

Childproofing Checklist

Before your baby crawls



Babies usually crawl between 6-9 months. This checklist will help you get your home ready for when your baby is on the move.

Sleeping

- Put your baby to sleep on her back, even for naps.
- Don't let your baby sleep on soft surfaces, such as pillows, fluffy comforters, sheepskins or water beds.
- Do not use crib bumpers or drop-side cribs.
- Remove mobiles and hanging toys when your baby can get on his hands and knees. Always remove toys from the crib when your baby is sleeping.
- When your baby is able to sit up, change the crib mattress to its lowest position.

Bathing

- Never leave your baby in the bathtub unattended, even for a few seconds.
- Use warm, not hot, water. Test on your wrist. It should feel just slightly warm.
- Water in the tub should be just enough to cover your baby's legs—about 3 inches of water.
- Use nonslip mats in the bathtub and on the floor.
- Purchase a soft cover for the bathtub handles and spout.

Changing table

- Don't leave your baby unsupervised.
- Keep toiletries out of your baby's reach.

Toys

- Should not have strings or cords longer than 12 inches.
- Should not have small pieces, such as buttons, eyes or cords that your baby could pull off and choke on.
- Shouldn't be heavy enough to hurt if it falls on your baby.

Clothing

- Don't dress your baby in clothes with drawstrings.

Preventing falls

- Don't leave your baby alone on sofas, beds, a high chair, a bouncy chair or in any other spot he could fall from.
- Install baby gates at the top and bottom of your stairs.
- Block railings with garden fencing or plastic sheets.
- When shopping, use the safety belt on the cart.

Preventing burns

- Keep hot food and drink away from edges of tables and counters.
- Don't carry your baby and hot food or drink at the same time, or while cooking at the stove.
- Turn pot and pan handles backwards.
- Use the latch on the oven door.
- Cover or block access to radiators and floor heaters.

Electrical safety

- Put safety plugs on unused outlets.
- Hide electrical cords behind furniture or use a safety device to hide the cords.
- Keep electrical appliances unplugged and out of reach.

Windows

- Use window guards, locks, and safety netting on windows, decks and landings.
- Apply colorful stickers to glass sliding doors.
- Tie up cords on curtains and blinds.

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Doors

- Use door holders and doorstops to keep them from closing on your baby's fingers.

Furniture

- Secure heavy furniture, such as bookcases and chests of drawers, to the walls.
- Bolt heavy paintings, flat-screen televisions, and large mirrors to the wall.
- Put soft guards on corners and edges of low tables.

Poison proofing

- Keep all toxic items, such as cleaning supplies, vitamins, medicine, hand sanitizer and toiletries in latched cabinets.
- Remove poisonous houseplants, such as Philodendron.
- Keep your purse out of reach.
- Program the number for the American Association of Poison Control hotline, (800) 222-1222, in your cell phone.

Controlling access

- Use safety gates, door locks, knob covers and latches on cabinets and drawers.
- Have trash cans with child-proof covers.
- Secure refrigerator with an appliance latch.
- Put plastic guards on CD and DVD players.
- Remove tablecloths and place mats. (Your baby can pull them down, along with whatever's on them.)
- Distract your baby by having unlocked cupboards filled with fun, baby-safe items, such as plastic bowls and containers in the kitchen.

Fire and carbon monoxide

- Test smoke detectors monthly.
- Test your carbon monoxide detector every six months.
- Plan fire escape routes for all family members.
- Use a fireplace screen, and remove gas fireplace key.
- Keep matches, lighters and fireplace tools out of reach.

Pools and water

- Don't leave babies unattended even for a moment in or near a pool or other water. Do not answer or talk on the phone while your baby is in water.
- Install gated fences that are at least four feet high around pools.
- Empty wading pools after each use.
- Don't leave even small amounts of water or cleaning supplies in buckets or other containers.
- Install a latch on toilet seat.

Sun

- Keep your baby out of the sun as much as possible.
- When your baby is outside, protect her skin with hats and light-colored clothing with long sleeves.
- Use a gentle sunscreen with at least 15 SPF.

In the Car

- Install a car seat properly, in the rear-facing position in the middle of backseat.
- Keep children in rear-facing seat until age 2, or until they reach the maximum height and weight for their seat.