

Top tips on how to keep your child safe at home and while out and about

Follow these simple tips to help keep babies and young children safe around the house and when out and about. Remember to always be extra vigilant:

- **Hot drinks and hair straighteners** - Babies and young children's skin is thin and delicate and can easily burn. Keep hot drinks and items like hair straighteners well out of reach of babies and children. High up is best. Put children down before picking up a hot drink
- **Medications, laundry products and cleaning products** - Medicines, such as painkillers; Washing pods and cleaning liquids, such as disinfectant and toilet cleaners can poison babies and children if swallowed. Put them high up out of reach. Remember to put them away after use. Always keep cleaning liquids in their original containers. When shopping, look out for products containing a [bittering agent such as Bitrex](#)- a very bitter tasting substance which causes children to spit it out, preventing poisoning
- **Button batteries** - Lithium coin cell batteries (silver round shaped) which are commonly found in electronic items such as TV remote controls, light up toys, car keys and gaming headsets. If swallowed, these can get stuck in the child's windpipe, cause internal bleeding and burns, and, in some cases, cause death. Place them out of reach of babies and young children. Dispose of used batteries quickly and safely. Keep any loose batteries and items containing these batteries safely out of reach of babies and young children
- **Cooking** - Young children do not automatically pull away if they are being burnt. To reduce the risk of burns happening, push kettles to the back of the worktop and use the rear cooking rings first. Try to keep babies and young children in a highchair, or better still, keep children out of the kitchen while cooking
- **Bath water** - Bath water can cause serious scalds to young children in seconds. Put cold water in the bath first then top up with hot water. Test the temperature of the water with your elbow before putting your child into the bath. Stay with your child in the bathroom in case they fiddle with the hot tap
- **Fires and heaters** - Fit fireguards around fires and heaters. Move cots away from radiators so babies and young children cannot get their arm or leg trapped against the heat
- **Blind cords** - It can take just 20 seconds for a toddler to die from strangulation from unsafe looped blind cords. Move bedroom furniture away from cords and chains. Fit a cleat hook or tensioner to keep blind cords and chains safely away and always use them
- **Nappy sacks** - Store nappy sacks well out of reach of babies. Never store nappy sacks under the cot mattress. It's also recommended that nappy sacks are never left in a child's room or where they can be accessed by a child
- **Choking** - Simple things that can be done to stop babies and young children choking include: Putting small parts from older children's toys out of reach, do not prop babies bottles up to feed, avoid popcorn, marshmallows and hard round sweets, cut hard food like carrots, apples and sausages into thin strips, chop nuts up into small pieces. [Watch the Chokeables video on how to save a choking baby](#)
- **Baby equipment** - Always follow the manufacturer's recommended instructions. Avoid enhancements. Keep cots, including travel cots, clear of any items such as bumpers, soft toys and loose bedding, like pillows or duvets and products such as straps and wedges that will keep a baby in one position. [Visit the Lullaby Trust for more information about safe sleep](#)
- **Water and beaches** - Water, such as the sea, ponds, standing water, swimming pools and slurry pits, can pose risks to babies, children and young people. Children should never go near water alone. When near water, babies and children should be supervised by an adult at all times - [see further tips and advice on beach safety](#)

- **Advice on face masks/face coverings** - Face masks are NOT considered to be suitable for babies or children during the COVID-19 pandemic. Masks/face coverings can be very dangerous to babies and young children. They can cause asphyxiation (suffocation). [Find out more about face coverings on GOV.UK.](#)

Further tips and advice

- [Child Accident Prevention Trust](#)
- [The Lullaby Trust](#)
- [National Child Mortality Database - Safety Notices](#)
- [Royal National Lifeboat Institution \(RNLI\)](#)
- [Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents \(RoSPA\)](#)
- [St John Ambulance - The Chokeables teach you how to stop a baby from choking](#)
- [Bitrex - Safety tips around the home](#)
- [GOV.UK - Face coverings guidance](#)
- [Visit Wigan Safeguarding Children Board for further child safeguarding advice.](#)