



guide to

keeping your child safe

What you can do to prevent accidents...

Although there is no such thing as a completely safe home, many accidents can be prevented by taking a few safety precautions. One of the biggest dangers in the living areas is fire; keep matches, lighters and cigarettes out of reach of children. Install a circuit breaker throughout your home and use electrical plug socket covers to prevent your child poking something into the socket.

any questions?

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hall, stairs and landing

- The most common accident is a child falling down the stairs. Fix gates at the top and bottom of the stairs to prevent children having access to them.
- Ensure that there are no loose floor coverings or any trailing wires.
- Make sure that stair carpet is securely fitted and in a good state of repair.
- Gaps between stair spindles should be no more than 10cm/4in so that a child's head
- Check that the lighting is good so that there is no risk of tripping on unseen objects on the stairs.
- Fit safety film or safety glass to any glass doors in these areas.
- Make sure that the front-door latch and letterbox are out of reach.
- Ensure there is a smoke alarm fitted and regularly tested.

living rooms

- Try looking at the room from your child's level (e.g. knees). Frequent safety checks are need as the danger areas change as your child becomes more mobile.
- Fit all fires with guards
- Unplug electric fires when they are not in use.
- Make sure that all fabrics and upholstery are made of fire-resistant materials.
- Fit safety protectors to the corners of cupboards and tables.
- Use mats instead of tablecloths so that your child can't pull things off the table on top of him.
- Place mugs/cups of hot drinks well away from baby's reach.
- Place all ornaments and breakables out of reach.
- Make sure that the floor is clean and that there are no small objects that could be swallowed.

kitchen

- The most common accidents in the kitchen are scalds from hot water, burns from cookers and poisoning from cleaning products.
- Keep the doorway blocked with a safety gate.
- Put all sharp objects, such as knives, well out of reach.
- Fit safety catches to all low-level cupboards, drawers, the fridge and also the freezer.
- Use a shortened coiled kettle flex.
- Cook on the back rings of the hob with the pan handles facing inwards.
- Use a pan guard on the cooker.
- Never leave containers of hot liquid or cups of tea where your child can reach them.
- Make sure that all household chemicals and cleaning materials are out of reach and that their lids are tightly secured.

bathroom

- Falls in the bath or shower, scalds from hot water, cuts and lacerations from razors, scissors and other dangerous objects, such as nail files, are the most common accidents in the bathroom. Make sure that all household chemicals and cleaning materials are out of reach and that their lids are tightly secured.
- Use a non-slip bathmat in the bath to prevent slipping.
- Fit a lock to the toilet seat.
- Make sure your child cannot reach the window by climbing on the toilet or the bath.
- Always run cold water into the bath before adding hot water and check the temperature before putting your child in the tub.
- The water temperature should not be above 32°C/90°F.
- Hang a towel over the taps to prevent a child burning herself.
- Check that your child cannot reach the door lock and lock herself in.

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your child's bedroom

- This is the one room where your child will spend time alone so regular safety checks are essential as your child grows and becomes more adventurous.
- Make sure that your baby's cot and mattress conform to safety standards and that the mattress fits snugly into the cot base.
- If your child sleeps in a bed, always use a bed barrier and make sure there is a safety gate fitted at the top of the stairs.
- Use a nursery light or dimmer to give your child reassurance at night and to allow you to look in on her without causing any disturbance.
- Monitor your child in bed by installing a nursery listening device
- Keep a check on the temperature by placing a thermometer in the bedroom, which needs to be around 18°C/65°F.
- Try to keep your child protected from cigarette smoke, which could put them at risk from coughs, chest infection and even cot death.
- Fit any windows with locks.
- Make sure you place the cot or bed away from the window.

outside

- Many accidents happen outside the home. Even if you have your own garden never leave a young child outside on his own.
- Keep all garden tools and chemicals locked away.
- Fit locks to garden sheds and garage doors.
- Make sure that any gates leading to the road are secure.
- Always use a harness, reins or wrist link when you are out on the pavement with your child.
- Make sure that the surface under any play equipment is safe for children to fall on.
- Cover up any ponds or water butts.

equipment

- Ensure that any equipment you buy conforms to the safety regulations established by the European Union (EU) and the British Standards Institute (BSI).
- Only use equipment for the age of the child it has been designed for.
- Second-hand equipment needs to be checked thoroughly for safety.
- Use safety straps when you put your baby in a pram, pushchair, highchair or bouncing cradle.
- Never put a bouncing cradle on a table or raised surface as your baby's movements could easily make it fall off.
- When travelling in a car always put your baby in a car seat approved for the child's weight and age.
- Use child locks on doors
- Don't leave your child alone in the car even if she is firmly strapped into her seat.