

# Top 25 Ways to Avoid Accidents in the Home

Accidental injury is one of the biggest causes of death in the UK. Even more children die each year as a result of accidents than from illness.

Every year 1 million children under 18 are taken to Accident and Emergency after being involved in accidents in the home, many more are treated at home or taken to their GP.

Most accidents happen to children who are between 0-4 years, with the most accidents happening in the living room, then the kitchen followed by the bedroom and stairs. Accidents in the kitchen or on the stairs are normally the most serious. Always ensure that your children are fully protected from accidents in the home.

## General safety advice

1. Keep corridors and stairs clear of objects – anyone is liable to trip or slip on these.
2. Fit safety gates on stairs, try to get gates which comply with British Safety Standards, and fit them to the top and bottom of stairways.
3. Ensure there is no room to fit through banisters and board up gaps that a small child or baby could fall through or get stuck in.
4. Secure appliances to the wall which could be pulled over or fall down if knocked by a small child.



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5. Do not put chairs or anything else a child could climb on near upstairs windows. Fit restrictors, of about 10cm, on windows which open wide to prevent any chance of a child falling out on the windows.
  6. Keep small objects, plastic bags, matches, lighters and chords or wires out of the reach of children.
  7. Only let a child play with a toy that is suitable for their age group, and encourage older children not to let younger siblings play with their toys.
  8. Fit safety or shatterproof glass at low levels.
  9. Do not let toddlers walk around with glass or anything sharp.
  10. Ensure fire alarms are fitted on all floors and tested regularly.

## **Kitchen**

11. Keep children out of the kitchen when possible, especially when you are cooking
12. Turn the saucepan handles towards the back of the cooker, and use the back rings where possible
13. Use a kettle with a short or curly flex and keep it well back from the edge of the kitchen worktop
14. Keep children away from the front of the oven – the door can get very hot
15. Teach older children how to use kitchen appliances safely such as the microwave kettle or toaster

## **Bed and bath time**

16. Never leave young children unsupervised in the bath, even for a minute.
  17. Check the temperature of the bath before you put the child in, it is better for it to be too cold than too hot as the child may get burnt or scald.
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18. Keep hair appliances like straighteners and curling tongs out of the reach; remember to turn them off after use.
19. Always place a baby at the bottom of a cot, on their back and without a pillow to avoid suffocation.
20. Keep animals, especially cats, out of your bedrooms in case they jump into cots and beds. If they fall asleep in the wrong place they could suffocate your child. Use a net over the pram if necessary.

## Medicines and poisons

21. Keep all medicines and poisons in a locked cupboard, preferably out of the reach of children.
22. Ensure all lids are fitted with child proof caps or lids, remember this only slows down their access to the bottle and does not necessarily stop the access completely.
23. Store chemicals in proper containers; do not put them in anything a child may think is a drinking bottle.
24. Dispose of all unused medicines properly, by taking them to your local pharmacists or GP surgery.
25. Do not take your medicine in front of your children, especially if it is brightly coloured and may be mistaken for sweets. Never tell a child that medicines are sweets, this could confuse the child and encourage them eat tablets unknowingly.



We hope that you have found this information useful in ensuring that your home is kept safe for your children.