



Childproofing Your Home for Poisons

Children are naturally curious and love to explore. Young children especially like to explore by putting things in their mouths.

Before or as soon as your child begins crawling or walking, take extra steps to make sure harmful items are out of reach, out of sight, and ideally stored in a cabinet with lock or safety latch. Check each room of your home for these potential hazards:



Cleaning products

- All-purpose cleaners
- Bleach (</English/health-issues/conditions/prevention/Pages/Cleaners-Sanitizers-Disinfectants.aspx>)
- Dishwashing detergent (liquid, powdered, or single-use packets or tablets)
- Drain openers and toilet bowl cleaners
- Furniture polish
- Laundry detergent (</English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Laundry-Room-and-Detergent-Safety.aspx>) (liquid, powdered, or single-use packets or tablets)

Detergent in single-use laundry packets (</English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Laundry-Room-and-Detergent-Safety.aspx>) **is very concentrated and can be toxic.**

Even a small amount of the detergent can cause serious breathing or stomach problems or eye irritation.

- Never let your children handle or play with the packets. The packets dissolve quickly when in contact with water, wet hands, or saliva. Biting a packet can cause it to burst, shooting detergent into the child's mouth and throat or eyes.
- Remember to seal the container and store it in a locked cabinet after each use. Make sure the container is out of sight and reach of children.
- Adults should follow the instructions on the product label.

Personal and hygiene products

- Nail polish removers
- Cosmetics (</English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Face-Paints-Makeup-Toxic-Ingredients.aspx>)
- Mouthwash
- Perfume and aftershave

is that may be in your basement or garage

- Antifreeze and windshield wiper fluid

- Gasoline (/English/ages-stages/teen/substance-abuse/Pages/Gasoline-Sniffing.aspx), kerosene, and lamp oil [Back to Top](#)
- Insecticides (/English/safety-prevention/all-around/Pages/Protecting-Children-from-Pesticides-Information-for-Parents.aspx) and weed killer

Medicines

- Prescription medicines
- Over-the-counter medicines (/English/safety-prevention/at-home/medication-safety/Pages/Using-Over-the-Counter-Medicines-With-Your-Child.aspx)
- Vitamins and supplements (/English/safety-prevention/at-home/medication-safety/Pages/Using-Over-the-Counter-Medicines-With-Your-Child.aspx)

Medicines can be harmful if not taken as directed.

- Be sure to purchase and keep medicines in original containers with safety caps.
- Check the label each time you give a child medicine to ensure proper dosage.

Small objects

- Beads, buttons, coins
- Button batteries (/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Button-Battery-Injuries-in-Children-A-Growing-Risk.aspx)
- Pins
- Refrigerator magnets (/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Dangers-of-Magnetic-Toys-and-Fake-Piercings.aspx) or products and toys with small or loose magnets
- Screws

Small objects can be choking hazards or harmful if swallowed.

- Check your floors regularly for small objects. This is particularly important if someone in the household has a hobby that involves small items or if there are older children who have small items.
- Make sure battery covers are secure on remote controls, key fobs, musical books, and greeting cards. Store devices that contain small button-cell batteries out of reach and sight of children. Button batteries can cause severe injury or death if ingested.

Other home dangers

Nicotine, including e-cigarette refills & cigarettes

Liquid nicotine (/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Liquid-Nicotine-Used-in-E-Cigarettes-Can-Kill-Children.aspx) e-cigarette refills can be extremely dangerous, even fatal, for a child. Keep all nicotine product, including traditional cigarettes, out of sight and reach of children.

Alcohol

Alcohol (/English/ages-stages/teen/substance-abuse/Pages/Alcohol-The-Most-Popular-Choice.aspx) can be very poisonous to a young child. Remember to empty any unfinished drinks right away.

Trash

Keep in mind that children may get into trash containers. Trash containers that contain spoiled food, sharp objects (discarded razor blades), or batteries should have a child-resistant cover or be kept out of a child's reach. Purses (/services.aap.org/en/news-room/aap-voices/purses-fashions-most-deadly-accessory/) and other bags that contain potential hazards, including medicines, should be kept out of a child's reach too.

Houseplants

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Certain houseplants may be harmful if children get ahold of them. Call Poison Help at 1-800-222-1222 for a list or description of plants to avoid. You may want to do without houseplants for a while or, at the very least, keep all houseplants out of reach.

Most poisonings (/English/safety-prevention/all-around/Pages/Poison-Prevention.aspx) **occur when parents or caregivers are home but not paying attention.**

- Keep products in original packaging.
- Store in locked cabinets or containers, out of sight and reach of children.
- Install a safety latch—that locks when you close the door—on child accessible cabinets.

What to do in case of poisoning

If you find your child with an open or empty container of a dangerous nonfood item, your child may have been poisoned.

1. Stay calm and act quickly.
2. Get the item away from your child. If there is still some in your child's mouth, make your child spit it out or remove it with your fingers. Keep this material along with anything else that might help determine what your child swallowed.
3. Do not make your child vomit because it may cause more damage.

If your child is unconscious, not breathing, or having convulsions or seizures, call 911 or your local emergency number right away.

If your child does not have these symptoms, call Poison Help at 1-800-222-1222. You may be asked for the following information:

- Your name and phone number
- Your child's name, age, and weight
- Any medical conditions your child has
- Any medicine your child is taking
- The name of the item your child swallowed
- The time your child swallowed the item (or when you found your child), and the amount you think was swallowed

If the poison is very dangerous, or if your child is very young, you may be told to take your child to the nearest hospital. If your child is not in danger, the Poison Help staff will tell you what to do to help your child at home.

More information

- Poison Prevention: One Pill Can Kill (/English/safety-prevention/at-home/medication-safety/Pages/Poison-Prevention-One-Pill-Can-Kill.aspx)
- Hand Sanitizers: Keep Children Safe from Poisoning Risk (/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Keep-Hand-Sanitizer-Out-of-Childrens-Reach.aspx)
- Preventing Furniture and TV Tip-Overs (/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Preventing-Furniture-and-TV-Tip-Overs.aspx)
- What to Expect When You Call 911 (/English/health-issues/injuries-emergencies/Pages/Calling-911-How-and-When-to-Call-for-Help.aspx#%3a~%3atext=Be%20calm.%2cthe%20dispatcher%20in%20real%20time.)

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