Home safety checklist

Children 0–4 years generally, but particularly children 1–2 years of age, are vulnerable to injuries as they begin to explore their environment, but are unable to recognise danger, or take action to keep themselves safe. Nearly 60% of injuries in children 0–4 years happen in the home and backyard.



General safety

- [ ] Is there an electrical safety switch (circuit breaker) to prevent electrocution?
- [ ] Do you have working smoke alarms fitted in the house?
- [ ] Are safety plugs fitted in unused power points?
- [ ] Are appliances, and plugs in good condition? (No frayed cords or damaged plugs)
- [ ] Have long cords been bound with twist ties, or extra cord hidden?
- [ ] Are there barrier gates on steps, stairs, and changes in floor levels to prevent falls?
- [ ] Are all railings/balustrade free of footholds that your young child can climb?
- [ ] Do you have a home fire escape plan?
- [ ] Are all mouse and rat traps/baits inaccessible to your young child?
- [ ] Do you have a dog? If so, do you always supervise your dog with your child or if you can't supervise them together, separate them? Never leave a child alone with a dog, no matter how friendly it is.

Kitchen

- [ ] Do your appliances have short cords that do not dangle over the bench?
- [ ] Do you use the back hot plates and turn pot handles around to prevent pots being pulled from the hot plate, or do you have a stove guard?

- [ ] Do you have a child-resistant lock on your oven door?
- [ ] Are matches, lighters, knives, scissors, and other dangerous objects stored in a place where your young child cannot reach them?
- [ ] Are plastic bags tied in the middle and kept out of reach?
- [ ] Is the kettle/jug, including the cord, out of your young child's reach?
- [ ] Do you have locks on cupboard doors and drawers where dangerous household goods (e.g. cleaning products) are kept or do you store them out of reach?
- [ ] Is the high chair stable and does it have a 5 point harness to restrain your young child safely?
- [ ] Do you have a fire blanket and a fire extinguisher located near an exit?
- [ ] Are all medications stored safely i.e. do you have a locked medicine cupboard, a lock on the fridge door or a lockable storage box in the fridge?
- [ ] Is the microwave positioned out of reach of your young child?
- [ ] Do you use placemats, rather than tablecloths?
- [ ] Are cups of hot tea/coffee kept out of reach of your young child?
- [ ] Do you keep the dishwasher closed at all times?

Bathroom

- [ ] Are medicines and razors kept in a locked cupboard, or out of reach?
- [ ] Are the shampoos, soaps, and cosmetics kept out of reach?
- [ ] Are hair dryers, straighteners/curlers and electric razors unplugged when not in use?
- [ ] Is your young child constantly supervised by an adult when in the bathroom?
- [ ] Is there a child-resistant lock on the toilet or bathroom door?
- [ ] Have you removed all chemicals from the toilet and bathroom floor?
- [ ] Is the hot water delivery temperature for your bathroom at a maximum of 50°C, or do you have tap protectors fitted?
- [ ] Does the bath have a non-slip surface or non-slip mats?
- [ ] Is the bath water temperature always 'tested' before putting your young child in (start with cold, then hot, then finish with cold)?
- [ ] Is the bath always kept empty when not in use?

Laundry

- [ ] Are cleaners, bleaches, and detergents stored out of reach, or in a lockable cupboard?
- [ ] Are all buckets, the sink and washing machine kept empty when not in use?
- [ ] Does the top loading washing machine switch off when the machine is opened?
- [ ] Are front loading washing machines and dryer doors securely closed to prevent your young child opening them and

climbing in?

Young child's/spare bedroom

- [ ] Is your young child's bed/cot safe? (children under 9 years should not sleep in bunk beds, and cots need to meet the Australian Standard(AS/NZS 2172). Check that cot rails are between 50mm and 95mm apart to avoid head entrapment)
- [ ] Does the cot mattress fit snugly to avoid your young child becoming wedged?
- [ ] Is the cot free of all soft items – toys, bumpers, and pillows?
- [ ] Is the cot away from the window and power points?
- [ ] Are electrical appliances and their cords out of reach of your young child?
- [ ] Are curtain and blind cords secured up high and out of reach of your young child?
- [ ] Is everything you need kept close to the baby change table, as it is important never to leave a baby unattended on a change table?
- [ ] Are the toys suitable for your young child's age? (e.g. no loose small parts that could pose a choking hazard)
- [ ] Are toys kept where your young child can reach them without climbing on furniture?
- [ ] Is all top heavy furniture, such as bookcases and tall-boy drawers, secured to the wall to prevent them from tipping over if your young child climbs on them?

Living areas

- [ ] Are sharp edges on tables and furniture covered?
- [ ] Are blind and curtain cords secured up high and out of reach of your young child?
- [ ] Are glass doors protected by safety film, colourful stickers, or made of safety glass?
- [ ] Is alcohol stored in a lockable cupboard, or stored up high and out of reach?
- [ ] Are cigarettes, ashtrays, matches, and lighters out of reach?
- [ ] Are hot drinks placed well out of reach of your young child?
- [ ] Are there child resistant fire screens attached to the wall around fire places, fuel stoves, and heaters?
- [ ] Are heaters kept at least 1 metre away from curtains, furniture, or other flammable material?
- [ ] Are large televisions secured to prevent toppling over onto your young child?
- [ ] Are all breakable items removed, or moved so they are out of reach of your young child?

Backyard

- [ ] Is your young child supervised at all times while playing outside?
- [ ] Is your young child's play area separated from the driveway, and is access to the driveway and the street/road restricted?
- [ ] Are the ignition keys removed from all vehicles, and the vehicles locked?

- [ ] Do you have the correct child restraints fitted in your car?
- [ ] Do you use the child-proof locks on the car doors?
- [ ] Is the swimming pool or spa fully enclosed by a safety fence with a functioning self latching gate, and with nothing near the fence that could be used to climb on?
- [ ] Is the backyard free of drowning hazards? e.g. uncovered ponds, pet's water containers, buckets, tanks, troughs, dams etc.
- [ ] Is the play equipment stable, secured, and in good condition?
- [ ] Is there a soft surface under play equipment in the backyard to cushion falls? e.g. bark chips or well watered lawn
- [ ] Does your young child wear a helmet and protective gear when riding a bike or scooter, or when using in-line skates, skateboards or rollerblades?
- [ ] Can the shed/garage/workshop be locked?
- [ ] Are all garden tools, mowers, chainsaws and other dangerous tools locked away?
- [ ] Do you make sure that your young child is well away from the lawn mower when mowing the lawns to prevent injury from flying stones and other objects?
- [ ] Are pesticides, paints, chemicals and other poisons stored in tightly covered and labelled original containers, out of reach of your young child?
- [ ] Are ladders stored safely so that your young child cannot climb them?
- [ ] Are rain water tanks sealed securely and any ladders removed?
- [ ] Are garden statues and birdbaths cemented in to prevent a crush injury?

Farm yard and rural safety

- [ ] Do you know where your young child is at all times?
- [ ] Is there a safe playing space outside which is visible from the house?
- [ ] Do you have a fence around the house with a self-latching gate to keep your young child close to the house, and away from machinery and livestock?
- [ ] Do you check outside for snakes before letting your young child into the yard?
- [ ] Are firearms stored unloaded and locked away in the gun safe?
- [ ] Are guns kept out of reach of your young child, and unloaded, when being transported in a vehicle?
- [ ] Are fuels tanks locked, and other highly flammable substances stored safely?
- [ ] Are agricultural chemicals stored in their original containers, correctly labelled and safely stored?
- [ ] Are silo doors locked, with ladders removed?
- [ ] Do you let workers know when your young child is on the farm?
- [ ] Do you check your young child is a safe distance away before starting a tractor or any other farm machinery or equipment?
- [ ] Have you removed all keys from farm vehicles and machinery when not in use?
- [ ] Have you the correct child restraints in your farm utility/car and use them on every trip, not matter how short?
- [ ] Are you able to lock sheds and workshops?

- [ ] Are water tanks sealed and ladders removed?
- [ ] Do you keep your young child away from Quad bikes and farm bikes? (Many burns and crush injuries result when these types of vehicles overturn – Always supervise a child.)
- [ ] Are animal pens and stockyards inaccessible to your young child?
- [ ] Are working dogs kept securely away from your young child?
- [ ] Do you always supervise your young child around any animal?
- [ ] Do you ensure your young child is supervised at a safe distance from where hay is being cut, baled and stacked?
- [ ] Do you always supervise your young child around water hazards?
- [ ] Have you established a clear set of rules for your young child to follow and are you consistent in applying those rules?
- [ ] Have you erected a sign at the entry to your property stating children are present and to reduce speed to 20 km/hour.

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