Safety at home

Accidental strangulation can happen very quickly. Do not leave your children unattended in a room where they may become entangled in blind or curtain cords.

If you already have corded blinds or curtains in your home:

- keep the cords out of reach of children
- visit the shop where you bought the blinds, or a hardware store, to see if you can modify the blinds to make them safer.

If you are thinking about buying corded blinds or curtains for your home:

- make sure they have safe design features and carry warnings about potential strangulation hazards
- make sure no loops are left hanging down.

Remember

1. Do not put your child’s cot, bed or playpen near a window with corded blinds or curtains.
2. Do not leave your child unsupervised near a corded blind or curtain.
3. Do check with the manufacturer/supplier to see if you can modify your corded blinds or curtains.
4. Do make sure that cords of all kinds are kept well out of reach of children.

For further information

Publications can be ordered through the ACCC Infocentre or downloaded from the ACCC website.

Safety alert brochures:
Babies dummies
Baby bath aids
Baby walkers
Bunk beds
Cots
Household furniture hazards for kids
Toys

Safety guides:
Keeping baby safe
Safe toys for kids

ACCC contacts
ACCC Infocentre 1300 302 502
ACCC Indigenous Infoline 1300 303 143
For information in languages other than English, call 131 450 and ask for 1300 302 502.

Callers who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment can contact the ACCC through the National Relay Service www.relayservice.com.au

TTY or modem users—phone 133 677 and ask for 1300 302 502.

Voice-only (speak and listen) users—phone 1300 555 727 and ask for 1300 302 502

www.accc.gov.au

Important notice. The information in this brochure is general in nature and may not be relevant to your specific circumstances. While the ACCC has made every reasonable effort to provide current and accurate information, readers should be aware that the ACCC accepts no liability for any loss or damage whatsoever attributable to reliance upon any of that information. Nothing in this brochure should replace professional advice. The ACCC recommends that users exercise their own skill and care when using the information in this brochure.

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SAFETY HAZARD

Blind and curtain cords

Blind and curtain cords can pose a serious risk for babies and young children—particularly those under the age of three.

Children can injure, or even strangle, themselves on the hanging cords of blinds and curtains.

A child can place their head in the loop created by a blind cord. If the child then tries to sit or falls down, they can strangle themselves in the loop. The cord or chain loop used to open and close vertical blinds can also strangle children.

Since 1991 over 180 children have died this way in the United States. More than 10 Australian children have also been accidentally strangled by blind or curtain cords.

There are several simple steps you can take to minimise this risk—and help to keep your children safe.

- Make sure that curtain and blind cords are out of the way and are not left hanging within the reach of children. A child jumping or playing near the cord could become wrapped in the cord and strangled.
- The bottom of any cord should be at least 160 cm above the floor.
- Wrap blind cords around a cleat (available from hardware stores) attached to the wall near the curtain or blind well out of reach of young children.
- For vertical blinds install a cord-tensioning device (available from curtain shops or hardware stores) that encloses the cord or chain loops.
- Fix the device firmly to the wall using a screw—materials such as double-sided tape may become loose if the cord is pulled on by a child and the cord may then become a strangulation risk.

SAFETY CHECKLIST

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