

Home Safety Self Assessment Tool (HSSAT)



Occupational Therapy Geriatric Group

Department of Rehabilitation Science

University at Buffalo

Funded by



Community Health Foundation
of Western & Central New York

INSTRUCTIONS

HOW TO USE HSSAT CHECKLIST TO IDENTIFY HOME HAZARDS TO PREVENT FALLS

Use the checklist to find and correct/fix the hazards for every room/area in your home that could cause you to trip/fall.

Steps to use the checklist

Step 1:

Go to each room/area of your home with this checklist; look for the hazards/items that are listed below the picture on each page (Some items may not relate to your home).

Step 2:

If the problem is present in your room/area, check off in the appropriate box. After checking all the problems add them and write the total in the big box. (Each item that gets a checkmark is a potential hazard).

Step 3:

Then go through the solutions and take the necessary action to fix those problems which are a potential hazard.

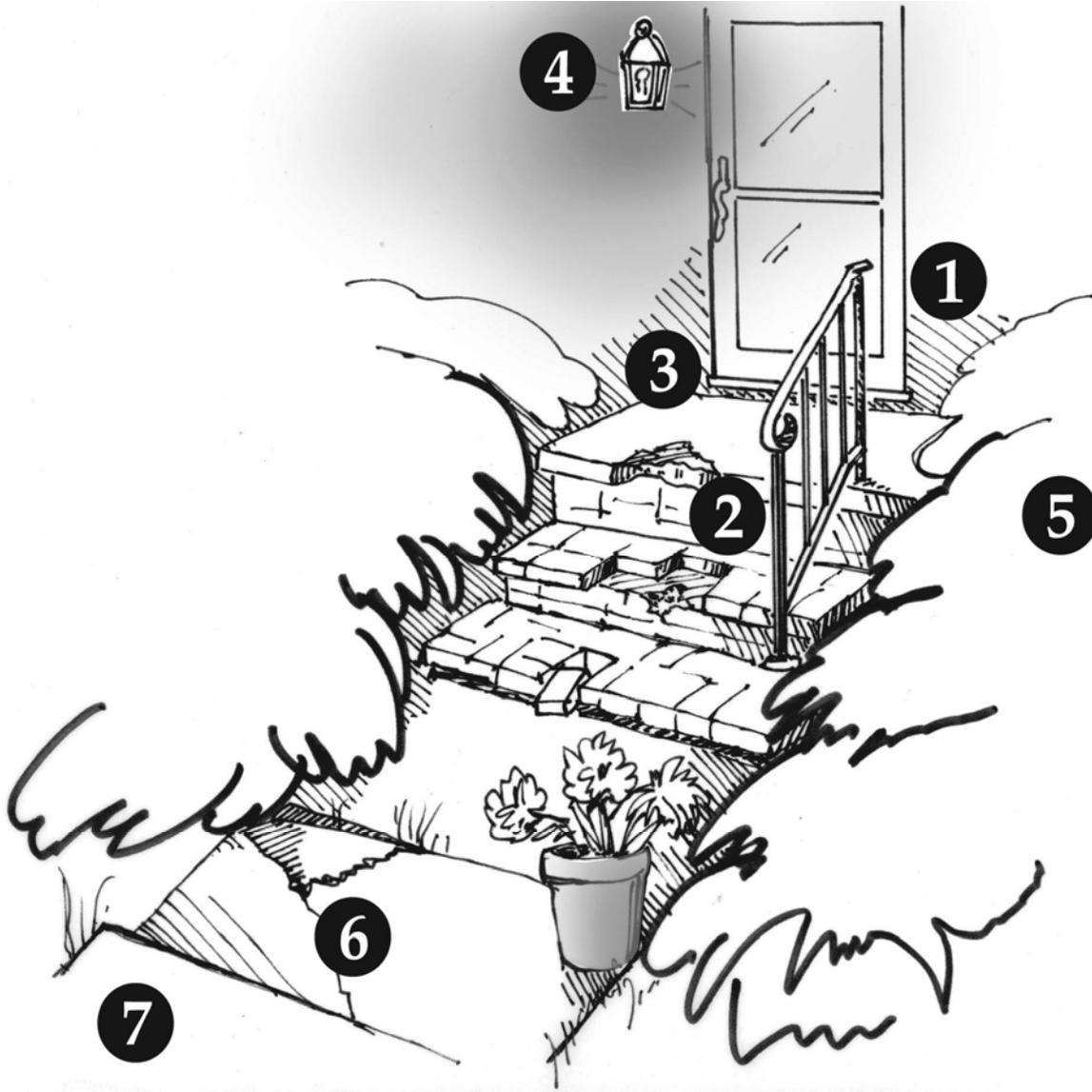
Step 4:

Add the total number of hazards in all the rooms/areas to get a grand total.

Step 5:

Write down what action you are going to take to prevent falls in the Action Log for your records.

Entrance to Front Door and Front Yard



Are these problems present in your home?
If yes, please check in the box next to the problem,
then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Lack of railings | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Lack of a ramp for a wheelchair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Unsafe steps (too steep/cracked/chipped) | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Uneven/cracked Pavement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Unmarked or raised threshold | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Ice or snow on driveway/walkway |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Lack of lighting at night | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Number of total problems

SOLUTIONS FOR THE PROBLEMS
IN ENTRANCE TO FRONT DOOR AND FRONT YARD

1. Lack of railings

Add at least one railing, ideally one on each wall.

2. Unsafe steps (too steep, cracked, chipped, etc.)

Have damaged or broken steps repaired.

3. Unmarked or raised threshold

Mark end of steps or thresholds with contrasting tape or paint color to increase awareness of change in height.

4. Lack of lighting at night

Add an outdoor light fixture if not present.

Add a sensor light that automatically turns on and off.

5. Lack of a ramp for a wheelchair

Have a remodeler or home contractor construct a ramp that will allow wheelchair access in and out of the home.

6. Unsafe pavement (uneven or cracked)

Have uneven or cracked pavement repaired.

Avoid these areas if possible when walking to and from the home.

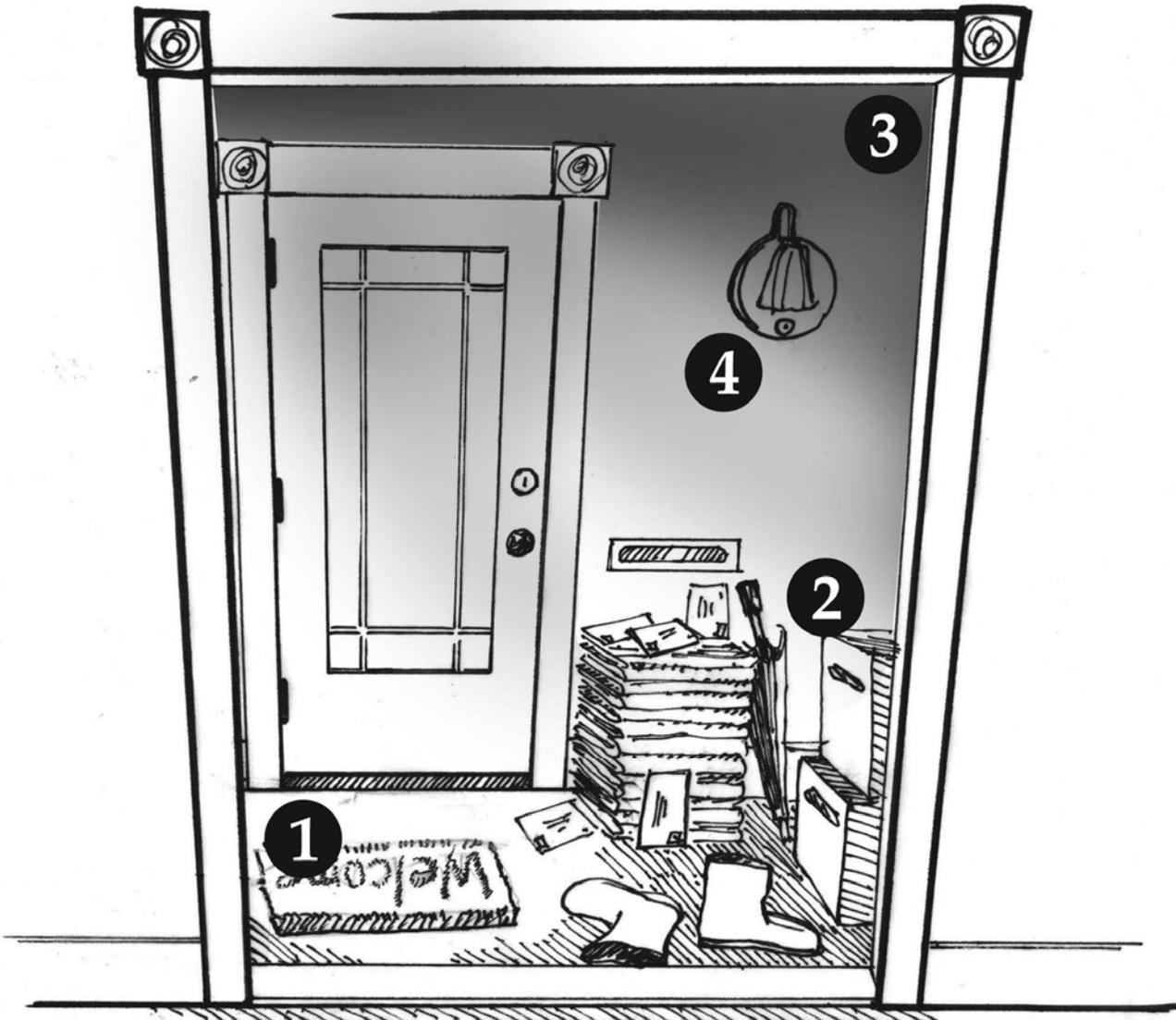
Contact local government for repair if it is a sidewalk or driveway end.

7. Ice or snow on driveway or walkway

Use snow melter.

Have snow/ice removed by a neighbor or service

Hallway or Foyer



Are these problems present in your home?
If yes, please check in the box next to the problem,
then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

1. Uneven or slippery flooring

3. Dark or poor lighting

2. Cluttered area

4. Lack of access to ceiling light

Other _____

Number of total problem

SOLUTIONS FOR THE PROBLEMS
IN HALLWAY OR FOYER

1. Unsafe flooring (slippery, uneven carpeting, etc.)

Make sure floor surfaces are dry.
Have carpet stretched or removed to eliminate wrinkles or bumps.
Add a carpet runner to hallways or foyer.

2. Cluttered area

Eliminate clutter on floors by removing and/or organizing items.
Example: shoe tray, hooks for umbrella.

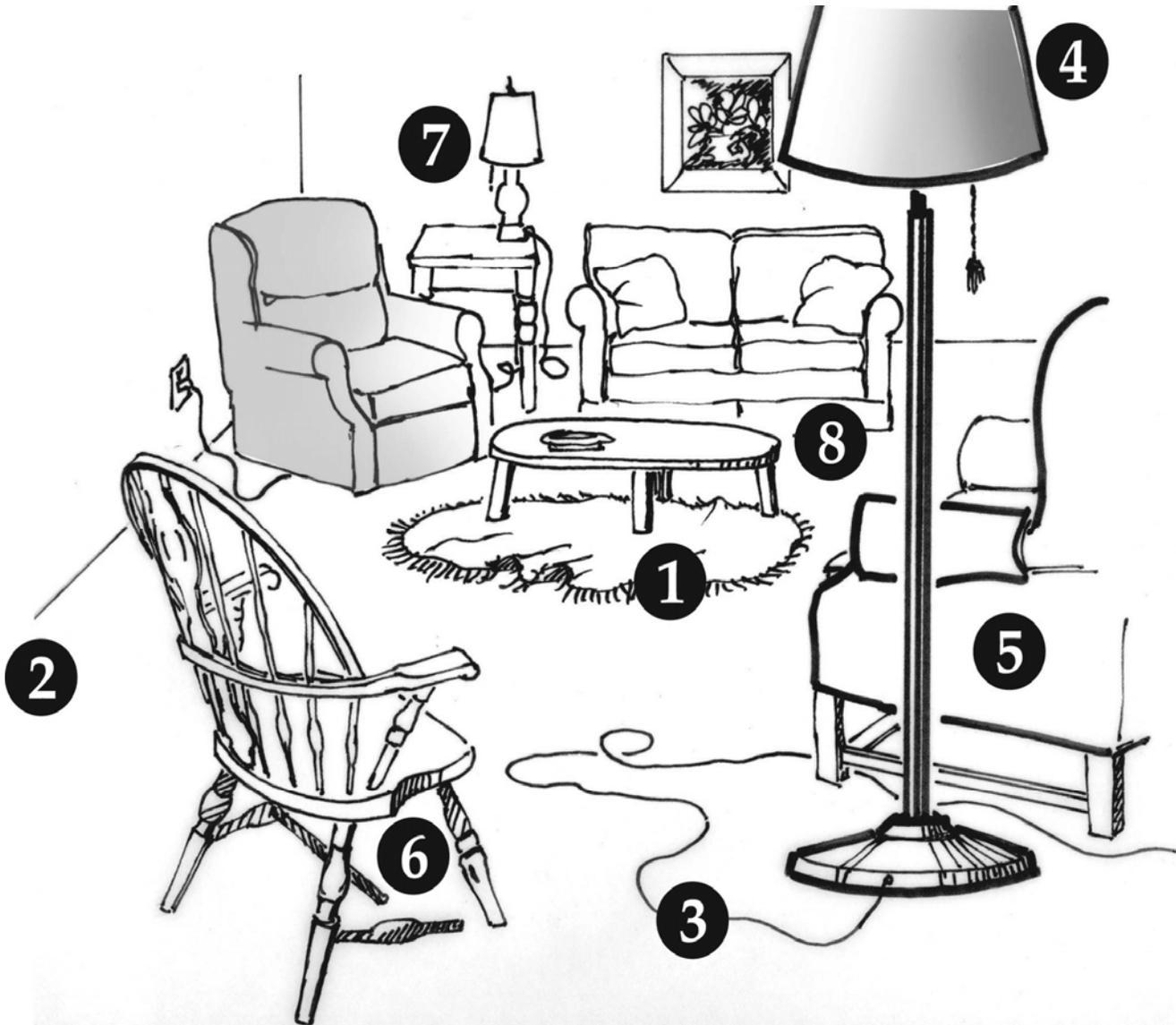
3. Dark or poor lighting

Increase wattage to allowable limits in lights.
Add additional overhead or wall lighting

4. Lack of access to ceiling light

Ask another person to change the light.
Add removable wall lights to poorly lit areas

LIVINGROOM



Are these problems present in your home?
 If yes, please check in the box next to the problem,
 then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Presence of throw or scatter rug | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Presence of unstable furniture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Presence of clutter | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Presence of unstable chair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Presence of electric cords across the floor | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Difficult to access light switches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Poor lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Not enough space to move around |

Other _____

Number of total problem

SOLUTIONS FOR THE PROBLEMS
IN LIVING ROOM

1. Presence of throw or scatter rug

Remove scatter rug

2. Presence of clutter

Eliminate clutter on floor surfaces by placing items on shelves or storage.
Consider donating or throwing out the items you no longer use.

3. Presence of electric cords across the floor

Run your cords behind furnishings. Use extension cords to accomplish this.
Rearrange items that must be plugged in to areas near an outlet.

4. Poor lighting

Increase wattage to allowable limits in lamps/lights.
Add additional lamp's or wall/overhead lights

5. Presence of unstable furniture (chair, table, etc.)

Place a block under the shorter leg.
If the chair or table is broken, have it repaired or replaced.

6. Presence of unsafe chair (too low, too high, without arms)

If the chair is too low, add a cushion or pillow to raise the height.
A chair that is too high, or without arms should not be used as it will not provide you with sufficient stability to get in and out of the chair.

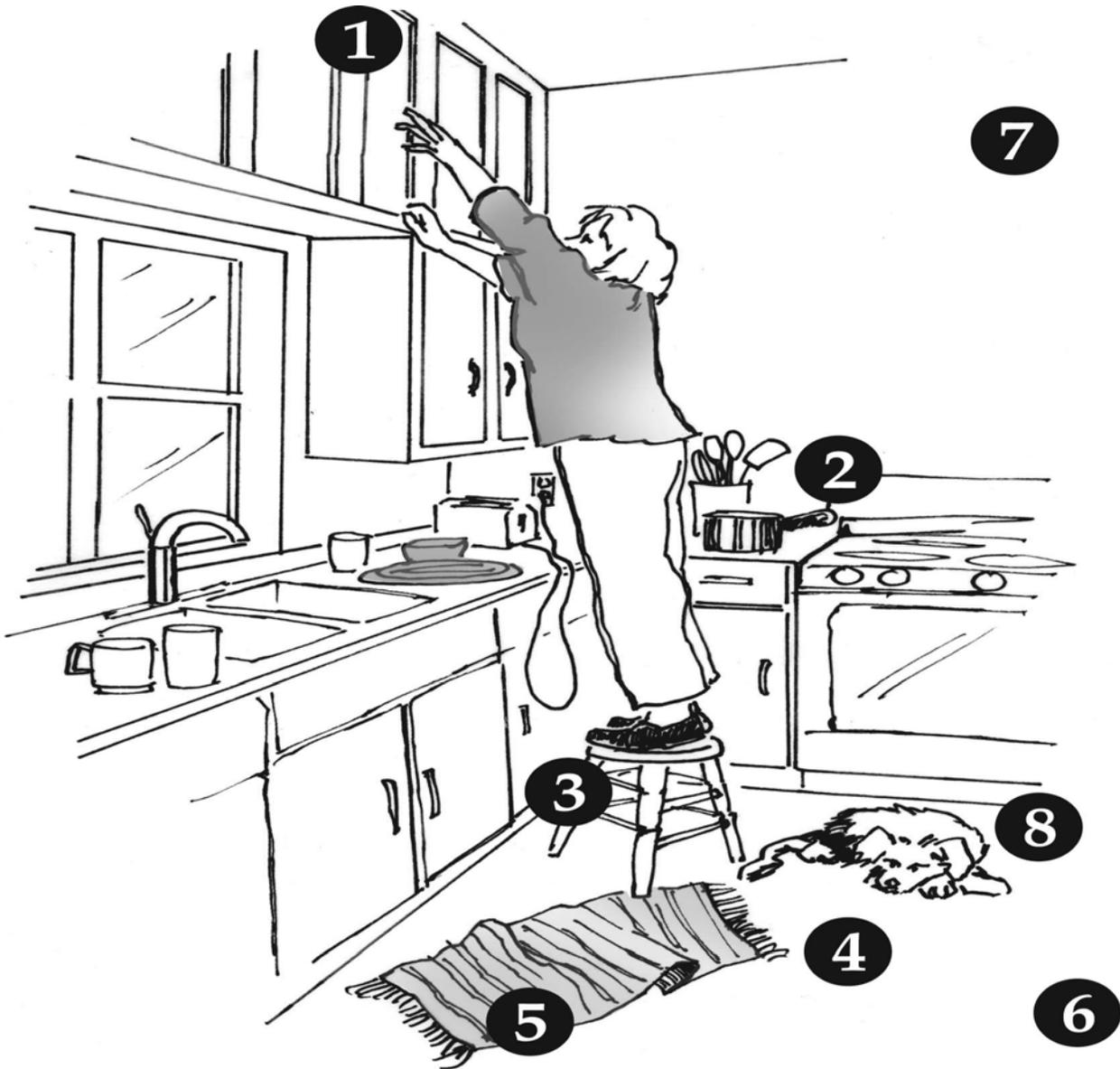
7. Difficult to access light switches easily

Add "clapper" light switch control to lamps.
Rearrange furnishings to allow quick access to wall switch or lamps.

8. Not enough space to move around

Remove clutter or excess furniture that prevents you from moving around the room easily.
Some items may be rearranged, while you may need to donate or throw out other items you don't really need or use.

KITCHEN



Are these problems present in your home?
If yes, please check in the box next to the problem,
then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Cabinet too high or low | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Presence of throw/ scatter rug |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Not enough counter space | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Presence of slippery floor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Using a stool or a chair to reach things | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Poor lighting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Not enough room to maneuver | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Presence of a pet underfoot when preparing meals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Number of total problem

SOLUTIONS FOR THE PROBLEMS IN KITCHEN

1. Cabinet too high or too low

Move items to the shelves closest to the counter.
Add hooks to the wall for pots and pans you use frequently.

2. Not enough counter space

Make sure available counter space is cleared of clutter.
Move kitchen table closer to counter for additional work space.
Use a rolling cart for added work space.

3. Using a stool to a chair to reach things

Move items to lower shelves.
Replace the stool with a sturdy step ladder.

4. Not enough room to maneuver

Eliminate clutter or excessive furniture (extra kitchen chairs, etc.) to add space.
Remove a leaf from the table and push it closer to the wall.

5. Presence of a throw/scatter rug

Remove scatter rug

6. Presence of slippery floor

Do not walk on a wet floor.
Wear shoes or socks with a non-skid sole.
Change flooring surface to one with a less slippery surface.

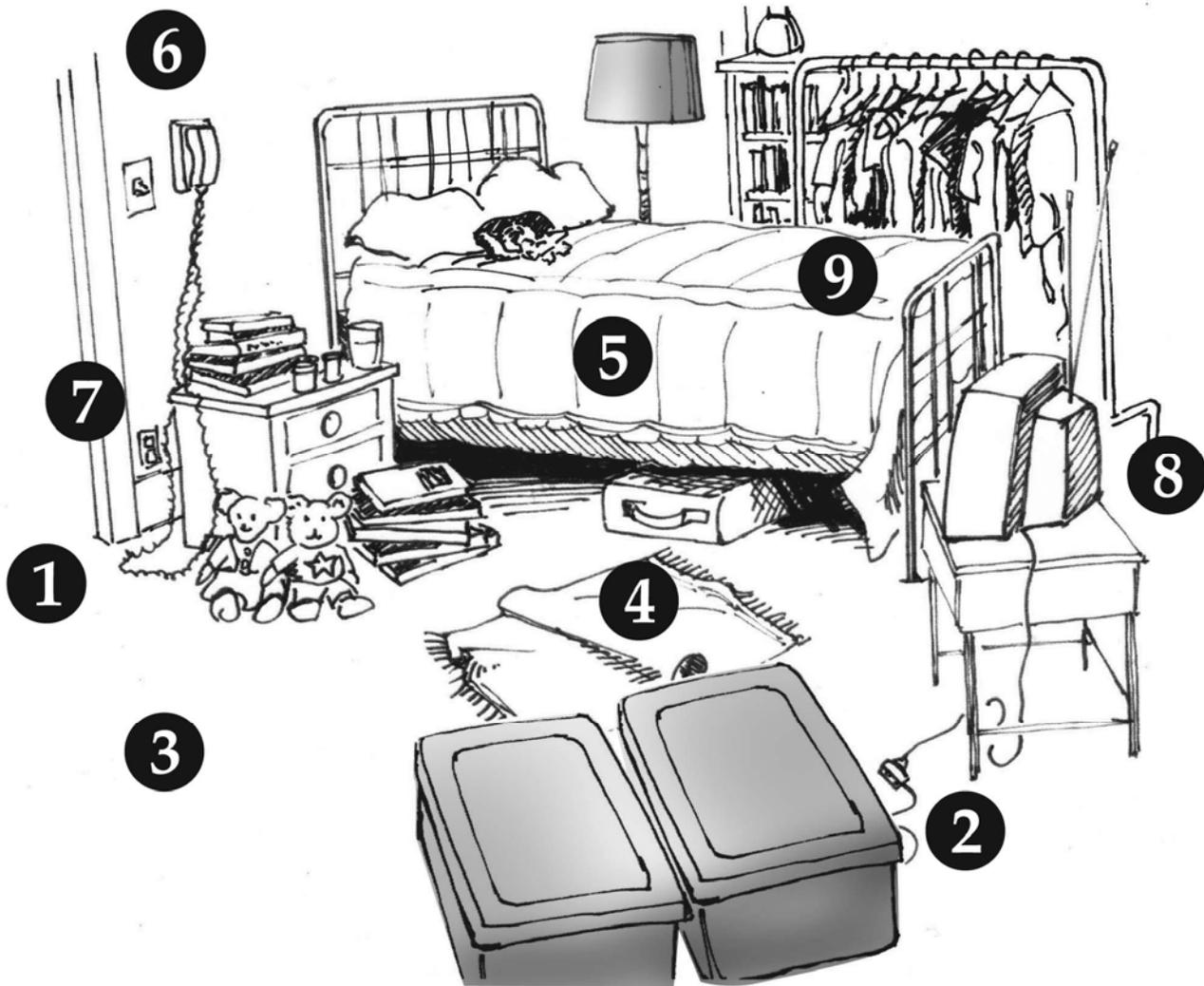
7. Poor lighting

Increase wattage of bulbs to allowable level.
Add under counter lighting.
Add additional overhead lighting.

8. Presence of a pet underfoot when preparing meals

Remove the pet from the room while working in the kitchen by adding a pet gate to the entry ways of the kitchen.
Put the pet outside or in a crate.

BEDROOM



Are these problems present in your home?
 If yes, please check in the box next to the problem,
 then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Presence of clutter | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Lack of a telephone near the bed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Presence of electric cords across the floor | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Lack of nightlight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Unsafe carpet (uneven, torn, curled up) | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Arrangement that causes difficulty to reach items (TV remote, lamp) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Presence of throw/scatter rug | <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Lack of device to get in/out of bed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Height of bed | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Number of total problems

SOLUTIONS FOR THE PROBLEMS IN BEDROOM

1. Presence of clutter

Eliminate clutter on floor surfaces by placing items on shelves or storage. Consider donating or throwing out the items you no longer use.

2. Presence of electric cords across the floor

Run your cords behind furnishings. Use extension cords to accomplish this. Rearrange items that must be plugged in to areas near an outlet.

3. Unsafe carpet (uneven, torn, curled up, etc.)

Have carpet stretched or removed to eliminate wrinkles or bumps

4. Presence of throw/scatter rug

Remove all scatter and throw rugs

5. Height of bed (too high or low)

Too low: Add blocks below bed frame to raise height
Too high: Remove bed frame or use a lower profile mattress or box spring

6. Lack of a telephone near the bed

Place a cordless type or cell phone next to your bed at night or during naps

7. Lack of a nightlight

Place at least 2 nightlights in the bedroom to illuminate the room at night. Add additional nightlights along the hall or path to the bathroom. Add one in the bathroom, also

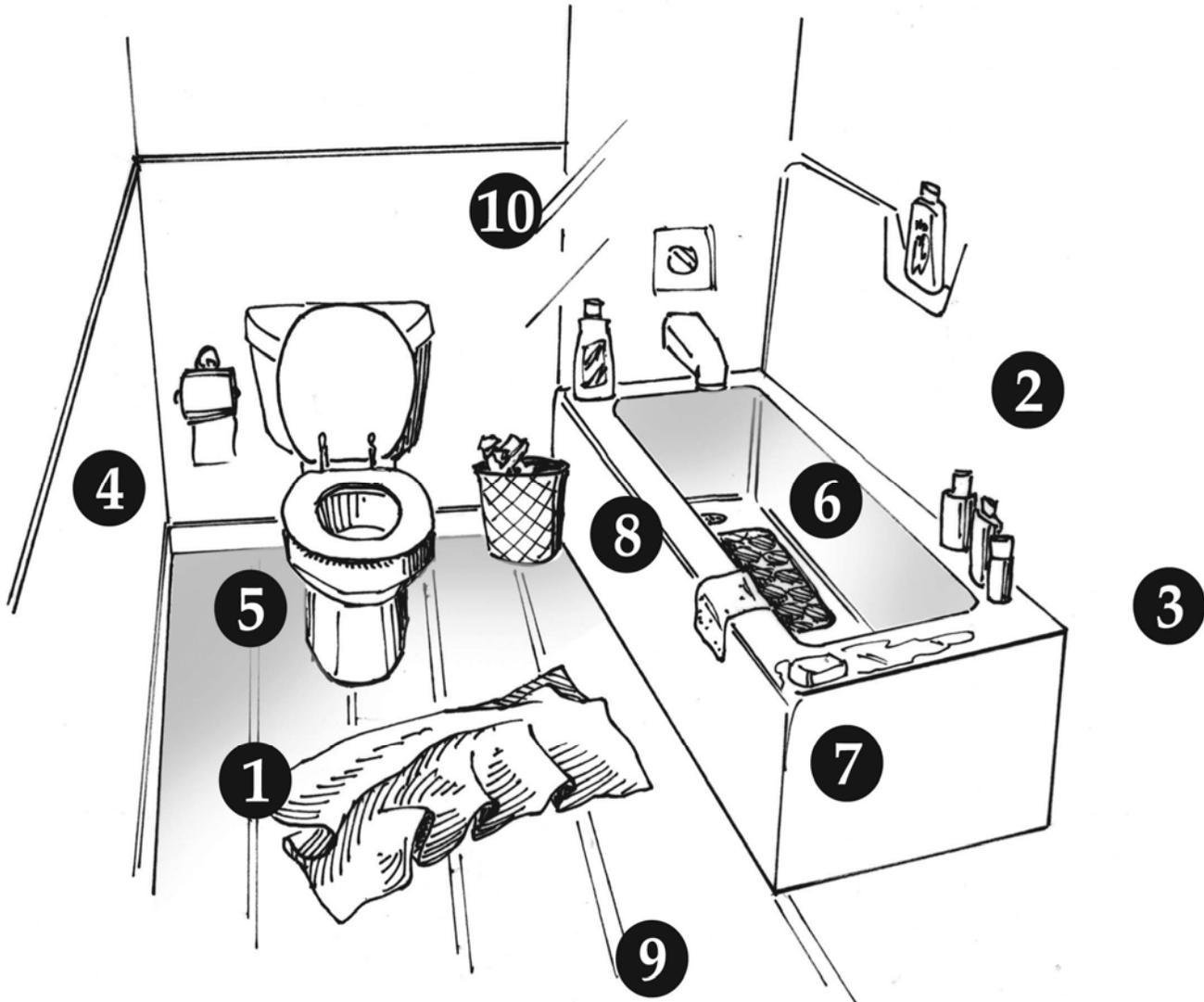
8. Arrangement that causes difficulty to reach commonly used items such as a TV remote, medications, lamp, glasses, magnifier, etc. at night

Place these items on your bedside table. If you don't have a table, you may put a rolling cart or shelving unit next to the bed

9. Lack of a device to help get in and out the bed

Purchase a ½ bedrail that can slide between mattress and box spring.

BATHROOM



Are these problems present in your home?
 If yes, please check in the box next to the problem,
 then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Presence of bath rugs | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Slippery tub (lack of bath mat, etc) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Lack of grab bars in the tub | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Claw foot/tub that is high to get into |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Lack of grab bars in the shower area | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Lack of bath chair in the shower area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Lack of grab bars near the toilet | <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Clutter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Toilet is too high or low | <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Incorrect placement of grab bars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Number of total problems

SOLUTIONS FOR THE PROBLEMS IN BATHROOM

1. Presence of bath rugs.

Remove bath rugs that do not have non-skid bottoms.

2. Lack of grab bars in the tub

Add a clamp on bath grab bar to the side of the tub.

3. Lack of grab bars in the shower area

Add grab bars to the wall across from the tub and on the wall where there are bath faucets.

4. Lack of grab bars in the toilet

Add a grab bar next to the toilet wall or toilet safety grab bars that attach at the toilet seat screws.

5. Toilet is too high or too low

Add a raised toilet seat for seats that are too low.
Consider a lower profile toilet if it is too high.

6. Slippery tub (lack of bath mat, etc.)

Add a rubber bath mat or adhesive non-skid decals to the bottom of the tub.

7. Claw foot or other type of tub that is too high to get into easily

Add a tub transfer bench to slide into the tub area, or replace with a lower tub.

8. Lack of bath chair in the tub or shower area, or tub transfer bench

Add a tub bath or chair along with grab bars. A tub transfer bench is helpful if you have difficulty stepping into the tub area because you can sit and slide over into the tub area.

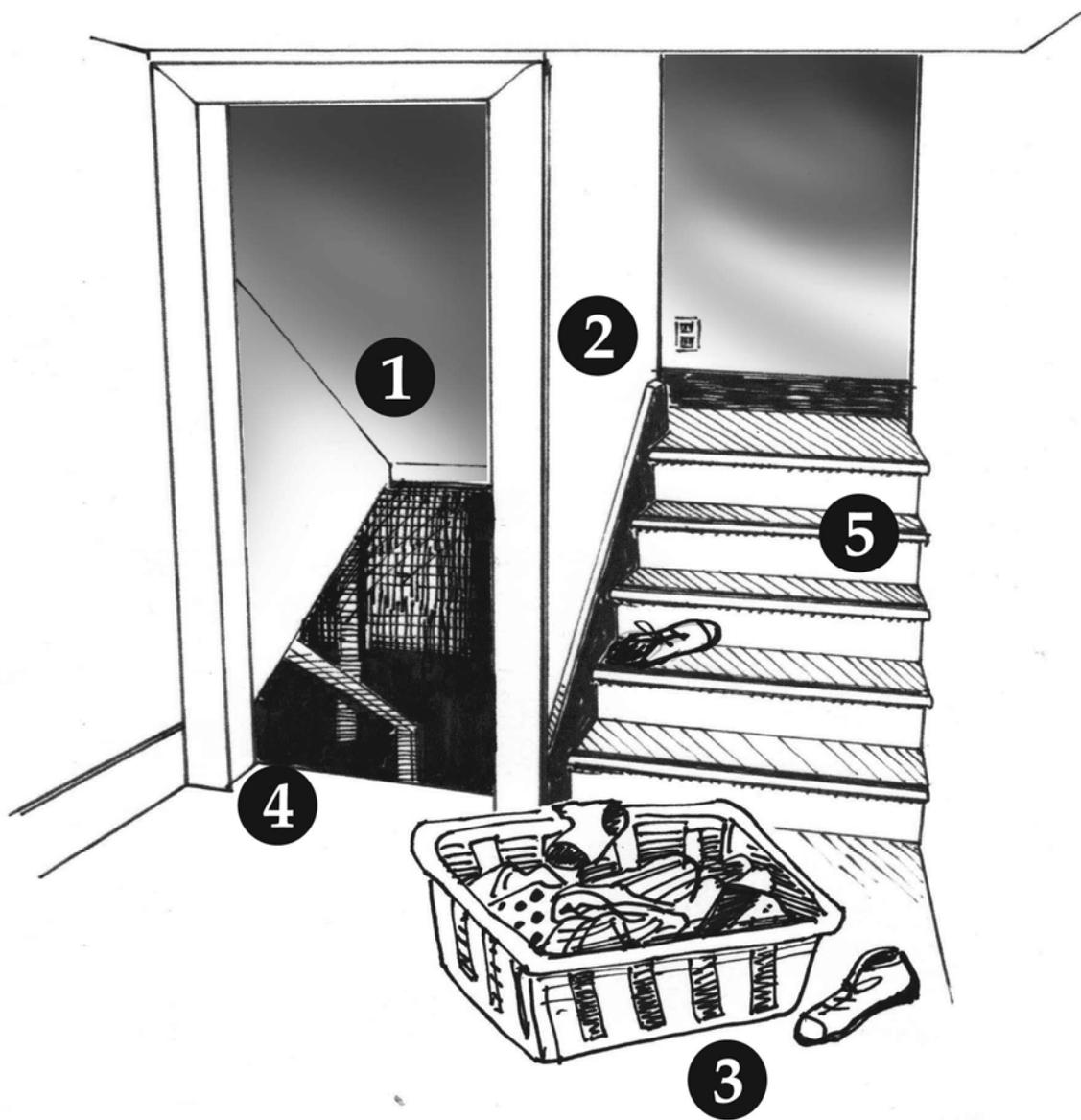
9. Clutter

Remove clutter from all floor areas to drawers or closets. Inexpensive plastic cabinets or rolling units can be purchased to store bath items.

10. Incorrect placement of grab bars

If permanently installed, hire a qualified professional to change the grab bars to the correct location and angle.

STAIRCASES



Are these problems present in your home?
If yes, please check in the box next to the problem,
then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

1. Poor or lack of lighting

3. Steps too steep

2. Lack of railings

4. Slippery steps without tread/ carpet

3. Cluttered

Other _____

Number of total problems

SOLUTIONS FOR THE PROBLEMS IN STAIRCASES

1. Poor or lack of lighting

Increase wattage to allowable limits in lights
Add additional overhead or wall lighting

2. Lack of railings

Add at least one railing entire length of the wall, ideally one on each side.

3. Cluttered

Eliminate clutter on floors by removing and/or organizing items in areas near the stairs.

4. Steps too steep

Use railings for stability.
Walk slowly up and down stairs with lights on.
Have others carry heavy or large items up or down the stairs.
Reduce daily use of stairs to reduce risk of falls

5. Slippery steps without tread or carpet

Add adhesive stair treads, or carpet runner.

Total Number of Home Hazards

Transfer all the total scores of each room/ area in the appropriate boxes and add all the scores to get a grand total.

Entrance to Front Door and Front Yard

Hallway or Foyer

Living Room

Kitchen

Bedroom

Bathroom

Staircases

Grand Total

If you have 1-5 problems, you have less than 10% of possible home hazards.
6-10 problems, you have less than 20% of possible home hazards.
11-20 problems, you have less than 40% of possible home hazards.
26 or more problems, you have more than 50% of possible home hazards.

You should reduce the percentage of the home hazards as much as possible. Refer to solutions in each area.

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