

## Guide on things to have in your home to stay safely at home



East, west, home is always the best! But is it? This arguably genuine statement can come to question when the home becomes a house full of unpremeditated booby traps. For instance, an ‘innocent’ throw rug that is out of place can simply cause a slip to an elderly leading to injuries. This situation can however be fixed, preventing random visits to the emergency room.

Since prevention is better than cure, there are adaptive measures available to make a house a safe haven. This always starts with some detective work of tracking down trouble-prone situations hidden in everyday household objects.

Aging is unforgiving, especially with its erratic nature. Performing activities of daily living (ADLs) gets dicey by the day, and to sustain some degree of independence, modification of your home or a loved one’s.

Making these modifications can be as simple as doing away with scattered rugs, or keeping them in place, or as complex as installing an elevator or a stair lift for easy access. Here are some things you might consider having in your home to make it a comfortable and safe environment and thus allow you to maintain your independence at home.

### Medical alert systems

Medical alert systems are used to protect seniors against falls, medical, home invasion and even shower emergencies. They are wearable devices in the form of bracelets, watches, necklace and wristbands. With these systems, in case of emergencies, help is just but a push of a button away.

### Amazon Echo and Alexia

With the world exploring new technologies such as AI (Artificial Intelligence), devices such as Amazon Echo and Alexia have emerged in the bid to make life easy, even for seniors. These devices can enable you to keep track of your to-do list, shopping list and other lists. They can even act as medication reminders. Even in cases of emergency, they can call a loved one or through voice commands control your cell phone to call 911.

Apart from these devices, there are other home modifications that can help keep seniors safe at their home based on the nature of the elderly's abilities/disabilities and physical set-up of the home.

### **To improve safety and support**

- ▶ Secure electrical and telephone cords.
- ▶ Put up barriers in dangerous locations.
- ▶ Fix skid-proof floors or mats in bathrooms and kitchens.
- ▶ Install grab bars and handrails in stairways and bathrooms.
- ▶ Install smoke detectors.

### **To enhance lighting and visibility**

- ▶ Make use of high-watt light bulbs in hazardous areas such as stairs.
- ▶ Fix light switches at the bottom and top of stairs.
- ▶ Install motion-sensitive lighting at exterior areas.
- ▶ Fix a night light along paths between bathroom and bedroom.

### **To enhance convenience, ease of use and accessibility**

- ▶ Install wheelchair ramp
- ▶ Fix bedrails/handrails
- ▶ Install a shower/tub chair and raised toilet seats.
- ▶ Rearrange furniture to give more room for wheelchairs and walkers.

### **Other cautionary measures**

- ▶ Note expiration date of food items.
- ▶ Create a one-week medicine dose schedule with reminders.
- ▶ Be on the alert for fraudsters and scam artists, avoid sharing Social Security numbers, credit card information or bank data to anyone over the telephone.

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These are just but examples of things to have in your home that will make your golden years gentle and exciting.

This information was provided by  
**Picket Fence Home Care - Chicago.**

For more information, contact them here:  
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