



100 Ways to Childproof Your Home

KITCHEN

1. If this is where you store house keys, make sure they are up high. The same goes for handbags.
2. Stove Safety. Is the insulation adequate or does the stove give off unnecessary heat? Where are the on-off knobs? Preferably, they should be above in the rear or on the side—not on the front. If you have a gas range with the controls in the front, you can take the knobs off and leave them at the rear of the stove until needed. Plexiglass shields are also available that suction to the front of the range so little hands cannot reach over and touch hot things. Is the stove anchored to the floor or wall so it cannot tip over onto a toddler who has stepped on the open oven door?
3. When you don't need to use all four burners, use only the back two.
4. Keep all pot handles turned toward the back of the stove.
5. Move recently used coffee/tea pots out of reach.
6. Do not leave hot beverages unattended on a kitchen table or counter.
7. If you own an electric food processor, store blades in separate container out of reach when not in use.
8. Latch shut any floor-level cabinets that contain cleansing and waxing substances and other sources of poison. Consider moving poisonous household items to a higher, locked location.
9. Check overhead cabinets to make sure canned goods, boxes and dishes are well balanced so that nothing drops out if a cabinet door is opened quickly.
10. Put tacks, needles, pins and scissors out of reach.
11. A kitchen bulletin board with tacks should also be beyond reach.
12. Lock up all sharp knives.
13. Electric sockets not in use should be capped.
14. Electric appliances should be unplugged when not in use. Be sure no cords dangle temptingly along or over a kitchen counter (including phone cords, too).
15. Check cords to make sure that none are frayed or damaged.
16. Never place high chair near the stove, cabinets, or food preparation areas.
17. Cookies and candies should not be stored by the stove. This tempts young children.
18. Poisonous plants should be removed or placed beyond reach.
19. Floor mats should have nonskid backing.
20. Keep matches out of reach.
21. Tablecloths and mats should not be left on the table if children are left unattended. They may be tempted to pull them off and everything on top of them!
22. Cover the toaster. It holds particular temptation for youngsters.
23. Buy plastic drinking mugs. If they fall, they don't shatter.
24. Cover the trash container securely.
25. Keep a fire extinguisher in your kitchen and check it periodically to make sure its date of usage has not expired.
26. Mop up spills immediately to prevent slipping.

27. Place decals on glass doors leading out to the deck or patio. Each year, a number of children as well as adults walk right through these glass doors, thinking they are open.

28. Open windows from the top only or locked so that only a small opening is available to avoid accidentally falling out the window.

29. Keep chairs and hassocks away from windows.

30. Secure heavy dining room chairs to dining table if they are inclined to fall backwards easily.

31. Latch bureau, table or buffet drawers if they contain hazardous items and are at youngsters' eye-level. Consider bolting heavy bookcases and other furniture to wall to prevent them from tipping over on a child who might try to climb on it.

32. Remove valuables from lower bookshelves and fill with age appropriate books and toys.

33. Remove poisonous plants beyond reach.

34. Cap unused sockets.

35. Place lamps as close as possible to sockets so that children won't be tempted to play jump rope in the area between.

36. Again, check for frayed or damaged cords.

37. Don't run electrical cords under a carpet.

38. Tape to wall excessive cord and extension cords.

39. Again, loose area rugs should be backed with nonskid material.

40. Think twice about adding any lamps that break easily.

41. Keep the piano lid down on the keys when not in use.

42. Keep the stereo shut when not in use.

43. Put a sturdy grate in front of the fireplace.

Fence off a wood stove and put dense foam guards along edge of hearths.

44. Don't leave bowls of candy in hard-to-reach spots that can tempt climbers.

45. Low tables with sharp corners should be removed or covered with guards available at hardware stores.

46. There should be a light bulb in every lamp. If you don't use the lamp, remove it.

47. Keep alcoholic beverages in a locked cabinet.

BEDROOMS

48. Open windows from the top only or lock so that only a small opening is available to avoid accidentally falling out the window.

49. Make sure all screens are secure.

50. Clear from bureaus and end tables all perfumes, nail polish and remover, shoe polish, night medications.

51. Again, check for nonskid rugs.

52. Again, check cords running from tables to wall outlets to make sure there is not too much distance between.

53. Remind any guests staying in a guest bedroom to keep the following out of reach: pills, rings, earrings, cosmetics, coins, cigarettes, matches, lighters, and to lock their suitcase when they are out of the room.

CLOSET

54. Remove all plastic bags supplied by your cleaner.

55. Keep mothballs beyond reach.

56. If shoeboxes and suitcases are stored precariously on shelves, reorganize so that they are well balanced.

BATHROOMS

57. Check doors. Are they sticky? Fix them or a child—or you—could get locked in.

58. If your medicine cabinet is not beyond reach, it should be locked up or cleared of medication, deodorant, laxatives, mouthwash, shampoo, cream rinse, perfume, nail polish and remover, aftershave lotion, cosmetics, razor and blades, suntan lotion.

59. If area below sink is used as a storage area, clear out cleaners for the toilet, tiles, floor, tub, sink, mirrors.

60. If you attach a permanent cleaning device to your toilet bowl, remove it. Children like to drink brightly colored water. Use a toilet lock or just keep bathroom unavailable to children without an adult by using a child resistant door knob lock.

61. Again, check for nonskid rugs.

62. Again, make sure the trash container has a secure lid.

63. When you run the tub, do not leave a child in the bathroom unattended. A child can get burned if the water is too hot or can fall in and drown. Make sure the water heater for the home is turned down to 120 degrees. Consider a foam cover for the bathtub faucet.

64. Shut all water faucets tightly when not in use. Children are fascinated by them.

65. Keep all electrical appliances away from water.

66. If you have an extra heating unit in your bathroom, it should be insulated well and the on-off switch (usually at child-level) should be barricaded.

67. Put nonskid stripping in your tub or shower.

STAIRS

68. Make sure they are well-lit, free of toys, and that the carpeting is secure in place.

69. If you don't have a door at the entry of your stairs, buy a stair guard to use at the top and bottom of stairs.

FRONT & BACK DOORS

70. Safety latches, please.

LAUNDRY ROOM

71. Lock up all cleansing substances.

72. Lock up the extra freezer stored there.

73. Securely latch your washer and dryer when not in use.

74. Keep the iron beyond reach.

75. Keep a cover on your sewing machine.

76. No pins and needles out in the open.

BABY'S ROOM or SLEEPING AREA

77. Begin your checkout with the crib. Slats should be 2 3/8" or less apart. The paint should be lead-free. The crib should not be near the changing table, window, lamp, cords, vaporizer, or humidifier. Locks and latches on the crib's side should be secure.

78. Again, the windows should only be opened from the top or locked so that only a small opening is available to avoid accidentally falling out the window. The screens should be secure.

79. Again, check for frayed or damaged cords.

80. Again, have nonskid backing on area rugs.

81. Baby's pajamas should be purchased with flame-retardant finish. Don't use phosphate-free detergent on them or the finish will go down the drain. Make sure you have working smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors in the sleeping areas.

82. No pillow for baby until 6 months old.

83. Remove lotions or pins from the diaper changing table.

UTILITY ROOM OR AREA FOR TOOLS AND REPAIR SUPPLIES

84. Poisonous substances—paints, solvents, insecticides—should be kept under lock and key.

85. Lock up building tools large and small, and secure unfinished projects.

GARAGE

86. Store poisons beyond reach—antifreeze, gasoline, paints, thinners, fertilizers, and bug sprays.

87. If you store your mower here, it should be barricaded from youngsters as should all garden tools.

88. If a mechanical gadget opens and closes your garage doors, make sure the mechanism that triggers it is beyond a child's touch.

PLAY AREAS OUTDOORS

89. Charcoal lighter fluid for the grill should be out of reach.

90. Check hobbyhorses, walkers (eliminate) and jumpers for exposed springs that can amputate fingers.

91. Make sure swings, slides, etc., are sturdy and have adequate cushioning material beneath them—like pea gravel.

92. Check lawn for deep holes resulting from winter storms and fill them in.

93. If you have a well on your property, keep it covered. Also keep all empty containers such as planting pots turned upside down so they do not collect rainwater.

94. The pool or spa should be securely locked and covered when there is no adult supervision.

95. Identify and remove or barricade poisonous plants and weeds.

96. Identify and remove poisonous insects and snakes.

97. Restrict youngsters' outdoor activity when fertilizing or weeding or mowing the lawn.

GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

98. Post emergency phone numbers for doctor, hospital, poison control, and insurance near the phone.

100. Shorten or loop drawstrings on blinds so that youngsters cannot reach them. And use child resistant electrical outlet face plates.

99. Prepare an emergency disaster preparedness plan with other family members. Practice. Crawling around your home on your hands and knees will give you the best vantage point for identifying potential hazards for your young child.

Handouts to be retrieved by the instructor from Healthy Child Care Washington at:
<http://www.healthychildcare-wa.org>

Look for the *Child Health Care Consultants* link and the *Manual: Public Health Consultation in Child Care*. A free "pdf" file of the following resource is posted online.

Washington State Department of Health (September 2000). *Public Health Consultation in Child Care*
Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Health, Community and Family Health, Publication No. 950-137. 1-800-525-0127. Available in Spanish.

Print out these handouts from the following pages:

Safety for Infants (p. 178)

Safety for Toddlers (p. 179)

Poisonous Plants (p. 177)