

Safety Glass



The simplest way to prevent an injury is to be certain that safety glass has been used in any area where there is a risk of impact with a glazed surface:

This includes:

- Shower screens and shower doors
- Glass panelled doors (internal and external)
- Low level windows
- Mirrored door panels
- Windows in stair wells
- Glass panelled balustrades

Install safety glass, particularly in floor-to-ceiling windows in family rooms and high traffic areas (Australian and New Zealand standard AS/NZS 2208:1996), or cover glass with sticky plastic film so it doesn't shatter when broken. Since 1989, most states have made it compulsory to install safety glass in new doors and side panels. If your home was built before 1989, it is unlikely that safety glass was installed.

Shower screens and shower doors must comply with Australian Standards AS/NZS 1288 and 2208 and be made of toughened glass or wired glass.

Types of Glass

Annealed glass - a common glass that tends to break into large, jagged shards.

Toughened glass - made from annealed glass and treated with a thermal tempering process making it far more resistant to breakage and more predictable in the way it shatters into small, typically square fragments.

Laminated glass - made of two or more layers of glass with one or more "interlayers" of polymeric material bonded between the glass layers. Rather than shattering on impact, laminated glass is held together by the interlayer.

Film-backed glass - a film of flexible plastic applied to the back of the glass to hold the pieces together if it is broken.

How to Identify What Glass is in Your Home?

- Check for labelling. All safety glass should be labelled.
- Contact an accredited glazier who will come to your home and identify the glazing type.



Safe Practices

Simple steps can be taken to prevent any bodily contact with glazed surfaces particularly where you suspect that annealed glass has been used in doors, glass panels, mirrors, low level windows and in furniture.

Low Level Windows

- Protect by barrier rails or recessed sills

Fixed Glass Panels

- Screen by furniture or plants

Mirrors

- Children are attracted to mirrors. Make sure they can't pull them down or break them.
- Select a mirror that is made from Grade A glazing material.
- Hand held mirrors for children should be a child-safe material so they don't break and injure the child.

Play Areas

- Provide play opportunities away from glassed areas.
- Use furniture that is stable and not able to be easily moved or tipped over.
- Avoid using furniture where children can climb up close to glass.
- Teach children not to push, bang on or slam into glass panels.
- Role model safe practices in glassed areas.
- Supervise children at all times in play areas.
- Carefully sweep up broken glass immediately. If glass breaks near a child, lift him out of the area.

Environmental

- Remove toys and loose rugs from areas where children might trip.
- Keep indoor and outdoor areas dry to prevent children slipping into glass windows or doors.



Visibility

- Install stickers, safety strips or decals on glass doors and glass panels at both child and adult eye level. These can also be used in any other glass you are concerned about.
- Make sure that glass areas are well lit at all times, especially at night.
- Where clear glass is not essential, coloured translucent glass is easier for a child to see.

Glass used in Furniture

- Glass tables and glass panels (often present in storage units and cabinets, either as shelves or in glass doors) that are not made from toughened glass can cause serious cuts or stabbing if broken by a playing child. Injuries are typically caused when children jump, sit or fall on glass items or knock them over. Shattered glass or jagged edges of broken glass can cause severe lacerations and scars.
- Try not to use furniture with glass panels close to where children play.
- Ensure any glass is adequately supported.
- Ensure edges of glass panels are either protected or have rounded edges.
- If glass shelving is chipped or cracked replace it immediately.

Further information:

- Refer to NSW Fair Trading fact sheet titled *Toughened Glass - safety guidelines for consumers* fairtrading.nsw.gov.au
- Visit the Product Safety Australia website productsafety.gov.au

Short-Term Safety Measures for Existing Glass

If you are think that a glassed area in your home might be dangerous and cannot replace it with safety glass, you should use other precautions. You could install a barrier or apply coated plastic safety & security film to help protect children from the glass if it is broken.



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