



Tips,
Tools and
Resources for
Organizers

Home Safety Tips & Tools

Home Safety Tips & Tools is designed so that individuals, organizations and community groups can help make the homes of older family members, friends and neighbors safer and more comfortable. Your involvement will make a difference to people you care about.

INCLUDED IN THIS KIT:

- 1 Group Organizer Tips: Let's Get Started**
- 4 No-Cost/Low-Cost Home Safety Checklist**
 - No-Cost Home Improvements
 - Low-Cost Home Improvements (With Products Costing Under \$35)
 - Home Improvements (With Products Costing Under \$75)



Activity: Organize a Home-Safety Match-Up.

Pair members of your group with members of your community who could benefit from the home improvements. Your group member can help his or her partner create a safer home by using the No-Cost/Low-Cost Home Safety Checklist. You'll see how simple and easy it is for you to Create The Good®.

Get Organized

- Determine who could use the help, how best to reach out to them and how many volunteers you will need.
- Determine whether or not you'll have to involve others in the decision-making and/or planning process.
- Select a date or a time frame for the activity.
- Determine the best way to get the word out (newsletters, email, word of mouth, radio – think about the media outlet that's most trusted in your community).

Get The Word Out

You can use the sample announcement included in this kit. In addition to the ways mentioned above, consider including your announcement in local newspapers, faith-group bulletins, neighborhood newsletters and community bulletin boards.



Sample Announcement Copy

Below is sample copy to announce your effort to help others in your community stay safely in their homes. It is usually best to submit the announcement at least two weeks before your project’s beginning date.

Join us in making the homes of older friends and neighbors safer.

The members of _____
(organization, community name, faith group)

are joining together on _____
(date, time and meeting location of Home Safety Tips & Tools)

to help make homes safer for members of our community. AARP’s Create The Good is offering “Home Safety Tips & Tools” to encourage individuals and community groups to assist with updating the homes of friends, neighbors and community members for safer and more comfortable day-to-day living.

Group members will review a simple checklist with homeowners and look for easy, no-cost changes that can make their homes more safe and comfortable. Plugging in nightlights or removing objects from the stairs are two examples of small changes that can make a big difference. In just an hour or so, you can help someone you care about to have a safer home.

For more information, contact _____ at _____.
(project organizer’s name) (phone number, email address)

Get Set Up

- Match homeowners who need help with those who would like to help.
- Make copies of the checklist and distribute to everyone helping out and provide details on who needs help, including their names, addresses, phone numbers and other contact information.
- Tell homeowners and volunteers the day and time of the event and what to expect. Ask the volunteers to contact the homeowners sometime during the day before the event, to make sure the date planned is still convenient.



Results and Thanks

- Ask homeowners and volunteers how the “Home Safety Tips & Tools” event went and report the results in an email or newsletter announcement.
- Thank the volunteers individually.

Additional Ideas

Consider asking members of your group or community to donate an item or two from the **No-Cost/Low-Cost Home Safety Checklist** to give to the homeowners you’re helping. For instance, you could ask volunteers to bring some nightlights or fluorescent bulbs with them when they visit the homeowners. Other options might be to collect supplies from your group or community or to request that a local business donate supplies.



No-Cost/Low-Cost Home Safety Checklist

Whether you own or rent your home, there are many no-cost or low-cost improvements you can make to greatly increase its comfort and safety. Discover how simple updates can make it easier for you to stay comfortable, independent and injury-free. Begin with this checklist of things you can do quickly and easily for little to no cost.

No-Cost Home Improvements

- Open blinds and curtains and raise shades during daylight hours to increase natural light inside the home.
- Place exposed electrical, telephone and computer cords along a wall where people won't trip over them.
- Remove all cords from under furniture or carpeting to lessen the risk of fire.
- Remove clutter from stairways and passageways to help prevent trips and falls.
- Set the hot-water heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit to reduce energy costs and prevent scalding.
- Remove all scatter and throw rugs that can cause falls.
- Place the items you frequently use in an easily accessible place.
- Check the carpeting on your stairs to be sure it is firmly attached.
- Arrange furniture to allow for easy passage.
- Create an emergency exit plan in case of a fire.
- Remove debris from outdoor walkways.
- Trim shrubbery to provide a clear view from doors and windows.



Low-Cost Home Improvements (With Products Costing Under \$35)

The products mentioned below can be purchased at your local hardware or home-improvement store.

- Increase light by using the highest-watt light bulbs or compact-fluorescent bulbs appropriate for your light fixtures or lamps.
- Put nightlights in the bathroom and in hallways leading from the bedroom to the bathroom.
- Use a rubber-suction bath mat or antislip floor strips or decals in the tub or shower.
- Place self-stick carpet mesh or double-sided carpet tape under large area rugs to prevent them from sliding.
- Replace knobs on cabinets and drawers with easy-to-grip D-shaped handles.
- Replace traditional light switches with easy-to-use, rocker-style light switches.
- Place or mount an A-B-C rated, all-purpose fire extinguisher in an easily accessible location near the stove and oven so that you're prepared for any type of kitchen fire.
- Install smoke and carbon-monoxide detectors on all levels of the house, especially where the bedrooms are.



Home Improvements (With Products Costing Under \$75)

Most of the products mentioned here can be purchased at your local hardware or home-improvement store.

- Install a handrail on both sides of any staircase so you can stay steady on your feet.*
- Install easy-to-grip lever door handles on all doors instead of doorknobs.
- Install a handheld adjustable showerhead for easier bathing.
- Install user-friendly lever handle faucets in your sinks and in tubs or showers. Some faucets even include built-in antiscald protection.
- Place a sturdy bathtub or shower seat in the tub and/or shower for comfort and safety.
- Mount grab bars next to the toilet and bathtub and in the shower for help getting up or down.*
- Install offset hinges on all doors to add two inches of width for wheelchair access, if needed.*
- Install a security peephole on exterior doors at a height that's right for you, so you can identify the person wanting to enter.*
- Install photosensitive porch or entryway lighting that will come on at dusk and turn off at dawn. A light-switch timer can also be installed on interior switches for exterior porch or post lights.*
- Install outdoor floodlights that switch on by motion sensors to light your way and to deter burglars.*

*These items may best be installed by a professional.