

# Elder Home Safety Assessment

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An important evaluation tool, a home safety assessment is an effective preventative measure to identify and eliminate potential hazards. Whether the goal is to keep an elderly member of the family in their home, move them into a family home, or if they are coming for a visit - proactively removing hazards will ensure a safer environment.

Here's a few helpful hints to get started:

## W - Walkways

- Clear away clutter from walkways (small toys, cords, throw rugs, baskets)
- Secure rugs at their edge with double-stick tape
- Do not wax floors or create slippery surfaces
- In bathroom, use non-slip floor mats on floors and non-stick surface for showers/baths
- Exteriors - make sure all walkways are cleared, smooth/even - non-stick grip tape can be used on stairs to help with traction
- Garage - make sure that garage paths are clean from car to house

## B - Balance

- Make sure handrails are tight and able to be easily gripped
- Add handrails for changes in elevations (stairs, etc) - inside and outside
- Assistive devices can be added to stairs (chair lifts)
- In bathroom, think about grab bars in the showers, over the tub edges, over the toilet

## L - Lighting

- Use highest wattage bulb as indicated in light fixtures - look for daytime exposure styles for brighter light
- Add night lights in prominent locations (bathroom, kitchen, hallways)
- Add a flashlight to the bedside table
- Ensure stairs are well-lit
- Exteriors - for safety and security, add or increase lighting as needed.

Additionally, here are a few areas which you want to evaluate:

- Water Heaters - keep temperature below 120 deg F
- Reposition items onto reachable shelves
- Keep a house phone or phone chargers in available rooms, especially in bedrooms
- Consider a medical alert device that can be worn at all times
- Add important medical and contact information to a posting on the fridge for emergencies