

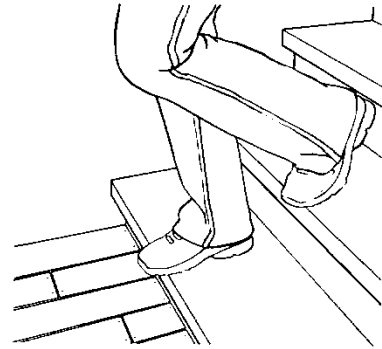
Safety begins at home

Make your home a safer place for you and your family

Safety on the stairs

Lighting and handrails are important here, plus that good old rule – keep it slow.

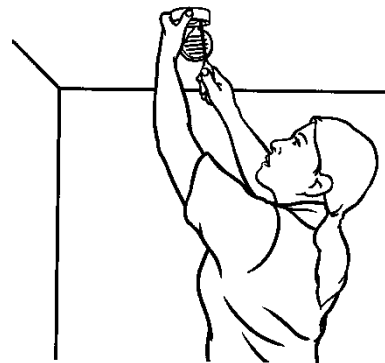
- The more light the better. If you can, install two lights over stairs and put light switches at the top and bottom so you won't have to climb in the dark.
- Always use the handrail. If you don't have one, it's easy to get one fitted – just make sure it extends past the end of the stairs.
- Clear the clutter – keep objects like toys, shoes, books and bags away from stairs.
- Try and go one step at a time to avoid slips and trips.



Living room and hallway

Our homes are our havens. Here's few simple things to make your home safe and comfortable:

- Make sure you've got working smoke alarms in bedrooms, sleepouts, hallways and living rooms and test them regularly.
- Put safety catches on any windows children can reach. Make sure that you can still open them easily in case there's an emergency, like a fire.
- If you have wooden floors, wear non-slip shoes or slippers rather than socks and take it slow.
- Try not use rugs or mats on wooden floors. If you do have them, stick them to the floor with Velcro or double-sided tape.
- Keep power cords away from walkways by taping them to skirting boards. Don't put them under rugs or carpet as they can cause a fire. If you are building or renovating, install enough power points so cords don't cross the room.

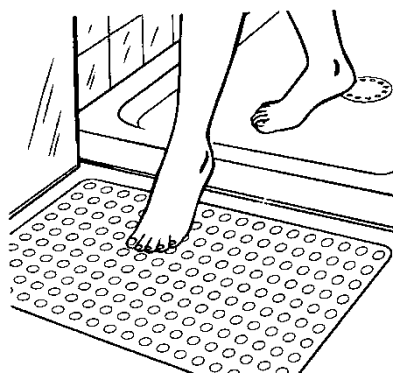


Best bathroom behaviour

Keeping your bathroom tidy and dry is a great start to make it safe:

- Keep the floors dry – mop up water after baths and showers.

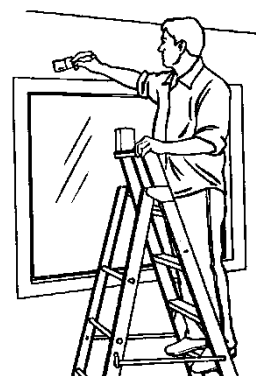
- Put towel rails close to the bath or shower to stop you having to lean to reach them.
- Clear the shower floor – put your shampoo and soap in a shelf or basket.
- Ask your pharmacist for child safety caps on all medicines.
- Get your hot water checked to ensure it's at the right temperature. It should be 55°C at the tap and 60°C at the cylinder.
- Use non-slip mats in the shower and bath and non-slip flooring for the rest of the room.



Outside: garden, paths and shed

As a nation we love our DIY. On a fine day, see which of these things can be tackled at your house:

- Keep your paths and steps clear of leaves and moss and be careful when it's raining.
- Make sure your outdoor areas are well-lit with sensor lights, plus mark edges of steps and drops with white paint for better visibility.
- Grooved timber on decks gives better grip or try adding sand to deck paint to stop slips.
- Balconies need a solid safety barrier or fence that children can't climb.
- Put stickers on any glass sliding doors or large glass panels – it's a fun thing to do with the kids.
- Keep chemicals, solvents, paints and sprays out of sight and reach of children – ideally, lock them away in a cupboard.
- Keep three points of contact on ladders (e.g. two feet and a hand). Don't reach over too far – keep your belt buckle within the sides of the ladder.



Kitchen safety

Kitchens are often busy places and the heart of the home – just a bit of reorganising can make sure they're easier to use and safe for all the family:

- Put safety catches on cupboards holding poisons or knives.
- Keep cupboard doors closed so you don't walk into them.

- Keep heavy objects and things you use often in low cupboards so you can reach them easily.
- Use a step ladder rather than a chair to reach high shelves.
- Clean up any spills as soon as you see them.
- Dangling cords are dangerous – put appliances close to power points.
- If you can, put the fridge at the entrance to the kitchen, so people don't have to walk through the kitchen to reach it.

How safe is your home?

In New Zealand, more injuries happen at home than at work, on the road, or while playing sport. In fact, on average, someone in New Zealand is injured at home every 48 seconds!

But it's not all doom and gloom. The good news is, with just a few simple changes, you can make your home a safer place for you, your family, and any visitors.

These tips cover the main areas in most homes and are great place to start.

Ref.: Acc booklet – "Safety begins at home"