This AARP Home Alone Alliance℠ video is in two parts. The first part shows how to make a bed while the person is in it. The video shows a hospital bed, but the steps are similar for any bed. The second part shows how to help a person transfer (move) from a bed to a commode (a moveable toilet).

**Supplies for Changing a Bed**
- Laundry bag or basket
- Clean top and bottom sheets
- Clean pillow cover
- Gloves (not shown in the video, but they may be helpful)

**Steps for Changing a Bed When a Person Is in It**
- Have supplies ready and tell the person what you’ll be doing.
- Put on a transfer belt or harness if available or needed.
- Pull the commode close to the bed and place it sideways next to the person (against a wall for support if possible).
- Place the person’s outside leg (the one farthest from the commode) between your knees for support.
- Make sure the person places her hands by her side and helps push off the bed.
- Pivot (turn) the person so her back is toward the commode.
- Lift the person’s nightgown or robe out of the way.
- Once the backs of the person’s legs are touching the edge of the commode, ask the person to start reaching for the commode armrest, then bend your knees to lower the person onto the commode.

---

**Moving a Person from a Bed to a Commode**
- Have the person sit on the edge of the bed and say what you’ll be doing.
- Put on a transfer belt or harness if available or needed.
- Pull the commode close to the bed and place it sideways next to the person (against a wall for support if possible).
- Place the person’s outside leg (the one farthest from the commode) between your knees for support.
- If you’re not using a transfer belt or harness, put your hands under the person’s underarms.
- Make sure the person places her hands by her side and helps push off the bed.
- Bend your knees and keep your back straight.
- Count to three, then both of you slowly stand up together, using your legs to lift—not your back.
- Pivot (turn) the person so her back is toward the commode.
- Lift the person’s nightgown or robe out of the way.
- Once the backs of the person’s legs are touching the edge of the commode, ask the person to start reaching for the commode armrest, then bend your knees to lower the person onto the commode.
You may want to review the video a few times to get the steps straight in your mind. If you’re uneasy, ask someone—preferably a nurse or home care aide—to help you so you don’t hurt yourself while helping your family member.

For more information and videos on mobility, visit the Home Alone Alliance page on the AARP website at https://www.aarp.org/nolongeralone.

Remember to take care of yourself as you help your family member. Find someone to talk to about your own feelings about handling this care. Look for support groups and message boards where people in similar situations share their experiences and suggestions. You are not alone!

AARP Public Policy Institute
Prepared by Carol Levine, United Hospital Fund