

Protecting Your Toddler at Home

Toddlers are curious and love to explore, but they don't know when they're getting into dangerous situations. It's up to you to keep your little one safe. As soon as your baby starts to crawl, it is necessary to child-proof your home.

The following tips are a good starting point. Each home is different, so walk through yours with an eye to what will appeal to your toddler. If it's dangerous, do something about it! Put away valuable items you don't want damaged or destroyed, even if they're not dangerous. That will save you from saying "no" too often.

- Keep emergency numbers next to your telephone in case of injury, fire, poisoning, or any other situation requiring immediate assistance.
- Store medicines and household cleaners on a high shelf. But remember closets and shelves aren't the only place to find these dangerous items. For example, medicine may be found in women's purses, and poisonous cleaners may be in your garage.
- If you have stairs in your home, prevent falls by blocking them with safety gates.
- Keep matches away from children. Your toddler may play with them and accidentally start a fire.
- Never allow a young child to be responsible for your toddler, even for a few minutes.
- Young children can't always tell what an active toddler will do.
- Putting small toys in wall sockets is tempting to toddlers. Keep the sockets covered with safety plugs.
- Keep electrical cords out of the way. Small children can pull the cord and be injured when something heavy falls on them.
- Lower the thermostat on your hot water heater to protect your child from burns. Fill the bathtub and turn off the water before you place your child in the tub. If the water is running, a toddler can turn the handle and be scalded even if you are supervising him or her.
- Be sure your child is never alone around water. Keep toilet seats covered. Children can drown in as little as a few inches of water.
- Even if you're with your toddler all the time, accidents can happen. So it's important to prevent accidents before they occur