Eliminate clutter on floors by removing and/or organizing items in areas near the stairs.

4. Steps too steep

Use railings for stability.
Walk slowly up and down stairs with lights on.
Have others carry heavy or large items up or down the stairs.
Reduce daily use of stairs to reduce risk of falls.

5. Slippery steps without tread or carpet or luminous light (See page 32, item 30)

Add adhesive stair treads or carpet runner.

6. Presence of cords across the floor (See page 25 item 9)

Run your cords behind furnishings. Use extension cords to accomplish this.
Rearrange items that must be plugged in to areas near an outlet.

7. Same colored floor at bottom of stairs

Have the bottom of the stairs painted a different color so that you are aware of the last step.

ASSISTIVE DEVICES AND HELPFUL PRODUCTS TO PREVENT FALLS

Disclaimer

The products listed in this section are currently available in the market. We selected these types of products based on our experience and public reviews.

For further information, contact product's manufacturer and distributors. The price ranges listed are as of January, 2013 and are subjected change. For installation of grab bars, railings, and other products contact qualified professionals for installation. The number before the products (such as 1. for Vinyl railings) coincides with that indicated in the Home Safety Checklist and Solutions section as well as in Picture Credits. (Pages 31-32)

Entrance to Front and Back



1. Vinyl railing

Hand railings on both sides of the stairs will provide support for safely climbing and descending the stairs. Vinyl railings have advantages over wooden or metallic railings in terms of durability, maintenance costs, corrosion, resistance to mold, and decay.

Price range: Approx. \$68 for 36in X 4ft section

Approx. \$210 for 42in X 8ft section



2. Rubber threshold ramp

Threshold ramps can prevent stumbling and also provide accessibility to the users of a wheelchair or scooter. Rubber threshold ramps have advantages over metallic or wooden ramps in terms of traction, and shock absorption. It can be trimmed to custom fit various doorways. It is available in various sizes. (Note: Threshold ramps may be needed for both sides of a threshold)

Price range: Approx. \$90 for 42" (W) X 24" (L) X 1.5(H)

Approx. \$150 for 42" (W) X 24" (L) X 2.5(H)



3. Motion sensing security lamp

Lights with motion sensors can detect movement within a specified range and then illuminate. The motion sensing security lamp shown in the picture has a manual override feature so that the light turns on in the dark and turns itself off during the day instead of just when there is motion.

Price range: \$35 - \$70



4. Suitcase/Fold ramp

Suitcase or fold ramps are easy to carry and are used to bridge the gap over steps, curbs, and raised landings. To get in and out of mini vans with an end or side entrance, a fold aluminum ramp can be used. This fold aluminum ramp with a non-skid surface shown in the picture has several advantages over wooden and single-piece design ramps because it is corrosion and rust free, has a high traction surface with side rails, and a foldable design for easy transportation.

Price range: \$115 for 2ft ramp
\$279 for 6ft ramp



5. Cane ice tip

An ice tip is easily attached to most canes and crutches to provide good grip on an icy surface to prevent falls. The key feature of this attachment shown in the picture is that it has five prongs to provide greater grip than attachments with one prong, and it can be used with any type of cane.

Price range: \$6 - \$29

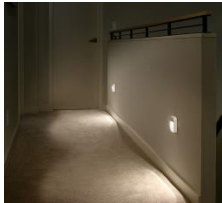


6. Outdoor grab bar

A grab bar at an entrance provides support and makes it safer and easier to open an entrance door. The key feature of this plastic grab bar shown in the picture is that it is rust proof and in winter, will not get as cold as a metal grab bar. Weight capacity of a recommended grab bar in general is 250 pounds and above.

Price range: \$15 - \$53

Hallway and Living Room



7. Motion sensing LED light

Using automatic LED lights is an efficient way to illuminate dark hallways to prevent falls. The motion sensors activate the light whenever movement is detected, and the auto shut-off feature turns the light off when there is no movement for a preset duration of time. The light in the picture does not require wiring for the installation, and the built-in photocell activates light in a low-glow mode in darkness, thus saving on battery life.

Price range: \$8 - \$40



8. Rug pad and double sided carpet tape

Rug pads can prevent the mats and rugs from skidding over the floor and provides cushioning underfoot. Various pads differ in their dimensions, color, and material. Carpet tape can also be used alone or in combination with a rug pad. The key feature of this rug pad is that it is made from eco-friendly materials.

Price range: \$7 - \$149



9. Single-piece cable cover

Cable covers keep the wires and cords off the floor and eliminate the risk of falls by getting tangled in them. Cable covers, such as the one shown in the picture, are easy to install because of their single-piece design and self-adhesive backing. They can also be painted to match the color of the interior.

Price range: \$12 - \$34



10. Furniture risers

Risers elevate the height of the bed, chairs, or table if they are too low. They also create considerable space under the bed for storage. The key feature of this furniture leg riser is that it is made of durable polycarbonate with an interlocking design for safe stacking, and it can fit most leg types including castors. The usual weight carrying capacity of a single riser is 600 lbs. per leg.

Price range: \$7 - \$49



11. Standing cane with tray feature

A standing cane provides safety and balance while getting in or out of a chair. There are several key features of this standing cane such as a fully adjustable height and length, and it features a handy multi-use swivel laptop/TV tray with cup holder and utensil compartment.

Price range: \$130 - \$180

Kitchen



12. Three step ladder

A 3-step ladder with a wide platform top is helpful to reach shelves. The ladder shown in the picture has several key features such as a large standing platform for stable and secure use, thin design for saving space, a convenient hand grip with non-skid steps, and non-marring feet for secure footing on the ladder.

Price range: \$28 - \$153



13. Non-slip socks/Safe shoes

Well fit canvas shoes or athletic shoes are recommended. Shoes with more than 1.5 inch heels may cause falls. If shoes are not preferred inside the home then wearing non-slip socks can diminish the risk of falling on bathroom, kitchen, wood and other slippery floors. The key feature of this non-slip sock is that it has skid resistant treads. Price range: \$2 - \$19 for non-slip socks

\$30 - \$60 for canvas shoes

\$30 - \$70 for athletic shoes



14. Lazy Susan

Lazy Susans can be used to save space and organize items in the kitchen. There are many shapes of Lazy Susans such as full circle, kidney shaped, and d-shaped. They can be a single

tray or multi-tier shelves. They can be free standing on a tabletop or installed in a kitchen cabinet. When installing in a cabinet, there should be appropriate clearance from the hinge and the door.

Price range: \$8 - \$44 for single turntable
\$50 - \$300 for 2 tier shelf



15. Hallway security gate

Security gates of different shapes and sizes are available to keep children and pets away from the kitchen, or other restricted areas of the house. Some of the gates swing open in both directions with easy, one hand operation. Some of the gates are tall (39.4 inches) and can expand up to 63.5 inches (Note: When the door is open, there is still a portion of the gate on the bottom that remains in the way. Be careful while stepping over the remaining part of the gate.)

Price range: \$55 - \$124

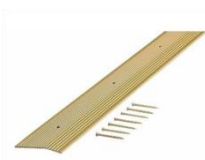


16. Programmable stove shutdown device

Automatic stove control devices turn off the stove if a person leaves the kitchen unattended and forgets to come back. The key feature of the device in the picture is that it automatically turns the stove off when someone is not present in the kitchen. It has a motion sensor to detect the presence of an individual in kitchen. (Note: Different models available for either 3 or 4 prong stoves).

Price range: \$296 - \$360

Bedroom



17. Carpet trim

Carpet trims are available in different colors and materials such as metal, rubber, wood or plastic. They prevent the carpet edges from fraying and smooth the transition between a floor and a carpet and vice versa. The product shown in the picture has a fluted design for better traction and predrilled holes for easy installation.

Price range: \$4 - \$106 for approximate 2 inches X 72 Inches



18. DECT 6.0 cordless phone

Some of the latest cordless phones offer Digital Enhanced Cordless Telecommunications (DECT) 6.0 technology that provides clearer and louder voice output that can benefit individuals with mild to moderate hearing loss. The key features of this phone are large, high contrast and easy to press numbers, an intercom between handsets, sound amplification up to 30 decibels, digital answering machine, and long battery life. Price range: \$37 - \$192



19. Big button remote control

Remote controls for TVs and VCRs with a small number of buttons are simple to use. The key features of this remote control is that it only has 6 large lighted buttons for the most basic functions and is easy to hold in your hand. Price range: \$14 - \$44



20. Bedside cane/bed rail

Bed side canes/bed rails provide assistance for getting in and out of bed. A long bed rail is not **recommended because it can cause injuries**. The device shown in the picture has the following features: an ergonomic non-slip handle, adjustable height, foldable design for easy storage and travel, an organizing pouch for essential items such as a remote control or a cordless phone, a collapsible design to get it out of the way when required, and a safety strap for securing the base of the cane to the bed.

Price range: \$40 - \$160

Bathroom



21. Bathtub grab bar

Some grab bars can be mounted on the edge of the bath tub by a clamping mechanism. The turning knob located on the outside of the clamping mechanism is used to secure the grab bar. The key feature of this grab bar is that it is made of plastic and stainless steel. (Note: Do not use with fiberglass bathtubs because it can damage the fiberglass).

Price range: \$22 - \$171



22. Right angled grab bar

Right angled grab bars are used both horizontally and vertically. These grab bars offer a left hand or right hand orientation depending upon the handedness of the user and the placement of the bath tub, shower, or toilet. The grab bar shown in the picture is ADA standards compatible

with a non-slip surface. (Note: ADA guidelines say that the clearance between the grab bar and the wall should not be more than 1½ inches).

Price range: \$81 - \$128



23. Raised toilet seat

Raised toilet seats assist people with bending and seating difficulties and in performing toilet transfers with ease. The device shown in the picture has an extra wide toilet seat for bariatric patients, height adjustable aluminum legs, padded armrests, and a 600 pound weight capacity.

Price range: \$13 - \$70 for raised toilet seat without arms

\$103 for raised toilet seat with arms

\$200 for bariatric raised toilet seat with arms



24. Bath mat

Bath mats will reduce the risk of slipping on a wet bath tub surface. The key features of this mat are the use of antimicrobial materials to prevent any mold and mildew, machine washable, and suction cups on the bottom. (Note: The mat should be removed from the tub, rinsed, and allowed to air dry after each use).

Price range: \$6 - \$69



25. Water alarm with temperature monitor

Water alarm devices send an audible alarm when the water reaches the base of the unit, to prevent the overflow of water. The key features of the device are: having both a water alarm and temperature monitor within one unit and temperature display on the LCD screen that alerts the user if the water is too hot.

Price range: \$16 - \$17



26. Walk in bathtub

Walk-in bathtubs offer a swing-in door that allows the user to walk in and out of the bathtub with ease. Some of the walk-in bathtubs also have a seating feature. The swing-in door can either be on the left or right side of the bathtub depending on the orientation of the bathroom. The bathtub shown in the picture has a non-slip bottom surface with arm support inside the tub, and an optional whirlpool system. (Note: Be careful of the elevated step height before getting in or out of the bathtub).

Price range: \$1570 - \$6548

Staircases and Laundry Room/ Basement



27. Stairs grab bar

Specially designed grab bars can be installed on the walls alongside the stairs. The key feature of the grab bar shown is that its curved design allows for continuous support around the corner of the stairs.

Price range: \$57 - \$166



28. Stair railing with a good grip

Stair railings are available in a wide variety of designs, styles and materials. They provide support while climbing or descending the stairs inside the home. They can be made of wood, iron, steel, or vinyl. The design that allows for a good grip, as shown in the picture is highly recommended instead of handrails that are too fat or wide to comfortably grip.

Price range: \$150 - \$200 for 8 foot section

\$300 - \$360 for 10 foot section



29. Stair treads

Stair treads prevent accidental slips while ascending or descending the stairs. They are available in various colors and shapes. The stair treads shown in the picture have skid-resistant rubber backing. These stair treads attach to the surface of the stairs by “hook-and-loop” fastening strips. The “hook” strip is sewn into the stair tread and the “loop” strip is glued to the stairs. These strips are used to attach and detach the stair tread when needed.

Price range: \$56 - \$387 for a pack of 12 - 13 pieces.



30. Stairs LED lighting kit

When installed on stairs, the motion activated LED lights illuminate the areas that need additional lighting. The light shown in the picture is battery powered and comes with universal (interchangeable) joints that are easy to install.

Price range: \$50 - \$127

Personal Emergency Response System and Fall Detecting Device



31. Fall detection system

Personal emergency response systems (PERS) detect falls and alert the caregivers, emergency response call center, or 911 for a monthly fee. These devices use internet or phone lines to send out the alert. The key features of this device are as follows: Tracking the daily activities of a user on a website, automatic fall detection and alert message to family members, automatic reminders if not worn, can be used with a compatible cell phone to send alert and fall location.

Price range: \$100 - \$400

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOME HAZARDS

Transfer all the total scores of each room/ area from pages 4-21 to the appropriate boxes and add all the scores to get a grand total. Three blocks for each area are provided for you to keep records of your assessments and improvements for three occasions.

Date	_____	_____	_____
Entrance to Front Door and Front Yard	_____	_____	_____
Entrance to Back/Side Door	_____	_____	_____
Hallway or Foyer	_____	_____	_____
Living Room	_____	_____	_____
Kitchen	_____	_____	_____
Bedroom	_____	_____	_____
Bathroom	_____	_____	_____
Staircases	_____	_____	_____
Laundry Room/Basement	_____	_____	_____
Grand Total	_____	_____	_____

To fix problems at home, you can contact the listed home modification service providers found on pages 35 and 36. To obtain free services for home modification, refer to pages 37 and 38. To record your home modification improvement use action log on page 46 and 47.

PICTURE CREDITS FOR ASSISTIVE DEVICES AND HELPFUL PRODUCTS

1. Vinyl and resin railing: <http://www.thevinyloutlet.com/railgallery.html>
2. Rubber threshold ramp: <http://www.allegromedical.com/wheelchair-accessories-c545/ez-access-rubber-threshold-ramp-with-beveled-sides-p555797.html>
3. Motion sensing security lamp: http://www.homedepot.com/h_d1/N-25ecodZ5yc1v/R-100125618/h_d2/ProductDisplay?catalogId=10053&langId=-1&keyword=motion+light&storeId=10051&superSkuld=202573742#.UO2Hqm9EHuM
4. Suitcase ramp for mobility devices: <http://www.allegromedical.com/travel-aids-c6857/ez-access-suitcase-ramps-advantage-series-2-3-4-5-and-6-ft-lengths-p555734.html>
5. Cane icetip: http://www.amazon.com/Duro-Med-Prong-Grip-Crutch-Attachment/dp/B0009STN2E/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1357744185&sr=8-2&keywords=cane+ice+tip
6. Outdoor grab bar: <http://www.amazon.com/Prima-Grab-Bar-Outdoor-Green/dp/B0051BFLKC>
7. Motion sensing LED light: <http://www.coolstuffcheap.com/mb723.html>
8. Rug pad: http://www.walmart.com/ip/Eco-Grip-Rug-Saver-Pad/10963059?sourceid=1500000000000003260370&ci_src=14110944&ci_sku=10963059
9. Single-piece cable cover: http://www.homedepot.com/h_d1/N-25ecodZ5yc1v/R-202331941/h_d2/ProductDisplay?catalogId=10053&langId=-1&keyword=single+piece+cable+cover&storeId=10051#.UO2Jfm9EHuM
10. Furniture Risers: http://www.amazon.com/Clear-Bed-Risers-Set/dp/B000L3QBEK/ref=pd_cp_e_0
11. Standing cane with tray feature: http://www.amazon.com/Standers-2052-Able-Tray/dp/B0026IBSUA/ref=pd_sim_sbs_hpc_2
12. Three step ladder: http://www.amazon.com/Werner-StepRight-225-Pound-Rating-3-foot/dp/B000IZU3H2/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1357744754&sr=8-3&keywords=three+step+ladder+rubbermaid
13. Non-slip Socks: <http://www.silverts.com/show.cfm/image/19140-non-skidslip-sockshospital-socks/pink>
14. Lazy Susan: http://www.amazon.com/Rev-A-Shelf-3072-18-11-52-Value-Circle-Susan/dp/B002QBW4C8/ref=lp_3744181
15. Tall security gate: [Courtesy of Karen Barnes](#)
16. Programmable stove shutdown device: <http://www.thiscaringhome.org/products/auto-stove-shut-off.php>
17. Carpet trim: http://www.homedepot.com/Flooring-Carpet-Carpet-Tile-Carpet-Tools-Accessories/h_d1/N-5yc1vZbng9/R-100198103/h_d2/ProductDisplay?catalogId=10053&langId=-1&storeId=10051#.UO2NR29EEwA

18. DECT 6.0 cordless phone: <http://shop.clarityproducts.com/products/clarity/d703/?cat=amplified-cordless-phones>
19. Big button remote control: <http://www.amazon.com/Tek-Pal-Button-Remote-Control/dp/B0016RNSHS>
20. Bedside cane: http://www.amazon.com/Standers-2041-BedCane/dp/B000GUHG6K/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=hpc&qid=1294338253&sr=8-1-catcorr
21. Bathtub grab bar: http://www.amazon.com/Drive-Adjustable-Clamp--Tub-Rail/dp/B001BLT196/ref=sr_1_4?ie=UTF8&qid=1294349836&sr=8-4
22. Right angled grab bar: <http://www.shopinpro.com/store/product/tabid/60/p-182-l-shaped-grab-bar.aspx?catid=161>
23. Raised toilet seat: http://www.amazon.com/Tall-Ette-725881000-Extra-Elevated-Toilet/dp/B000AYG7ZS/ref=sr_1_8?s=hpc&ie=UTF8&qid=1294348063&sr=1-8
24. Bath mat: http://www.amazon.com/Rubbermaid-18x36-Brown-Bath-Mat/dp/B000VBC1SC/ref=cm_cr_pr_product_top
25. Water alarm with temperature monitor: <http://www.amazon.com/Starfish-Warter-Alarm-Temperature-Monitor/dp/B000V22BKY>
26. Walk-in bathtub: <http://www.ameriglide.com/item/AmeriGlide-Sanctuary-Full.html>
27. Stairs grab bar: <http://www.grabbarspecialists.com/products.php?cat=591>
28. Stair railing with a good grip: <http://www.vandykes.com/victorian-wooden-handrail/p/208415/>
29. Stair treads: http://www.amazon.com/12-Attachable-Carpet-Stair-Treads/dp/B0040UIP0I/ref=pd_sbs_misc_15
30. Stairs LED lighting kit: <http://ecobatteries.net/Motion-Sensor-Stair-and-Hallway-LED/M/B0020MLFQO.htm>
31. Fall detection system: <http://www.ubergizmo.com/2010/01/wellcore-stylish-mobile-personal-emergency-response-system/>

Tips for Fall Prevention

1. Provide seating at the entrance to the home, so that a person can rest or put down things in their hand.
2. Small icicles that are within easy reach should be removed so that entry to and exit from the home are safe. Do not try to remove bigger and dangerous icicles by yourself. Instead have them removed by someone else.
3. Always wear shoes that fit properly and have nonskid soles with Velcro fasteners instead of laces.
4. Install light switches at the top and bottom of all stairs.
5. Use lights with high wattage bulbs to see more clearly.
6. Installation of automatic lighting in areas of frequent activity can aid in safer night activity.
7. Keep emergency flashlights near the bed to help locate the light switches and provide illumination in case of a power outage.
8. When climbing or descending stairs, you should never be in a hurry to pick up a phone. It can wait!
9. Remember the number of stairs and count each step when climbing or descending.
10. While carrying things, always keep one hand empty so that it is possible to grab on to something in case support is needed.
11. Electrical and phone cords should be removed from walkways to reduce the risk of falls.
12. Regularly used items in the kitchen should be placed where they are easily accessible.
13. When using a ladder, always keep three points of contact with the ladder, that is two feet and one hand.
14. The use of a handheld shower makes it safer and easier to take a shower.
15. The size and contents of a laundry basket should not be too heavy. Use a small basket for comfortable use.
16. For emergency purposes there should be a phone in the bathroom, attic, and laundry room.
17. For emergency purposes, keep a bag with a 3-day supply of water and food, contact list, radio, flashlight, first aid, medications, etc. placed near the exit of the house.

HOME IMPROVEMENT CENTERS AND DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT PROVIDERS IN Herkimer County. The following durable medical equipment providers in Herkimer County were selected from the medical suppliers listing in the yellow pages.

HOME IMPROVEMENT CENTERS

NAME/ADDRESS	CONTACT
<u>Lowe's</u> 53 State Route 5 Herkimer, NY 13350	PHONE: 315-867-5520 www.lowes.com
<u>Lowe's</u> 4699 Middle Settlement Rd. New Hartford, NY 13413	PHONE: 315-351-4241 www.lowes.com
<u>Home Depot</u> 545 French Rd. New Hartford, NY 13413	PHONE: 315-797-5300 www.homedepot.com
<u>Ilion Hardware</u> 39 W. Clark St. Ilion , NY 13357	PHONE: 315-894-5274
<u>Ilion Lumber Company</u> 161 W. Main St. Ilion, NY 13357	PHONE: 315-895-7437
<u>Collis True Value</u> 104 N. Main St. Herkimer, NY 13350	PHONE: 315-866-0826
<u>Jay-K Cabinet</u> 8448 Seneca Tpke. New Hartford, NY 13413	PHONE: 315-735-4665 FAX: 315-735-0425 www.jay-k.com
<u>Zipp Hardware</u> 73 N. Main St. Dolgeville, NY 13329	PHONE: 315-429-9761

DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT PROVIDERS

<p><u>TRAID Center</u> Upstate Cerebral Palsy 10708 N. Gage Road Barneveld, NY 13304</p>	<p>315-896-2654 x287(voice/TTY) 315-292-1968 www.upstatecp.org</p>
<p><u>Mohawk Hospital Equipment Inc.</u> 335 Columbia St. Utica, NY 13502</p>	<p>PHONE: 315-797-0570 www.mohawkmedicalmall.com 1-800-962-5660</p>
<p><u>Mohawk Valley Home Care Inc.</u> 2521 Sunset Ave. Utica, NY 13502</p>	<p>PHONE: 315-732-4663</p>
<p><u>Lincare</u> 1307 Champlin Ave. Utica, NY 13502</p>	<p>PHONE: 315-793-8341</p>
<p><u>St. Regis Medical Equipment</u> 233 Elizabeth St. Utica, NY 13501</p>	<p>PHONE: 315-732-7040</p>
<p><u>Home and Hospital</u> 1 New Hartford Shopping Center New Hartford, NY 13413</p>	<p>PHONE: 315-724-6767</p>
<p><u>Upstate Homecare</u> 7506 State Route 5 Clinton, NY 13323</p>	<p>PHONE: 315-853-1280</p>

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HOME MODIFICATION SERVICE PROVIDERS IN HERKIMER COUNTY

The following service providers were selected from among those who responded to our request to reply to create this list. They are insured, have experience in residential home modification to prevent falls, and are willing to do a job under \$1,000. They have completed the workshop offered by us regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act and issues related to home modifications for fall prevention.

NAME/ADDRESS	CONTACT
<u>Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1100 Miller St. Utica 13501 • 61 West St. Ilion 13357 • 9882 River Rd. Utica 13502 	PHONE: 315-624-9930

LEGAL SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY, DISABLED OR DISADVANTAGED (LSED)

NAME/ADDRESS	CONTACT
<u>Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York</u> 225 Genesee St. 2 nd Floor Utica, NY 13501	PHONE: 315-793-7000 FAX: 315-732-3202 Toll Free: 877-203-1062 www.lasmny.org

ORGANIZATIONS THAT PROVIDE FREE SERVICES

NAME/ADDRESS	CONTACT
<p><u>HC Office for the Aging</u> County Office Building, Suite 1101 109 Mary St. Herkimer, NY 13350</p>	<p>PHONE: 315-867-1121 FAX: 315-867-1448 Email: hcofa@herkimercounty.org www.herkimercounty.org Contact: Kathy Fox, Director</p>
<p><u>Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CABVI)</u> 501 Kent St. Utica, NY 13501</p>	<p>PHONE: 315-797-2233 FAX: 315-797-2250 Contact: Kim Hall</p>
<p><u>Catholic Charities of Herkimer County</u> 61 West St. Ilion, NY 13357</p>	<p>PHONE: 315-894-9917 FAX: 315-894-6313 www.ccherkimercounty.org</p>
<p><u>Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL)</u> 409 Columbia St. PO Box 210 Utica, NY 13503</p>	<p>PHONE: 315-797-4642 FAX: 315-797-4747 www.rcil.com</p>
<p><u>Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL)</u> 401 E. German St. Herkimer, NY 13350</p>	<p>PHONE: 315-866-7245 FAX: 315-866-7280 www.rcil.com</p>
<p><u>Herkimer Lions Club</u> PO Box 171 Herkimer, NY 13350</p>	<p>PHONE: 315-866-2011</p>

American Red Cross 235 N. Prospect St. Herkimer, NY 13350	PHONE: 315-866-2890
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LOAN CLOSETS- A loan closet is a place where you can borrow medical equipment such as; beds, walkers, canes, crutches, bed pans, urinals, wheelchairs, commodes, shower benches, etc...*(free of charge)*.

CITY/TOWN	ADDRESS	CONTACT
Herkimer	VFW Post #4915 131 Mohawk St. Herkimer, NY 13350	PHONE: 315-866-9353 (2PM-9PM)
Little Falls	American Legion Post #31 100 W. Main St. Little Falls, NY 13365	PHONE: 315-823-9862 (after 10am)
Richfield Springs	Veteran's Club 13 Lake St. Richfield Springs, NY 13439	PHONE: 315-858-9924 (after 9am)
Frankfort	VFW Wm Hempstead Post #502 4272 Acme Rd. Frankfort, NY 13340	PHONE: 315-895-7775 Contact: Claudette Williams
Ilion	American Legion Auxiliary #920 59 E. Clark St. Ilion, NY 13357	PHONE: 315-894-8128 (after 3pm)
Old Forge	Town of Webb Health Center South Shore Rd. Old Forge, NY 13420	PHONE: 315-369-6619

INSTRUCTION FOR HOME MODIFICATIONS TO PREVENT FALLS: ADA GUIDELINES

By Dean Carroll OTR/L

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) established guidelines for wheelchair users and individuals with disabilities in the community. ADA guidelines are designed to meet the needs of the majority of users, no matter what their ability or disability level is. Although it does not specially apply to residential homes, it is important to keep the ADA guidelines in mind when modifying homes for an individual's need.

ADA guidelines have already been proven to be effective for most people. Many homes in Erie County were built prior to 1976 and before the current, more standardized building codes. Those homes were not built for wheelchair use, walker access, and older adults. For these homes, home modification may be necessary using ADA guidelines.

Most commonly needed modifications are:

- bathroom grab bars near the toilet and in the shower or the tub;
- railings on both sides of a stairway, if possible;
- widening of door frames for greater access to common areas such as bathrooms kitchens, and bedrooms; and
- repair and removal of structural barriers such as inadequate flooring, uneven transitions between flooring surface, and other non-structural barriers such as furniture.

Structural issues and barriers to meeting ADA guidelines are:

- limited floor space,
- limited wall space for installing grab bars,
- wall studs that are generally 16 inches on center,
- unknown barriers within walls, and
- financial limitations.

Common devices and features for consideration are:

- smooth versus textured grab bars,
- one stair railing versus two stair railings,
- height of grab bars in comparison to the user, and
- minimum width of door frames for walker and wheelchair access.

To see full ADA Standards for Accessible Design visit <http://www.ada.gov/adastd94.pdf>

**ACTION LOG:
ACTION TAKEN TO PREVENT FALLS AT MY HOME**

The Problem/Hazard:	I will do:	I have done: (mm/dd/yyyy)	Resources used/Cost
<u>1.</u>			
<u>2.</u>			
<u>3.</u>			
<u>4.</u>			
<u>5.</u>			
<u>6.</u>			
<u>7.</u>			

**ACTION LOG:
ACTION TAKEN TO PREVENT FALLS AT MY HOME**

The Problem/Hazard:	I will do:	I have done: (mm/dd/yyyy)	Reduces used/cost
<u>8.</u>			
<u>9.</u>			
<u>10.</u>			
<u>11.</u>			
<u>12.</u>			
<u>13.</u>			
<u>14.</u>			

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For download of this material, visit
www.agingresearch/buffalo.edu

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Falls Prevention

Step Up to Stop Falls

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