

## The Safe Living Guide—A Guide to Home Safety for Seniors

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/safe-living-guide-a-guide-home-safety-seniors.html#a5>

Outside	Yes	No
Do all your entrances have an outdoor light?		
Do your outdoor stairs, pathways or decks have railings and provide good traction (i.e., textured surfaces)?		
Are the front steps and walkways around your house in good repair and free of clutter, snow or leaves?		
Do the doorways to your balcony or deck have a low sill or threshold?		
Can you reach your mailbox safely and easily?		
Is the number of your house clearly visible from the street and well lit at night?		
<b>TIP: If you live in a rural area and don't have a visible house number, make sure your name is on your mailbox and keep a clear description of directions to your home (main roads, landmarks, etc.) by each phone in your house. You can also purchase your high-visibility, reflective house number sign from South Cowichan Community policing here:</b> <a href="https://southcowichancommunitypolicing.ca/hnsform/">https://southcowichancommunitypolicing.ca/hnsform/</a>		

Inside	Yes	No
Are all rooms and hallways in your home well lit?		
Are all throw rugs and mats secured in place to keep them from slipping?		
Have you removed mats from the top of the stairs and high traffic areas?		
Are your high traffic areas clear of obstacles?		
Do you always watch that your pets are not underfoot?		
If you use floor wax, do you use the non-skid kind?		
Do you have a first aid kit and know where it is?		
Do you have a list of emergency numbers near all phones?		
<b>TIP: Install a seat at the entrance of your home to remove or put on your shoes and boots.</b>		

Stairs	Yes	No
Are your stairways well lit and do you have light switches at the top <i>and</i> bottom of the stairs?		
Are your stairs in good repair and free of clutter?		
Do the steps of your stairs have a non-skid surface?		
Are there solid handrails on both sides of the stairway?		
<b>TIP: To help avoid taking a misstep, you can paint wooden or concrete steps with a strip of contrasting colour on the edge of each step or on the top and bottom steps.</b>		

Fire and Hazardous Materials	Yes	No
Do you have a smoke detector on every floor of your home and in every bedroom?		
Do you test your smoke detector every month and change the battery annually?		
Have you developed an escape route in case of fire and a fire safety plan?		
Are you registered on your apartment building's fire safety plan?		
Do you have a carbon monoxide detector in your home?		
Are flammable and hazardous materials clearly labelled and properly stored?		
If you use a space heater, is it placed well away from flammable substances and materials?		
Do you use appropriate power bars to prevent overloading electrical outlets?		
If you live in an older home, have you or an electrician inspected your wiring, electrical panel, electrical cords and appliances for safety?		
<b>TIP: To remember to change the batteries in your smoke detector once a year, make it a habit to change them on an important, easy-to-remember date like your birthday.</b>		

Bathroom	Yes	No
Do you test the water temperature before you get into the bathtub or shower?		
Is your hot water temperature set to the recommended 49°C (120°F)?		
Do you have non-slip surfaces in the tub or shower?		
Do bath mats next to the tub or shower have rubberized backing or are they secured in place to keep them from slipping?		
Do you have a night light in the bathroom?		
Does your bathroom door lock have an emergency release?		
Do you have grab bars that have been properly placed and well anchored to the wall in the bathtub or shower?		
If you have any trouble getting on and off the toilet, do you have a raised toilet seat and a grab bar that is well anchored?		
If it's difficult for you to take a shower standing up, have you considered a bath seat?		
<b>TIP: Some tile and bath cleaning products may make items more slippery. Be careful when using such products.</b>		

Kitchen	Yes	No
Are your pots and pans, canned goods and staple foods stored in an easy-to-reach location—between knee and shoulder heights?		
Are heavy items stored in the lower cupboards and light items in the higher cupboards?		
Do you have a stable step stool (with a safety rail) for reaching high places?		
Are the "off" and "on" positions on the stove dials clearly marked?		
Are your oven mitts within easy reach when you are cooking?		
Do you make sure never to cook while wearing loose-fitting clothing or sleepwear?		
Do you have a fire extinguisher in the kitchen, mounted on the wall away from the stove?		

Do you regularly check that your fire extinguisher is in good operating order?		
<b>TIP: Use heat-resistant oven mitts rather than potholders; they provide a better grip on hot containers and give you better protection against splatters and steam. If you do experience a burn, immerse in cool water (not ice or butter!).</b>		

Bedroom	Yes	No
Is there a light switch near the entrance to your bedroom?		
Do you have a lamp or a light switch near your bed?		
Do you keep night lights or other sources of light on in case you get up in the middle of the night?		
Is there a clear path from your bed to the bathroom?		
Do you have a phone and a list of emergency phone numbers near your bed?		
Do you have a flashlight or other emergency light near your bed in case of a power outage?		
<b>TIP: Make sure your bed is not too high or low, so that it is easy to get in and out of it.</b>		

Garage/Basement/Workroom	Yes	No
Are your workroom and laundry room well lit?		
Do you have a telephone in the basement and a list of emergency phone numbers?		
Do you keep floors and benches clean to reduce fire and tripping hazards?		
Are all your tools and service equipment in good condition? Are the safety locks on?		
Is your work area well ventilated, summer and winter?		
Are heavy items on lower shelves or in bottom cupboards?		
Do you use a ladder or a stable step stool (with a safety rail) for reaching high places?		
Are all chemicals, such as bleach, cleaners and paint thinners, clearly identified?		
Are flammable materials stored as indicated by the directions on the label and away from sources of heat and flame?		
If you have a gas barbecue, is your propane tank stored outside of the house?		
<b>TIP: When you use a ladder, never stand or sit on the top three rungs. Maintain your balance by keeping your body centred between the rails and three points of contact on the ladder at all times. Do not reach to the sides and push or pull anything.</b>		

Childproofing	Yes	No
Have you removed items from your lower surfaces to prevent breakage, injury and spills?		
Child-resistant caps are not childproof. Are all medications and pill boxes stored out of the reach of children?		
Are household products and chemicals, such as cleaning products, paint, paint thinners and alcohol, stored and locked in a cupboard that is out of the reach of children?		
Are cosmetic products, such as nail polish remover, creams, mouthwash and perfumes, out of the reach of children?		
Have you stored small objects out of the sight and reach of younger children to prevent choking?		

Have you installed safety catches on your cupboards and medicine cabinet doors?		
Have you stored lighters, matches and candles out of the sight and reach of children?		
Is there a safety latch on your stove and dishwasher?		
Are extension, telephone and venetian blind cords out of children's way?		
Are your garage and workshop locked with deadbolts installed high on the doors?		
<b>TIP: If you have a pool, or if there's one in the building where you live, exercise extreme vigilance. Make sure the pool is absolutely off-limits to children by installing safety devices on house doors leading to the pool and a very high latch on the pool fence gates. Never leave any child without supervision.</b>		