

# Managing Category Levels in Shopify - Tutorial for Site Admins

## Overview

This guide will help you understand and manage the category structure in your SAFE GEAR store. Categories in Shopify are called "Collections," and we use a hierarchical system with metafields to organize them into levels.

## 1. Understanding the Category Structure

Your store uses a 3-level hierarchy for organizing products:

### Level 1 (Top Level Categories)

These are your main product categories that appear at the top of your navigation.

**Examples from your store:**

- Værdiskabe (Safes)
- Brandsikring (Fire Safety)
- Brandslukkere (Fire Extinguishers)

### Level 2 (Subcategories)

These are subcategories that belong under a Level 1 category.

**Example:** Under "Værdiskabe" you might have:

- Different safe types
- Different security grades
- Different brands

### Level 3 (Product Collections)

These are the actual product collections where individual products are assigned.

**Example:** Specific product series like "Serie 900" or "Fire Star"

## 2. How the Hierarchy Works with Metafields

Your store uses custom metafields to create the category relationships. Here are the key metafields:

Metafield Name	Metafield Key	What It Does	Used On
L1 Subcategory	l1_subcategory	Links Level 2 categories to their Level 1 parent	Level 1 collections
Collection List	collection_list	Lists featured or highlighted subcollections	Level 1 or Level 2 collections
Collection Level	collection_level	Identifies which level a collection belongs to	Any collection

## 3. How to View and Edit Category Hierarchy

### Step 1: Navigate to Collections

1. From your Shopify admin, go to **Products → Collections**
2. Find the collection you want to edit
3. Click on the collection name to open it

### Step 2: Scroll to Metafields Section

1. Scroll down past the description and image sections
2. Look for the **Metafields** section (usually near the bottom)
3. You'll see the custom fields we use for hierarchy

### Step 3: Understanding What You See

**For a Level 1 Category** (like "Værdiskabe"):

- **L1 Subcategory:** Contains a list of all Level 2 categories that belong under it
- **Collection List:** May contain featured collections to highlight

**For a Level 2 Category:**

- May have its own subcollections listed
- Should be referenced in a Level 1 category's "L1 Subcategory" field

## 4. How to Move Categories

**Example:** Moving "Safety Signs" under "Fire Safety"

**Step-by-Step:**

### 1. Open the Level 1 category (Fire Safety / Brandsikring)

- Go to Products → Collections
- Click on "Brandsikring"

### 2. Find the L1 Subcategory metafield

- Scroll to the Metafields section
- Look for "L1 Subcategory" field

### 3. Add the Safety Signs collection

- Click in the "L1 Subcategory" field
- Search for "Safety Signs" (or the Danish equivalent)
- Select it from the dropdown
- It will be added to the list

### 4. Save the collection

- Click the Save button at the top right

**Result:** Safety Signs is now a subcategory of Fire Safety!

## 5. How to Change Category Hierarchy

**Making a Level 2 Category into a Level 1 Category:**

### 1. Remove it from its parent's L1 Subcategory list

- Open the current parent collection
- Find the L1 Subcategory metafield
- Click the X next to the collection you want to remove
- Save

### 2. Update the collection itself (optional)

- Open the collection you're promoting
- Update the "Collection Level" metafield to "1" or "Level 1"
- Save

**Making a Level 1 Category into a Level 2 Category:**

### 1. Choose which Level 1 category it should belong under

- Open the new parent collection
- Add your collection to its "L1 Subcategory" metafield
- Save

### 2. Update the collection level

- Open the collection you're demoting
- Update "Collection Level" metafield to "2" or "Level 2"
- Save

## 6. How to Fill Metafields Correctly

### L1 Subcategory Field

• **Type:** List of collection references

• **How to fill:**

1. Click in the field
2. Start typing the collection name
3. Select from the dropdown
4. Repeat to add multiple subcategories
5. Drag to reorder if needed

**Example:**

```
L1 Subcategory:
- Serie 900
- Fire Star
- Yale Fireproof
- Seguro
```

### Collection List Field

• **Type:** List of collection references

• **Purpose:** Highlight specific collections to feature

• **How to fill:** Same as L1 Subcategory

**Example:**

```
Collection List:
- Serie 900 (featured)
- Børn V, II, VII (new arrival)
- Topas Pro Deposit II (bestseller)
```

### Collection Level Field

• **Type:** Text

• **How to fill:** Simply type "1", "2", or "3"

**Example:**

```
Collection Level: 1
```

## 7. How to Clean Up and Organize

### Audit Your Category Structure

#### 1. Create a spreadsheet with these columns:

- Collection Name
- Current Level
- Parent Category
- Number of Products
- Status (Active/Needs Review)

#### 2. Review each collection:

- Does it have products? (If not, consider archiving)
- Is it in the right level?
- Is it linked to the correct parent?

#### 3. Look for orphaned collections:

- Collections not linked to any parent
- Collections with no products
- Duplicate collections

### Best Practices for Organization

#### ✅ DO:

- Use clear, descriptive names
- Keep hierarchy to 3 levels maximum
- Regularly review and remove empty collections
- Use consistent naming conventions
- Test navigation after making changes

#### ❌ DON'T:

- Create circular references (A links to B, B links to A)
- Leave collections without a level assigned
- Forget to save after making changes
- Delete collections that have products without reassigning them

## 8. Quick Reference Checklist

**When creating a new Level 1 category:**

- ☐ Create the collection
- ☐ Set "Collection Level" to "1"
- ☐ Add subcollections to "L1 Subcategory" field
- ☐ Add featured collections to "Collection List" (optional)
- ☐ Save

**When creating a new Level 2 category:**

- ☐ Create the collection
- ☐ Set "Collection Level" to "2"
- ☐ Open the parent Level 1 collection
- ☐ Add this collection to parent's "L1 Subcategory" field
- ☐ Save both collections

**When moving a category:**

- ☐ Remove from old parent's "L1 Subcategory" field
- ☐ Add to new parent's "L1 Subcategory" field
- ☐ Update "Collection Level" if changing levels
- ☐ Save all affected collections
- ☐ Test navigation on your storefront

## 9. Common Issues and Solutions

**Problem:** Collection doesn't appear in navigation

**Solution:** Check that it's added to a parent's "L1 Subcategory" field and that the parent is published

**Problem:** Can't find the metafield section

**Solution:** Scroll all the way to the bottom of the collection edit page, below SEO and Online Store sections

**Problem:** Changes don't appear on the website

**Solution:** Make sure you clicked Save, and clear your browser cache or check in an incognito window

**Problem:** Accidentally deleted a metafield value

**Solution:** Click Cancel (don't save), then reopen the collection to restore the previous values

## Need Help?

If you're unsure about making changes:

1. Take a screenshot of the current metafield values before editing
2. Make changes to one collection at a time

- 3. Test on your storefront before making bulk changes
- 4. Keep a backup list of your category structure