

# **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 might cause you to trip or fall. All items are potential risks for falls but if a wheelchair is not used, some items may not apply.

## **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 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 that are a potential hazard. Make sure that you look at assistive devices and helpful products that are indicated in the solutions section. Having them can make your home safer.

### **Step 4:**

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

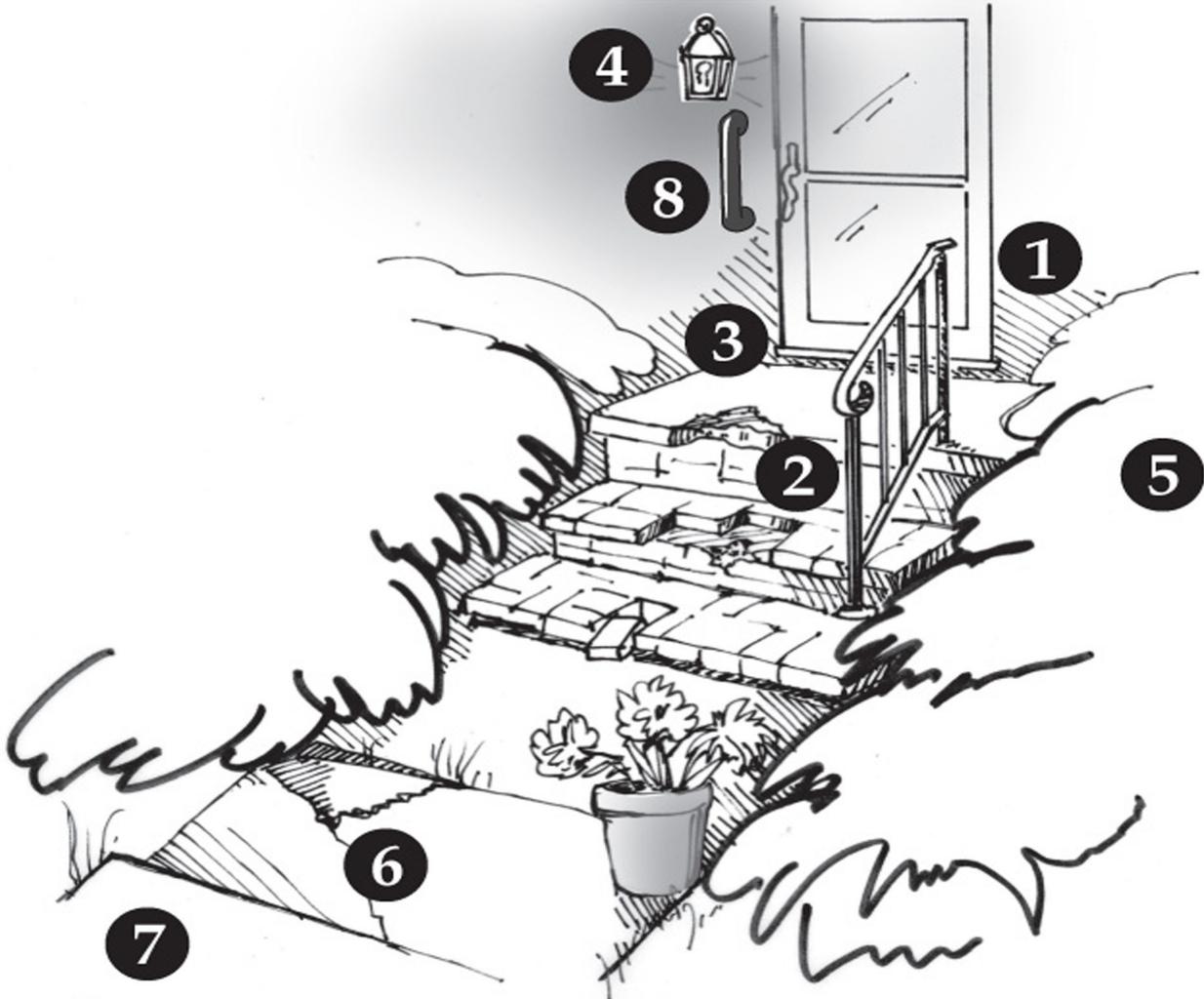
### **Step 5:**

Write down what actions you are planning to take or have already taken to prevent falls in the Action Log for your records.

### **Step 6:**

It may be a good idea to ask your family and friends for a home safety modification or an assistive device for your birthday or holiday present. Also, talk with your friends about home safety. It can be a great gift for them to know how to prevent future falls.

## Entrance to Front Door and Front Yard



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

1. Lack of railings or unstable railing

5. Lack of a ramp for a wheelchair

2. Unsafe steps (too steep/cracked)

6. Uneven/cracked pavement

3. Unmarked or raised threshold

7. Ice or snow on driveway/walkway

4. Lack of lighting at night

8. Lack of an outdoor grab bar

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of problems

\* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

## **Solutions for the Problems in Entrance to Front Door and Front Yard**

### **1. Lack of railings or unstable railing**

Add at least one railing, ideally one on each wall. **(See page 22, item 1)**  
Have unstable railing stabilized.

### **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 changes in height. **(See page 22, item 2)**

### **4. Lack of lighting at night**

Add an outdoor light fixture if not present.  
Add a sensor light that automatically turns on and off. **(See page 22, item 3)**

### **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. **(See page 23, item 4)**

### **6. Unsafe pavement (uneven or cracked)**

Have uneven or cracked pavement repaired.  
Avoid these areas if possible when walking to and from the home.  
You may contact local government for repair if it is a sidewalk or driveway end.

### **7. Ice or snow on driveway or walkway**

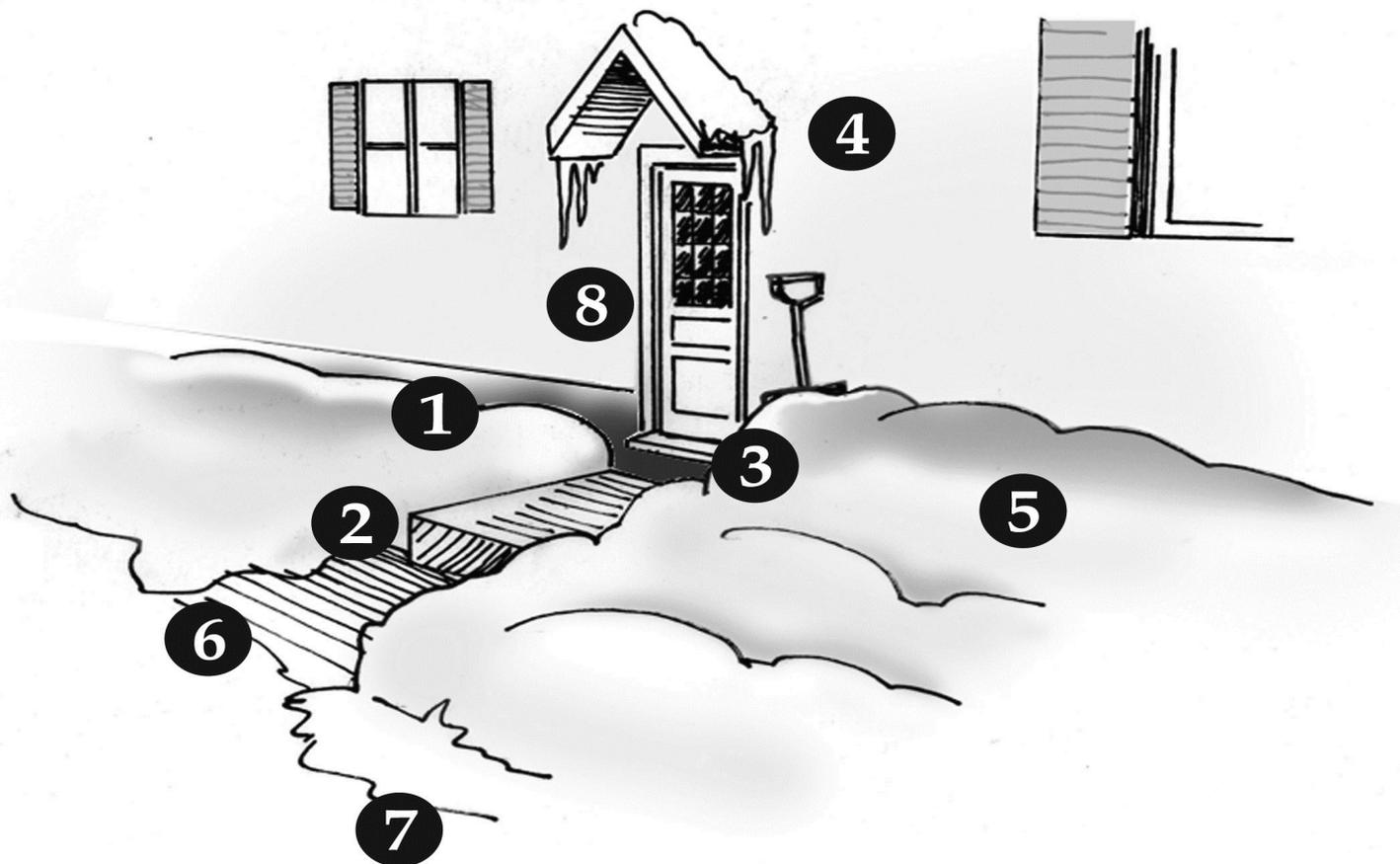
Use snow melter.  
Have snow/ice removed by a neighbor or service. **(See page 23, item 5)**

### **8. Lack of an outdoor grab bar**

Add an outdoor grab bar next to the door. **(See page 23, item 6 & page 33, item 1)**

**For information on additional devices, see page 29, item 31.**

## Entrance to Back/Side Door



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Lack of railings or unstable railing<br><input type="checkbox"/> 2. Unsafe steps (too steep/cracked/chipped)<br><input type="checkbox"/> 3. Unmarked or raised threshold<br><input type="checkbox"/> 4. Lack of lighting at night | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Lack of a ramp for a wheelchair<br><input type="checkbox"/> 6. Uneven/cracked pavement<br><input type="checkbox"/> 7. Ice or snow walkway<br><input type="checkbox"/> 8. Lack of a outdoor grab bar |
|---|---|

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of problems

\* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

## **Solutions for the Problems** **Entrance to Back/Side Door**

### **1. Lack of railings or unstable railing**

Add at least one railing, ideally one on each wall. **(See page 22, item 1)**  
Have unstable railing stabilized.

### **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 changes in height. **(See page 22, item 2)**

### **4. Lack of lighting at night**

Add an outdoor light fixture if not present.  
Add a sensor light that automatically turns on and off. **(See page 22, item 3)**

### **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. **(See page 23, item 4)**

### **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 walkway**

Use snow melter.  
Have snow/ice removed by a neighbor or service. **(See page 23, item 5)**

### **8. Lack of an outdoor grab bar**

Add grab bar next to the door. **(See page 23, item 6)**

## Hallway or Foyer



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of problems

\* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

## **Solutions for the Problems** **in Hallway or Foyer**

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

Make sure floor surfaces are dry.

If you have a carpet, make sure that the patterns are not too busy.

Have carpet stretched or removed to eliminate wrinkles or bumps.

Add a carpet runner to slippery hallways or foyers and secure to the floor.

**(See page 26, item 17)**

### **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.

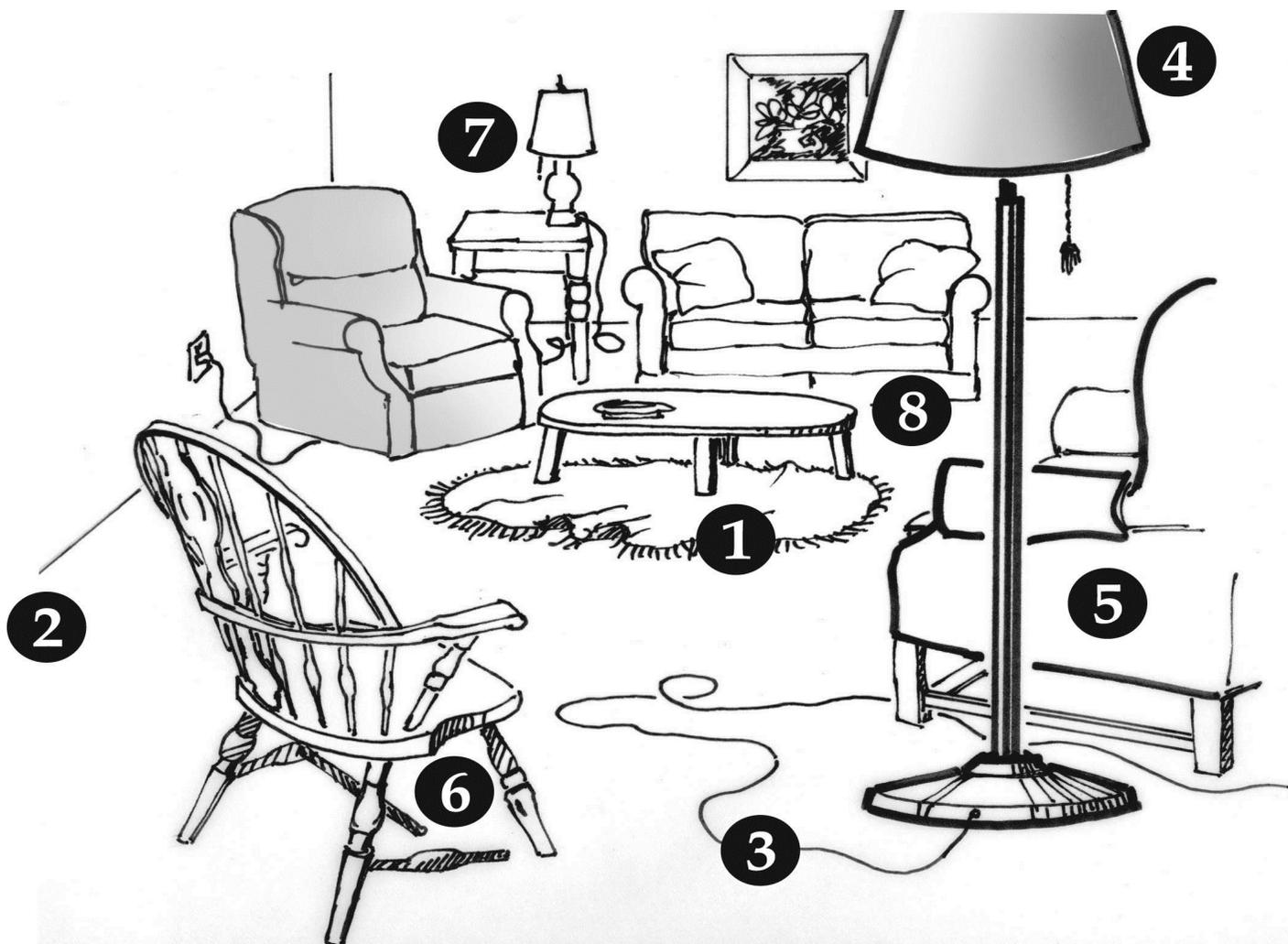
Add additional overhead or wall lighting.

### **4. Lack of access to ceiling light**

Ask another person to change the light.

Add removable wall lights to poorly lit areas. **(See page 23, item 7)**

## Living Room



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below.

1. Presence of throw or scatter rug

5. Presence of unstable furniture

2. Presence of clutter

6. Presence of unstable chair

3. Presence of electric cords across the floor

7. Difficult to access light switches

4. Poor lighting

8. Not enough space to move around

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of problems

\* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page.

## **Solutions for the Problems in Living Room**

### **1. Presence of throw or scatter rug (See page 24, item 8)**

Remove a scatter rug or use a double sided rug tape or a rug pad to secure the rug to the floor.

### **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. Avoid carpets with confusing patterns.

### **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. **(See page 24, item 9 & page 36, item 7)**

### **4. Poor lighting**

Increase wattage to allowable limits in lamps/lights. Add additional lamps or wall/overhead lights. **(See page 34, item 4)**

### **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 furniture leg riser 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. **(See page 24, item 10)**

### **7. Difficult to access light switches**

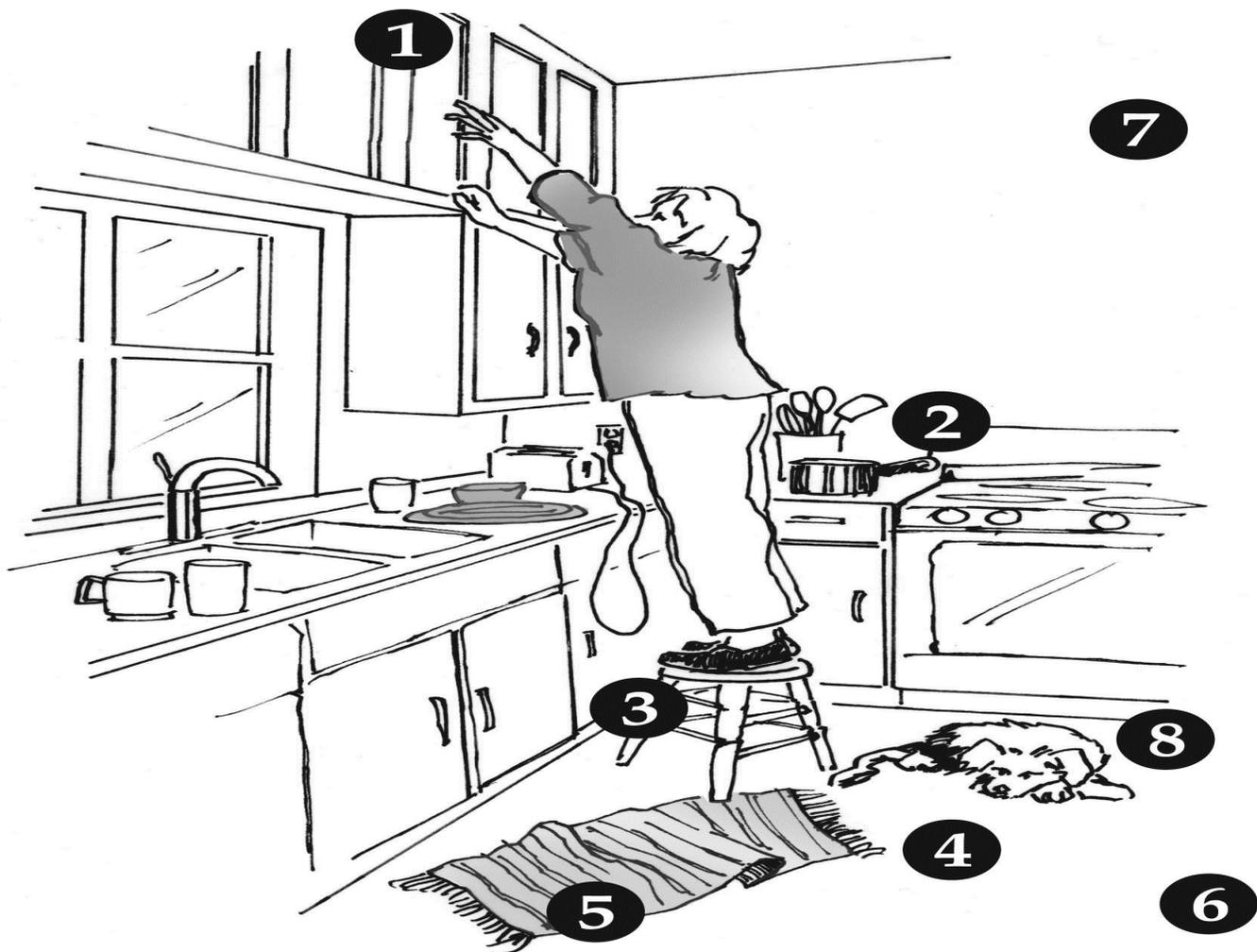
Add "clapper" light switch control to lamps. There are other remote control switching options for operating the lights. Rearrange furnishings to allow quick access to wall switch or lamps.

### **8. Not enough space to move around**

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

**For information on additional device, see page 24, item 11**

## Kitchen



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

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

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of problems

\* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

## **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. Use Lazy Susan.  
**(See page 25, item 14)**  
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. **(See page 25, item 12)**

### **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 a scatter rug or use a double sided rug tape or a rug pad to secure the rug to the floor. **(See page 24, item 8)**

### **6. Presence of slippery floor**

Do not walk on a wet floor.  
Wear comfortable and fit shoes or socks with a non-skid sole.  
**(See page 25, item 13)**  
Change flooring surface to one that is less slippery.

### **7. Poor lighting**

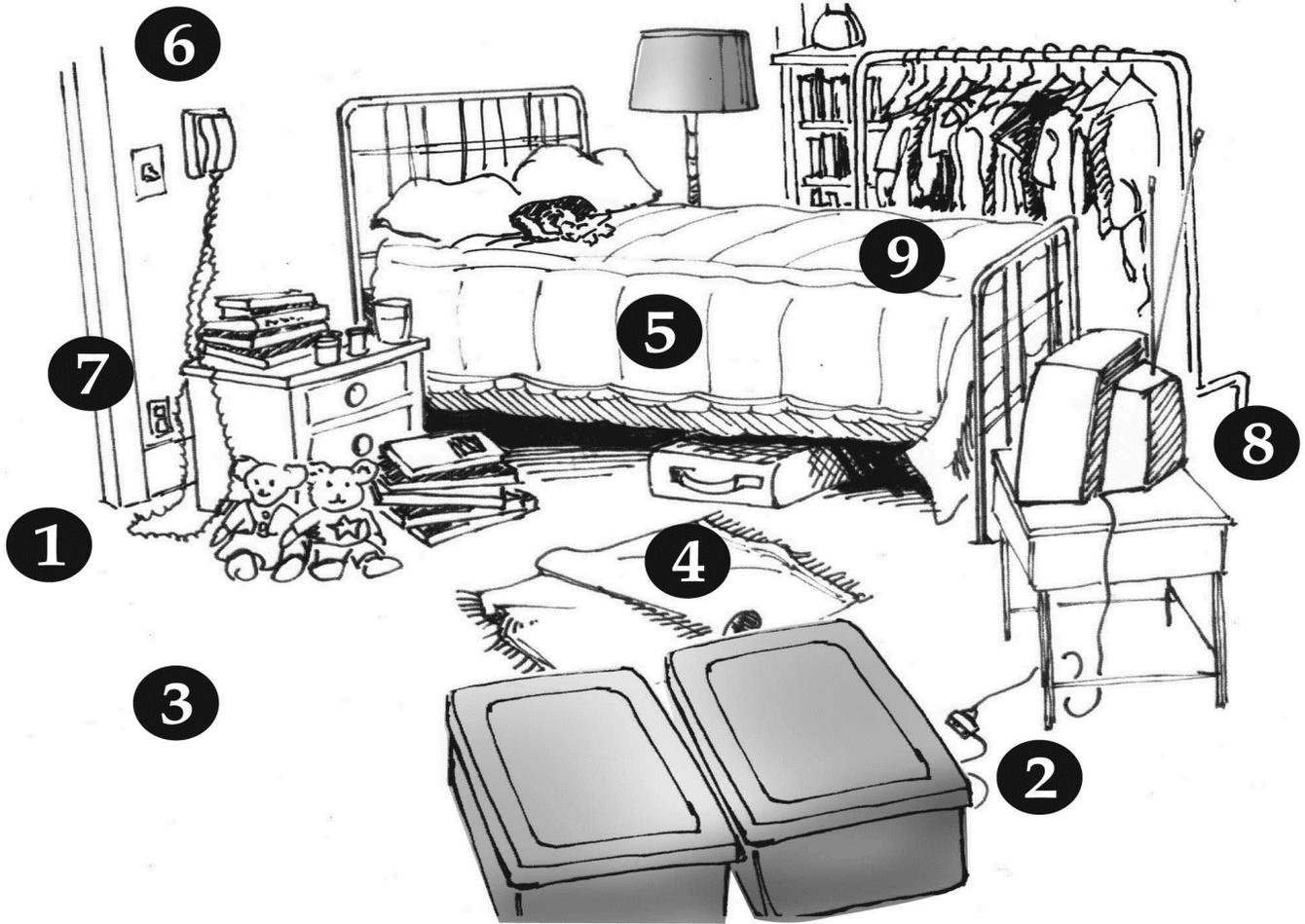
Increase wattage of bulbs to allowable level.  
Add under counter lighting.  
Add additional overhead lighting.

### **8. Presence of a pet underfoot when preparing meals**

Remove the pet from the kitchen while cooking and add a pet gate to the entry ways of the kitchen. **(See page 25, item 15)**  
Put the pet outside or in a crate.

**For information on additional device, See page 26, item 16**

## Bedroom



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

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

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of problems

\* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

## **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 (See page 24, item 9)**

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.) (See page 26, item 17)**

Have carpet stretched or removed to eliminate wrinkles or bumps.

### **4. Presence of throw/scatter rug (See page 24, item 8)**

Remove all scatter and throw rugs or use a double sided rug tape or a rug pad to secure the rug to the floor.

### **5. Height of bed (too high or low) (See page 24, item 10)**

Too low (your knees are above the hips when sitting at the edge of the bed) : Use bed risers below bed legs to raise height.

Too high (your legs do not touch the floor when sitting at the edge of the bed): Remove bed frame or use a lower profile mattress or box spring.

### **6. Lack of a telephone near the bed (See page 26, item 18)**

Place a cordless type or cell phone next to your bed at night or during naps. Use a remote control for TV and VCR. (See page 26, item 19)

### **7. Lack of a nightlight (See page 23, item 7)**

Place at least two nightlights in the bedroom to illuminate the room at night. Add additional nightlights along the hall or path to the bathroom. Also add one nightlight in the bathroom.

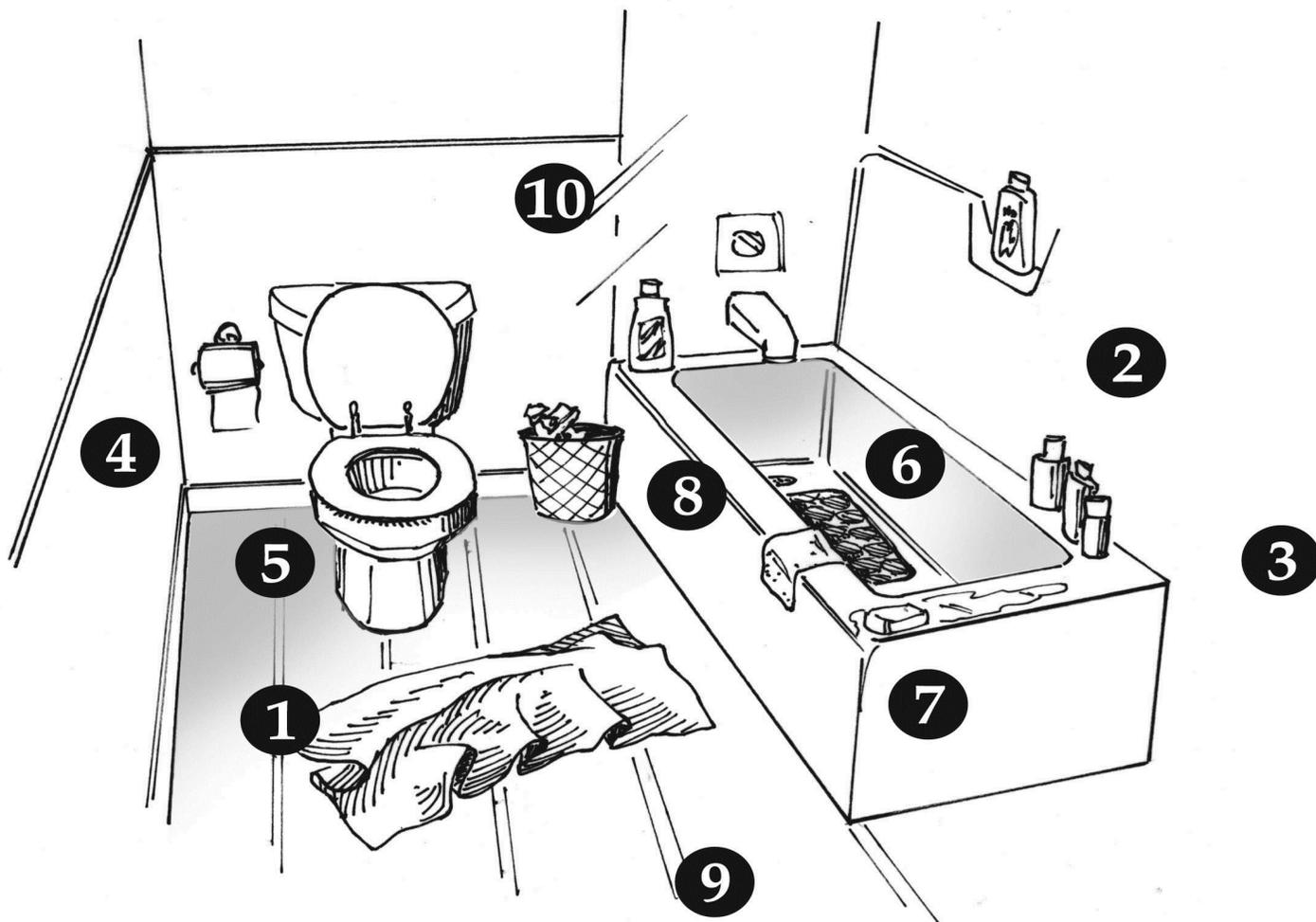
### **8. Arrangement that causes difficulty to reach commonly used items such as a TV remote, medications, lamp, glasses, magnifier, etc. at night**

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 (See page 27, item 20)**

Purchase a half bedrail or a bed cane that can slide between mattress and box spring.

## Bathroom



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

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

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of problems

\* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

## **Solutions for the Problems in Bathroom**

### **1. Presence of unsafe bath rugs.**

Use a bath rug with non-skid bottom.

### **2. Lack of grab bars in the tub (See page 27, item 21)**

Add a bath grab bar on the wall or a clamp-on grab bar to the tub.

### **3. Lack of grab bars in the shower area**

Add grab bars to the wall near the shower and on the wall where the bath faucets are.

### **4. Lack of grab bars near the toilet (See page 27, item 22)**

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

### **5. Toilet is too high or too low (See page 27, item 23)**

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.) (See page 28, item 24)**

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 bath chair along with grab bars to the tub or shower area. 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**

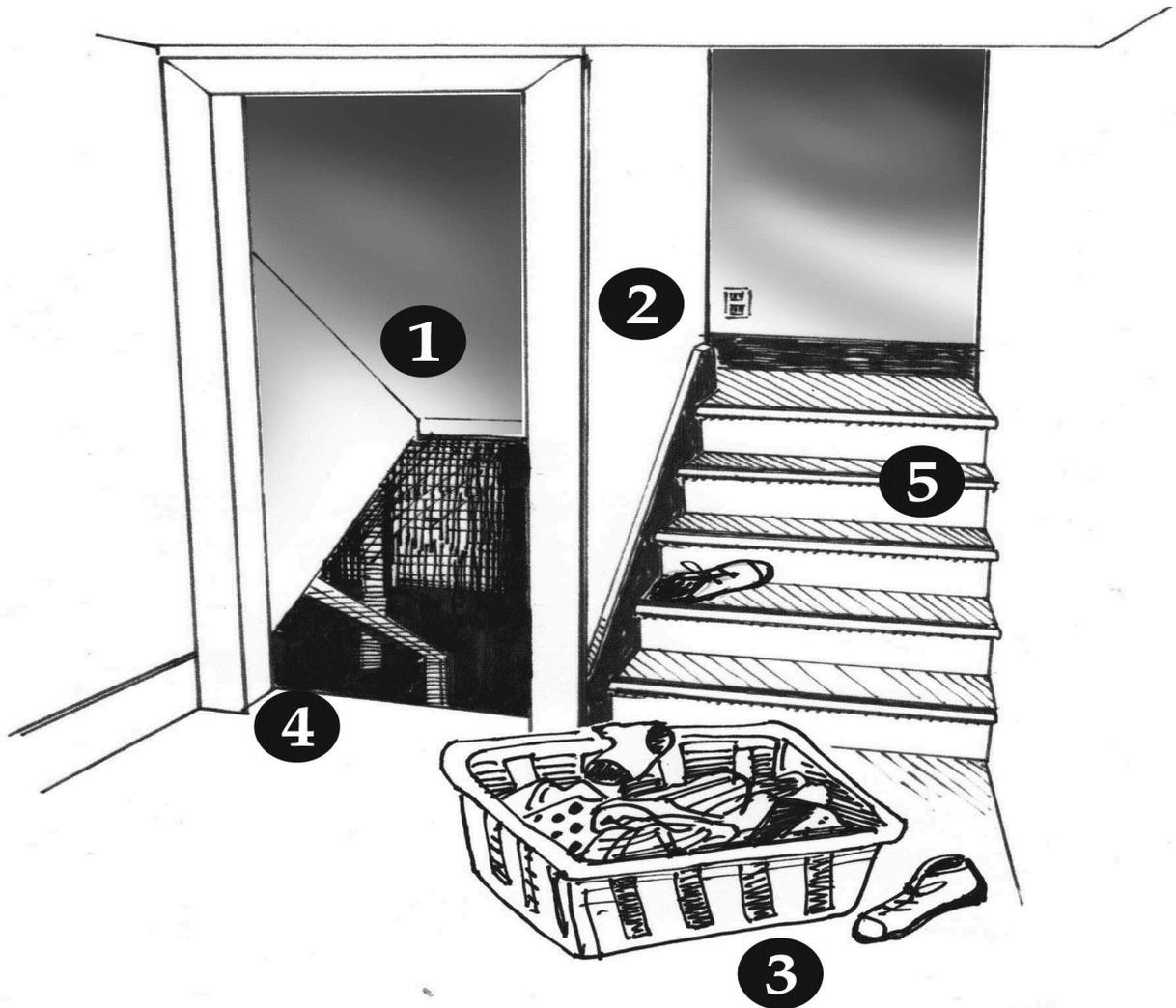
Remove clutter from all floor areas to drawers or closets. Inexpensive plastic cabinets or rolling units can be purchased to store bath items.

### **10. Incorrect placement of grab bars**

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

**\* See page 28, items 25 & 26 and page 29, item 31**

## Staircases



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

1. Poor or lack of lighting

4. Steps too steep

2. Lack of railings

5. Slippery steps without tread/ carpet

3. Clutter

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of problems

\* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page.

## **Solutions for the Problems** **in Staircases**

### **1. Lack of or poor lighting (See page 29, item 30)**

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

### **2. Lack of railings (See page 28 & 29, items 27 & 28, & [age 38, item 11)**

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

### **3. Clutter (See page 40, item 16)**

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

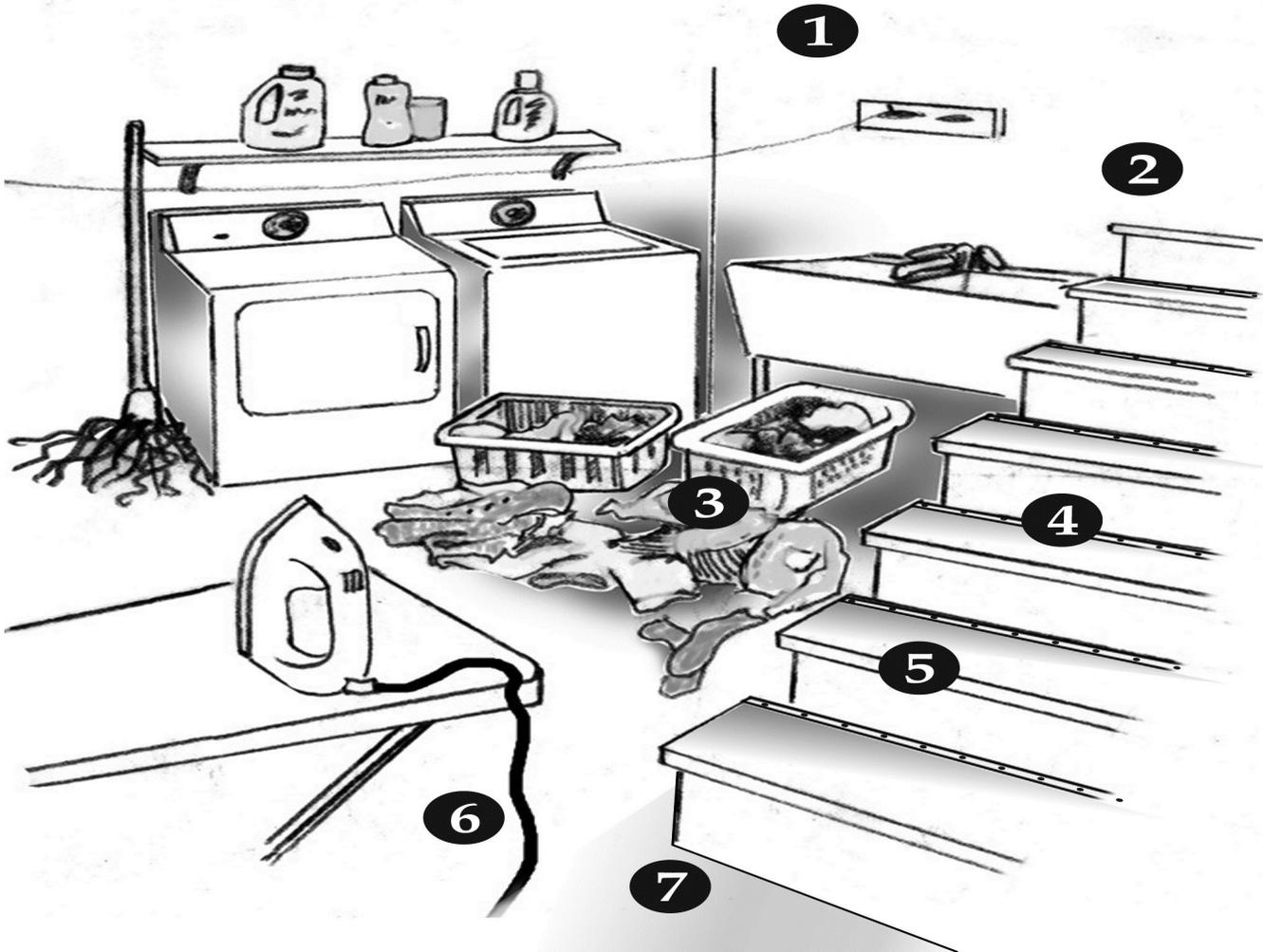
### **4. Steps too steep**

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 or luminous light (See page 29, items 29 and 30 & page 37, item 9)**

Add adhesive stair treads or carpet runner.

## Laundry Room/Basement



The list identifies all the potential home hazards that may cause a fall. If the item applies to your home place a check in the box. Then add the total number of checks and enter it in the box below

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Poor or lack of lighting<br><input type="checkbox"/> 2. Lack of railings<br><input type="checkbox"/> 3. Clutter<br><input type="checkbox"/> 4. Steps too steep | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Slippery steps without carpet /luminous light<br><input type="checkbox"/> 6. Presence of cords across the floor<br><input type="checkbox"/> 7. Same colored floor at bottom of stairs |
|--|---|

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of problems

\* The numbers correspond to the hazard in the picture and solutions on the following page

## **Solutions for the Problems** **in Laundry Room**

### **1. Lack of or poor lighting**

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

### **2. Lack of railings**

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

### **3. Clutter**

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 or luminous light (See page 29, item 30)**

Add adhesive stair treads or carpet runner.

### **6. Presence of cords across the floor (See page 24, item 9)**

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

### **7. Same colored floor at bottom of stairs**

Have the bottom of the stairs painted a different color so that you are aware of the last step.

## Total Number of Home Hazards

Transfer all the total scores of each room/ area from pages 4-21 to the appropriate boxes and add all the scores to get a grand total. Three blocks for each area are provided for you to keep records of your assessments and improvements for three occasions.

Date	_____	_____	_____
<b>Entrance to Front Door and Front Yard</b>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
<b>Entrance to Back/Side Door .....</b>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
<b>Hallway or Foyer .....</b>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
<b>Living Room .....</b>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
<b>Kitchen .....</b>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
<b>Bedroom .....</b>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
<b>Bathroom .....</b>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
<b>Staircases .....</b>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
<b>Laundry Room/Basement .....</b>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
<b>Grand Total .....</b>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 60px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>

To fix problems at home, you can contact the listed home modification service providers found on pages 35 and 36. To obtain free services for home modification, refer to pages 37 and 38. To record your home modification improvement use action log on page 46 and 47.