



Topic: Preventing Falls

Humpty Dumpty, hero of a catastrophic rhyme, fell off a wall. Not that it was his fault, but he seems to have set a pattern for how people think about falling ... off of something.

If you stop to think about a time you fell or almost fell down, you may recall that unsure footing was the cause. It usually is. You'll probably remember that the floor or ground was slippery. Maybe it was water, snow, ice, or grease that made you slip up and fall down.

Certainly, people have been known to trip over their own feet, but that's rare. More often, they trip over a mat or rug, a box, a cord, an open drawer, or something else they didn't notice because it shouldn't be there. Watch for the unexpected as you walk.

"Walk, don't run." This well-worn caution has been with us from the first day we trotted down the hall to kindergarten. No matter how old you get, it's still good advice unless you are rounding the bases in a softball game. Anywhere, running can result in the aforementioned poor footing and you can trip over things you won't have time to notice.

That's also true on stairways where rushing is particularly unwise. A stairway could have all the footing and tripping hazards, plus poor lighting, and the added intricacy of ascending and descending. Use the handrail always.

The rhyme doesn't tell us what made Humpty fall. We do know that he was sitting on a nice solid wall. That's more than you can say for people who climb on chairs or boxes to reach higher. Always use a ladder to climb higher.

