

Safety Checklist

This Safety Checklist was designed to help you make your home or work environment as safe as possible for infants and children. It can be used to inspect your home, the childcare center where your children stay after school, or any

other place where children spend time. Take time to go around your house and see just how safe your home is for a child and learn how you can make it safer.

If you already follow the suggested safety precaution, check the box in the first column. If you need to purchase a certain

item to make your home safer, the box on the far right will be shaded, indicating the need to purchase a “Safety Item.” Check the shaded box when you have purchased the appropriate safety items.

	I follow this safety precaution (✓ = yes)	Purchase of safety item is required for all shaded boxes (✓ = item purchased)
Car Safety		
1. Ensure that every person in the car “buckles up” correctly.		
2. Have children less than 12 years old ride in the BACK seat with appropriate child restraints or lap-shoulder restraints.		
3. Use a rear-facing infant safety seat until infants weigh at least 20 lb and are 1 year old. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Secure all car seats in the BACK seat of the car. ■ Secure the seat following the manufacturer’s instructions. ■ Test for tightness by pushing the seat forward, backward, and side to side. Tighten the belt to ensure that the seat does not move more than ½ inch (1 cm). ■ For proper adjustment, the seat belt buckle and latch plate (if needed) must be located well below the frame or toward the center of the seat. 		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — infant safety seat
4. Wait until a child weighs 20 lb (9 kg) and is at least 1 year old and can sit with good head control before using a convertible seat or toddler seat in the forward-facing position. Place these seats in the BACK seat of the car.		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — child safety seat
5. Use a belt-positioning booster seat for children weighing 40 to 80 lb (18 to 36 kg). Secure the seat with a 3-point seat belt (lap and shoulder belt) in the BACK seat of the car. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If a shield is provided, fasten it close to the child’s body. ■ Properly install the tether harness if required. 		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — belt-positioning booster seat

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Car Safety (continued)		
<p>6. Children cannot be properly restrained with a lap-shoulder belt until they are at least 4 feet 9 inches (58 inches or 148 cm) tall, weigh 80 lb (36 kg), and can sit in the automobile seat with their knees bent over the edge. Always use a combination lap-shoulder belt to restrain children sitting in an automobile seat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The shoulder belt should fit across the shoulder and breastbone. If it crosses the face and neck, use a belt-positioning booster seat to ensure that the belt is properly placed. Do not hook the shoulder belt under the child's arm. ■ All children 12 years old or younger should ride in the BACK seat. 		
General Indoor Safety		
7. Place a sticker with emergency telephone numbers near or on the telephone. Include numbers for the EMS system, police, fire department, local hospital or physician, the poison control center in your area, and your telephone number.		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — phone sticker with emergency response numbers
8. Install smoke detectors on the ceiling in the hallway outside sleeping or napping areas and on each floor at the head of stairs. Test the alarm monthly and replace batteries twice a year (for example, in the fall and spring when the time changes to and from daylight saving time).		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — smoke detector
9. Ensure that there are 2 unobstructed emergency exits from the home, childcare center, classroom, or other facility where children are likely to be present.		
10. Develop and practice a fire escape plan.		
11. Ensure that a working fire extinguisher is on the premises.		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — fire extinguisher
12. All space heaters are approved; in safe condition; out of a child's reach; placed at least 3 feet from curtains, papers, and furniture; and have protective covers.		
13. All wood-burning stoves are inspected yearly and vented properly. Place stoves out of a child's reach.		

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General Indoor Safety (continued)		
14. Ensure that electric cords are not frayed or overloaded. Place out of a child's reach.		
15. Install "shock stops" (plastic outlet plugs) or outlet covers on all electric outlets.		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — plastic outlet plugs
16. To prevent falls, always keep one hand on the infant while he or she is on a high surface such as a changing table.		
17. Position healthy full-term infants on their back or side to sleep. <i>Do not place infants on their stomach to sleep.</i>		
18. The crib is safe. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The crib mattress fits snugly with no more than 2 fingers' breadth between the mattress and crib railing. ■ The distance between crib slats is less than 2$\frac{3}{8}$ inches (so the infant's head won't get caught). 		
19. Check the strength of stairs, railings, porches, and balconies.		
20. Light hallways and stairways to prevent falls.		
21. Use toddler gates at the top and bottom of stairs. (Do not use accordion-type gates with wide spaces at the top. They can entrap a child's head and cause strangulation.)		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — toddler gates (NOT accordion-type)
22. Do not let your child use an infant walker.		
23. To prevent falls, place locks (available at hardware stores) on all windows. Put gates on the lower part of open windows.		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — window locks, gates
24. Store medicines and vitamins out of a child's reach and in child-resistant containers.		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — child-resistant containers
25. Store cleaning products out of a child's reach and sight. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Store and label all household poisons in their original containers in high locked cabinets (not under sinks). ■ Do not store chemicals or poisons in soda bottles. ■ Store cleaning products separately from food. 		

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General Indoor Safety (continued)		
26. Install safety latches or locks on cabinets that contain potentially dangerous items and are within a child's reach.		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — safety latches or locks on cabinets
27. Keep purses containing vitamins, medications, cigarettes, matches, jewelry, and calculators (which have easy-to-swallow button batteries) out of a child's reach.		
28. Install a lock or hook-and-eye latch on the door leading to the basement or garage to prevent children from entering those areas. Place a lock at the top of the door frame.		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — latch on basement, garage doors
29. Keep potentially harmful plants out of a child's reach. (Many plants are poisonous. Consult your poison control center.)		
30. Be sure that toy chests have lightweight lids, no lids, or safe-closing hinges.		
Kitchen Safety		
31. To minimize the risk of burns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Keep hot liquids, foods, and cooking utensils out of a child's reach. ■ Place hot liquids and food away from the edge of the table. ■ Cook on the back burners when possible and turn pot handles toward the center of the stove. ■ Avoid using tablecloths and place mats that can be yanked off, spilling hot liquids or food. ■ Keep high chairs and stools away from the stove. ■ Do not keep snacks near the stove. ■ Teach young children the meaning of the word <i>hot</i>. 		
32. Keep all foods and small items (including balloons) that can choke a child out of reach. Test toys for size with a toilet-paper roll (if it fits inside the roll, it can choke a small child).		
33. Keep knives and other sharp objects out of a child's reach.		
Bathroom Safety		
34. Bathe children in no more than 1 or 2 inches of water. Stay with infants and young children throughout the bath.		

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Bathroom Safety (continued)		
35. Use skidproof mats or stickers in the bathtub.		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — bath mats or stickers
36. Adjust the maximum temperature of the water heater to 120° to 130°F (48.9° to 54.4°C) or medium heat (test with a thermometer).		
37. Keep electrical appliances (radios, hair dryers, space heaters, etc) out of the bathroom or unplugged, away from water, and out of a child's reach.		
Firearms		
38. If firearms are stored in the home, they must be locked and inaccessible to children. Store guns individually locked and unloaded, and store ammunition separately.		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — trigger lock, lock-boxes for firearms
Outdoor Safety		
39. Playground equipment is assembled and anchored correctly according to manufacturer's instructions over a level, cushioned surface such as sand or wood chips.		
40. Your child knows the rules of safe bicycling. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Wear a protective helmet. ■ Use the correct size bicycle. ■ Ride on the right side of the road (<i>with</i> traffic). ■ Use hand signals and wear bright or reflective clothing. 		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — bicycle helmet
41. Do not allow children to play with fireworks.		
42. Your child is properly protected while roller skating or skateboarding. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child wears helmet and protective padding on knees and elbows. ■ Child skates only in rinks or parks that are free of traffic. 		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — helmet and protective padding
43. Your child is properly protected while riding on sleds or snow disks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child sleds only in daylight and only in a safe, supervised area away from motor vehicles. 		
44. Your child is properly protected while participating in contact sports. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proper adult instruction and supervision are provided. ■ Teammates are of similar weight and size. ■ Appropriate safety equipment is used. 		<input type="checkbox"/> Safety item — safety equipment for contact sports

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Outdoor Safety (continued)		
<p>45. To reduce the risk of animal bites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teach your child how to handle and care for a pet. ■ Teach your child never to try to separate fighting animals, even when a familiar pet is involved. ■ Teach your child to avoid unfamiliar animals. 		
<p>46. If you have a home swimming pool, be sure the pool is totally enclosed with fencing at least 5 feet high and that all gates are self-closing and self-latching. There should be no direct access (without a locked gate) from the home into the pool area.</p> <p>In addition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Children must <i>always</i> be supervised by an adult when swimming. Never allow a child to swim alone. ■ Change young children from swimsuits into street clothes and remove all toys from the pool area at the end of swim time. ■ All adults and older children should learn CPR. ■ Pools on nearby properties should be protected from use by unsupervised children. 		<p>■ Safety item — 5-foot fence around swimming pool with self-closing, self-latching gate</p>

Note: Much of the safety information presented in this course is based on the SAFEHOME program developed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health as part of its Statewide Comprehensive Injury Prevention Program and the Children's Traffic Safety Program at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn. The SAFEHOME program was funded by the Federal Division of Maternal and Child Health. The Children's Traffic Safety Program was funded by the Department of Transportation and the Tennessee Governor's Highway Safety Program.