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# Slips, trips and falls

A bite size guide for tenants advising how to prevent slips, trips and falls in the home

## Slips, trips and falls

Slip, trip and fall hazards are one of the most common hazards found in Cornwall. There are some simple ways that both you and your landlord can help to reduce the likelihood someone falling and hurting themselves.

### Top tips for preventing accidents in the home

- Keep the stairs clear of belongings.
- Don't leave shoes, toys and other items on the floor.
- Wipe up spilled liquids or food.
- Ensure the lighting is adequate, it is your responsibility to replace light bulbs.
- Try not to use extension cables. If you must use them, try and plug them in to the closest socket to where you want it. Avoid running the cable under a rug.
- Secure rugs, i.e. have a slip resistant backing on them, especially if you have wooden or tiles floor.
- If you have small children make sure you have a stairgate.
- Try not to create steps with items of furniture, i.e. placing a chair in front of a window.
- Report any defects to your landlord as soon as possible.

## Falls on Stairs

- Treads and risers should be an even size, wherever possible.
- Ideally there will be a handrail to each side of the staircase or steps, but if they are narrow one rail may be acceptable.
- Where there is no wall to one or both sides of the staircase guarding such as balustrades will be required to prevent a fall over the side of the stairs.
- Handrails should be continuous along the length of stairs/steps be an appropriate height from the floor.
- Handrails should be easy to grip.
- Stairs should be well lit.

### Falls between levels

Any change in height that is more than 300mm should be guarded. These include:

- a landing, stair-well, light/basement well.
- garden terrace or garden retaining walls.
- roof terraces.
- windows or balconies.

The guarding should be at least 1100mm high, designed to discourage children climbing and have no gaps in excess of 100mm.

Openable parts of a window situated at first floor level and above with a low window sill, should have a safety catch fitted. The safety catch should be easy to over-ride by an adult in the event of a fire.

## Falls from baths

Falling out of a bath is a common accident in the home. Many falls can be prevented by:

- ensuring that there is adequate slip resistance provided to the bath surface.
- where appropriate incorporate safety features such as handles and grab rails can be installed.

The floor beneath the bath also needs to be level and stable to prevent the bath from 'rocking' when in use.

### Falls on level surfaces

These types of falls tend to occur when floor surfaces are in disrepair, are uneven, slippery or are excessively steep.

The floor should:

- Be properly constructed, maintained and even.
- Not be too steep
- Have no/ minimal trip hazards and/ or projecting thresholds.
- Have appropriate natural or artificial lighting.
- Have adequate drainage to any paths or yards.
- Not be too slippery (i.e. untreated timber decking).