



American Stroke Association®
A division of the American Heart Association.

Together to End Stroke®

Home Safety Checklist for Preventing Falls After Stroke

A Comprehensive Assessment Tool for Survivors of Stroke and Caregivers

How to Use This Checklist

This checklist helps survivors of stroke and their caregivers spot risky areas and make them safer. For things that need professional help, we include recommendations on how to get it. Go through your home one room at a time and check each item. Mark **YES** if the area is safe, **NO** if it needs work.

PATHS & FLOORS

Clear Pathways

- YES NO **Are all paths clear of furniture?**
If NO: Move furniture to create clear, wide walking paths. Get help from someone if you need it.
- YES NO **Are floors free of clutter (papers, shoes, books, boxes)?**
If NO: Pick everything up. Always keep paths clear.
- YES NO **Are walking paths clear of electrical cords?**
If NO: Coil or tape cords and wires next to walls. Would adding another outlet make it easier to keep cords out of the way? If so, have one installed.

Floor Surfaces

- YES NO **Are throw rugs removed OR secured with non-slip backing?**
If NO: Remove throw rugs entirely, or use double-sided tape or non-slip backing so rugs won't slip.
- YES NO **Are all carpets firmly attached to the floor?**
If NO: Secure all carpeting properly to prevent slipping and tripping.

STAIRS & STEPS (INDOOR AND OUTDOOR)

Stair Safety

- YES NO **Are stairs completely free of objects?**
If NO: Remove everything from the stairs immediately. Always keep stairs clear.
- YES NO **Are all steps in a safe, functional condition?**
If NO: Have damaged or uneven steps repaired immediately.
- YES NO **Is stair carpet firmly attached to every step?**
If NO: Secure carpet firmly to every step, or remove carpet and attach non-slip rubber treads to each step.
- YES NO **Are stairs safe and manageable to use?**
If NO: If stairs are consistently difficult or unsafe, consider installing a ramp or threshold ramp for small level changes. Ramps can be safer alternatives for those with mobility challenges.
- YES NO **Are step transitions easily visible?**
If NO: If stairs are not easily seen, consider marking the edges in a bright color for easy visibility.

Handrails & Lighting

- YES NO **Are handrails installed on both sides of all stairs?**
If NO: Have handrails installed on both sides. Make sure they extend the full length of the stairs.
- YES NO **Are all handrails secure and not loose?**
If NO: Have handrails repaired immediately. Make sure they're properly mounted.
- YES NO **Are light switches located at both the top and bottom of the stairs?**
If NO: Have light switches installed at the top and bottom of stairs. Consider glow-in-the-dark switches.
- YES NO **Is all stair lighting working properly?**
If NO: Replace burned-out bulbs immediately. All stairways should be well-lit.

BATHROOMS •

Slip Prevention

- YES NO **Do tubs and showers have non-slip mats or strips?**
If NO: Install non-slip rubber mats or self-stick strips on tub/shower floors.
- YES NO **Do bathroom floors have non-slip surfaces or mats?**
If NO: Add non-slip mats to prevent slipping on wet surfaces.

Support & Safety

- YES NO **Are grab bars installed next to the toilet?**
If NO: Have grab bars professionally installed next to the toilet. Improperly installed grab bars can pull out of the wall when used, risking serious injury.
- YES NO **Are grab bars installed inside the tub/shower area?**
If NO: Have grab bars professionally installed next to and inside the tub. Improperly installed grab bars can pull out of the wall when used, risking serious injury.
- YES NO **Is the shower/bath area well-lit?**
If NO: Ensure proper lighting for safe bathing.
- YES NO **Are toiletries and supplies within easy reach?**
If NO: Reorganize items to avoid overreaching while bathing.

BEDROOMS •

Accessibility

- YES NO **Is a bedside lamp easy to reach?**
If NO: Place a lamp close to the bed where it's easy to reach.
- YES NO **Is a phone within arm's reach of the bed?**
If NO: Keep a charged phone near the bed in case of emergency.
- YES NO **Is the path from bed to bathroom well-lit?**
If NO: Install nightlights along the path to the bathroom. Motion-activated nightlights only turn on when needed, making them less likely to disturb sleep.

Clothing & Storage

- YES NO **Is it easy to reach clothes?**
If NO: Move frequently used clothes to waist-high spots.

KITCHEN •

Storage Safety

- YES NO **Are the things used most often stored in easy-to-reach places?**
If NO: Move commonly used items to lower shelves.
- YES NO **Is your step stool (if used) sturdy and has handles for support?**
If NO: Replace with a sturdy step stool with a handlebar. Don't climb up on chairs.

Work Areas

- YES NO **Are kitchen work areas well-lit?**
If NO: Add lighting over counters and cooking areas.
- YES NO **Is the floor area kept clean and dry?**
If NO: Keep cleaning supplies within easy reach for quick spill cleanup and dry floors.

OUTDOOR AREAS •

Entryways

- YES NO **Is the front door area well-lit?**
If NO: Install lighting near all entry doors. Consider motion-activated lights.
- YES NO **Do entry steps have handrails on both sides?**
If NO: Make sure handrails are on both sides of outdoor stairs and steps.
- YES NO **Are entry steps easy and safe to navigate?**
If NO: Consider installing a ramp if steps are hard to use safely. Ramps can make entries safer for those with balance issues or those using walkers or canes.

Walkways & Driveways

- YES NO **Are all outdoor walkways in good condition (no cracks, uneven surfaces)?**
If NO: Repair uneven walkways and steps to prevent tripping.
- YES NO **Are walkways kept clear of debris, leaves, ice, and snow?**
If NO: Keep walkways clear of debris and ice. Use ice-melt products in winter.
- YES NO **Are outdoor paths well-lit?**
If NO: Add lighting for all outdoor walking areas.

Garage

- YES NO **Are garage walkways clear and well-lit?**
If NO: Make sure garage pathways are clear and well-lit.
- YES NO **Are items stored securely and not creating hazards?**
If NO: Organize storage to prevent items from falling or blocking walkways.

LIVING AREAS •

Furniture Arrangement

- YES NO **Are walking paths clear of any obstructions?**
If NO: Rearrange furniture or other objects so you don't have to walk around obstacles.
- YES NO **Are coffee tables and low furniture positioned not to block walking paths?**
If NO: Move or remove furniture that creates walking obstacles.

Lighting

YES NO **Are all rooms well-lit?**
If NO: Add lamps or more lighting in dim areas.

YES NO **Are light switches easy to reach?**
If NO: Add table lamps with easy-to-reach switches, or consider remote control switches for overhead lights.

PRIORITY ACTION ITEMS •

Based on your checklist results, focus on these high-priority areas first:

Immediate Safety Concerns (Address today)

- » Any items on the stairs or pathways
- » Burned-out lights on stairways
- » Secure loose rugs or remove them temporarily

Seek Professional Help (Schedule as soon as possible - see the "Getting Help" section below)

- » Broken or uneven steps
- » Missing handrails on stairs
- » Look into local assistance programs for home modifications and professional repairs
- » Consider an Occupational or Physical Therapy home assessment

Follow Up Items

- » Improve lighting where needed
- » Review and organize storage areas
- » Plan for seasonal outdoor maintenance

GETTING HELP •

Finding Assistance Programs:

- » Contact your local Area Agency on Aging for home modification programs.
- » Ask your health care team for a medical social worker consultation. Medical social workers can help identify disability services, community nonprofit programs and other assistance options. They know what's available in your area. They can give you contact information and may help with getting services started.

Professional Services to Consider:

- » Electrician for lighting and outlet installation
- » Handyman for handrail and grab bar installation
- » Occupational therapist for a comprehensive home assessment

Emergency Preparation:

- » Keep phone numbers easily accessible
- » Consider medical alert systems

Remember:
 Small changes can make a big difference in creating a safer home that supports your stroke recovery.

Additional Resource

- » [Home Safety Solutions: Before and After](#)

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