

Lifeline

How to create a safer home



A room-by-room guide to help eliminate the most common causes of falls

Lifeline Falls Prevention Guidebook

We can't prevent every fall, but we can help reduce the likelihood of trips and slips that lead to them.

This guide provides before-and-after images to help you identify and remove fall hazards in the home, and includes advice on what to do if you happen to fall.

Falling is a serious health risk on its own and can be related to other major health issues.

The time to prepare is now, before a fall happens. In addition to making every effort to remove the fall risks in your environment, make a plan for after you fall.

- Think about how you would get up from a prone position to sitting or standing.
- If you can't get to your feet, call for someone you live with, use a medical alert system or dial 9-1-1 if your cell phone is within reach.
- If you're with someone who has fallen and don't think you can help them up in a way that's safe for both of you, call 9-1-1.



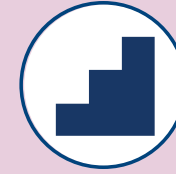
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Bathroom: needs improvement



1 Tight spaces and wet floors make the bathroom one of the most likely places for falls.

2 Lack of a nightlight makes it hard to see at night or in low light.

3 Unsecured bath mats can slide out from underfoot and wet floors can lead to slips.

4 Slippery surfaces can cause you to lose your balance or fall while getting in or out of the shower or tub.



Much better

- 1 Grab bars
- 2 Helpful nighttime lighting
- 3 No slip or trip hazards
- 4 Assistive equipment



1 Grab bars help increase safety.

2 Installing an automatic motion- and light-sensitive nightlight improves visibility and increases security.

3 Removing or securing a bath mat, or replacing it with a non-slip option, makes it safer to get in and out of the tub or shower.

4 Using a sturdy shower seat helps reduce the risk of losing your balance and installing a hand-held unit eliminates the need to reach overhead.



Bedroom: needs improvement



1 The chair is too close to the door and could make exiting the room difficult.

2 Shoes, small rugs and other items on the floor are easy to trip on in the dark or when first waking up in the morning.

3 Clutter on your nightstand can easily be knocked off, creating a potential tripping hazard.

4 Without space for a phone, you may trip or lose your balance in the rush to answer a call.



Much better

- 1 Spacious walkway
- 2 No trip hazards
- 3 No clutter
- 4 A phone or Lifeline device



1 Relocating the chair clears the path to the door.

2 Moving shoes and slippers out of the walking areas and removing small rugs or securing them to the floor with double-stick tape helps reduce falls risk.

3 Decluttering the nightstand creates room for necessities that must be accessible from bed, and adding a lamp improves nighttime visibility.

4 Placing a phone or medical alert service device on the nightstand offers easy access to help 24/7.



Bedroom: needs improvement



1 Low visibility at night increases the likelihood of slips, trips and falls.

2 The walker isn't easily accessible from the bed.

3 Electrical cords and charging cables are easy to trip over.

4 Bed linens and other items on the floor may create a tripping hazard or cause a fall.



Much better

- 1 Nighttime lighting
- 2 Accessible assistive equipment
- 3 Cords safely moved
- 4 Nothing on floor



1 Installing an automatic motion- and light-sensitive nightlight makes it easy to find your way.

2 Moving the walker makes it accessible from the bed and clears the path to the door.

3 Making sure cords are safely run behind furniture removes trip hazards.

4 Keeping items off the floor helps reduce the risk of trips and falls.



Living room: needs improvement



1 Items on the floor increase the likelihood of tripping.

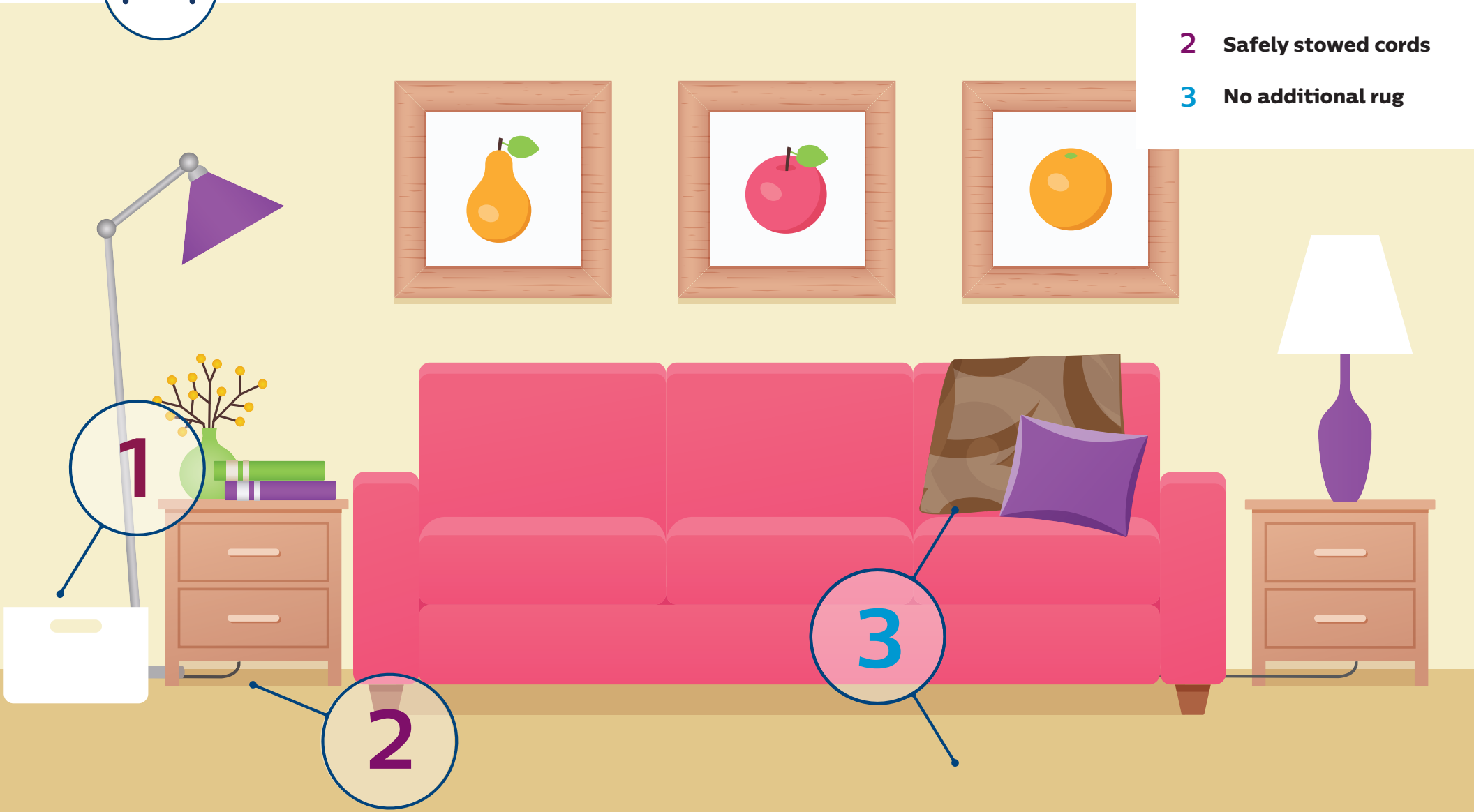
2 Cables, cords and wiring in open spaces are easy to trip over.

3 A loose throw rug or blanket on the floor is easy to trip over.



Much better

- 1 Uncluttered floor
- 2 Safely stowed cords
- 3 No additional rug



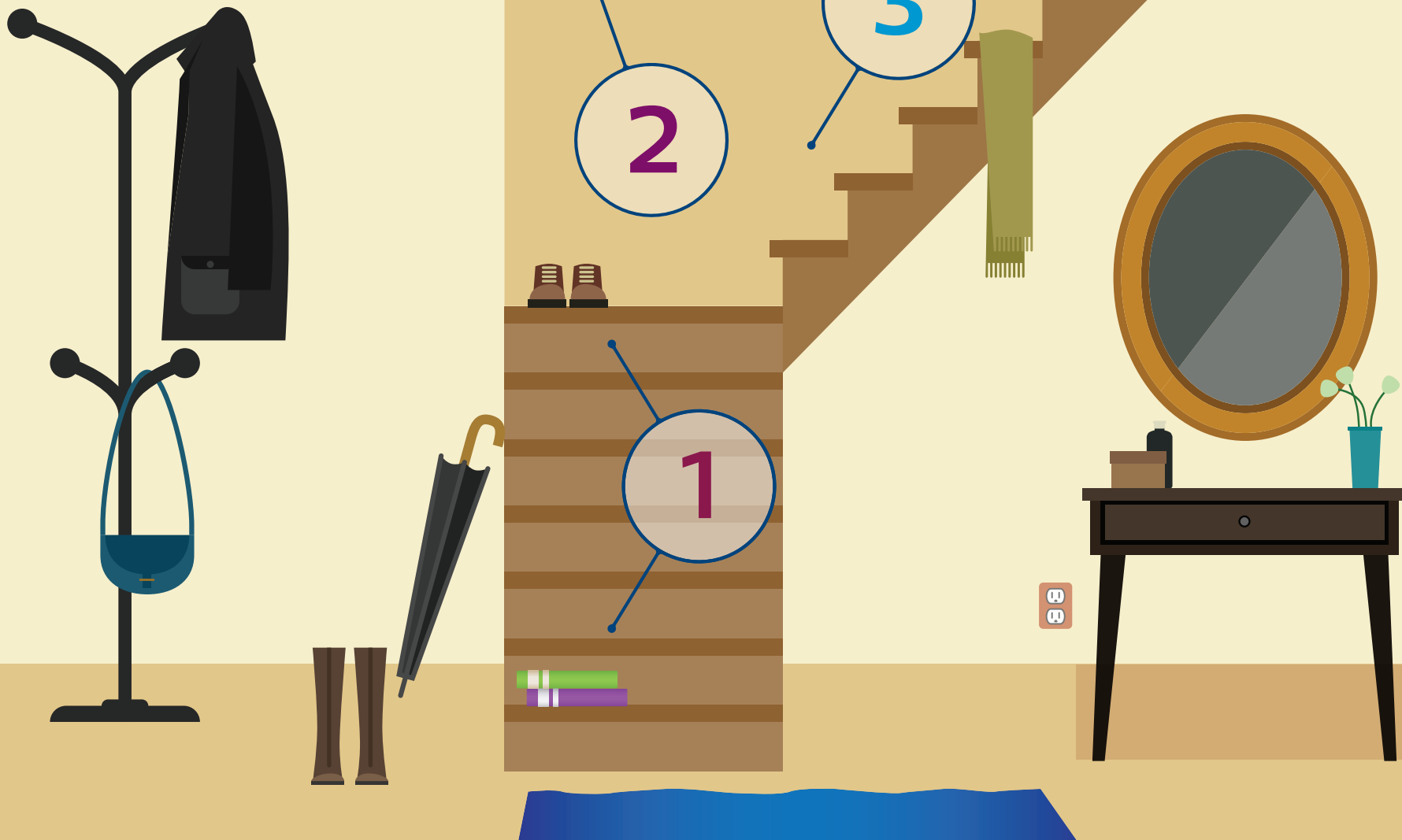
1 Moving objects off the floor clears your path.

2 Running cords behind or under furniture makes walking safer.

3 Removing or securing rugs makes moving around the room safer.



Stairs: needs improvement



1 Loose items on stairs and landings are easy to trip over or slip on.

2 Shadows and dim conditions increase the likelihood of missing steps or slipping.

3 Without a handrail, even a small misstep can turn into a major fall.



Much better

- 1 Secure handrail
- 2 Clear stairway
- 3 Bright lighting



1 Keeping items off the stairs allows you to focus on the steps and reduces loss of balance from trying to avoid items.

2 Adding ceiling lights with switches at the top and bottom of the stairwell, or automatic light- and motion-sensors stairway lighting ensures you can see where you're stepping.

3 Installing a secured handrail at the proper height provides support and improves balance.

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