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# **GOOD HOMES**

## **Repairs and Maintenance Assessment and Solutions**

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**HOUSEHOLDER**



## Acknowledgement

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For more information about the project as well as previous publications please see the research website [www.goodhomes.co.nz](http://www.goodhomes.co.nz).

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## Why use this?

This assessment tool aims to help older people stay in their own homes for longer by keeping on top of house maintenance and repairs. Often this work is put off because it feels like it's too hard or could cost too much. This assessment booklet is designed to help you identify what work needs to be done around your home and who is the best person to do it.

A house in good repair has many benefits:

- You save money when you fix minor things before they become big problems
- Life is more comfortable if you have a warm, dry, home
- You will be healthier and less likely to have an accident
- You can stay in your home and community for longer
- It helps maintain the value of your property


## How to use this booklet

This booklet contains a checklist of maintenance and repairs for inside and outside your house. It aims to help you keep your home safe, comfortable and enjoyable to live in.

The checklist divides the house into seven zones – the outside, kitchen, bedrooms, laundry, hallways and stairs, lounge, bathrooms and toilets – so you can walk around each zone and tick off the features easily. Then there is a general section (All rooms) to check for mould and insulation.

The assessment can be repeated at different times of the year to allow for seasonal changes.

Armed with a pencil and rubber, take your time filling in the (Yes/No) tick boxes. If you are unsure of an answer, tick 'No'. If a section does not apply to you (e.g. you don't have a deck/balcony) then tick the 'I don't have' box.



You don't need to complete the whole checklist all at once. You could get a friend, family member or service provider to help you do this. You might like to complete a zone on one day and do the next zone another day. Please do not climb up a ladder or go under the house to do the checks – ask someone to help.

## **For each zone:**

1. Tick the YES/NO boxes
2. If you tick a NO box, follow the 'Do this to check' instructions on the right hand column.
3. Go to the Solution code at the bottom of each section (A, B, C etc). This points you to the Solution Sheets at the back of the booklet for more information on what needs to be done to fix the problem and who the best person is to do it.
4. Each Solution sheet also has a number on the right hand side that indicates the urgency of the repair or maintenance work.
  - 1 = very high priority – important to fix as soon as possible.
  - 2 = important to address – but only after the top priority ones have been carried out.
  - 3 = should be considered – A good time to do it would be if you are going to remodel or renovate.
  - 4 = low priority – good to fix if you can do so easily and can afford it.

**Please turn to the next page for the first zone:  
'Outside the House'**

# Outside the house

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do all the <i>outside lights</i> , including sensors, work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wait until night time to check. Make sure there is enough light to see the edge of the path, any steps and your door handle.
Do you have <i>enough light</i> to see your way into the house from the street?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If you have a <i>sensor light</i> , does it stay on long enough?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution

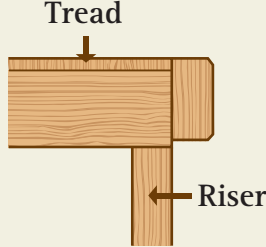



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do you have ramps connecting different <i>levels</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Go out to have a really good look at how different outside spaces are linked. Check whether the paths are level, and check that there is nothing you could trip on.
If you have <i>steps</i> , is the edge of each one permanently marked so you can see it clearly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Have a really good look at the steps around the section. Stand close to them. Don't assess them from a distance.

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# Outside the house

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Can you climb each <i>step</i> without getting your foot caught in a gap?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Have a really good look at the steps around the section. Stand close to them. Don't assess them from a distance.</p> <p><b>Parts of a step</b></p> 
Are all the <i>steps</i> the same height and tread distance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are all the <i>steps</i> level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you keep a firm footing on each step?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you keep a <i>firm footing</i> on the driveway and paths?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Has anyone ever slipped on the driveway or path - even if they haven't fallen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>I don't have steps</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution** 

Also check the garage for uneven steps, poor lighting and things that could cause you to slip or trip.

# Outside the house

	Yes	No	Do this to check
<p>If there is a wooden <i>deck/balcony</i>, does it have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All its boards?</li> <li>- Sound and complete railings?</li> <li>- Firm fixings (nails, screws and steel joiners)?</li> <li>- Good wood (no rot)?</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Go to your deck/balcony with a screwdriver, pencil and pad. Have a close look at all of the deck/balcony and make a note of any parts that look worn.</p> <p>Check for rot. Probe with the screwdriver and pencil. Any rotten wood will feel soft.</p> <p>Do not put your weight on any board or rail that looks unstable.</p>
<p>Is the <i>deck/balcony</i> easy to walk on when it is wet and when it is dry?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>When it is wet, stand on your deck/balcony and slide one foot from side to side. If your foot slides easily your deck/balcony is too slippery. Repeat this test when the balcony is dry. If you're uncomfortable doing this, ask someone else.</p>
<p><b>I don't have a deck/balcony</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>		


For any 'No' answers go to Solution




**HAPPY HINT:** This tool focuses on assessing your house and safe access but some problems can start in the garden, such as overgrown trees causing slippery paths and blocked gutters.

# Outside the house

	Yes	No	Do this to check
If you have a non-wooden patio area (e.g. concrete, brick or tile) is it easy to walk on when it is wet and when it is dry?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	When it is wet, stand on your patio and slide one foot from side to side. If your foot slides easily your patio is too slippery. Repeat this test when the patio is dry. If you're uncomfortable doing this, ask someone else.
<b>I don't have a patio area</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution** 

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are the <i>roof and gutters</i> :			Do not check the roof yourself. Ask someone to help and take note (or preferably photos) of any signs of wear.
- Free of rust.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Free of moss.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Firmly fixed (sound nails, screws and steel joiners).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If your roof is tiled, are they all there?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution** 



# Outside the house

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are the <i>walls and windows</i> free of dirt, moss and salt deposits?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Walk around the outside of the house with a pen and pad. Get close up to have a good look at the walls and windows. Ask someone to help with hard-to-get-to areas. Write down any signs of wear and deterioration.
If the house is painted, is it sound (free of flaking and cracking)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are the <i>gutters and downpipes</i> free of grass, weeds and leaves?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
If your <i>house is on piles</i> :			Ask someone to check under your house for signs of water or damp. Beware of any exposed wiring. Do not go under the house yourself.  Walk around the house to see if vegetation or landscaping has blocked any of the vents.
- Is the area under the floor dry and free from damp?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Can any water under the house drain away easily?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Are ventilation grills around the house clear of blockages?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>My house is not on piles</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Do you know where to go to <i>turn off your mains water supply</i> (toby)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# All rooms: Mould

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are rooms free from <i>mould</i> :			<p>Have a careful look at the ceiling and walls in each room, especially south-facing walls. Mould appears as dark spots which can be small or large.</p> <p>The most likely places to see mould are:</p>
Bathroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Bathroom and toilet</i> – around shower and windows.
Kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Kitchen</i> – around and above the extractor fan.
Laundry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Laundry</i> – on the ceiling or around windows.
Bedroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Bedroom</i> – on the ceiling, in the wardrobe, on the walls and around windows.
Hallway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Hallway</i> – on the ceiling and walls.
Lounge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Lounge</i> – on the ceiling and walls.

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# All rooms: Insulation

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do you have <i>roof/ceiling insulation</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Get someone to have a careful look at the insulation in your ceiling/roof space. Check for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good coverage over the entire area, with no gaps.</li> <li>- A depth of at least 150mm but preferably 200mm.</li> <li>- Any sign of damp.</li> <li>- Any sign of rats, mice or birds such as droppings or nests.</li> </ul> <p><i>Do not go into the roof space yourself.</i></p>
Is it in good condition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have <i>underfloor insulation</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Get someone to have a careful look at the insulation underneath your house. Beware of any exposed wiring. Check for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good coverage over the entire area, with no gaps or rips.</li> </ul> <p><i>Do not go under the house yourself.</i></p>
Is it in good condition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# All rooms: Fire Safety

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do you have a <i>fire plan</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A fire plan is a practised drill so you know what to do in an emergency.

For any 'No' answers go to Solution 

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do you have <i>smoke alarms</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do the smoke alarms work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution 

# Earthquake Safety

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Have you had an <i>earthquake safety</i> check?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact the local council or Citizens Advice Bureau about getting an earthquake safety check.
Is the house secured to its <i>piles</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are taller <i>shelf units</i> screwed to the walls?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the <i>hot water cylinder</i> secured?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution 

# Kitchen

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are the doors to the kitchen easy to open?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Try out the handles on all doors into the kitchen. Note any that are difficult to use.
Do the doors between rooms have <i>lever handles</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If the door handles are not levers (e.g. knobs) are they easy to grip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do all <i>cupboards and drawers</i> :			
- open and close easily?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- have firm screws, hinges and fastenings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



Also check cupboards and drawers in the bedrooms, lounge, laundry and bathroom.

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is the floor clear of things that you could <i>slip or trip on</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If you have carpets or rugs, look carefully for possible hazards such as rugs that slip or have curled-up edges.
Is the area where you walk clear of <i>power cords</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



**HAPPY HINT:** It is easy to trip over pets. Make sure their eating and sleeping areas are out of the way.

# Kitchen

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are <i>appliance cords</i> free from:			
- Frays?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Switch off at the wall and unplug all appliances and put them on the kitchen bench. Look at each power cord, one by one. Check carefully for any sign of wear on the cord or around the plug. Do not take apart the appliance.
- Nicks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Exposed wires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Any other signs of wear and tear?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are the appliance plugs in good repair?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you insert and remove <i>plugs</i> easily without stretching or feeling off-balance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use a small appliance to try out all the kitchen powerpoints that you use. Switch off the power point and the appliance. Plug it in. Then unplug it.

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is the <i>hot water</i> at the tap a safe temperature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Run the hot tap until it reaches its highest temperature. Hold a thermometer under the running water. The temperature should be no more than 50°C.

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# Kitchen

	Yes	No	Do this to check
If you have an <i>appliance storage area</i> , is it easy to take out each appliance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Take the appliances out from the storage space. Check that each cord is long enough to use the appliance comfortably.
Are your kitchen <i>appliances</i> easy to use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Take out all of the appliances and turn them off. Pretend you are using them. Note any that are difficult to assemble or use.
Can you see the controls clearly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are regularly used appliances easy to reach (stored below shoulder height)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution **

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do you have good <i>light</i> to prepare and cook food?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	You should be able to easily read food labels in the storage, preparation and cooking areas. The same applies at night with artificial lighting.
Do you have enough light to see what is in your cupboards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution **

# Kitchen

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is there a <i>fire blanket</i> in the kitchen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stand close to your oven and hob. The fire blanket needs to be within easy reach.
Is the <i>fire blanket</i> easy to get to?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is there a <i>range hood</i> over the stove?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Put an open saucepan of water on the hob and heat until boiling rapidly. Switch the range hood fan on to its highest setting. All the steam should be sucked up into the range hood.
Does the <i>range hood</i> work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are the <i>range hood</i> filters clean?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do all electric elements or gas hobs work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution





# Kitchen

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are the <i>waste and recycling</i> bins in the kitchen easy to use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are they big enough?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is it easy to move the <i>waste and recycling</i> :			
- Into garage?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Outside?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- On to the street for collection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do the <i>taps</i> turn off without dripping?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



Also check for dripping taps in the bathroom, laundry and outside the house.

# Bedrooms

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do the bedroom doors have <i>lever handles</i> for easy opening?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Have a close look at the door handles. Try them out. Note any that are difficult to use.
Is the floor clear of things that you could <i>slip or trip</i> on?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If you have carpets or rugs, look carefully for possible hazards such as rugs that slip or have curled-up edges.

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is there a <i>light switch</i> by your bed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there a phone by your bed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you reach your clothes in the wardrobe easily?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Try and reach the clothes without having to stand on something or bend over too much.
If you have an <i>electric blanket</i> , is it secured on the bed (no kinks)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you turn it off when you get into bed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# Bedrooms

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do you have <i>enough light</i> to see your way to the bathroom and toilet at night?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do the <i>windows open and close easily</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there <i>security latches on the windows</i> to allow in fresh air while still being secure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is there a one metre gap between a heater and anything that could catch fire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



The 'heater metre rule' is to prevent fires. Also check heaters in the hallway and lounge.

# Bedrooms

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are the <i>cords on appliances</i> free from:			Turn off at the wall and unplug each appliance. Carefully check the cord and plug for any signs of wear. Do not take apart the appliance.
- Frays?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Nicks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Exposed wires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Any other signs of wear and tear?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the area where you <i>walk clear</i> of power cords?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is there <i>enough light</i> in general?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Walk around your bedroom during the day. Check that you can see your way easily. Do the same walk at night time. Note any areas that are poorly lit.
Is there <i>enough lighting for tasks</i> such as reading and sewing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sit down with a book during the day. Check that you can read it easily (with or without artificial light).

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# Bedrooms

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are TVs and other <i>large appliances</i> sitting on something stable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gently try to rock your TV from side to side. If it rocks easily it needs to be made more stable.
Can you <i>insert and remove plugs</i> easily without stretching or feeling off-balance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use a small appliance to try out all the power points that you use in the bedroom. Switch off the power point and the appliance. Plug it in. Then unplug it.
Is your <i>bedroom warm during the night</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Your bedroom is too cold if you have ice on the window when you wake up in the morning; you can see your breath at night; you wear a hat in bed. Your bedroom should be at least 18°C at night time.

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
If you use a gas heater, does it have a <i>flue</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the heater easy to reach and control?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Go to the heater. You should be able to change the settings easily without needing a torch or other aids.

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# Laundry

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do the doors between rooms have <i>lever handles</i> for easy opening?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Have a close look at all the laundry door handles. Try them out. Note any that are difficult to use.
If you have door handles that are not levers, are they <i>easy to grip</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is the floor clear of things that you could <i>slip or trip</i> on?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Look carefully for possible hazards such as power cords or rugs that slip or have curled-up edges.
Is the floor <i>non-slip</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Check twice – when the floor is wet and dry. Stand on the floor and slide one foot from side to side. If your foot slides easily your floor is too slippery. If you're uncomfortable doing this, ask someone else.

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# Laundry

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Can you get to the <i>clothesline</i> easily from the laundry?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the <i>clothes dryer</i> have an air duct that goes outside?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Go to the clothes dryer. There should be a pipe coming out of the side or back that vents outside. If it is difficult to see around the clothes dryer, ask someone else to take a look. Refer to the dryer operation manual to find the lint filter. Look to see if there is fluff or dust on it.
Is the outside <i>air duct</i> clear?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the <i>lint filter</i> clean?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution




	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are there <i>security latches on the windows</i> to allow in fresh air while still being secure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can the <i>windows be opened and closed</i> easily?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution




# Laundry

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is the <i>hot water a safe temperature</i> at the tap?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Run the hot tap until the water is steaming. Hold a thermometer under the running water. The temperature should be between 45 and 50°C in the laundry.

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution **

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are <i>laundry products</i> such as detergents and bleaches:			
- Clearly labelled?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Out of the reach of children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- In sound containers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	


**For any 'No' answers go to Solution **

Make the same checks in the garden shed so that sprays and poisons are clearly labelled and out of the reach of children.



# Laundry

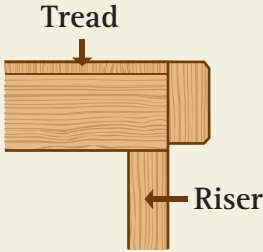
	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is there a firmly fixed <i>overflow pipe</i> from the washing machine into the tub?			

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution **

# Hallways and stairs

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is there <i>enough light</i> for you to walk comfortably through the house, including on the stairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution A**

	Yes	No	Do this to check
If there are <i>internal steps/stairs</i> , is the edge of each step permanently marked so you can see it clearly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Go around the house and stand close to the steps/stairs. Don't assess them from afar.
Are all the steps the same height and tread distance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the tread covering in good condition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the floor clear of things that you could <i>slip or trip</i> on?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If you have carpets or rugs, look carefully for possible hazards such as rugs that slip or have curled-up edges.
<b>I don't have steps/stairs</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution M**

# Hallways and stairs

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do the doors between rooms have <i>lever handles</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Have a close look at the hallway door handles. Try them out. Note any that are difficult to use.
If you have door handles that are not levers, are they easy to grip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are <i>handrails</i> in the right place and easy to grip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Try out all the handrails. Note any that feel insecure or are the wrong height.

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# Hallways and stairs

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are there <i>security latches on the windows</i> to allow fresh air in while still being secure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do the windows <i>open and close</i> easily?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution




	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is the area where you walk clear of <i>power cords</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are the cords on <i>appliances</i> free from:			Unplug each appliance and carefully check the cord and plug for any signs of wear. Do not take apart the appliance.
- Frays?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Nicks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Exposed wires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Any other signs of wear and tear?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are the <i>appliance plugs</i> in good condition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# Hallways and stairs

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Can you insert and <i>remove plugs easily</i> without stretching or feeling off balance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use a small appliance to try out all the power points in the hallway. Switch off the power point and the appliance. Plug it in. Then unplug it.

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution **

# Lounge

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are there <i>lever handles</i> on the lounge doors for easy opening?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Have a close look at all the lounge door handles. Try them out. Note any that are difficult to use.
If you have door handles that are not levers, are they <i>easy to grip</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is the floor clear of things that you could <i>slip or trip</i> on?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Look carefully for possible hazards such as power cords or rugs that slip or have curled-up edges.
Is the heater easy to reach and control?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Go to your heater. You should be able to change the settings easily without needing a torch or other aids.

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# Lounge

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are there <i>security latches on the windows</i> to allow in fresh air while still being secure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you <i>open and close the windows</i> easily?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are the walking areas clear of <i>power cords</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are <i>appliance cords</i> free from:			
- Frays?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Switch off at the wall and unplug each appliance. Check carefully for any sign of wear on the cord or around plug. Do not take apart the appliance.
- Nicks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Exposed wires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Any other signs of wear and tear?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are all the <i>appliance plugs</i> in good condition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# Lounge

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is there <i>enough lighting</i> to walk around your lounge safely?			Walk around the lounge during the day. Check that you can see your way easily. Do the same walk at night time. Note any areas that are poorly lit.
Is there <i>enough lighting</i> to read, sew or write a letter?			Sit down with a book during the day. Check that you can read easily (with or without artificial light).

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are TVs and other large appliances sitting on something stable?			Gently try to rock your TV from side to side. If it rocks easily it needs to be made more stable.
Can you insert and remove plugs easily without stretching or feeling off-balance?			Take a small appliance to try out all the power points that you use in the lounge. Switch off each power point and the appliance. Plug it in. Then unplug it.


For any 'No' answers go to Solution






# Lounge

	Yes	No	Do this to check
If you use a gas heater, does it have a <i>flue</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A flue is a steel tube that acts as a chimney for gas heaters and other enclosed fires. It usually goes out through the roof.
If you have a <i>heat pump</i> , is the filter cleaned regularly, according to the operation manual?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution **

	Yes	No	Do this to check
If you have a fireplace or wood-burner, is the <i>chimney cleaned</i> each year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution **

	Yes	No	Do this to check
If you have an open fireplace, do you have a <i>spark guard</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution **

# Bathrooms and toilets

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are there <i>security latches on the windows</i> to allow in fresh air while still being secure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do the <i>windows open and close easily</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the <i>floor non-slip</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stand on the floor and slide one foot from side to side. If your foot slides easily your floor is too slippery. If you're uncomfortable doing this, ask someone else.

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Are <i>handrails</i> in the right place and easy to grip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Try out all the handrails. Note any that feel insecure or are the wrong height.
If you <i>fall off the toilet</i> , is there enough room for someone to come in and help?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



# Bathrooms and toilets

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Do the doors between rooms have <i>lever handles</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Try out the handle. Note if it is difficult to use.
If it is a different sort of handle (e.g. a knob) is it easy to grip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution



	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is the floor clear of things you could slip or trip on?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If you have carpets or rugs, look carefully for possible hazards such as rugs that slip or have curled-up edges.

For any 'No' answers go to Solution




	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is the <i>toilet bowl</i> secure and free from leaks around the floor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep the toilet door open. Sit on the seat and shift your weight – the seat and bowl should not move. Feel for damp where the toilet meets the floor. If you are uncomfortable doing this ask someone else.
Is the <i>toilet seat</i> secure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For any 'No' answers go to Solution




# Bathrooms and toilets

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is there <i>enough light in general</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Walk around your bathroom and toilet during the day. Check that you can see your way easily. Do the same walk at night-time. Note any areas that are poorly lit.

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution **

	Yes	No	Do this to check
Is the <i>hot water at a safe temperature</i> at the tap?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Run the hot tap until the water is steaming. Hold a thermometer under the running water. The temperature should be no more than 50°C .

**For any 'No' answers go to Solution **



## What to do next

The completed assessment checklist highlights the areas that need attention for repairs and maintenance around your home.

The following Solutions section explains what to do and who the best person is to carry out the work.



There are several ways to find a tradesperson or handy person:

- Talk to family or friends about who they use and the quality of their work
- Contact a local organisation such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, RSA, Age Concern or Grey Power for a list of tradespeople

Unless you know the tradesperson well and are confident in their work always get at least two written quotes for the job.



Contact Work and Income (WINZ) if you need financial assistance for the work. You may be able to get help to pay for essential house repairs.

Phone: 0800 552 002    [www.workandincome.govt.nz](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz)

Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Improve lighting	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Poor lighting can lead to falls, abrasions, sprains and broken bones.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Improve lighting by putting in stronger bulbs or install more lights. Clean the light housing to allow more light to shine out. Please do not climb up to change a light bulb or reflector. Just note down which ones aren't making the grade.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Handy person to put in stronger bulbs. Electrician to install more lights.</p>	
Increase the time the sensor is on	<p><b>What to do:</b> The light sensor has a dial that sets the amount of time the light is on. Do not try to adjust this yourself, just note which ones aren't on long enough.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Handy person.</p>	

Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
<p>Improve links between ramps and paths</p>	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Uneven, slippery or hard-to-see surfaces can lead to falls and injuries.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> This can sometimes be difficult to fix. You need to get advice for your situation.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> A designer or inspector to assess the situation and then a builder to construct the solution. Information and funding advice is available at <i>AccessAble</i>, <i>Enable New Zealand</i> or the <i>Disability Resource Centre</i>.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Make steps clearly visible</p>	<p><b>What to do:</b> Mark the edges of the steps with bright paint.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Handy person or builder.</p>	<p>1</p>



<b>Issue</b>	<b>Solution</b>	<b>Priority</b> (1= highest)
Close gaps between steps, repair uneven treads or crooked steps	<p><b>What to do:</b> This can sometimes be difficult to fix. You need to get advice for your situation.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> A designer or inspector to assess the situation and then a builder to construct the solution. Information and funding advice is available at <i>AccessAble</i>, <i>Enable New Zealand</i> or the <i>Disability Resource Centre</i>.</p>	
Improve grip on path and driveway and steps  Improve grip on deck, balcony or patio	<p><b>What to do:</b> Find out what is causing the slippery surface. If it is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Oil-based (e.g. grease), use turpentine, petrol or a similar solvent to clean.</li><li>- Plant-based (e.g. grass, moss or lichen), use a water-blaster or spray with herbicide and remove dead plant with a stiff brush.</li><li>- Dirt-based (e.g. mud) use a water-blaster.</li></ul> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> A tradesperson or handy person.</p>	



Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Access to clothesline	<p><b>What to do:</b> Clear the pathway and any steps so you do not trip while carrying washing to the clothesline. If the path is slippery, refer to Solution C. Make sure any steps are sound and clearly marked.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Handy person.</p>	2
Clothes dryer vent and lint filter	<p><b>Why do this:</b> A vent removes moisture and condensation created by the dryer which can lead to mould. It also reduces dust that can cause allergies. The dryer will be more efficient if the lint filter is clear.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Try to reduce your use of the dryer by using an outdoor clothesline. Install a duct to vent the air from the dryer directly outside. Remove the lint filter and peel off layer of fluff (lint) each time the dryer is used.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Tradesperson to install duct. You can clear lint filter.</p>	3
Washing machine overflow	<p><b>Why do this:</b> An unsecured overflow pipe can dislodge and cause flooding. The tub plug may also block and stop the water draining.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Rather than drain the washing machine into the tub, install an overflow pipe that bypasses the tub.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Plumber</p>	3

Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Light switches	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Lack of lighting can lead to falls which can lead to serious disability and having to move out of your home.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Have light switches installed close to bed and at the top and bottom of the stairs.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> An electrician.</p>	3
Improve safety of stairs	<p><b>What to do:</b> Assess the build quality of the steps and stairs. Are they a manageable height? If not, have them adjusted.</p> <p>Replace any carpet that is showing signs of wear and tear. It should be high quality with a tight weave and no underlay.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> A builder and a carpet layer.</p>	1
Electric blankets	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Worn and old electric blankets can cause electric shock, fire and sometimes death.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Have your electric blanket tested each year. Turn off the electric blanket when you go to bed. Make sure the electric blanket is tightly secured and flat on the bed. To store your electric blanket, roll it up. Do not fold.</p>	1

Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Door Handles	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Lever handles are easier to use than rounded handles.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Replace door handles with lever handles.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> A builder.</p>	2
Cupboards and drawers	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Poorly fastened cupboards and drawers may fall off and injure you. The contents could also fall out on you. If cupboards and doors are stiff, you may strain yourself trying to open them.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Tighten screws or replace worn-out hinges and fastenings. Stiff drawers may need sanding back or lubricating.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Householder or handy person.</p>	2
Balcony decking	<p><b>What to do:</b> Repair insecure or missing decking. Waterblast slippery surface, apply anti-slip surface which can be either applied like a paint or as a stick-on strip.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Builder or handy person.</p>	2



<b>Issue</b>	<b>Solution</b>	<b>Priority</b> (1= highest)
Roofing and guttering	<p><b>Why do this:</b> A well maintained roof keeps you dry, warm and healthy and can prevent expensive problems further down the track.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> <i>Rust on roof</i> – sand and then paint. <i>Tiles loose or missing</i> – repair or replace. <i>Rust in gutters</i> – sand and repaint, or replace guttering. <i>Fixings</i> – replace insecure or missing nails, screws and joiners. <i>Moss</i> – remove with a wire brush and repaint.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Builder or handy person.</p>	
Dripping taps	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Dripping taps waste water, increase the power bill and could cause rot and mould.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Change the washers or replace worn parts in the tap.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Handy person or you may need a plumber.</p>	




Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Decking/balcony	<p><b>What to do:</b> Repair insecure or missing decking. Waterblast slippery surface, apply anti-slip surface which can be either applied like a paint or alternatively as a stick-on strip.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Builder or handy person.</p>	2
External walls and windows	<p><b>What to do:</b> Outside walls and windows should be washed every six months with a soft broom and low-pressure hose. This will increase the lifetime of the cladding. Sand back flaking or cracked paint, undercoat and repaint. Replace any rotten boards.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Householder, handy person, painter or builder.</p>	4
Gutters and downpipes	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Water trapped in gutters can cause serious damage to the roof and walls.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Scoop out weeds, leaves and built-up dirt. Use a hose to flush through gutters and downpipes.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Handy person.</p>	1





**HAPPY HINT:** Overgrown trees and falling leaves can block gutters and makes paths slippery. Keep the garden trimmed back to save on repair costs and improve safety around the house.

Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Underneath the house	<p><b>What to do:</b></p> <p>If your house is on piles, make sure the under-floor area is dry and well ventilated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lay down and secure a large black plastic sheet to ensure that no ground moisture makes its way into the house.</li> <li>- Remove any vegetation from around the vents.</li> <li>- Make sure the grills are clear from any obstructions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Who can do it:</b></p> <p>Builder or handy person.</p>	
Toby (mains water tap)	<p><b>What to do:</b></p> <p>To find out where your toby is, look on your building plans or ring the council. This is important information in an emergency. Write down the location of the toby and keep with your emergency phone numbers.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b></p> <p>You, or ask someone else to find out.</p>	




<b>Issue</b>	<b>Solution</b>	<b>Priority</b> (1= highest)
Chimney	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Clogged-up chimneys do not burn efficiently and may catch fire.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Have the chimney professionally cleaned every year. It is best to do this at the end of each heating season so you are ready for the next winter. Most insurance companies expect this.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> A professional chimney sweep.</p>	
Large appliances	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Unstable appliances can fall on you and cause other damage.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Make sure that appliances such as TVs and microwaves are on a solid, stable base or inside a stable cabinet.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> A builder or handy person.</p>	
Elements and hobs	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Faulty electrical elements and gas hobs are fire hazards.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Call in a professional.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Electrician, Plumber (gas), supplier or agent for the brand of appliance.</p>	

Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Power cords and power points - trip hazard	<p><b>Why do this:</b> It is easy to trip and hurt yourself on power cords that cross the floor.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Use another power point. If there isn't one available have one installed in a better position (about one metre up from the floor and not in a corner).</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Electrician.</p>	
Power cords and plugs - in poor condition	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Electrical appliances in good condition are less likely to catch fire or give you an electric shock.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> If power cords or plugs show signs of wear they must be repaired or replaced.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Electrician.</p>	
Mats and carpet - slip or trip hazard	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Falling over can cause serious injuries and loss of independence.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Replace mats or carpets that have curling edges or worn patches that could cause a fall. Put non-slip strips under rugs or mats on smooth floors.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Householder or handy person.</p>	



**HAPPY HINT:** It is easy to trip over pets. Make sure their eating and sleeping areas are out of the way.






<b>Issue</b>	<b>Solution</b>	<b>Priority</b> (1= highest)
Appliance storage	<p><b>Why do this:</b> You might injure yourself if it is difficult to get appliances out. It is also dangerous to have too many appliances for the number of power points.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Store regularly used appliances between knee and shoulder level.  If you have a storage area, reduce the number of appliances kept there.  Have more power points installed.  Make sure each appliance has a long enough power cord.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> You can reduce the number of appliances stored. For other tasks call an electrician.</p>	
Stairs and Handrails	<p><b>Why do this:</b> A fall down stairs or off the toilet can lead to serious disability and having to move out of your home.  In New Zealand, 610 people a week claim for stair-related accidents.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Install or adjust handrails so they are secure and suit your height.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Occupational Therapist or similar expert for advice. Builder to install.</p>	



<b>Issue</b>	<b>Solution</b>	<b>Priority</b> (1= highest)
Stair risers	<p><b>What to do:</b> Close all open risers (the space between each step) so your foot cannot get caught.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Builder.</p>	
Steps	<p><b>What to do:</b> Repair steps so they are an even width and height.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Builder.</p>	
Make steps clearly visible	<p><b>What to do:</b> Mark the edges with bright paint</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Handy person or builder.</p>	
Waste and recycling	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Easy-to-use waste and recycling bins are more likely to get used.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Have a dedicated storage area for recycling that has at least two compartments (i.e. paper and glass) and is at least 10 litres in volume. Make sure it is in an area that can be easily accessed.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Handy person or get someone to help.</p>	



Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Smoke alarms	<p><b>Why do this:</b> A smoke alarm that works properly can save your life. In 80% of Fire Service callouts, smoke alarms are either not installed or not working.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Smoke alarms work best if they are on the ceiling and kept clear of dust. Clean with a vacuum cleaner every two months. Consider a smoke alarm that is wired-in as part of a security/monitoring system or buying long-life photoelectric type smoke alarms.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Ask someone else to get up on a ladder.</p>	
Smoke alarms – battery	<p><b>What to do:</b> Smoke alarms must have a battery. To test if your battery is working, press the button on the outside of the alarm casing.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Ask someone else to get on a ladder. The Fire Service checks smoke alarms and changes batteries.</p>	
Smoke alarms – sound of	<p><b>What to do:</b> You need to be able to hear the smoke alarm when you are asleep and wherever you are in the house. Replace all your alarms that don't easily alert you. Advice is available at the <i>Disability Resource Centre</i>.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Get someone to test all of the smoke alarms while you are in the house.</p>	

Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Fire blanket	<p><b>What to do:</b> Use a fire blanket to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Smother a kitchen fire.</li> <li>- Wrap around a person whose clothes are on fire.</li> <li>- As a cover to escape through flames.</li> </ul> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Buy a fire blanket at your hardware store.</p>	2
Spark guard	<p><b>Why do this:</b> A spark guard screen stops sparks from an open fireplace starting a fire. It also protects your pets and flooring surfaces.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Buy a spark guard at your hardware store.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> You can put it in place.</p>	2
Heaters	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Heaters (fan, bar, exposed element, oil-filled radiators, gas or other heaters) may catch fire if anything is draped on them or they fall over.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Follow the 'heater metre rule'. Leave one metre of space between the heater and anything else.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> You can use the 'heater metre rule'.</p>	1




Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Fire plan	<p><b>Why do this:</b> A fire plan is a practised drill so you automatically know what to do in an emergency.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Come up with a plan so you know what to do and can account for everyone who lives in your house.  Know how to escape from each room in the house. Try to have two ways out.  Make sure escape-route doors and windows are easy to open.  Keep keys in deadlocks when at home. Practise the escape drill every six months.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> The local Fire Service or Citizens Advice Bureau can help.</p>	
Earthquake plan	<p><b>What to do:</b> Contact your local council about how to prepare your home for an earthquake.</p>	
Hot water	<p><b>Why do this:</b> The chance of burning yourself is greatly increased if the hot water at the tap is above 50°C.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Install a tempering valve, but also check that your hot water cylinder/water heating appliance is set to 60°C for health reasons.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> A registered plumber only.</p>	

Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Unflued gas heaters	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Unflued gas heaters release a lot of moisture into the room and make breathing more difficult. They are also an expensive way to heat your home.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Replace your heater. You may be able to get a heating subsidy from EECA (Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority). Make contact with the Citizens Advice Bureau.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Handy person or get someone to help.</p>	2
Range hood	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Moisture, pollutants and odours from cooking are vented outside to keep indoor air healthy.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Check and clean the grease filters. Make sure the range hood motor is working and the vent is not blocked.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Appliance installer or electrician.</p>	3
Heat pump	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Blocked air filters reduce the heat pump's efficiency, which costs more in power.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Check the operation manual. If you don't have a manual, ask the installer for one.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Handy person.</p>	3




Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Windows that open easily	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Ventilation all year round is important for healthy indoor air.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> If the window is inaccessible leave it shut. If it is jammed have it repaired.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Builder.</p>	
Laundry Products	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Laundry products can be toxic so need to be easy to identify and kept safe.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Make sure laundry products are kept out of reach of children and are clearly labelled. A cupboard with a child-proof lock is recommended.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Handy person or builder.</p>	
Security latches on the windows	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Keep the home secure while allowing ventilation. Air flow is important to stop condensation in winter and over-heating in summer.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Buy window security latches from hardware store.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Handy person or builder.</p>	



Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Mould	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Mould is bad for your health – it has toxins that can upset your stomach and affect your lungs. Mould also damages carpets, paint, wallpaper and plasterboard.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Mould needs moisture to grow so keep the inside of your house dry. Moisture increases with flueless gas heaters, showers and baths, drying clothes inside, cooking, and damp coming up through the floor. To fix:</p> <p><i>Flueless gas heaters</i> – replace with a different sort of heater.</p> <p><i>Showers and baths</i> – open a window or use an extractor fan in the bathroom.</p> <p>Install a shower dome.</p> <p><i>Drying clothes</i> – hang them up outside.</p> <p><i>Cooking</i> – use a rangehood to suck up steam.</p> <p><i>Ground moisture from under the house</i> – secure a plastic groundsheet to cover the area under the floor.</p> <p>Replace any plasterboard or wallpaper that has been damaged by mould. Use white vinegar to kill mould. Then, to take away the staining on mouldy ceilings and walls, make a 25% mix of household bleach, rub clean and allow to dry before repainting with an anti-mould paint.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> You or a family member or friend, a handyman, painter or builder.</p>	





Issue	Solution	Priority (1= highest)
Insulation	<p><b>Why do this:</b> Insulation reduces damp and mould as well as keeps your house warmer. Cold houses are associated with breathing problems, asthma, and high blood pressure. To stay healthy, keep your house temperature at 18°C. If you have a health condition the temperature should be warmer.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> Ask your community energy group (the Citizens Advice Bureau will have a contact name).</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Your community energy or retrofit provider or a tradesperson.</p>	
Toilet bowl and seat	<p><b>Why do this:</b> A secure seat and bowl will reduce the chance of you falling off the toilet and getting hurt or stuck. Water leaking from the toilet bowl can lead to mould, become a slip hazard and rot the flooring.</p> <p><b>What to do:</b> For the toilet seat, tighten the wing-nuts where the seat attaches to the bowl. If the thread is worn out, replace the toilet seat. If the toilet bowl is not stable and/or leaking, call in a plumber.</p> <p><b>Who can do it:</b> Householder or handy person for toilet seat. Plumber for toilet bowl.</p>	





Empowering housing decisions as we age

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