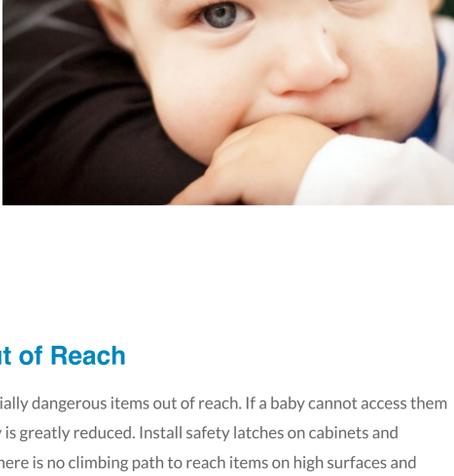


Complete Guide to Babyproofing Your Home



The idea of keeping a new baby safe can be a daunting one, especially as they grow and become an active toddler with the incredible ability to get into just about everything. This guide goes over all of the primary areas that you will need to cover in order to make a safe home environment for a growing family.



Keeping Items Out of Reach

The first rule is to keep potentially dangerous items out of reach. If a baby cannot access them to begin with, the risk of injury is greatly reduced. Install safety latches on cabinets and drawers, and make sure that there is no climbing path to reach items on high surfaces and shelves. Also, keep in mind that items that we consider as generally harmless, such as houseplants, may actually be poisonous or otherwise hazardous to a small explorer.

To learn more about what to keep out of reach (and where on earth to put it all!), visit:

- NYC Dads article on [Childproofing Your Home](#)
- Tulane University article on [Childproofing Your Home](#)
- Oregon Public Health [Safety Checklist](#) document

Furniture / sharp edges and corners

Some furniture, such as the type with glass surfaces or that can tip over easily, are simply a bad idea around small children. Some redecoration, including changing out furniture, may be your best option. However, there is still plenty that you can do to improve the safety of the furniture already in the home:

- Add cushions or protectors to sharp corners.
- Make sure that furniture that can possibly topple is securely anchored to a wall.
- Use childproof latches, safety gates, and knob covers to prevent any unwanted exploring.
- Install a fireguard if you have a fireplace.
- Push televisions back as far as possible (or secure them to a wall).
- Put tall lamps out of reach.

To learn more about baby proofing your furniture and living room, visit:

- The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia [Home Safety Products](#) section
- Wake Forest Baptist Health's section on [Babyproofing Your Home](#)
- The Childproofing Expert's [Childproofing Checklist by Age](#)

Electrical Safety

We take electricity for granted, but it is still a potentially serious hazard for small children who have not learned the risks.

- Keep hairdryers, toasters, and other small appliances unplugged when not in use.
- Put electrical cords out of reach where they cannot be tugged on.
- Use electrical outlet covers if you do not have tamper-resistant receptacles already installed.
- Block access to, or cover, radiators and heaters.
- Use a cord cover for any cords that run across the floor.

To read more about electrical safety hazards, visit:

- The Berkeley Parents' Network section on [Electrical Outlets](#)
- Payson, Arizona's [Plug Safety into Your Home](#) article
- Lafayette, Indiana Government's [Electric Safety](#) page

Windows

- Add window-guards, window-stops, or Charley bars to your windows.
- Remove or cover handles.
- Lock your windows.
- Move furniture away from windows so it cannot be used as a way to climb up and reach them.

For more ideas on how to baby proof your windows, visit:

- CPSC's How to [Child Proof Your Windows](#) article
- Safe Beginnings [Childproofing Windows](#) guide

Staircases

- Block gaps in railings
- Add secured baby gates to the top and bottom of staircases

To learn more about protecting your baby around stairs, visit:

- Parent guide on [How to Baby Proof Your Stairs](#)
- Home Tips guide on [Childproofing Stairs](#)

Kitchen Safety

- Make sure that any wastebaskets have childproof lids.
- Keep child safety latches on all cabinets.
- Use an appliance latch for the refrigerator.
- Keep sharp items, such as knives, out of reach.
- Put cleaners in a high cabinet instead of below the sink.
- Turn pot handles towards the back of the stove when cooking.
- Protect or remove oven knobs that can be reached.
- Do not place highchairs near counters or tables (the baby may push against them and cause the chair to tip).
- Never leave a baby unsupervised in a highchair.

For more kitchen safety ideas, visit:

- The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension's document on [Childproofing Your Home: A Room-by-Room Safety Checklist](#)
- The University of Maryland Medical Center Page: [Child Proof Your Home](#)

Bathroom Safety

- Supervision is key. To prevent drowning, never leave a small child alone near water.
- Add no-slip strips to the bottom of your shower or bathtub to prevent slipping.
- To prevent burns, adjust your hot water heater so that the water temperature is never above 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Store medications in childproof containers and keep them separate from commonly used items such as toothbrushes.

For more ways to keep everything safe in the bathroom, visit:

- The Up and Away [website](#) for keeping children safe from prescription medications
- The Drowning Prevention Foundation's [Protect Your Child Against Bathtub Drownings](#) pamphlet
- The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences has a good article to [Keep Kids Safe at Every Age](#)

Outdoors

It is a great opportunity for young people to explore the outdoors, socialize, get some fresh air, see what nature is like, and experience life to the fullest. With a few simple safety rules in mind, it can be a relatively hazard-free experience as well.

Playgrounds

- Make sure that there is always adult supervision.
- Regularly check playground equipment for damage and decay.
- Have soft child-friendly surfaces rather than pavement in the play area.
- Teach small children about taking turns and giving other children space when they are on swings or other playground equipment.

For more on playground safety, visit:

- Kids' Health [Playground](#) page
- Healthy Children: [Safety on the Playground](#)

Swimming Pools

- Never leave children unsupervised near a pool.
- Have a good, tall, and solid child-proof pool fence and gate.
- Make sure that pool covers are secure and do not have gaps that children can slip under
- Install gate and pool alarms.
- Early swimming lessons are a great way to reduce the risk of accidental drowning, although supervision is always key.

For more on swimming pool safety, visit:

- Utah Healthcare's article on [Water Safety for Parents](#)
- Beaumont's article on [Water Safety](#)
- The American Heart Association's page for [Finding a CRP Course](#)

Garage

- Make sure that electric garage door openers come with a sensor that can detect a small child or pet.
- Keep the garage door opener high and out of reach.
- Supervise small children near the garage door.
- Never leave your keys in your parked vehicle.
- Keep chemicals out of reach and sealed properly.
- Add locks to your washer and dryer.
- Store tools safely and out of reach where they are unlikely to fall and cause injury.
- Lock freezers with an appliance lock.
- Keep containers locked and store empty ones upside-down to prevent water collecting.

For more on garage safety, visit:

- The Cleveland Clinic's article on [How to Childproof Your Garage](#)
- Consumer Reports: Tips for [Childproofing Your Garage](#)
- The Home Institute's guide to [Childproofing the Garage](#)

Landscaping

Many of the items that we use to keep the exterior of our homes beautiful and our lawns green can pose a risk for small children and pets.

- Paint, cleaners, chemicals, and other potential poisons should be replaced with less toxic alternatives and stored away safely.
- Areas that are presently covered (the exterior of a building during painting or a lawn soon after treatment) should be clearly marked with hazard tape and have access limited by locking gates or doors.

For more on safety around landscaping, visit:

- The Environmental Protection Agency's section on how to [Reduce Your Child's Chances of Pesticide Poisoning](#)
- The University of Florida's [Childproofing Outdoor Areas](#) section

Choking and Suffocation Hazards

- Avoid using soft bedding for infants. It may look comfortable, but it comes with a risk of suffocation.
- Anything small enough to fit into a mouth is too small to keep around a baby or young child.
- Keep curtain cords and other strings safely tucked away or removed to prevent accidental strangulation.
- Beware of balloons. They are common at children's parties, but include a high choking risk.

To learn more about what you can do to prevent choking and suffocation, visit:

- The New York State Department of Health: [Choking and Suffocation Prevention, Children Ages Birth to 19 Years](#)
- National Safety Council: [Safety at Home – Choking](#)

Pet Safety

- Pets can sense when a change is about to occur in a house. Let them get familiar with the baby's room, baby gates, and other changes before the baby arrives to lower their anxiety about the newest member of the family.
- Enroll your dog in an obedience-training course.
- Carry a baby doll around with you to teach a dog what the acceptable behavior is (no licking, for example) around a real baby.
- Let your pet get used to the scent of the new baby's used items (blankets, clothes) before introducing the two.
- Do not leave infants or small children alone with pets.

To learn more about having a happy household with both pets and babies, visit:

- WebMD: [Pets and New Baby](#)
- ASPCA's article on [Cats and Babies](#)
- The Humane Society's tips for [Pets and Babies](#)

Gun Safety

- Avoid having a firearm in the house, if possible.
- Store firearms in a locked box and keep ammunition in a separate locked location.
- Never leave a gun unattended in the home.

For more information on gun safety at home, visit:

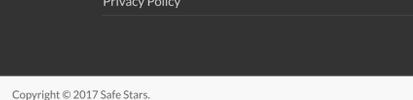
- Project Child Safe has a section on [Safe Storage](#)
- The State of California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General has a section on [Firearm Safety](#) and includes a subsection on child gun safety

Miscellaneous Tips and Advice

A new baby can be both overwhelming and wonderful at the same time. Take your time, get to know your infant, and try to find some time to relax. Bumps and bruises are a normal part of growing up, and not all can be prevented. If your home is baby proofed, you will have significantly decreased the risk of more serious injuries as well as having reduced the number of minor injuries as well.

Additional Resources

- Oklahoma.gov covers [Baby's Safety, for Age Two to Six Months](#)
- The Doernbecher Children's Hospital offers a [Safety Checklist](#) to get you started



← Hurricane Safety and Information for Adults and Children

Neighborhood and Home Safety Guide for the Whole Family →