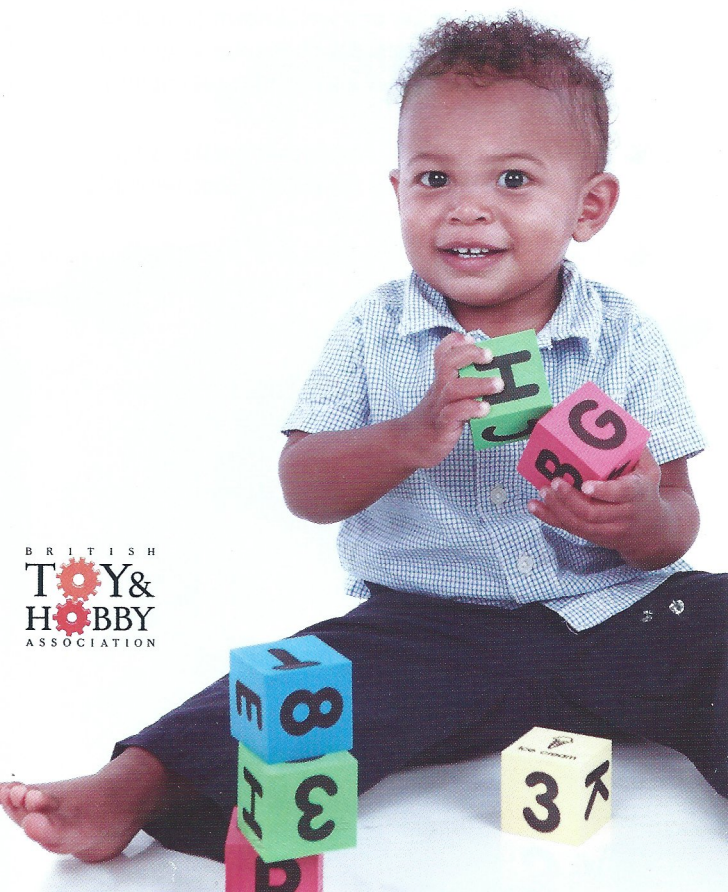




child accident  
prevention trust

# how safe are your child's toys?

a safety guide for parents and carers  
of babies and young children



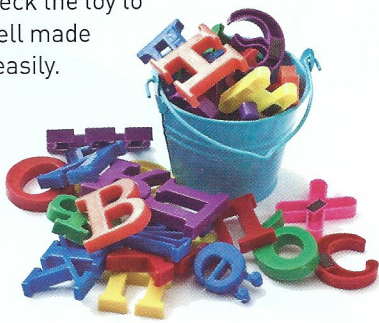
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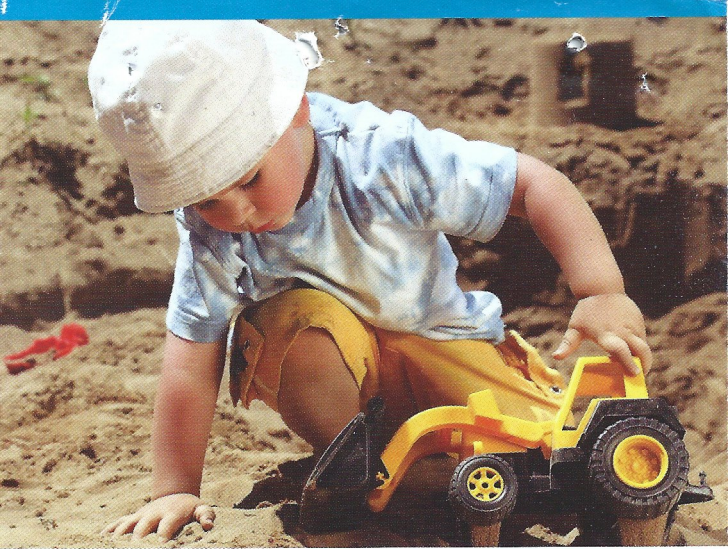
Most children's toys sold in the UK are safe. Accidents tend to happen when a child plays with a toy meant for an older child, or because toys are left out and cause trips or falls.

But, accidents can and do happen. This leaflet provides helpful advice and tips on how to prevent your child having a mishap with their toys.


## Choosing safe toys


- ✎ always try to buy new toys from a recognised, reputable toy seller or a well known high street chain. Avoid markets, car boot sales or pop up temporary shops that may sell illegal imports or unsafe toys
- ✎ beware of 'bargains' on internet auction sites. If the price for popular branded goods seems too good to be true, it probably is
- ✎ take care with second hand toys. A toy library can be a safer option – find out if there is one in your area. Go to [www.btha.co.uk](http://www.btha.co.uk) for information on safe second hand toys
- ✎ beware of magnets in older toys, particularly if they are damaged in anyway. If more than one magnet is swallowed by a child seek medical advice
- ✎ ask advice from sales staff if you are not sure what to buy, and look for safety and age warnings
- ✎ before buying, check the toy to make sure it is well made and won't break easily.






## Understanding marks on toys:

 Age warning symbols indicate that a toy is not safe for children under three years old. This warning is often given because the toy contains small parts that a baby or toddler could choke on. This warning is different from age guidance – see the section below on choosing the right toy for your child's age

 The Lion Mark helps in the identification of a safe toy. Toys with this mark have been made to the highest standards of safety and quality as the mark is used by members of the British Toy and Hobby Association

 You might also see the CE mark on toys. This mark is required by law on all toys sold within the European Union.





## Choosing the right toy for your child's age

Most toys have a suggested age range on the packaging. However, this is usually only for guidance.

- 👉 babies under a year old should not be given toys with long fur or hair, as these can cause them to choke
- 👉 think about what your child is able to do and what they will find challenging. They won't play with a toy for long if they find it too babyish or too difficult
- 👉 avoid letting young children play with their older brother's or sister's toys. Something that is safe for a six or seven year old can cause serious injury to a toddler
- 👉 remember some toys require adult supervision, such as toys used in water or baking kits
- 👉 don't be tempted to buy a bicycle that is too big, for your child to 'grow into'. Make sure your child can place the balls of their feet on the ground when sitting on it and can comfortably reach the handlebars and squeeze the brakes.

## Looking after toys

- 👉 teach children to put their toys away when they stop playing with them. Many accidents involving toys happen when children or adults trip over them, with toys left on the stairs a common cause of serious falls
- 👉 throw away broken toys rather than giving them to charity or a jumble sale as they can be dangerous
- 👉 If you do want to pass toys on when your child has finished with them remember to include the instructions if you have them
- 👉 don't mix old and new batteries in toys as the old batteries can overheat
- 👉 clear up the remnants of burst balloons straight away as they can be a choking hazard, especially for younger children.



## Top tips for individual toys

**Cot toys** are a great way of keeping babies stimulated but remove them from the cot once your baby can sit up or get on all fours, as they can use them to climb out of the cot.

**Noisy toys** such as cap guns can damage hearing. Never allow children to hold them near their own or anyone else's ears.

**Kites** are a great way of getting children out in the open air and can be great fun. Always make sure that kites are not used near overhead power lines, and that your child is heavy enough to not be lifted off the ground and cannot get tangled up in the strings.



## *Tips for individual toys (continued)*

**Garden toys** such as swings or climbing frames should not easily tip over. Use them over soft grass or soil (you should be able to push a screwdriver in). Make sure there are no hard edges, spikes or glass where children might fall. Regularly check fastenings, ropes etc, for looseness and wear.

**Trampolines** should be placed on soft, energy-absorbing ground and should only be used by one child at a time. Try to buy one that comes with safety netting, or think about buying a safety cage to use with it to reduce the risk of falls and follow the guidelines from the manufacturer.

**Paddling pools** must be emptied after use and put away, or turned upside down so they do not collect rain water. Babies can drown in as little as 5cm (2") of water – this depth can easily collect in an empty paddling pool left out in the rain.

**Chemistry sets** are only suitable for children over the age of ten. Follow the age guidance carefully and make sure you are nearby in case there are any problems.

**We strongly advise parents and carers to learn first aid.**

**capt** is a charity committed to reducing childhood injury.



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