

**caring**  
*for those*  
**you care about**

# How Well **Does Your Home Meet Your Needs?**

**H**ome modifications can make your home safer and more comfortable. The gradual physical changes and losses that normally come with aging can eventually create difficulties in daily living. These changes may include vision or hearing loss, hand limitation, range-of-reach changes, dizziness and disorientation, and trouble getting around. Many older people and their adult children are unaware that simple changes at home can help people stay in charge and maintain their independence.

Many conditions inside and outside the home can be dangerous to older residents — especially those that increase the risk of falls, such as poor lighting, narrow steps, and slippery surfaces. Many products and ideas can make homes safer and more convenient for the older person living there:

- lever door and faucet handles
- adjustable closet rods
- night lights

- no scatter rugs
- handrails on both sides of staircases
- large rocker light switches
- grab bars by toilet and tub
- peepholes or view panels on doors
- hand-held adjustable shower head
- nonskid surface for tub/shower floor
- bathroom telephone that is within reach if you fall
- adjustable shower seat
- sufficient lighting

Conducting a home safety check can help people prevent problems that could lead to injury and/or loss of independence. To start your safety check, look at your home as if it were the first time you were walking into it. Answer the following questions, and write down any problems you find and any ideas that come to you for improvements.

# How Well Does Your Home Meet Your Needs?

## Steps/Stairways/ Walkways

Are they in good repair?  Yes  No

Smooth/safe surface?  Yes  No

Are there handrails on both sides of the stairway?  Yes  No

Are there light switches at both the top and bottom of the stairs?  Yes  No

Is there grasping space for both knuckles and fingers on railings?  Yes  No

Are the stair treads deep enough for your whole foot?  Yes  No

Would a ramp be feasible in any of these areas if it became necessary?  Yes  No

## Floor Surfaces

Is the surface safe?  Yes  No

Nonslip?  Yes  No

Are there throw rugs or doormats that may be dangerous?  Yes  No

Is carpeting loose or torn?  Yes  No

Are there changes in levels?  Yes  No

If so, are they obvious or marked in some way?  Yes  No

Do you have to walk over or around cords or wires (like cords from lamps, extension cords, or telephone cords)?  Yes  No

## Driveway and Garage

Is parking space always available?  Yes  No

Is it convenient to entranceway?  Yes  No

Does garage door have an automatic opener?  Yes  No

## Windows & Doors

Are windows and doors easy to open and close?  Yes  No

Are locks sturdy and easy to operate?  Yes  No

Are doors wide enough for a walker or wheelchair?  Yes  No

Can you walk through the doorways easily?  Yes  No

Is there space to maneuver while opening and closing doors?  Yes  No

Does the front door have a view panel or peephole?  Yes  No

If so, is it the proper height for you?  Yes  No

## Appliances/Kitchen/Bath

	Yes	No
Is arrangement convenient and safe?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can oven and refrigerator be opened easily?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are stove controls easy to use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are stove controls clearly marked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is counter height and depth good for you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you sit while working?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are cabinet doorknobs easy to use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are faucets easy to use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a hand-held shower head?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the things you use often on high shelves?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a stepstool with handles?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you get in and out of the tub or shower with ease?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a bath or shower seat?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there grab bars where needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is hot water heater regulated to prevent scalding or burning?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Lighting/Ventilation

	Yes	No
Is lightning sufficient?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is lighting bright enough for safety?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have night lights where needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is area well ventilated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Electrical Outlets/Switches/Alarms

	Yes	No
Are outlets and switches easy to turn off and on?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are outlets properly grounded to prevent electrical shock?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are extension cords in good condition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have smoke detectors in all necessary areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have an alarm system?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the telephone readily available for emergencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the telephone have a volume control for increased hearing if necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you hear the doorbell in every part of the house?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

