

A Publication of Together In This™

# Preparing Your Home for Someone with Alzheimer's

A Guide for Family

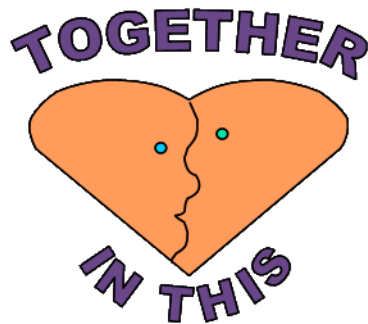
Steps and Knowledge to Start You on the Right Track



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Empowering Caregivers

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# INTRODUCTION

**You are not alone:** 60 – 80% of all people with dementia are cared for in a private residence by loving family members – just like you.

However, even without the complexity of Alzheimer's or other dementia, our homes don't meet the needs of an aging body and mind.

It's hard to duplicate the safe environment an assisted living community offers, but there are steps you can take to make your home more Alzheimer's friendly.

This guide introduces steps to help you start creating a safer and more enriching home environment for both you and your loved one.

# Aspects of Preparing the Home

**Be Prepared:** You can't prevent all accidents or behavioral issues, so take steps to minimize the impact when something does happen.

**Prevention:** Reduce the risk of injury by modifying the environment.

**Remove Dangers:** Judgment is eventually impaired; some things should be stored and possibly locked up to prevent unsafe use.

**Simplify:** Following multiple process steps, making complex decisions, and reasoning are impacted; reduce complexity to avoid confusion and frustration.

**Reduce Behavioral Triggers:** Many things can cause confusion, so be aware of the surrounding environment to identify and eliminate triggers.

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# Be Prepared

(check each box when complete)



**Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Detectors** –the most basic safety devices you can install



**Fire Extinguisher** – should be located in the kitchen and anywhere else your loved one may have access to flammable items



**First Aid Kit** – should be maintained and located where all care providers can find it



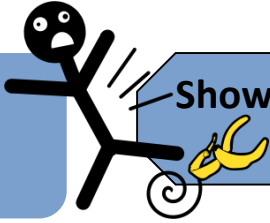
**Emergency contacts & medical information** – should be placed in plain sight; typically on the refrigerator



**Spare Key** – keep one outside to avoid being locked out by a confused loved one

# Prevention

(check each box when complete)



**Shower Mat** – can help prevent slips in the shower

**Shower Seat and hand-held wand** – to aid in bathing and reduce risks



**Trip hazards** – ensure that floor coverings are secured down and walkways are clear

Throw Rugs

Torn Carpet

Extension Cords

Clutter

**Night Lights**– should be placed throughout the residence

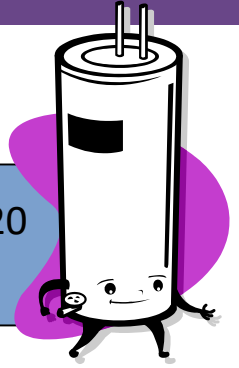


# Prevention

(check each box when complete)



**Water heater** – setting the temperature to 120 degrees Fahrenheit will avoid scalding



**Red Tape** – place around floor vents, radiators, or other items that pose a danger



**Check outdoors for hazards** – don't forget to examine the exterior of the house for dangers



**Stairs** – examine and repair steps and railings, and add adequate lighting with switches at top and bottom of the stairs



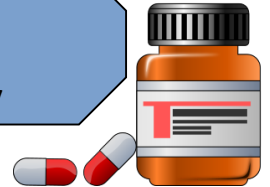
**Doors** – limit access to risk areas by disguising to prevent entry and exit



# Remove Dangers

(check each box when complete)

**Medications** – should be concealed, and expired and unwanted medicines, creams, liquids, etc. should be disposed of properly



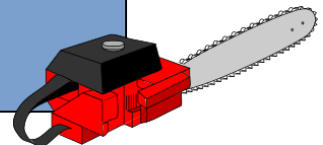
**Chemicals** – all rooms of the house, including the garage, should be considered



**Ability to Create Fire** – anything that can be used to create a spark should be locked up

**Weapons** – guns and knives should always be properly stored to prevent access

**Power Tools** – if your love one's judgment prohibits the "safe" use



**Fake, decorative fruits and toxic plants** – a lack of judgment may result in consumption

# SIMPLIFY

(check each box when complete)

**Clutter** – can cause confusion as the person searches for something or “stores” an item in an unexpected place



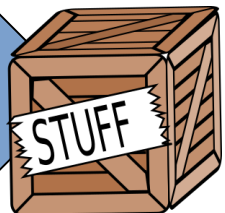
**Walkways** – should be easily maneuverable by reducing obstacles such as “extra” furniture



**Reduce choices** – clothing options as well as excessive dishware should be considered

**Make items accessible** – put regularly used items in easy to access locations

**Label items** – drawers, cabinets, and even entryways can be labeled with text or images to improve the ability to find things



# Reduce Behavioral Triggers

(check each box when complete)



**Lighting** – create evenly distributed (balanced) lighting to reduce shadows and sundowning



**Colors** – use contrasting colors among functional items, such as a plate on a place mat, to help the person clearly see the item



**Patterns** – eliminate busy patterns on flooring, walls, and furniture



**Mirrors and other reflective surfaces** – can confuse them when they don't recognize the person they see



**Family pictures** – may also result in confusion when the people are not recognized



**Sounds and smells** – can also cause issues so pay attention to the entire environment

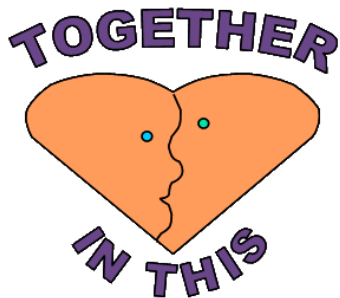
**You are not alone**

**We are Together in This  
But nobody is going to fight this fight for you**

Following my recommendations will help you provide a safe and enriching environment for the person with Alzheimer's or other dementia.

Please tell me how I can improve this guide. It's important for me to learn what does and doesn't work, so I can continually improve this important guide for the benefit of each and every caregiver.

Don't forget to share this guide with others.



Want to learn more about preparing your home?

Visit:

[TogetherInThis.com/HomePreparation](http://TogetherInThis.com/HomePreparation)