Making your home safe is important



Slips, trips and falls can happen to anyone however as we age the risk increases. Our home is our haven where we spend most of our time so it is important to reduce hazardous risks to ensure we can remain in our home and enjoy the fun things in life.

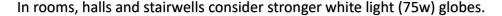
Making your home safer is a team effort. A friend or family member can assist you to complete your home safety check. Many changes are simple and can be made by you. Other changes may need the assistance of your GP and perhaps an Occupational Therapy referral through a My Age Care provider or perhaps DVA if eligible.

A good place to **Start** is the main entrance to the house, and consider.....

Lighting

Are all areas inside and out of the house well-lit?

Are your light switches easy to find and reach?



Utilise Sensor lights where you don't wish to leave lights on.

If you do not have a light switch next to your bed, consider a lamp (touch lamp).

Allow your eyes time to adjust when moving from brightly lit to darker areas?

Turn on lights in darker rooms or walkways even if you are only entering briefly.

Consider using natural light by opening blinds and perhaps installing skylights.

Eg. Replace hallway lightbulb	ask son	completed

|--|--|

Floors



Are your floor coverings non-slip and in good condition?

⇒ Torn carpet, moving mats, polished floors and tiles can cause slips and trips.

Consider NON-slip mats, repair carpets and consider slip resistant treatment on walkways.

Sometimes our keepsake rugs can be hung on a wall or relocated to prevent falls

Are your wet areas safe?

Clean up spills straight away and take extra care in wet areas.

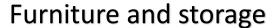
Use slips resistant treatments on the base of your bath or shower.

Consider grab rails or handles to help navigate wet areas where necessary.

Are there uneven surfaces in your home?

Use coloured tape to alert you to changes in your floors surface or mark step edges.

Footwear, ensure our shoes are comfortable, non-slip and in good repair





Is your furniture steady and can you stand up/sit down safely?

We all like to keep our favourite chair, but there may be a time that we need to consider a more suitable furniture that assists us with getting up, or at a height that is more suitable to supporting our individual needs.

If you have electric cables for furniture/lights consider running them along skirting boards (it is easy to slip/roll your foot on a loose cable)

Are you storing items safely?

Store heavy items and items you use regularly in easy to reach places at waist height. Adjust shelving in your cupboards so you don't have to reach high or bend low to use your items.

Pantry/cupboards - may require rearranged to support your current needs

Are you storing important items nearby?

Keep items such as your telephone, medication and walking aids in easy to reach places where they won't create a trip hazard and are easy to reach quickly.

Stairs and steps

Actions to take

Are your stairs and steps kept free of hazards?

Do your stairs and steps have easy to reach sturdy grab rails?

Check stairs, steps are not too high, narrow, uneven or in need of repair.

Consider steps into your bath or shower and steps outside of your home.

Note: you may need to consider rails, ramps, reducing height of steps, non-slip or repair

An Occupational Therapy Home Assessment can assist with the best solution.

Also REMEMBER keeping objects and ornaments out of your path for walking

Consider non-slip contrast tape or paint to highlight the edges of steps/stairs



Ladders (Ask yourself <u>DO I NEED</u> to be using the ladder?) Is there someone else that is better suited for climbing up the ladder than you? Never use the ladder without having someone else present to assist.

Outside the home

Are your paths and the entrances to your house safe?

Do you need latches to hold back door if you use a mobility aid?

Ensure outdoor areas are well lit.

Do paths need rails, non-slip or are pavers all flat and in good repair?

Try not to let shrubs become overgrown as this may reduce light in garden, cause damp and subsequent slime or mould/algae on walkway services leading to hazardous slips

How safe is your yard after wet weather?

Grass, pavers and other outdoor surfaces can become slippery in wet/damp weather. Ensure you wear non slip shoes and consider using slip resistant tread on slippery surfaces.

ALWAYS try to keep garden items put away when you are finished to reduce trips.

Eg. Retractable or hanging garden hoses can become a trip hazard

Pets

Our fur babies love us dearly and want to be where we go, so please ensure you know where they are so as to no trip on them. Consider a bell on the collar if the little rascals like to get under your feet.

Consider safe places to put the water and feed bowls, good light and not in walkways.



Remember



Slips, Trips and Falls can be prevented......

- ➤ Looking after our health and wellbeing is essential at all ages, but becomes particularly important if we want to remain independent, reduce risk of injury and illness.
- Conducting a simple home safety check can help you to identify potential hazards/risks and assist you to make the changes necessary for a safe home environment. Many of which can be done with the assistance of a friend or family, at a simple low cost; leaving time to get on with enjoying the fun things in life.
- ➤ If you currently have aids and appliances prescribed by Allied Health Practitioners to assist with your mobility or medical conditions it is important to use these.
- Be aware of personal changes to your body and mind, if you notice changes, please always contact your GP, and discuss with family and friends as necessary.
- As we age changes occur. Feel confident that you can adapt to these changes and remain as safe as possible.

Helpful Resources:

https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/falls

https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ data/assets/pdf file/0028/429814/33381 full.pdf

https://www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au/preventing-falls/home-safety-checklist

https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/

https://youtu.be/d0zlrkErEPA