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## Home Safety Checklists

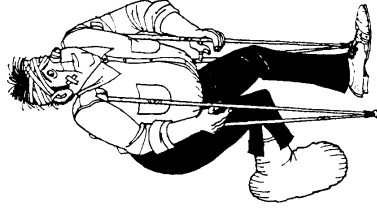
Fall Prevention Project, Pima Council on Aging  
Tucson, AZ

**Halls, Stairs, Entrances**

- YES NO
- Can you clearly see the outline of each step as you go both up and down? (Each step can be marked with brightly colored adhesive tape strips. Don't use shag carpets, deep-piled carpets or carpets with busy patterns on stairs.)
  - Are there lights and light switches at both the top and bottom of the stairs?
  - Do all stairways have securely-fixed handrails on both sides? (Rails should extend beyond the top and bottom steps, and the ends should turn in.)
  - Does your hand wrap easily and completely around the rail? (Rails should be round and anchored one to two inches away from walls.)
  - Are all carpets and runners well fastened down?
  - Do stairs have even surfaces (no metal strips or rubber mats to trip you up)?
  - Are stairs kept free of clutter?
  - Are your outdoor stairs and walkways free from cracks, dips, and holes?

**If you do fall  
...call 9-1-1!**

-  **Call for help.** Keep a telephone, along with emergency phone numbers, on a low table. It will be easier to reach if you fall and can't get up.
-  **Keep warm.** While you are waiting for help, cover up with a blanket, a coat, or even a rug if that's all you can reach.
-  **See a doctor.** Even if you don't think you're hurt, always see a doctor after a fall - especially if you don't know why you fell. Falling can often be a sign of illness or of problems with the medicine you're using.



Look inside for a fall prevention checklist.  
**Don't let a FALL get you down.**

**Most FALLS can be prevented**

As you grow older, the consequences of a fall become more serious. Broken bones often result and may lead to lifelong disability. Even when you fall and don't get hurt, the fear of falling again can limit the way you live your life.

Please use this fall prevention checklist and then make a "To Do" list. If you need help with some changes, talk to a family member, friend, neighbor, senior organization, or church.

Fall Prevention Project, Pima Council on Aging  
Tucson, AZ — Continued

# FALL Prevention Checklist

Use this checklist to find and correct the hazards that could trip you up. Each "no" answer indicates a need for change in your home or your habits.

## Getting Around

- YES NO
- Do you take time to regain your balance when you sit up after lying down, or stand up after sitting?
  - Do you wear supportive, rubber-soled, low-heeled shoes? Do your slippers fit well and have soles that provide traction? (Avoid walking in stocking feet.)
  - If you feel dizzy from time to time, do you use a cane, walking stick, or walker?
  - Do you watch for slippery pavement when walking outdoors and entering/leaving cars and buses?
  - Are you alert to unexpected hazards in your path, such as out-of-place furniture, toys, and pets?
  - Do you avoid walking on stairs or uneven surfaces in poorly-lit public places such as theaters?
  - When you carry bulky packages, do you make sure they don't block your view?

- YES NO
- Do you divide large loads into smaller loads, leaving one hand free to grasp railings?
  - Do you avoid rushing to answer the phone or doorbell?
  - Do you avoid rushing to cross streets, especially in wet or icy weather?
  - Do you always use a step stool, never a chair, when you have to reach high places?
  - Do you know how to reduce your chances of being injured once you have started to fall?
  - If you live alone, do you make contact every day with a friend, relative, or neighbor? (If you were injured in a fall and couldn't make contact, would someone check up on you?)

## Living Areas

- YES NO
- Can you turn on a light without having to walk into a dark room?
  - Does your favorite chair have arm rests that are long enough to help you get up and sit down?
  - Are your chairs and tables stable enough to support your weight if you lean on them?
  - Are your small rugs and runners secured with carpet tape or non-skid backing?
  - Do you use non-skid wax, or no wax at all, on polished floors?
  - Are walkways kept clear of things that could trip you, such as cords, low furniture, and toys?

## Bedroom

- YES NO
- Do you keep a light or flashlight within easy reach of your bed?
  - Do you have a night light that lights your path to the bathroom?

## Bathroom

- YES NO
- Do the tub and shower have rubber mats, non-skid strips or non-skid surfaces?
  - Do you have a grab bar on the wall or side of the tub/shower? (If balance or weakness is a problem, you should use a bath seat.)
  - Is the floor safe? (If it's slippery or has loose rugs or tiles, it's risky.)
  - Can you get on and off the toilet easily? (If you can't, you should install a raised toilet seat and fix a grab rail into the wall next to the toilet. Or, install a grab rail that fastens onto the back of the toilet seat.)

## Kitchen

- YES NO
- Do you use a non-skid wax, no wax, or carpeting that is fastened down well on the floor?
  - If you insist on using floor mats, do you have a backing that grips?
  - Can you reach the things you use most often without using a step stool?
  - Is the lighting bright but not creating glare?

**Community and Home Injury Prevention Project for Seniors  
San Francisco Department of Public Health  
San Francisco, CA**

**Home Safety Checklist Summary**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Check the box that applies:

doesn't  
apply/  
don't

√ Living Room - Family Room

- |  | yes                      | no                       | know                     |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Can you turn on a light without having to walk into a dark room?                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Are lamp, extension or phone cords out of the flow of foot traffic in this room?                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Are passageways in this room free from objects and clutter (papers, furniture)?                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Are curtains and furniture at least 12 inches from baseboard or portable heaters?                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Do your carpets lie flat?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Do your small rugs and runners stay put (don't slide or roll up) when you push them with your foot? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

√ Kitchen

- |   |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 7. Are your stove controls easy to see and use?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Do you keep loose fitting clothing, towels, and curtains that may catch fire away from the burners and oven? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Can you reach regularly used items without climbing to reach them?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Do you have a step stool that is sturdy and in good repair?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

√ Bedrooms

- |   |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 11. Do you have a working smoke detector on the ceiling outside your bedroom door?            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Can you turn on a light without having to walk into a dark room?                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Do you have a lamp or light switch within easy reach of your bed?                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. Is a phone within easy reach of your bed?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. Is a light left on at night between your bed and the toilet?                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. Are the curtains and furniture at least 12 inches from your baseboard or portable heater? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

√ Bathroom

- |   |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 17. Does your shower or tub have a non-skid surface: mat, decals, or abrasive strips? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. Does the tub/shower have a sturdy grab-bar (not towel rack)?                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. Is your hot water temperature 120° or lower?                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. Does your floor have a non-slip surface or does the rug have a non-skid backing?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. Are you able to get off and on the toilet easily?                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Community and Home Injury Prevention Project for Seniors,  
San Francisco Department of Public Health  
San Francisco, CA — *Continued***

- |   | yes                      | no                       | doesn't<br>apply/<br>don't<br>know |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>√ Stairways</b>  |                          |                          |                                    |
| 22. Is there a light switch at both the top and bottom of inside stairs?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| 23. With the light on, can you clearly see the outline of each step as you go down the stairs?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| 24. Do all stairways have sturdy handrails on both sides?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| 25. Do handrails run the full length of the stairs, slightly beyond the steps?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| 26. Are all steps in good repair (not loose, broken, missing or worn in places)?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| 27. Are stair coverings (rugs, treads) in good repair, without holes and not loose, torn or worn?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| <b>√ Hallways and Passageways</b>   |                          |                          |                                    |
| 28. Do all small rugs or runners stay put (don't slide or roll up) when you push them with your foot?                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| 29. Do your carpets lie flat?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| 30. Are all lamp, extension and/or phone cords out of the flow of foot traffic?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| <b>√ Front and Back Entrances</b>   |                          |                          |                                    |
| 31. Do all entrances to your home have outdoor lights?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| 32. Are walkways to your entry free from cracks and holes?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| <b>√ Throughout Your House</b>  |                          |                          |                                    |
| 33. Do you have an emergency exit plan in case of fire?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| 34. Do you have emergency phone numbers listed by your phone?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>           |
| 35. Are there other hazards or unsafe areas in your home not mentioned in this checklist that you are concerned about? If so, what? _____ |                          |                          |                                    |

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**Making Your Home Safer**

What home safety changes do you want to make?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

CALL THE COMMUNITY AND HOME INJURY PREVENTION PROJECT FOR SENIORS (CHIPPS) FOR SAFETY ASSESSMENT INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES AT 554-3274. THIS PROGRAM IS SPONSORED BY THE OFFICE OF SENIOR HEALTH SERVICES AND THE BUREAU OF HEALTH PROMOTION AND EDUCATION, SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH.

**Pro Action Senior Wellness Program  
Bath, NY**



**HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST**

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>OK</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>SUGGESTION/ACTION</b>
<b>INTERIOR</b>			
<b>Floors</b>			
Small rugs are tacked down or slip- resistant.			
Flooring (rugs, tile, boards) in good repair.			
Cords are not stretched across pathways or under rugs.			
Door sills are low.			
Sleeping pets are out of pathways.			
Exits, halls, and pathways are kept clear.			
<b>Lighting</b>			
Exits, halls, and pathways are well lit.			
Lights can be turned on before going through a dark area.			
Night lights are used(hallways, bedroom, bath).			
A working flashlight in case of power outage.			
Stairways are well lit.			
There is a light or light switch within reach of the bed.			
<b>Phone</b>			
There is a working phone to call for emergency help.			
They are aware of Lifeline/Alert link.			
There is a phone by the bed.			
Emergency numbers are posted, and can be seen.			
<b>Stairs</b>			
Have secure handrails from top to bottom.			
Steps and their coverings are in good condition.			
Steps have non-skid surface.			
Steps are even to allow sure footing.			
Items are not stored on steps, even temporarily.			
Attic Stairs			
Cellar stairs			
<b>Bathroom</b>			
Bathtubs and showers equipped with non-skid rubber mats or surfaces.			
Bath tub and showers have at least one grab bar.			
A shower chair is used			
There is difficulty getting on and off the toilet			

**Pro Action Senior Wellness Program  
Bath, NY — *Continued***

Hazard	OK	NO	SUGGESTION/ACTION
<b>Kitchen</b>			
Everyday dishes and foods are placed on lower shelves so there's no need to climb.			
For reaching high shelves there is a sturdy step stool with a hand rail.			
<b>Bedroom</b>			
Bed is at the proper height.			
Furniture is arranged to prevent tripping.			
Pathways are kept clear.			
<b>EXTERIOR</b>			
Outside porch/exit light is working.			
Outside stairs are in good condition.			
Outside steps have handrails.			
A ramp is present, or needed.			
The ramp is in good repair.			
Steps have non-slip surface.			
Entrance area is in good condition.			
Side walks and steps free of debris and snow.			
Side walks/pathways in good condition.			
Clothes lines are high enough for pedestrians.			
<b>OTHER</b>			
Smoke detectors are present.			
Smoke detectors are checked twice a year using a cane or yardstick.			
A system is used to remember to take medications.			
Chair exercises are done at least 3 times per week.			
No problems rushing to bathroom to use the toilet.			
Alcohol consumption is kept to a minimum.			
They are able to prepare meals.			
Canes, walkers, wheelchairs are in good condition.			
Water temperature is at 120 degrees or less			
Windows and doors are airtight(weatherization)			







## **Educational Materials**

Home Secure, Jewish Family Services of Los Angeles  
Los Angeles, CA

## REDUCING YOUR RISK OF FALLING

### A WIDESPREAD PROBLEM

ONE THIRD TO ONE HALF OF THE POPULATION OVER AGE 65 EXPERIENCE FALLS

FIVE PERCENT OF FALLS LEAD TO FRACTURES

ADDITIONAL TEN PERCENT WILL SUSTAIN OTHER SERIOUS INJURIES

### CAUSES OF FALLS

#### INTERNAL RISK FACTORS

MEDICAL CONDITIONS  
DECREASED VISION  
MEDICATIONS  
DECREASED STRENGTH  
FOOT PROBLEMS

#### EXTERNAL RISK FACTORS

UNEVEN/SLIPPERY SURFACES  
POOR LIGHTING  
ACTIVITY LEVEL  
TIMING DEMANDS (I.E. CROSSING STREETS)

### REDUCING YOUR RISK

TAKE CARE OF MEDICAL PROBLEMS AS NEEDED

HAVE YOUR VISION CHECKED AND WEAR EYEGLASSES AS NEEDED

CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR REGARDING POSSIBLE MEDICATION

INTERACTION WHICH MAY AFFECT YOUR BALANCE

TAKE MEDICATION ONLY AS PRESCRIBED

EXERCISE

TAKE CARE OF YOUR FEET AND WEAR SUPPORTIVE, RUBBER SOLED SHOES

INSTALL PROPER LIGHTING THROUGHOUT YOUR HOME - USE

NIGHTLIGHTS

STAY ON PATHWAYS

REMOVE CLUTTER, UNSECURED SCATTER RUGS FROM WALKWAYS IN YOUR HOME

LET THE PHONE RING - USE A PORTABLE PHONE, \*69, OR ANSWERING MACHINE

USE A CANE, WALKER OR OTHER DEVICE IF INSTRUCTED TO DO SO

**Home Secure, Jewish Family Services of Los Angeles  
Los Angeles, CA — *Continued***

**SIMPLE STEPS TO REDUCE THE RISK OF FALLING**

**PROPER LIGHTING**

1. Always turn on lights before going into a room.
2. Replace any burned-out light bulbs immediately.
3. Night-lights are inexpensive and invaluable in contributing to visibility at night, especially in hallways, bathrooms and bedrooms.
4. Make sure indoor and outdoor walkways are properly lighted, especially at night.

**SECURE WALKWAYS**

1. Carpeting should be securely fastened down. Avoid throw rugs. Place non-skid backing on rugs and replace as needed.
2. Place bright, contrasting color tape on the top and bottom steps of stairways.
3. Keep walkways clear of miscellaneous or misplaced objects, especially cords from lights or telephones.
4. Don't take shortcuts off established walkways; they can be dangerous.
5. Be alert to pets and children who can move quickly and unexpectedly.
6. Clean up all spills immediately.

**BATHROOM SAFETY**

1. Install and use tightly fastened grab bars in the bathtub/shower and on the wall next to the tub/shower when possible.
2. Install non-slip strips or mats in bathtub/shower. Replace as necessary.
3. Grab bars or handrails can be installed by the toilet or use a raised toilet seat with arms.
4. Use a bath bench to eliminate need to stand in shower or sit on floor of tub if this is difficult for you.
5. Use a hand held shower to make bathing easier.

**Home Secure, Jewish Family Services of Los Angeles  
Los Angeles, CA — *Continued***

**RAILINGS**

1. Install hand rails on outside stair.
2. Install hand rails on inside stairs and check to make sure they are not loose.

**FOOTWEAR**

1. Wear footwear with soles and heels that provide good support and traction between your feet and the surface you walk on.
2. Avoid wearing on socks, smooth-soled shoes, or slipper on stairs, wood or waxed floors.

**WET, SLIPPERY OR UNFAMILIAR, UNEVEN SURFACES**

1. Pay attention to the surface you are walking on: be alert for ice, snow, wet or dry leaves, moss covered stone paths or steps.
2. When you get out of a car, be sure to test the surface for wetness or iciness before standing up and walking.
3. Be careful on tile or marble floors.

**GENERAL SAFETY**

1. When visiting friends, be alert to possible hazards, as you are in an unfamiliar environment.
2. Be alert as you enter and exit any areas that have curbs.
3. Be alert when entering or exiting elevators.
4. Let the phone ring - don't run to answer it.
5. Never climb onto a chair to change a lightbulb or reach high objects on shelves. Use a sturdy stool or step ladder or have someone else do it.

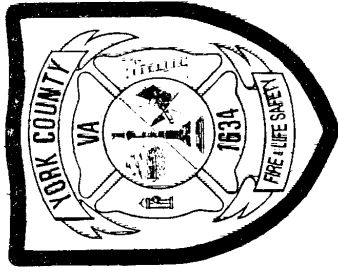
**PERSONAL SAFETY**

1. Have vision and hearing tested regularly and properly corrected.
2. Use caution in getting up too quickly after eating, lying down or resting.

**Home Secure, Jewish Family Services of Los Angeles  
Los Angeles, CA — *Continued***

3. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about the side effect of the drugs you are taking and how they may affect your balance or coordination.
4. Limit alcohol intake.
5. Use a cane, walking stick, or walker to help maintain balance as recommended by your doctor or physical therapist.
6. Maintain a regular program of activity.

York County Fire & Life Safety  
Williamsburg, VA



## Fall Prevention Program

An original program targeting the senior citizens of York County with the purpose of reducing falls in & around the home.

### Actions to take:



Seek a doctor's assistance for anyone experiencing sudden changes in walking with frequent falls.



Obtain a free fall prevention screening given by York County Fire & Life Safety. By appointment, on-duty personnel will come to homes in York County and screen for fall hazards. Any recommendations made will be accompanied by a list of possible resources.

**Call 890-3600 to schedule a screening.**

York County Fire & Life Safety  
Williamsburg, VA — *Continued*

Fall Facts:

- Thirty-five to forty percent of persons over 65 years of age fall at least once a year & seek medical attention.
- Of persons over 65 who suffer a hip fracture, 60% are discharged to a nursing home.
- Fifty percent of women age 65 have a hip at fracture threshold due to bone loss.
- At age 85, 100% of women have a hip at fracture threshold.

Fall Prevention Tips:

- If a person is holding onto furniture as they walk, they are at risk for falls. Use of a walker or cane with training by a physical therapist can lessen the risk.
- Use of power failure lights prevents walking in the dark. These simple devices can be installed in electrical outlets & are especially helpful near stairs.
- One cause of dizziness results from a sudden change in position. Clenching hands and wiggling toes prior to standing reduces this form of dizziness.

- A person who is unsteady on their feet may be at risk for a fall in the bathroom. Use of a tub seat or shower chair along with a hand-held shower massage with extra-long cord may help avoid slips.
- Sudden changes in surfaces such as curbs or ramps can cause a loss of balance. When painted brightly, these surface changes are easier to identify.
- A person's balance can be worse when walking in the dark. Use of nightlights or having a lamp near the bed can improve safety when getting up at night.

Statistics from Am Journal of Epidemiology  
1990 & Osteoporos Int 1992.

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## **Liability Waiver**



**Pro Action Senior Wellness Program  
Bath, NY**



Pro Action  
of Steuben  
and Yates, Inc.

Pro Action Office Building  
Suite 11  
117 East Steuben Street  
Bath, New York 14810-1600  
607/776/2125  
607/776/2723 Fax

Release Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Release of Information

I understand that the information I have provided is confidential and will be used only to assist me in obtaining needed and appropriate services in the community.

Permission for Home Safety Modifications

I give permission for Pro Action of Steuben and Yates Inc. to provide Home Safety Modifications.

I shall at all times save harmless Pro Action of Steuben and Yates Inc. any of its employees and associates from all claim damages, judgements, including any action for personal injury , and any other affiliated claims, by reason of any act or failure to properly act on the part of Pro Action of Steuben and Yates Inc., as may arise from their performance under this contract.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Surveyor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Pro Action Senior Wellness Program  
Bath, NY — *Continued*

***NOTICE OF YOUR RIGHT  
TO FILE A GRIEVANCE***

*As a participant in the Pro Action Senior Wellness Program, services provided through a contract with SCOFA under Title III-F of the Older American's Act, you have a right to file a grievance if services are denied to you or if you are dissatisfied with the service provided.*

*Assistance is available, upon request, to help you with filing a grievance if you are unable or have difficulty doing so.*

*You must submit your grievance in writing to the Senior Wellness Coordinator of Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc., at 117 E. Steuben Street, Suite 11, Bath, NY 14810 for an initial review within thirty (30) days of denial, reduction or termination of services, or of the event or circumstance with which you are dissatisfied.*

*Forms are available at Pro Action of Steuben & Yates, Inc., 117 E. Steuben Street, Suite 11, Bath, NY 14810 for filing a grievance. Copies of our entire grievance procedure are also available upon request at the same office.*



National Center for Injury Prevention and Control  
4770 Buford Highway, N.E., Mailstop K63  
Atlanta, Georgia 30341-3742  
[www.cdc.gov/ncipc](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc)  
[www.cdc.gov/safeusa](http://www.cdc.gov/safeusa)