

## KIDS SAFETY 10 TOP TIPS

### TEN TIPS TO CHILD PROOF YOUR HOME

It's a sad fact that children feature very highly in home injury statistics. What's particularly sad is that most of those injuries – or deaths – could have been avoided.

Here are 10 top tips that make it easy to keep your kids safe at home.

1. **Install child-locks** – Our homes are full of medicines, cleaners, chemicals, poisons or sharp objects we simply don't want our children to get at. Store these out of sight and out of reach. Child-locks are also cheap and easy to install on cupboards and they could save a life (or at the very least, a mess!)
2. **Children and water** – Young children, especially babies, can drown quickly and very quietly, and in a small amount of water. Always supervise a young child around pools or in the bath, keeping within arms length and only use buckets with a fitted lid. Toddlers can also tamper with bath taps, which could result in a nasty burn if your water is hotter than 55 degrees Celsius at the tap. Get some tap attachments so they can't turn them on and have your water thermostat altered if the water's too hot.
3. **Keep sharp objects out of reach** – Sounds like a no-brainer, but it's easy to forget to put the scissors away after you've wrapped a present or some-such. Make sure all knives, scissors, or anything else sharp, is up high and preferably out of sight.
4. **Electrical cords and sockets** – Keep all electrical cords out of reach and put safety plugs in all electrical sockets to prevent burns and electrocution. Teach kids about the dangers of electricity – the younger they know why forks in sockets aren't a good idea, the better.
5. **Hot liquids** – Each year many children are admitted to hospital because of burns from hot food or liquids. Most commonly, the child pulled cups, kettles or bowls of hot stuff onto themselves. Remember, a cup of hot tea spilled over a baby is equivalent to a bucketful over an adult. Always keep hot drinks where they can't be grabbed and use placemats instead of tablecloths so a young child can't pull on the hanging material. Turn pot handles towards the back of the oven.
6. **Fires and heaters** – Never leave a child unsupervised in a room with a fire or heater going. Use guardrails, making sure they are stable and cannot be climbed, and follow the 'heater metre rule', keeping heaters at least one metre away from bedding, clothes, curtains, rugs and furniture. Firmly teach each your children about the dangers of going near that oh-so-attractive glowing thing and only buy flame-resistant clothing, particularly pajamas.
7. **Toys** – Unfortunately toys can be dangerous, especially if they have bits a child could swallow or choke on – anything small enough to fit into a match box is a hazard. Make sure your child's toys are age-appropriate and regularly check them over for chipped paint, broken or sharp bits. Also, keep plastic bags away from children – they are not toys.

8. **Windows and glass** – Use safety glass, or frosted or decorated glass, for floor to ceiling windows or glass doors, or put stickers etc on them so children (and adults!) know they're there. Put latches on windows so they can't be opened wide enough for a child to climb out – however make sure you can remove them quickly in a house fire.
9. **Babies and high surfaces** –When changing your baby it is safest to do this on the floor. If you do need to put a baby on a high surface (even your bed or a changing table) always keep one hand on them, so keep everything you need within arm's reach. Babies can move quickly and may roll at a very early age – you don't want to learn about your baby's latest milestone as they hit the floor. Use restraints in high chairs and prams.
10. **Beds** – Use a bed that's the right size for your child; beds that are too big or too small can be dangerous. Bunks aren't recommended for children younger than six, especially if they're sleeping in the top bunk. If you do have bunks, make sure there's a guardrail on both sides of the top bunk and that it extends up past the mattress by at least the length of a ballpoint pen. Avoid using an electric blanket for a young child because bedwetting can cause electrocution. Hot water bottles are better, but fill them with hot, not boiling water. Children under two a pillow shouldn't have a pillow and keep beds, or bedroom furniture away from power points