



Parenting Checklists

Childproof Home

Safety measures for every room:

- Install child-resistant covers on all electrical outlets.
- Keep dangerous chemicals out of children's reach.
- For strings and ribbons, follow the six-inch rule.
- Always use a safety belt on your baby when she is sitting in a bouncy seat or a swing.
- Shorten curtain and blind cords.
- Place furniture well away from windows.
- Use corner bumpers on furniture and fireplace-hearth edges.
- Place houseplants out of children's reach.
- Know the names of all plants in case a child eats one of them.
- Keep cigarettes, matches, and lighters out of children's reach.
- Safeguard heating and gas systems against accidents.
- Be sure that furnaces, fireplaces, wood-burning stoves, space heaters, and gas appliances are vented properly.
- Place screened barriers around fireplaces, radiators, and portable space heaters.
- Install carbon-monoxide (CO) alarms outside bedrooms to help prevent CO poisoning.
- Install smoke alarms outside each bedroom and on every level of your home.
- Remove the plastic end caps on doorstops or replace the stops with a one-piece design to prevent choking.
- Consider placing plastic guards along the hinge side of frequently used interior doors to prevent the doors from pinching fingers.
- Safety-proof windows and fire exits.
- Make a fire evacuation plan and practice fire escape routes at least twice a year.
- Keep firearms and ammunition safely locked away.
- Secure unsteady furnishings.
- Avoid household water hazards.
- Test homes built before 1978 for lead paint.
- Learn first aid and CPR.

Hallways and staircases:

- Avoid dark hallways and rugs that slip.
- Safety-proof stairs.
- If possible, install carpeting on stairways to protect from falls.

Kids' rooms:

- Position your child's crib away from all drapery, electrical cords, and windows.

- Make sure the crib meets national safety standards.
- Make sure the mattress fits snugly.
- Be sure the crib sheet fits snugly.
- If you use a crib bumper, make sure it's firm (not fluffy) and secured tightly with at least six ties.
- Remove mobiles and other hanging toys from the crib as soon as your child can reach up and touch them.
- Place infants under one year on their backs to sleep.
- Never use an electric blanket in the bed or crib of a small child or infant.
- Place night-lights at least three feet away from the crib, bedding, and draperies to prevent fires.
- Always use a safety belt on your infant when you have her on a changing table, and never leave her unattended.
- Provide padding for falls.
- Check age labels for appropriate toys.
- Be vigilant about choking hazards.
- Use side railings for children just getting used to "big kid" beds.
- If bedrooms are on second or third stories, be sure to have a fire-escape ladder in each room.

Bathroom:

- Put a lock on the medicine cabinet.
- To prevent poisoning, lock away all vitamins and medicines.
- Install toilet-lid locks to prevent drowning.
- Lower the household water temperature.
- Always test the water first before bathing a child.
- Make sure bathtubs and showers aren't slippery.
- Use electrical appliances carefully.
- Install ground-fault circuit interrupters on outlets near sinks and bathtubs.
- Never leave a young child alone in the bathroom.

Kitchen:

- Keep knives, cleaning supplies, and plastic bags out of children's reach.
- To avoid fires and burns, never leave cooking food unattended.
- If stove knobs are easily accessible to children, use protective covers to prevent kids from turning them.
- Teach your kids how to respond to fire.
- When they're not in use, unplug electrical appliances.
- Replace any frayed cords and wires.
- Keep chairs and step stools away from counters and the stove.
- Keep activated charcoal (helps absorb some poisons) and syrup of ipecac (used to induce vomiting) on hand.
- Beware of foods that children can choke on.

Yard:

- Store tools, garden, and lawn-care equipment and supplies in a locked closet or shed.
- Don't use a power mower to cut the lawn when young children are around.
- Don't allow children to play on a treated lawn for at least 48 hours following an application of a fertilizer or a pesticide.
- Know the types of trees on the property in the event children ingest berries, leaves, or other plant life.

- If you have a swimming pool, install a fence (with an automatic childproof gate) that separates the house from the pool.
- When you barbecue outdoors, never leave kids unattended around the grill.
- Store propane grills where children cannot reach the knobs.

Other resources for childproofing your home:

- To find outlet covers, cord shorteners, cabinet latches, and toilet-lid locks, check with your local hardware store.
- For consumer-product and home-safety information, contact the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.
- For details about child and home safety, contact the National Safe Kids Campaign.
- For information about child lead poisoning, read the "Lead Hazard Information" pamphlet from the department of Housing and Urban Development.
- For information about safe drinking water, contact the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Water.