

## Throughout your home

- fit carbon monoxide alarms wherever there is a flame-burning appliance (such as a gas boiler) or open fire. Carbon monoxide is poisonous. You can't see it, smell it or taste it. Also, make sure that your appliances are serviced regularly and that ventilation outlets in your home are not blocked
- use safety glass in low glass doors and windows, or cover the panes with safety film, or board them up
- fit windows with locks, or safety catches that prevent windows opening more than 6.5cm (2.5") to stop toddlers and young children falling out. However, make sure adults know where keys are kept in case of fire
- keep the floor free of clutter – teach children to put toys away once they have finished playing with them and keep older children's toys away from babies and toddlers – they can have small parts that can cause choking
- never drink a hot drink with a baby on your lap, or pass hot drinks over babies' heads, or leave them within easy reach of little hands
- keep matches and lighters locked away or high up and out of sight and reach
- practise escaping from your home so you know what to do if there is a fire.

## Garden or balcony

- keep back gates and doors on to balconies shut and locked when not in use. However, make sure adults know where keys are kept in case of fire
- lock away chemicals such as weed killer or fertiliser
- lock away garden tools in a shed or garage when not in use
- check paths and steps are clear and well maintained to avoid falls
- fill in or securely cover garden ponds and make sure there is no way into neighbours' gardens with ponds
- keep children away from barbecues – even when you've finished using them – and bonfires.

## We strongly advise parents and

carers to take the following steps to reduce the risk of fire in the home. For further information on fire safety and first aid, contact your local fire authority.

British Red Cross [www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)

St John Ambulance [www.sja.org.uk](http://www.sja.org.uk)

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# how safe is your child at home?

top tips room by room for parents and  
carers of children under five



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Every year around one million children are taken to hospital after an accident at home. The vast majority of these accidents happen to under-fives.

Taking a few simple safety measures can make your home a safer place.

But remember – friends' and relatives' homes may not be as safe for little ones as your home so be extra careful when visiting with your children.



### Halls and stairs

- fit smoke alarms on every level of your home. Test the batteries every week and change the batteries every year or get alarms that have ten year batteries, are wired to the mains or that plug into light sockets
- keep the front door shut and locked to prevent little ones escaping. However, make sure all adults know where keys are kept in case of fire
- use safety gates to stop young children climbing stairs or falling down them
- if gaps between banisters are more than 6.5cm (2.5"), your baby may be able to wriggle their body between them. For this reason, we recommend covering banisters with boards or safety netting. Also, board up any gaps in horizontal rails as they are particularly easy to climb or slip through
- keep stairs free from clutter to avoid trips and falls.

### Living room

- fit fireguards to all fires and heaters and use a sparkguard too if you have a coal or wood fire
- avoid children plugging in appliances that could burn them or start a fire, by making sure appliances are put safely away.

### Kitchen

- keep cleaning products high up out of sight and reach. If necessary, fit safety catches to low kitchen cupboards. Try to choose cleaning products that contain a bittering agent. It helps to prevent children swallowing the contents as it makes them taste horrible
- keep children away from hot appliances such as ovens, kettles and toasters
- when cooking, make sure you use the rings at the back of the cooker and turn saucepan handles towards the back so that they can't be grabbed by little fingers
- never leave a chip pan unattended or fill the pan more than one third full of oil
- keep knives and scissors well out of reach
- use a five point harness to secure your baby in a high chair.
- if possible, pad your child's cot bed and use a cot cover to stop them climbing out and away from radiators that may burn
- don't use pillows or duvets for children under a year old as they can suffocate if their face gets smothered
- change your baby's nappy on the floor to prevent falls from beds, sofas or changing tables
- make sure all medicines are locked away or kept high up out of sight and reach
- don't leave hot hair straighteners in reach of little hands.

### Bathroom

- make sure all medicines, razors and scissors are locked up in a proper medicine cabinet or kept high up out of sight and reach
- keep cleaning products high up out of reach and sight. If necessary, fit safety catches to low bathroom cupboards. Try to choose cleaning products that contain a bittering agent. It helps to prevent children swallowing the contents as it makes them taste horrible
- to avoid scalds test the temperature of the bath water with your elbow before allowing your child to get in – the water should not feel hot or cold. We advise that you have a thermostatic mixing valve fitted to your bath tap to control the temperature of the water that comes out of it, to stop your child being severely scalded
- never leave a child under five in the bath alone – small children can drown in as little as 5cm (2") of water and toddlers can fiddle with the hot tap and scald themselves
- don't rely on young children to supervise younger siblings in the bath
- empty the bath immediately when finished.



This publication is not meant as a substitute for advice on particular issues and is written in general terms. If you have any concerns or if you have particular questions you should seek specific advice before taking any action based on the information that this publication contains.

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