

Cot Safety



The most important thing about choosing a cot is to make sure that it will be a safe place for your child.

Babies and small children spend a great deal of time in their cots so it's essential that their cots are safe.

Many cot-related injuries happen when a child falls while trying to climb out of the cot. Children are also injured when part of the cot breaks or doesn't work properly, such as the side falls down, the base falls out, or screws come loose.

Serious injury or death can occur when the child's head and upper body are caught in gaps. This is more likely to occur with cots that are older or that have been modified. Sometimes fingers get caught in holes, limbs lodge in spaces and the head gets stuck in a gap.

Household cots must comply with the safety requirements of Australian New Zealand Standard *AS/NZS 2172:2010 Cots for household use—Safety requirements*.

Cots must be safely designed and constructed so they have no climb-out or fall-out hazards, strangulation hazards, head, arm or leg entrapment hazards. They should not cause injury to fingers and toes or have sharp pieces that could cause a child's clothing to catch on them.

Second-hand cots

Second-hand cots have the same design and construction requirements as new cots. There are three exceptions:

- protrusions must be no greater than 8mm
- there must be no gaps greater than 95mm but there is no requirement preventing gaps between 30 and 50mm
- there are no requirements for informative labels and safety markings.

Regardless of these exceptions, it is recommended to use only a good second-hand cot that comes with all necessary parts in good working order and with full instructions for its safe assembly and use.

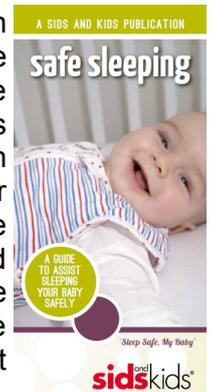
Online Purchasing

Be careful when buying online. Check that your purchases meet mandatory Australian safety standards and have not been recalled in Australia or another country. Consumer guarantees may be difficult to enforce if you purchase a product from an overseas supplier and you may not be able to obtain compensation if the goods cause an injury.



Bumper Pads Warning

Cot bumper pads are a very common baby product, and parents often use bumper pads thinking they are increasing the safety of their child's cot. However, bumpers put children at greater risk for suffocation or strangulation. It is nearly impossible for an infant to hit his or her head hard enough on the crib to cause bruising or injury. For more information on safe sleeping visit sidsandkids.org



Safety Features for Cots

- Make sure the cot has an Australian Standard sticker stating that it complies with the mandatory product safety standard.
- Make sure the mattress fits snugly at the sides and the ends of the cot. Any gap should be less than the size of your index finger.
- Check that drop side mechanisms are secure and easy for an adult to use, but not a child.
- Make sure there are no horizontal bars or decorations which could be used as a foot hold.
- Check there are no sharp pieces to catch clothing.
- Always follow the manufacturer's assembly instructions and keep them somewhere safe to refer to when required.

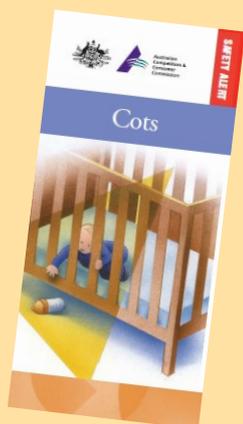


For further information refer to the ACCC safety alert brochure titled *Cots* available at productsafety.gov.au

Visit the Product Recalls Australia website at recalls.gov.au

or contact the

ACCC Infocentre
1300 302 502



Safe Practices

Below are some simple suggestions for a daily routine to ensure your child's safety:

- Cots and beds must be placed well away from exposed blind and curtain cords. Cords should be kept out of the child's reach and secured to a cleat, hook, or other safety device.
- Position the cot away from windows, heaters and power points to reduce risk of injury from falls, burns and electrocution.
- Check cot regularly for wear and tear. Repair any hazards immediately and do not use the cot until this hazard is fixed. Peeling paint could cause choking.
- Remove any items that your child could use as a climbing aid, including large toys, cot bumpers and cushions.
- Refrain from placing small items into your child's cot or in reach of your child, as these could cause choking.
- Items such as pictures and mirrors can fall and should not be hung over cots. Don't put toys or mobiles with stretch elastic cords nearby.
- Ensure any adjustable base on the cot is moved to the lowest setting as soon as the child can sit unaided.
- Do not use pillows or bumpers. Children can become wedged in a pillow or bumper and suffocate.
- Never use electric blankets or hot water bottles for babies or young children.
- When children start to climb, it is a sure sign they have outgrown their cots. When this happens, it is time to investigate safer sleeping arrangements such as a low bed or mattress on the floor. Some parents use a cot that can be converted to a toddler bed.

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