

# Toy Safety



Toys play an important role in helping children learn and develop. Toys should be safely designed and in good working order to avoid injury.

Injuries from toys are often caused by:

- Choking, inhaling or swallowing small objects
- Crushing fingers and other parts of the body
- Cuts from metal blades or sharp plastics
- Damage to eyes from sharp objects
- Strangulation from loose cords or wire loops



Be careful when selecting a toy for your child. Any of these things can be hazardous to an infant or small child:

- Small parts or loose items
- Fur or hair
- Projectiles, sharp points
- Gaps or holes
- Small removable attachments
- Realistic-looking weapons
- Balloons
- Plastic spheres or beads
- Long strings
- Hinges or links
- Weak stitching
- Poorly ventilated enclosed spaces
- Attached toy box lids
- Button batteries

New toys should be introduced to the child in your presence, so that you can be sure that the child is playing safely with the toy.



**Supervise your child to ensure the toy is being used safely.**

**Australian Standards for toys** have been developed to protect children. Look for these on labels to assess possible hazards and suitability for your child's age and stage:

AS/NZ ISO 8124 Parts 1-7: *Safety of Toys*—deals with small parts, sharp points and edges, flammability of toys, moving parts and toxicity of toys.

AS 1900–1991, *Flotation toys and swimming aids for children*—deals with flotation aids and swimming toys.

**child safety is no accident**

## Safety Features for Toys

- Select toys that meet the Australian Standard AS/NZ ISO 8124
- Check the recommended age on the label to make sure the toy is suitable for the child.
- Select toys that are well put together
- Think big. Be particularly careful with toys for children under three. Toy parts should be larger than a 20 cent piece to avoid any chance of choking. Remember that a younger child might play with an older child's toys.
- Make sure the toy is suitable for the child's current ability and stage of development. For example, if a four year old child still puts things in their mouth avoid toys with small parts
- Make sure there are complete instructions on how to use the toy
- Check the information to make sure that the toy is non-toxic and non-flammable, especially with paints, crayons and glues.
- Be wary of toys that make loud noises that might hurt a child's hearing, especially toys that are held against the ear such as walkie-talkies and toy mobile phones.
- Check for ventilation before buying tents, masks, helmets, etc.
- Ensure ride-on toys are appropriate to the age of the child and are stable. Toy bikes should have effective brakes which can be applied by the rider.



## Safe Practices

- Always immediately dispose of plastic packaging on toys because infants can suffocate if they put it over their heads, faces or mouths.
- Regularly check toys for wear and throw away damaged toys. Examine toys for any buttons, batteries, ribbons, eyes, beads, or plastic appendages that have become loose.
- Check for loose hair and small parts, sharp edges and points.
- Check toys that contain magnets to ensure that they have not come loose. Remove any loose magnets from the toy box.
- Remove strings or cords longer than 30cms from the toy. A cord can too easily be wrapped around a young child's neck, risking strangulation.
- **Do not** store toys in plastic bags.
- Drill holes in toy boxes for ventilation.
- Use a toy box lid that is not attached to the toy box or one that can be locked open.
- Discourage younger children from playing with toys designed for older children.
- If a toy requires safety gear, (e.g. scooter, bike, skateboard, rollerblades) *Kidsafe NSW* recommends that you buy this when you buy the toy.
- Remember that rings, inflatable arm bands, kick boards and small inflatable toys are not safety devices. Children in the water must be supervised at all times to prevent drowning.

### For more information visit:

- Product Safety Australia [productsafety.gov.au](https://productsafety.gov.au)
- Product Recalls Australia [recalls.gov.au](https://recalls.gov.au)
- Choice [choice.com.au](https://choice.com.au)
- Australian Toy Association [austoy.com.au](https://austoy.com.au)

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