

Is your home really safe?

How often do you check your home for safety hazards? Once a day? Once a week? This year during Child Safety Week we are asking everyone to take a second look for safety. It will only take you a few seconds but will give you peace of mind that will last and last.

Imagine you are walking around your home, or anybody's home. It is a home where a normal busy family live ... as you walk around take a second look to spot any hazards and help make this home, your home, a safer place for everyone to live.

Put a tick next to all the things you think are a hazard. There may be more than one answer in each area of the house. Also have a think about other hazards that aren't listed that you could fix in your home.

1. In the hall, take a look around, what hazards might you find?

- A. Toys and books stacked on the bottom few steps of the stairs
- B. An interesting looking umbrella stand, in the shape of a duck
- C. An open safety gate

2. Moving into the kitchen. What hazards might you find?

- A. A long kettle flex hanging over the edge of the kitchen worktop
- B. Dishes in the sink
- C. A hot oven door

3. Moving into the living room. What hazards might you find?

- A. A cup of coffee left unattended on the coffee table
- B. An overstuffed toy box in the corner
- C. Loose blind cords hanging beside the toy box

4. Moving into the bathroom. What hazards might you find?

- A. A rubber duck
- B. A steaming hot bath being run
- C. Toilet cleaner tucked behind the toilet

5. Lastly, moving into the bedroom. What hazards might you find?

- A. Hair straighteners hanging over the door handle
- B. An unmade bed
- C. An open window

Answers

1. A – Yes, these could prove to be a hazard in the event of fire, as you may not see them through the smoke.
 B – No, ugly furniture is not a hazard!
 C – Yes, take a second look to make sure it is closed properly to stop babies and toddlers climbing or falling down the stairs.
 2. A – Yes. Small hands could grab the flex and pull a kettle or hot water off the counter. Always keep kettles at the back of the worktop.
 B – No, left over dishes are just on the to-do list not a hazard.
 C – Yes, some oven doors get very hot and can burn a young child's skin.
 3. A – Yes, little fingers can easily pull a hot drink off a coffee table. A young child's skin is much thinner than an adult's and hot drinks can badly scald a young child up to 15 minutes after they are made.
 B – No, a child having lots of toys is not a hazard.
 C – Yes, tie blind cords up on a cleat hook, out of children's reach, as they can strangle small children.
 4. A – No, a rubber duck is not a hazard in itself! But, if it's floating in the bath, your toddler may try to grab it and fall in, and be at risk of scalding, drowning or both.
 B – Yes, filling the bath with hot water first can be a hazard, as a child could climb or fall in and get badly burnt.
 C – Yes, always keep cleaning products out of reach as they can be poisonous, and try to buy products which contain a bittering agent such as Bitrex.
 5. A – Yes, you can't tell by looking if they are hot or not. Straighteners can cause serious burns 8 minutes after you have used them so don't leave them lying around.
 B – No, just another one for the to-do list!
 C – Yes, make sure you fit safety locks or catches to your windows to reduce the risk of your child falling out.