

# around the HOUSE

## Sleep Safe & Sound

**The typical person spends a third** of his/her life in the bedroom. A person recovering from an injury may spend one half and possibly 80% or more of their time in the bedroom.

This makes having a good accessible bedroom extremely important

place for healing, exercise, socializing meditation and relaxing. Safety is the common denominator.

### Bedroom Bearings

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, bedrooms are the most common room in the home where electrical fires start.

tripping and provide wheelchair passage may be even better.

I design window sills no higher than 36 inches to provide optimum viewing and egress. A visual connection to the outdoors is preferable for healing.

I believe every new home should have a master bedroom on the main level for life-span living. Many older

homes have bedrooms on a second or split-level floor.

When I was a caregiver for my grandfather who had a stroke, he used a walker and a wheelchair. The stairs were a difficult and dangerous area to negotiate. Moving the bedroom to the main level will also minimize the possibility of falling at the stairs.

### Correct Cords

With all this activity and time spent in the bedroom, a large amount of assistive technology and other medical equipment can quickly accumulate.

This may require increased electrical loads,

and cords could become numerous and dangerous. Be sure not to run power cords under the bed or trap them against walls where heat can build up.

Never put too many plugs into extension cords. A six-plug power supply, also known as a "relocatable power tap," should have a fuse so it



This accessible bedroom has plenty of space on each side of the bed and has low-pile carpet for wheelchair access. It also features abundant lighting and a padded bed bench for sitting and cushions if one falls.

for someone who has sustained a spinal-cord injury (SCI). After an injury and for life-span living, an individual's bedroom must include universal design with built-in safety features for optimum performance.

The bedroom may take on several various functions. It needs to provide restful sleep; it also becomes the

The bedroom may need to be relocated to allow for easiest evacuation from a fire. For this to be achieved, a 36-inch-wide door directly to the outside will provide a quick escape, peace of mind and relieve much stress for anyone with a mobility impairment. A sliding French door with a low ½-inch threshold to lessen

will shut off if overheated and not burn. It should have an on/off switch and an LED light to be fused. They are commonly available. Discard any old cords and any that are frayed.

### Fire & Security

Summer is here, and temperatures continue to heat up outside, but it's never the wrong time to think about staying nice and warm inside.

Take extra care when using space heaters. Keep curtains, bedding, clothing and other combustible items at least 3 feet away from them. Don't even think about smoking in bed!

Use only laboratory approved electric blankets and warmers. A person with bad circulation or who



Old plug adapters and old cords piled on top of each other can overload, overheat and start a fire.



A six-plug power cord adapter replaces old cord gangs. The fused on/off switch will trigger off automatically if overheated.

has had a stroke should not use electric blankets.

Replace mattresses made before 2007 with products that comply with the Federal Mattress Flammability Standard, which are safer by law.

Choose smoke, fire and intruder alarms with audio-visual or verbal communication devices. Dual smoke-sensor alarms sound fast for a fire that has flames and a smoky fire that has fumes but no flames.



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\*Audio description and open captioning available for select performances.

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Make sure everyone in the house knows at least two ways to exit the home safely in a fire.

### Floor Space

Remove any carpet with a pad or deep pile that can hinder safe mobility.

Low-pile carpeting, matte finish bamboo or wood flooring are best. Throw rugs are a tripping hazard and need to be tightly taped down or removed not only in the bedroom but throughout the house.

Remove all the clutter in the bedroom. It needs to be very safe to move about the entire room. The bed should be located to provide views outside, if possible. A bedpost could be a falling hazard. A bed bench should have cushions.

### See the Light

An abundant and balanced amount of natural and artificial light will keep occupants healthier, safer and functioning at their best.

**Remove any carpet with a pad or deep pile that can hinder safe mobility.**

A light cove at the ceiling or wall-light valance for indirect lighting are effective methods to provide light without it shining directly into one's eyes.

Avoid harsh chemicals in all interior products. This is especially

important for people who have asthma or allergies.

Woven shades made from grasses, reed, and bamboo will filter the light and reduce glare. Pair them with drapes to provide color while providing total privacy and darkness.

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