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YOUR SAFER HOME ACTION GUIDE · NOVEMBER 8, 2026

Sample: Margaret's 2-Hour Safer Home Action Guide

A practical two-hour session to make the home safer together. It's a focused start, not a promise that every issue can be fixed in two hours.

YOUR SITUATION

Your answers point to 5 areas worth working on at home. This guide focuses on the three that matter most.

Because Margaret has had a recent fall, the session starts there.

Margaret lives alone, so being able to call for help, and someone checking in, matter even more.

You weren't sure about one thing, so there's a short list to check during the session.

Your three priorities

PRIORITY 1

After a recent fall

Margaret has had a fall in the past six months. Falls are more likely to happen again, so the session starts with where and how it happened.

When to call a professional: Let Margaret's doctor or nurse practitioner know about the fall, and ask about a falls-risk review and balance programs.

PRIORITY 2

Better lighting

Poor light on stairs, in hallways and at entrances makes trips more likely, especially at night.

When to call a professional: If new switches or fixtures are needed, use a licensed electrician.

PRIORITY 3

Clear walkways and trip hazards

Clutter, loose rugs and cords on the routes Margaret uses most are some of the easiest hazards to fix.

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Your two-hour session

Do it together with Margaret, at a calm time. Take breaks, and skip anything that doesn't feel safe. Tick each step as you go.

FIRST 15 MINUTES — Agree the plan together

- [ ] Sit down with Margaret and go through the three priorities below. Let Margaret decide where to start.
- [ ] Gather what you'll need: bulbs, a tape measure, a notepad and this guide.

MINUTES 15 TO 45 — After a recent fall

- [ ] Ask Margaret, gently, where the fall happened and what led to it, then look at that spot together.
- [ ] Clear and light the route where it happened, and the night-time route from bed to bathroom.
- [ ] Make sure a phone, or a way to call for help, is within reach from the floor in the rooms used most.

MINUTES 45 TO 75 — Better lighting

- [ ] Check every light along the night-time route, and replace dim or burnt-out bulbs.
- [ ] Add plug-in or motion-sensor night lights between the bedroom and bathroom.
- [ ] Make sure there's a light switch, or a lamp within reach, at the top and bottom of stairs and by the bed.

MINUTES 75 TO 105 — Clear walkways and trip hazards

- [ ] Walk the main routes together: bed to bathroom, bedroom to kitchen, chair to door.
- [ ] Remove or secure loose rugs and mats, and move cords away from walkways.
- [ ] Clear anything on the floor or stairs that could catch a foot.

LAST 15 MINUTES — Write down what's left

- [ ] Tick off what you finished, and list what's left, with who will do it and by when.
- [ ] Write down any questions for the doctor, pharmacist or an occupational therapist.
- [ ] Agree when you'll check in with Margaret on how the changes are working.

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Check during the session

You weren't sure about these, so take a look together:

- [ ] Look at the bathroom and stairs: are there sturdy rails or grab bars where Margaret needs them?

Room by room

A quick check of each room. Tick what's fine, and note anything to come back to.

Entrance and outside

- [ ] Entrance steps have a sturdy railing and good lighting.
- [ ] The path from the driveway or sidewalk is even, and cleared of snow and ice.
- [ ] The house number is easy to see from the street, for emergency services.

Hallways and stairs

- [ ] Rails are sturdy and run the full length of the stairs, ideally on both sides.
- [ ] Every step is in good repair, with no loose carpet or objects left on it.
- [ ] There's a light switch, or good light, at the top and bottom.

Bathroom

- [ ] A non-slip mat is in the tub or shower, and a dry, flat mat is outside it.
- [ ] Towel racks and soap dishes are never used for support. Grab bars, if needed, are professionally installed.
- [ ] Toiletries are within easy reach, without bending or stretching.
- [ ] The door can be opened from outside in an emergency.

Bedroom

- [ ] A lamp or light switch is within reach of the bed.
- [ ] The bed is a comfortable height to sit on and get up from.
- [ ] A phone, or a way to call for help, is within reach of the bed.

Kitchen

- [ ] Everyday items are between waist and shoulder height.
- [ ] There's no need to climb on chairs or step stools.
- [ ] The stove is easy to see and turn off, and nothing that can burn is near it.

Living areas

- [ ] Chairs used most are sturdy, with arms to push up from.
- [ ] Cords run along walls, not across walkways.
- [ ] There's a clear path between furniture.

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Basement and laundry

- [ ] The basement stairs have a rail and good light.
- [ ] If laundry is downstairs, think about whether carrying baskets on the stairs is still safe.

Things that may help

Matched to your answers. Each one has a no-cost alternative, and none replaces a professional assessment or help that's needed.

Anti-slip stair treads

Grippy strips or pads for stair steps that add traction without changing the shape of the step.

May help with: after a recent fall.

No purchase needed: Keep stairs clear of objects, make sure every step is well lit, and check that the handrail is secure.

Treads must not create raised edges, curling or uneven footing.

Motion-sensor night lights

Small plug-in lights that switch on by themselves when someone walks past, so hallways, stairs and bathrooms aren't dark at night.

May help with: better lighting.

No purchase needed: Leave a hallway or bathroom light on overnight, and keep the route from bed to bathroom clear.

Avoid cords across walking routes. Lighting does not eliminate fall risk.

Reacher/grabber tool

A lightweight handheld tool for picking up or reaching small items without bending, stretching or climbing.

May help with: after a recent fall.

No purchase needed: Move everyday items to shelves between waist and shoulder height so they're easy to reach.

For lightweight objects only. Not a substitute for climbing or heavy lifting.

Non-slip bath/shower mat

A textured mat that grips the floor of the tub or shower to give feet more traction on wet surfaces.

May help with: after a recent fall.

No purchase needed: Keep a dry towel and a sturdy, non-slip bath mat just outside the tub, and wipe up water straight away.

Check it suits the tub or shower surface. The mat must lie flat and not slide or curl.

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Professionally installed grab bars
Sturdy bars fixed into the wall structure beside the toilet, tub or shower, for something solid to hold when sitting, standing or stepping.

May help with: after a recent fall.

No purchase needed: Until bars are installed, avoid leaning on towel racks or soap dishes; they aren't built to take weight.

Needs a professional assessment or installation.

Needs a professional suitability assessment and structural installation. Never use suction-cup bars as weight-bearing supports.

Safe to do yourselves

- Clearing clutter, securing or removing rugs, and moving cords.
- Changing bulbs and adding plug-in night lights.
- Reorganizing cupboards and shelves.
- Adding a non-slip bath mat.
- Testing smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

Call a professional for

- Grab bars and stair rails: they must be fixed into the wall structure by someone qualified.
- New light switches, fixtures or hard-wired devices: a licensed electrician.
- Choosing walking aids or bathroom equipment: a physiotherapist or occupational therapist.
- Help at home for Margaret: the doctor or Ontario Health atHome.

Before you finish

- [ ] After a recent fall: done, or next steps written down
- [ ] Better lighting: done, or next steps written down
- [ ] Clear walkways and trip hazards: done, or next steps written down
- [ ] Night-time route checked and lit
- [ ] Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms tested
- [ ] Remaining actions listed, with who and by when
- [ ] Questions for professionals written down

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Next steps

- Check in with Margaret in a week or two: are the changes helping, and is anything getting in the way?
- For health questions, you can call Health811 (dial 811) for free advice any time.
- Let Margaret's doctor or nurse practitioner know about the fall, and ask about a falls-risk review and balance programs.
- If new switches or fixtures are needed, use a licensed electrician.

Want the whole picture? A Personalized Family Plan ($199) covers all six areas of Margaret's life, with checked local services, reviewed by a care navigator: senestro.ca/pricing

This guide is practical help for a home-safety session. It isn't a medical assessment or a formal home inspection, and it can't promise a home is safe. Don't attempt installations or work you're not qualified to do. In an emergency, call 911.