



# Prevent Slips, Trips and Falls



We may not consider slipping at home or tripping on the sidewalk to be serious risks, but they can be deadly. Falls are the third leading cause of unintentional-injury-related deaths for all ages and the number one cause of death for those 65 and older, according to [injuryfacts.nsc.org](http://injuryfacts.nsc.org).

## How to Prevent Falls

Take these simple steps to prevent falls both at home and in your community:

- Remove clutter, including electrical cords and other tripping hazards, from walkways, stairs and doorways
- Install nightlights in the bathroom, hallways and other areas to prevent tripping and falls at night
- Always wear proper footwear and clean up spills immediately
- Place non-slip adhesive strips on stairs and non-skid mats in the shower and bathroom
- For older adults, install grab bars near showers and toilets, and install rails on both sides of stairs – older adults can also take balance classes, get their vision and hearing checked each year and talk with their doctors and pharmacist about fall risks from medication



**1 step for safety:** Avoid looking at or using your phone while walking. If you need to use your phone, find a safe area to stop walking and remain in place until you are finished.



## Distracted Walking – A Serious Risk

Today, nearly everyone has a cell phone and consequently distracted walking has become a serious risk. One study, published in the *Journal of Safety Research*, found that over a 10-year period, distracted walking was responsible for more than 10,000 serious injuries.

### To limit this risk:

- Avoid cell phone use while walking, especially near crosswalks – talk with your friends and loved ones about this risk as well
- Pay special attention in busy areas, such as airports and shopping centers, and even your own house – more than half of distracted walking incidents happen at home
- Avoid other distracted walking risks, such as listening to headphones, when walking near intersections and other busy areas
- When driving, look carefully for pedestrians distracted by their phones – slow down and pay special attention in school zones



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