

Safety Gates and Locks



Safety Gates

Child safety gates help provide parents and carers with peace of mind. Children are curious by nature and will access areas that can cause serious injury without proper safeguards.

Child safety gates can help keep children away from the more dangerous areas in the home. Safety gates can be installed at the top and bottom of staircases. They can limit access to rooms that are not safe for them. It is important to find the best child safety gate to suit your needs.

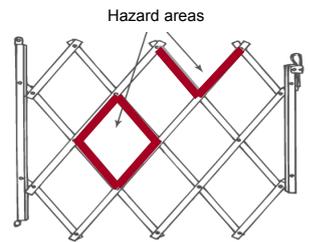
Safety gates can be obtained from suppliers of baby safety products and other retail outlets such as hardware stores. For areas that have an odd shape such as around fireplaces and open plan kitchens, it might be more useful to have a fence and gate specially made to fit the opening. A local handyman, builder or fencing supply company might be able to do this.

Falls are the greatest cause of injury to children under 5 years of age.



Safety Features

- Choose a hardware, wall-mounted gate to block off high risk areas such as stairs rather than a pressure-mounted gate.
- Check that spaces between the bars are less than 125mm to avoid trapping a child's head.
- When buying a safety gate, decide if you need the convenience and safety of being able to open the gate with one hand.
- Safety gates with a crisscross diamond pattern and concertina style gates have been known to trap a child's head or clothing.
- Pet gates cannot be substituted for child safety gates because they are not designed for nor secure enough to use with infants or toddlers.



Safe Practices

- Install a safety gate at the top and bottom of stairs.
- Ensure the gate is securely attached to prevent it unhinging or falling off completely and causing injury to a child.
- Never step over a safety gate while carrying a child in case you trip over and cause the child to fall, potentially injuring both you and the child.
- Gates that have a fixed horizontal bar at the bottom can become a tripping hazard when opened.

Half Doors

Also known as Dutch doors, these can be used to prevent children from accessing dangerous areas without blocking visibility for the carer. Half doors can be useful in:

- Kitchens
- Bathrooms
- Laundries, and
- Garages



child safety is no accident

Child Resistant Locks

All children are inquisitive. Openings and cupboards of every type are fascinating to small children. However a cupboard may present a hidden hazard for a child. To avoid the risks, safety devices are available from suppliers of baby products and many hardware stores.

- **Window locks** - these allow windows to be opened for ventilation but prevent small children from opening them further and falling out.
- **Fridge/freezer locks** - children have been known to climb into large fridges and freezers and become trapped in them. A simple hook and loop fastener such as *Velcro* may prevent a child accessing the fridge or freezer.
- **Cupboard door and drawer locks** - it is particularly important to lock cupboards containing hazardous substances such as cleaning fluids and medicines. Lock designs vary; some are secured by screws, some by adhesive pads and some are detachable.

Different styles of cupboard door require different styles of lock; some are fitted inside the cupboard, some are visible on the outside. Choose a style that is convenient and easy for you to use - remember that although you don't want the child opening the cupboard you will still need easy access to it.

- **Toilet lid lock** - prevents young children from playing in the toilet.
- **DVD locks** - these may be a guard that simply blocks the DVD or CD slot, or a visor that fits across the slot and the controls to prevent small hands posting items in or becoming trapped. Check that when fitted, the appliance can still be operated via the remote control.
- **Magnetic locks** - A magnetic lock or a pool gate magnetic lock can also be used for a number of indoor applications.

Safety products are designed to be “child proof”. Children learn by watching your actions. When installing any safety product, get down to your child's level and watch what your child is able to do.



For further information visit:

- Product Safety Australia productsafety.gov.au
- Choice choice.com.au

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