

Bathroom Safety Checklist for Aging in Place

AgingInPlaceDirectory.com

A comprehensive room-by-room safety review for older adults and their families

How to use this checklist: Walk through your bathroom with a family member or aging-in-place specialist. Check each item that is already safe. Items left unchecked are your action items. Consider sharing results with an occupational therapist or Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS).

1. Flooring & Entrances

Slippery floors are the leading cause of bathroom falls. Address these first.

☐	Non-slip bath mat or rug at the tub/shower exit <i>Look for mats with rubber backing rated for wet surfaces</i>
☐	Non-slip mat or rug at the bathroom entrance
☐	All rugs are secured with non-slip backing or double-sided tape <i>Loose rug edges are a trip hazard</i>
☐	Tile or hard floor has slip-resistant finish or anti-slip strips applied
☐	Floor is free of clutter, cords, and obstacles
☐	Threshold between hallway and bathroom is flush or ramped (no raised lip)
☐	Floor drain is flush with the floor surface
☐	Adequate lighting illuminates the floor path at night

2. Grab Bars & Support

Grab bars must be wall-anchored into studs or blocking — towel bars are not a substitute.

☐	Grab bar installed on the entry/exit wall of the tub or shower <i>Horizontal bar at 33–36 inches from floor is ideal for most adults</i>
☐	Grab bar installed on the back wall of the tub or shower
☐	Vertical grab bar at tub/shower entry to assist with stepping in and out
☐	Grab bar installed beside the toilet (on the dominant-hand side) <i>Standard placement: 6 inches above seat height, angled or horizontal</i>
☐	Grab bar is rated for at least 250 lbs of static load
☐	All grab bars are securely anchored into wall studs or blocking <i>Test by applying firm downward and outward force — no movement is acceptable</i>
☐	Grab bars are free of sharp edges and comfortable to grip
☐	Towel bars and toilet paper holders have NOT been repurposed as grab bars

3. Toilet Area

Toilet height and surrounding space significantly affect ease of use and fall risk.

☐	Toilet seat height is 17–19 inches from floor (comfort height / ADA standard) <i>Standard toilets are 15 inches — a raised seat or comfort-height toilet can help</i>
☐	Raised toilet seat or comfort-height toilet is installed if standard seat is too low
☐	Toilet seat is stable and does not shift under body weight
☐	At least 18 inches of clear space on one or both sides of the toilet
☐	Toilet paper holder is within easy reach without twisting or leaning
☐	Area around toilet is well lit, including at night
☐	Floor is dry and non-slip in the toilet area
☐	Call button, phone, or alert device is within reach from the toilet

4. Shower & Tub

Walk-in showers with a zero-threshold entry are the gold standard for aging in place.

☐	Shower has a zero-threshold or low-threshold entry (no step to trip over)
☐	Non-slip strips or textured surface applied to tub or shower floor
☐	Shower bench or fold-down seat is installed for seated bathing
☐	Handheld showerhead is installed on a slide bar <i>Allows bathing while seated; slide bar doubles as a light grab support</i>
☐	Showerhead height is adjustable for both standing and seated use
☐	Shower controls (faucet handles) are reachable from outside the spray zone <i>Turn water on/off before entering to test temperature</i>
☐	Anti-scald device or thermostatic valve is installed (max 120°F / 49°C)
☐	Glass shower doors are tempered safety glass or replaced with a curtain
☐	Shower curtain rod is mounted to support weight if grabbed during a fall
☐	Tub surround or shower walls are in good repair (no loose tiles or grout)

5. Sink & Vanity

The vanity area should support safe grooming without requiring prolonged standing.

☐	Sink is at a comfortable height for the user (seated or standing use)
☐	Knee clearance under sink if a wheelchair or shower chair is used
☐	Hot water pipes under sink are insulated to prevent burns
☐	Faucet handles are lever-style or single-handle (easy to operate with limited grip)

☐	Mirror height is appropriate for seated and standing use
☐	Counter surface is clutter-free with frequently used items within easy reach
☐	Grooming stool or perch stool available at the vanity
☐	Electrical outlets are GFCI-protected (required near water sources)
☐	Electrical appliances (hair dryer, curling iron) are stored away from the sink

6. Lighting

Good lighting reduces fall risk and compensates for age-related vision changes.

☐	Overhead lighting provides bright, even illumination throughout the bathroom
☐	Night light or motion-activated light is installed for nighttime bathroom visits
☐	Light switch is located at the door entrance and easy to reach
☐	Illuminated or glow-in-the-dark light switch plate is installed
☐	Vanity mirror lighting eliminates shadows on the face
☐	Bulbs are at least 60–75 watt equivalent (or higher) for adequate brightness
☐	Lighting is checked and replaced promptly when it burns out

7. Storage & Accessibility

Reaching overhead or bending low increases fall risk. Reorganize storage to reduce these movements.

☐	Frequently used items stored between waist and shoulder height
☐	Step stools are sturdy, non-slip, and have a handle if used to reach cabinets
☐	Medications are stored in a cool, accessible location (not above the toilet)
☐	Medicine cabinet or shelving does not require overhead reaching to access
☐	Towels and washcloths are within easy reach of the tub or shower
☐	Cabinet door and drawer handles are lever-style or D-ring pulls

8. Bathroom Door

The bathroom door itself can become a barrier in an emergency or when using mobility equipment.

☐	Bathroom door swings outward OR is a pocket/barn door <i>Inward-swinging doors can trap a fallen person against the door</i>
☐	Door width is at least 32 inches (36 inches preferred for wheelchair access)
☐	Door lever handle (not round knob) for easy operation
☐	Door lock can be unlocked from outside in an emergency (privacy pin)

☐	No raised threshold at the door entry
☐	Door opens and closes smoothly without requiring significant force

9. Emergency Preparedness

Even the safest bathroom should be equipped for the unexpected.

☐	Personal emergency response system (PERS) device is worn or within reach in the bathroom <i>Waterproof PERS devices can be worn in the shower</i>
☐	Cell phone or landline is within reach from the floor in case of a fall
☐	Emergency contact list is posted or saved in an accessible location
☐	A trusted person has a key or access code to the home
☐	Regular check-in routine is established with a family member or neighbor
☐	Smoke and CO detectors in or near the bathroom are functional

10. Notes & Next Steps

Need help completing your safety assessment? [AgingInPlaceDirectory.com](https://www.AgingInPlaceDirectory.com) connects you with Certified Aging in Place Specialists (CAPS), occupational therapists, and home modification contractors in your area.

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This checklist is for educational purposes and does not replace a professional home safety assessment.