



# AGING-IN-PLACE: YOUR ULTIMATE SAFETY CHECKLIST

*Marisa Home Care Helps You STAY in Your Own Home*

Walk through your home (or your parents' home) with this checklist, and act as if you were a safety inspector making a pass-or-fail decision. Your awareness and attention to safety in your own dwelling could very well contribute to your own healthy future.

## AT-HOME

YES NO

- |                          |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I can hear the doorbell and phone throughout the house.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I can operate the door locks.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I can unlock and open the windows, and any security bars can be released from within the home to allow for escape.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I can operate the alarm system <i>(if installed)</i> .   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Smoke alarms with fresh batteries are installed a) on every level of my home, b) outside sleeping areas, and c) inside bedrooms.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Carbon monoxide (CO) alarms are installed on every level of my home and outside of sleeping areas.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Telephones are positioned low enough so I can reach them if I have an accident that leaves me unable to stand. <i>(As an alternative, I could obtain a wearable medical alert device that provides a "Call for Help" push-button.)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Emergency numbers are posted on an easy-to-read card near all telephones. <i>(If you have impaired vision or difficulty seeing the numbers on a regular telephone, choose a phone that has large, lighted number keys.)</i>            |
|                          |                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Police</li><li>• Fire Department</li><li>• Poison Control Center</li><li>• Doctor(s)</li><li>• Trusted neighbor</li><li>• Family member</li></ul>  |

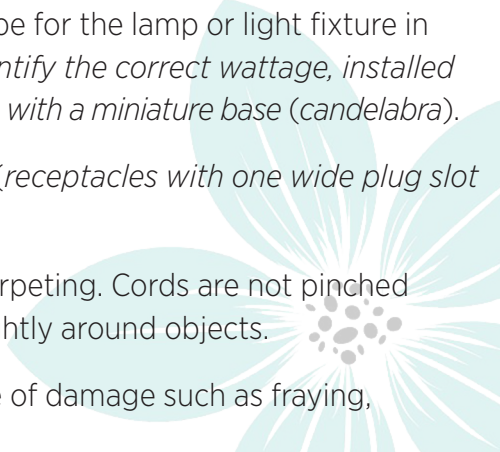
## STEPS & WALKWAYS

YES NO

- |                          |                          |  |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have a CLEAR WALKWAY through all rooms. Walking surfaces are completely free of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• electrical cords</li><li>• rugs</li><li>• boxes</li><li>• furniture (low tables/footstools)</li><li>• shoes/boots</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• pet bowls</li><li>• toys</li><li>• house plants</li><li>• magazines, books, newspapers</li><li>• tracked-in water/snow/ice</li></ul> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | All FLOORING is in good condition, is flat and uniform, and is slip-resistant or is covered with non-slip carpeting, rugs, or mats.  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | DOORSILLS are painted a contrasting color to prevent tripping.   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | All STEPS are in good condition, have flat, even surfaces and are free of objects that could pose a tripping hazard. <i>(Use reflecting tape at top and bottom of staircase for better visibility.)</i>  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | All STAIR TREADS are in good condition, and have slip-resistant surfaces such as dense, low-pile carpeting or slip-resistant strips that are securely attached to the steps.   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Light switches are located at BOTH the top and bottom of the stairs.   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | All stairs have solidly mounted HANDRAILS that run continuously along the full length of the stairs on BOTH sides.   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Would my home accommodate a walker, wheelchair or wheelchair ramps, if needed?   |  |

## LIGHTING & ELECTRICAL

YES NO

- |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Walkways and rooms in which I am likely to be reading—for example, the bedroom, bathrooms, and the kitchen—are especially well-lit or have additional lighting available.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | All light bulbs are of the appropriate wattage and type for the lamp or light fixture in which they are installed. <i>(For fixtures that do not identify the correct wattage, installed bulbs should not exceed 60 watts, or 25 watts for bulbs with a miniature base (candelabra).</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | All extension cords have polarized-plug receptacles <i>(receptacles with one wide plug slot and one narrow plug slot)</i> .   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Electrical cords are not beneath furniture, rugs, or carpeting. Cords are not pinched against the wall by furniture and are not wrapped tightly around objects.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | All electrical cords are in good condition and are free of damage such as fraying, cracking, and staple or nail holes.  |
- 

- Extension cords are not overloaded. (*DISCARD older extension cords that use small 18-gauge wires.*)
- Electrical receptacles that supply appliances, such as toasters, hairdryers, and power tools are protected by GFCIs.

## KITCHEN

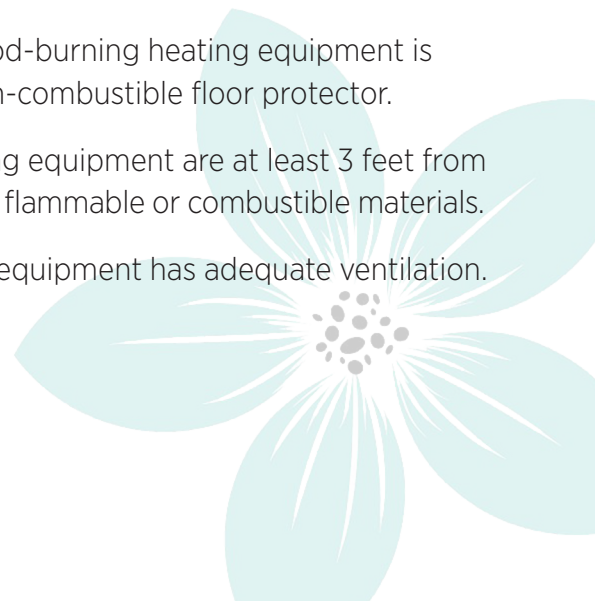
YES NO

- A fire extinguisher is in the kitchen in case of fire, and I know how to operate it. (*Extinguisher should be less than 10 years-old, and free of dust and grease; it should be mounted on a wall by the exit door – NOT under the sink.*)
- The area around the range should be free of grease build-up and clutter, including towels, curtains, potholders, and other objects that might catch fire.
- Kitchen ventilation systems or range exhausts are functioning properly. (*Never use your range or stove to heat your home.*)
- I always stay within view of food cooking on the stovetop. (*Cooking is the #1 cause of home fires; the leading contributor to these fires is unattended cooking.*)
- My appliances (*coffee-maker, iron, crockpot, etc.*) have an automatic shut-off.
- I keep the items I use most often safely within my reach. (*Rearrange high shelves and low cabinets to make your most-used items more accessible at waist-height.*)
- I have a stable step-stool with a handrail in the kitchen for reaching high items.

## HEATING

YES NO

- All chimneys have been professionally inspected and cleaned within the last year, and chimney openings are clear of leaves and other debris that could clog them.
- The surface of each fireplace is fireproof, and all wood-burning heating equipment is installed on fireproof flooring or on an approved non-combustible floor protector.
- All portable space heaters and wood-burning heating equipment are at least 3 feet from walls, furniture, curtains, rugs, newspapers, and other flammable or combustible materials.
- All kerosene, natural gas, and similar space-heating equipment has adequate ventilation.



## BATHROOM

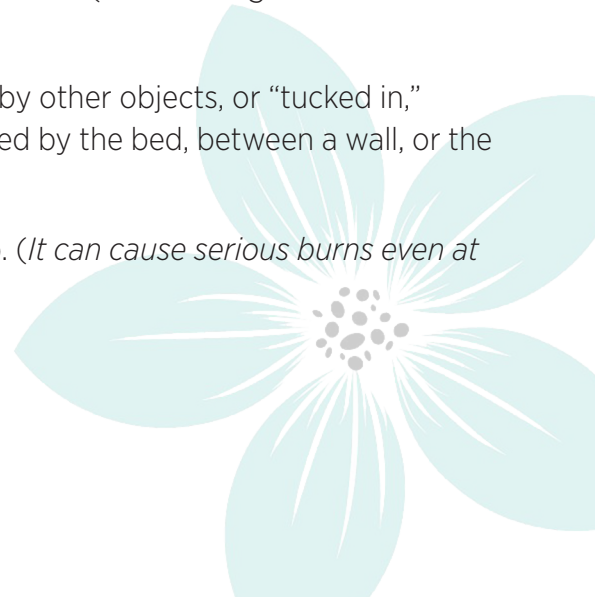
YES NO

- My medications are stored in child-resistant containers and are clearly marked. (*Only request non child-resistant containers if you are physically unable to use child-resistant enclosures.*)
- All bathtubs and showers are equipped with non-skid mats, abrasive strips, or surfaces that are not slippery; I have at least one secure GRAB BAR (*not a towel bar!*).
- I have a hand-held shower head.
- I use liquid soap and shampoo in containers that are firmly attached to the wall or in a storage unit inside the walk-in shower or bathtub.
- I have a grab bar next to the toilet, and an elevated toilet seat if necessary.
- I have a shower chair or bench that is stable and easy to access in the walk-in shower or bathtub.
- The bathroom floor is slip-resistant and/or is covered with secure, rubber-backed rugs.

## BEDROOM

YES NO

- I never smoke in bed. (*Burns associated with personal use products are the most frequently reported cause of accidental death among seniors.*)
- A telephone is within reach of the bed in case of an emergency.
- I keep a flashlight next to my bed in case of an emergency, or if I need to get up at night.
- I can easily reach and operate the lamp next to my bed.
- My path from bedroom to bathroom is well-lit with nightlights.
- My mattress meets the new federal flammability standard. (*Mattress tags will indicate if standard is met.*)
- Electrically-heated blankets are not folded, covered by other objects, or “tucked in,” when in use. The power cord is not pinched or crushed by the bed, between a wall, or the floor.
- I always turn off my heating pad before I go to sleep. (*It can cause serious burns even at relatively low settings.*)



## BASEMENT, LAUNDRY & WORKSHOP

YES NO

- I can carry a small laundry basket safely up and down stairs.
- Can my basement washer and dryer be moved to the ground floor?
- Laundry detergent is bottled or boxed in a size that I can easily lift.
- The water heater is set to no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit. *(If your hot water system is controlled by the landlord, ask the landlord to consider lowering the temperature.)*
- Work areas, especially where utilities or power tools are used, are well-lit.
- For electrical panels with fuses, the fuses are the correct size (*amperage*) for the circuit.
- If you find that all or most of the fuses in your fuse box are rated higher than 20 amperes, there is a good chance that some of the fuses are rated too high for residential circuits and can present a serious fire hazard.
- No containers of flammable and combustible liquids are stored inside the house, utility room, garage, or near the water heater.
- Portable generators are not operating in the basement, garage, or anywhere near the house.

## GARAGE

YES NO

- The garage door opens with a remote control.
- There are handrails on any steps leading into the garage.
- Garage floor and driveway pavement are without breaks, large cracks or uneven surfaces.
- Garage is brightly lit.
- Garage is uncluttered, has easy parking space and a clear access to car.

## ENTRYWAY & HOME EXTERIOR

YES NO

- The porch, entryway, and approach to the entryway are all well-illuminated.
- The light switch is located near the entryway.
- Outside steps, entryway, and approach to the entryway are in good condition and are slip-resistant.



- Outside steps have handrails that are easily graspable.
- All outside electrical outlets are GFCI-protected and in weatherproof covers or enclosures.
- Portable generators are located far from windows, doors, and vents to the home.
- In cold climates, a covered container of ice-melt is kept near exit doors for porch surfaces and porch steps in winter.

## SECURITY

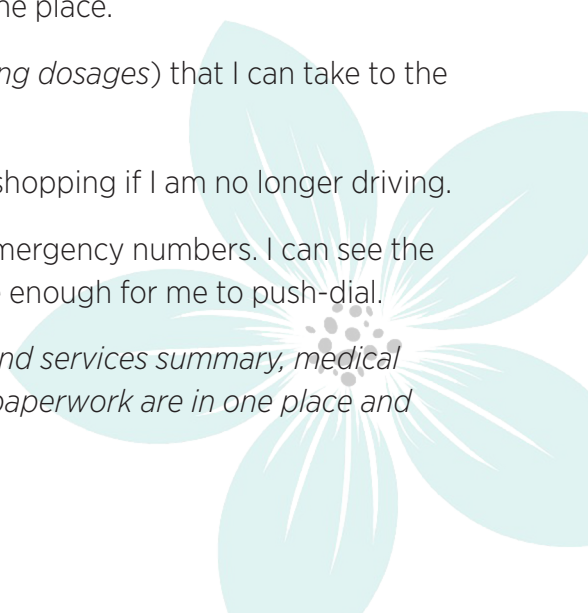
YES NO

- My doors have wide-angle peepholes (*or a video door bell system*) and I can easily view.
- My doors are security-strength and equipped with heavy-duty deadbolts that I can open.
- My sliding glass doors are equipped with slide-locks, or a dowel rod in the track.
- My windows have working locks.
- My spare key is with a family member or neighbor, not hidden outside the house.
- My house has an alarm system/security cameras that I use daily.
- There are motion sensor lights around the outside of my house.

## PERSONAL

YES NO

- I am current with my vision check-up, and have more than one pair of glasses with the correct prescription.
- My hearing has been tested and I own and use the correct hearing devices (*if indicated*).
- My medications are organized, well-marked and in one place.
- I have a complete list of current medications (*including dosages*) that I can take to the doctor or hospital.
- I can arrange for transportation to appointments or shopping if I am no longer driving.
- My cell phone has been pre-programmed with my emergency numbers. I can see the numerals on my cell phone and the buttons are large enough for me to push-dial.
- My health and life insurance papers (*health benefit and services summary, medical file, life insurance beneficiary document, and billing paperwork are in one place and easily accessible.*)



- My house slippers and shoes fit well and have a non-slip sole.
- My cane or walker has non-slip, rubber tip(s).
- I keep easy on/off ice cleats by my door in the winter to slip on over my shoes or boots (*brand examples: YakTrax or Stabilicers – a huge help on icy days*).
- If I use a purse, it is slim and has a cross-body strap to leave both of my hands free.
- I can arrange to have groceries and items delivered, if necessary.
- I can arrange to have help with caring for my pet.
- I know where I can call for *reputable home care*.

**We Help You Stay In Your Own Home**



**HAVE A SPECIAL SITUATION OR REQUEST? JUST ASK!**

Marisa is dedicated to making home care more personal and affordable through boutique-style services that accommodate your lifestyle.



**Marisa**  
Home Care

*Because sometimes you need a hand...*

27698 Franklin Road | Southfield  
**248.354.7600**  
**marisahomecare.com**

Sources include:

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Office of Information and Public Affairs, 4330 East West Highway, Bethesda, MD 20814

The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention  
4770 Buford Highway NE, Mailstop K-63, Atlanta, GA 30341

Notes:

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