

FALL PREVENTION BINGO WORD LIST: PRINT, CUT AND FOLD EACH WORD AND FACT

**B-
Exercise** As we age we lose muscle, but we can protect our muscles with exercise. It is never too late to increase your strength and balance. Exercise can be done at home or look for programs through a senior center, area agency on aging, or other organization that serves older adults.¹



**B-
Be Aware** Awareness can help you recognize hazards and risky behaviors before they cause a fall.²

**B-
Ask for Help** If you are concerned that you cannot complete a task easily and safely, do not risk a fall by trying to do it. Make sure to ask others for help if you need it.²

**B-
Glasses** If you wear glasses, make sure to clean them regularly. All older adults should have their eyes tested every year for updated prescriptions. This can help you to see the ground, bumps in the sidewalk, or things that could contribute to a fall.³

**B-
Pace** Pacing yourself is important to manage your fatigue and energy level so you can complete a task and limit your risk of falling.²

**B-
Rushing** Rushing to get ready or finish a task makes it more likely that you will not see things that can lead to a trip, or you might turn too quickly. Give yourself extra time and remember to slow down.²

**B-
Crowds** Being jostled by others can upset your balance. Be aware of crowded areas and try to avoid if possible.^{2, 4}

**B-
Turning** Turning around too fast can lead to a fall. Make sure to pace yourself and take your time when turning to avoid losing your balance and falling.²

**B-
Plan** Make sure you have a plan in case you have a fall. Many older adults have difficulty getting up, even if they are not injured. A plan may include always carrying a phone, wearing a safety alert button, or checking in daily with a family member or friend.⁵

**B-
Bifocals** Wearing multi-focal glasses while walking can distort distances, making it difficult to find obstacles in your path. If you use reading or multi-focal glasses, take them off when walking. Be extra cautious when getting used to new glasses.⁶

**B-
Doctor** Talk to your doctor about any falls or fear of falling that you experience. Most people do not tell their doctor after they have had a fall. Your doctor can review your fall risks and refer you to another healthcare provider to reduce your risk.⁷

**B-
Clothing** Loose clothing can get caught on door handles, chairs, or underneath your feet.⁸

B- It is important to take care of your feet. Foot problems such as pain, calluses, ulcers, and deformed nails all increase walking and balance difficulty. If you have

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Feet foot problems, make sure to visit a foot doctor (podiatrist).⁶

**B-
Fear** Many people who fall, even if they are not injured, develop a fear of falling. Fear of falling can result in reducing social and physical activities, leading to reduced mobility and loss of physical fitness, which increases your actual risk of falling.⁹

**B-
Reaching** A reacher, or grabber, can reduce long distances to get items on high shelves or the ground. Stretching far distances can make it difficult to maintain your balance, or you may climb on unsafe furniture to reach items.²

**I-
Light** Make sure your home has lots of light by adding more or brighter light bulbs.⁸

**I-
Grab Bar** Add grab bars inside and outside your tub or shower and next to the toilet.⁸

**I-
Wet Floor** Wet floors can be very slippery and can lead to a fall. Be very careful if you must walk over wet surfaces.⁸

**I-
Steps** Remember to keep steps clear of clutter to avoid slips and trips.⁸

**I-
Bath Seat** There are many kinds of bath seats. Tub benches aid in stepping over the edge of the tub and provide a seat while bathing. Shower chairs are smaller and best when there is no edge of the tub to step over.

**I-
Walking Device** If a health professional has advised that you use a walking device, make sure to keep it within your reach at all times.² If you feel unsteady walking, talk to your doctor to find out what device, such as a cane or walker, is best for you.¹⁰

**I-
Railings** Railings are important to have on both sides of the stairs and can help prevent a fall. Be sure to fix loose handrails, or put in new ones if needed.⁸

**I-
Shoes** Safe shoes reduce your chance of a fall compared to going barefoot or wearing an unsafe shoe. Athletic and canvas sneakers are good choices. Other types of shoes may have slippery soles, no back, or not enough support.¹¹

**I-
Cords** Lamp, telephone, or extension cords in the middle of the floor can be a fall risk. Be sure to coil or tape cords and wires next to the wall so you can't trip over them.⁸

**I-
Clear Pathway** Be sure to keep clear pathways in your home. Furniture, objects, and boxes can make it more difficult to move around and may cause a trip.⁸

**I-
Bathtub** Bathtubs can be slippery or hard to step in and out of. A secure bathmat or shower treads can reduce slipperiness. A grab bar can assist with getting in and out of the bathtub.⁸

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I- Home Safety About 50% of falls occur in and around the home. It is important to identify and be aware of potential fall hazards.⁵

I- Entrance Entrances may have many hazards including high steps, a lack of hand support, difficult doors, or slippery surfaces.⁸

I- Bathroom Bathrooms are high-risk areas for injurious falls. Secure bathmats, raised toilet seats, grab bars, and a seat in the shower can help reduce your risk of falls in the bathroom.¹²

I- Clutter Clutter can lead to a fall. It can also prevent healthcare professionals from reaching you in an emergency.

N- Cataracts Cataracts are very common as people age. They create blurry and hazy vision, making it difficult to see changes such as the edge of the curb on the sidewalk. Fortunately, cataract surgery is a safe way to improve your vision.¹³

N- Health Health plays an important part in fall risk. The more health conditions you have, the more likely you are to experience a fall.¹⁴

N- Fatigue Feelings of fatigue can increase your risk of falls by reducing attention and reaction speed in hazardous situations.^{15, 16}

N- 4 or More Taking four or more medications puts people at risk for a fall. The more medications you take, the more likely you are to fall. Monitor for symptoms such as dizziness or unsteadiness, and talk to your doctor or pharmacist.⁵

N- Vision Vision problems can develop slowly and we may not realize their impact on our daily lives. However, they may be corrected or reduced through updated prescriptions or surgery. Make sure to see an eye doctor for yearly vision checks.¹⁰

N- Hearing Hearing loss is associated with a higher risk of falls. Hearing loss may make it more difficult for individuals to maintain their balance. Hearing aids can help correct hearing loss and should be worn when possible.¹⁷

N- Medication Medication reviews can be done by a pharmacist or doctor. Do any of your medications make you dizzy or drowsy? Some medications can increase a person's risk of falling because they cause side effects like dizziness or confusion.

N- Balance Poor balance and gait, or how you walk, are other key factors that increase fall risk for older adults. It may be more difficult to stay upright when you have a loss of balance.¹⁸

N- Chair Make sure the chair you are sitting in is sturdy. Try to avoid chairs that have wheels on the bottom, as they could slide out from underneath you. Always make sure the

chair is directly behind you before you sit down.

N- Blood Pressure Orthostatic hypotension (feeling light-headed or dizzy when getting up too quickly) with uncontrolled hypertension increases your risk of a fall. If you do feel dizzy, stand up slowly, using a stable object for support before walking to allow your blood pressure to regulate.⁹

N- Hydrate As we get older, we are at risk for dehydration. Older adults store less water in their bodies, do not feel as thirsty, and may limit their fluid intake. Dehydration produces low blood pressure (hypotension), which can bring on a fall. Dehydration can also cause confusion, loss of balance, constipation, and many other unwelcome symptoms.¹⁹

N- Bed The bedroom is one of the most common fall locations, if you have difficulty standing from bed or feel dizzy when you get up a device called a bed cane can provide you with extra support.¹²

N- Dizzy Dizziness can be caused by medications, conditions that cause vertigo, or changes in blood pressure. If you have episodes of dizziness, talk to your healthcare provider about potential causes.

N- Numbness Numbness or tingling in your feet can make it hard to walk and feel the surface below you, which could lead to a fall.²⁰

N- Vitamin D Low levels of Vitamin D are linked to lower muscle strength and more falls. If you have low levels, supplements can help improve your muscle function and strength. Check with your doctor, and only take Vitamin D if you have low levels.²¹

G- Age As you age, your risk of falls increases. Normal aging affects our eyesight, balance, strength, and ability to quickly react to our environments.⁹

G- Trip A trip can cause a person to lose their balance and fall. Tripping hazards can include objects on the floor, furniture, and changes in floor surface.⁹

G- Hip Fracture Did you know that 90% of hip fractures are caused by falls?²² Falls are not a normal part of aging and there are many steps that you can take to lower your risk and prevent hip fractures.

G- Matter of Balance Matter of Balance is an 8-week group program that works toward goals to increase activity levels, improve strength and balance, and reduce hazards in your environment in order to reduce falls.²³

G- Head Injury Falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries (TBI).²⁴

G- Nursing Home Falls and fall-related injuries are the most preventable cause of needing nursing home placement.²⁵

G- 1 in 4 adults aged 65 and older falls each year.²⁶

1 in 4

G- Although pets can be important parts of our lives, they can also put us at risk for a fall. Walking and chasing pets are risky activities. Well-trained pets may reduce your risk of a pet-related fall.

Pets

G- Older adults may experience a loss of contrast sensitivity, which helps you distinguish changes in floor level, the end of stairs, and the edge of curbs. Adding contrast, such as bright-colored tape or a colored stair tread, can help you see a change in floor level or where one step ends.²⁷

Contrast

G- Even a small spill on the floor can lead to a slip or fall. Make sure to wipe spills off the floor as soon as possible, or ask someone else to help you clean it up.

Spills

G- Ice can be difficult to see and puts older adults at risk during the winter months.²⁸ If you cannot avoid going out on icy days, you can carry a small bag of kitty litter to throw ahead on slick surfaces.⁸

Ice

G- Try to avoid slippery surfaces whenever possible, as these can lead to a fall. Make sure you are wearing shoes with rubber soles, and use nonslip mats or railings if needed on these surfaces.⁸

Slippery Surface

G- Make sure to have loose carpet repaired so you do not trip and fall. Double-sided carpet tape can help keep carpet edges down.⁸

Loose Carpets

G- A portable or cellular telephone is a helpful device. You can carry the phone with you from room to room. When the phone rings, you won't have to rush to answer.

Phone

G- Weather such as snow, ice, wind, and rain can result in hazardous conditions outdoors. Check the weather before leaving the house, and try to stay indoors if possible during periods of inclement weather.²⁸

Weather

O- Swimming can help prevent falls in older adults by improving balance and overall fitness.²⁹

Swimming

O- A physical therapist can check your walking and balance and provide you with exercises to improve these areas.

PT

O- Occupational therapists conduct home assessments, where they evaluate how people interact with their home environments, and then suggest adaptations or modifications to prevent falls and live independently.

OT

O- Scan your home or environment for safety risks. Make sure your path is free of clutter and that you can see where you are going.⁴

Scan

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O- Strength It's important to keep muscles strong. Strengthening muscles in the lower body can improve balance. Work with your doctor or a physical therapist to plan a physical activity program that is right for you.¹

O- Prevention Although many people think that falls are a normal part of aging, many falls are preventable.

O- Tai Chi Tai Chi helps prevent falls by improving balance and control. Tai Chi is a low-impact exercise of slow, focused movements and controlled breathing.³⁰

O- Physical Activity Low activity levels are linked to falls, and increasing your physical activity can reduce your chance of a fall and fall injury.³¹ Participating in leisure activities is an easy way to increase your physical activity.

O- Depression Depression is associated with impaired gait and balance and an increase in falls.⁹ Talk to your doctor to be screened for depression or to find out treatment options.

O- Hazards Home safety assessments and removal of home hazards can reduce falls for people at high risk for a fall. Assess your home for hazards or have an occupational therapist complete an assessment.⁸

O- Yaktrax YakTrax can be worn over your shoes if you must go outdoors when snow and ice are on the ground.^{30, 32}

O- Laundry Carry heavy items can put you off balance. Avoid carrying heavy loads of laundry or carrying laundry down the stairs. Do smaller loads or use a wheeled cart.

O- Nightlights Nightlights should be used if you have to get up at night for any reason so you can see where you are walking. Some nightlights turn on by themselves after dark.²

O- Nonslip mats Nonslip mats can reduce slippery surfaces to help prevent a fall. They can be used in your bathroom, kitchen, or other area.

O- Habits Some behaviors put you at risk for a fall, such as climbing on a chair to reach high objects or turning around quickly. Changes in these risky behaviors or changing the way you do certain activities can help reduce your risk of falls.⁸

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Fall prevention bingo references

Websites with evidence-based information

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[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Older adult fall prevention](#)

[National Council on Aging: Falls prevention](#)

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