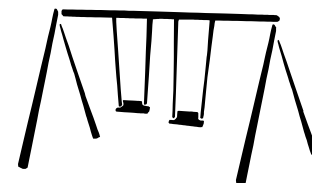


Playground Safety



Each year, more than 200,000 children go to U.S. hospital emergency rooms with injuries associated with playground equipment. Use this simple checklist, provided by the consumer Product Safety Commission, to help make sure your local community or school playground is a safe place to play.

- √ **Make sure surfaces around playground equipment have at least 12 inches of wood chips, mulch, sand, or pea gravel, or are mats made of safety-tested rubber.**
- √ **Check that protective surfacing extends at least 6 feet in all directions from play equipment. For swings, be sure surfacing extends, in back and front, twice the height of the suspending bar.**
- √ **Check for dangerous hardware, like open "S" hooks or protruding bolt ends.**
- √ **Make sure elevated surfaces, like platforms and ramps, have guardrails to prevent falls.**
- √ **Look out for tripping hazards, like exposed concrete footings, tree stumps, and rocks.**
- √ **Make sure play structures more than 30 inches high are spaced at least 9 feet apart.**



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Tips for Bicycle Safety



- √ **Always wear a helmet that meets the safety standards developed by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission**
- √ **Make sure the helmet is comfortable and snug and is centered on the top of your head in a level position— The straps should be buckled against your chin.**
- √ **Make sure bicycle reflectors are secure, the brakes work properly, gears shift smoothly, and tires are tightly secured and properly inflated**
- √ **Ride on the right side of the road, with traffic, not against.**
- √ **Use appropriate hand signals and respect traffic signals, stop at all stop signs and lights**
- √ **If riding at dusk dawn or in the evening, use a light on the bike and make sure your bike has reflectors**
- √ **Wear clothes and accessories that incorporate retroreflective materials to improve your visibility to motorists**

**Tips provided by Safe Kids USA*



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Important Dog Safety Tips

Dog bites are a very common form of injury, for both adults and children. While it is not possible to know in advance whether a dog will attack there are steps you can take to protect yourself and your children from being bitten.

- √ **Ask the owner's permission before you try to touch or pet the dog.**
- √ **Do not suddenly approach a dog, particularly when you are in its territory.**
- √ **After getting the owner's permission, extend the back of your hand to the dog and allow the dog to sniff you before you try to touch or pet it. (Remember - the back of your hand, not your fingers.)**
- √ **Do not try to touch a dog that is eating.**
- √ **Do not touch or pet a dog that is resting or sleeping -- the dog should be aware of your approach. ("Let sleeping dogs lie.")**
- √ **Be very careful around a mother dog that has puppies. This is particularly true if the mother is nursing.**
- √ **Avoid getting the dog very excited, or engaging in excessively rough play. The dog's instincts may overpower its self-control.**
- √ **Do not stare a strange or threatening dog in the eyes.**

Tips from SafeUSA



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Tips for Fire Prevention



In 1999, more than 2,900 people were killed and another 16,425 were injured in home fires in the United States.

- √ **Install smoke alarms outside each separate sleeping area and on every floor of your home, including the basement.**
- √ **Make a family fire escape plan and practice it every 6 months. The plan should indicate two different ways to exit every room and a chosen “safe place” for the family to meet after escaping a fire.**
- √ **Prevent a fire in your home by never leaving burning candles or lit cigarettes unattended, keeping space heaters at least three feet from anything that can burn, turning space heaters off when you go to sleep, and keeping matches or lighters away from children’s reach.**
- √ **Teach children to stop, drop, and roll in order to smother flames on clothing.**

**Tips provided by SafeUSA*



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Important Holiday Safety Tips...

The Holidays are an exciting and busy time but with all the joys of the holiday season come potential safety hazards that can cause injury or even death. Help prevent injuries by following these tips*.

- √ Check each set of tree lights for frayed wires, broken bulbs, and loose connections. Turn off lights before you go to bed or leave the house.
- √ Keep holiday plants away from children and pets. Mistletoe, holly berries, and Christmas cactus are poisonous if swallowed.
- √ If you place your child in a shopping cart, always use the safety belt and never let your child stand in or push a shopping cart.
- √ Do not give children under the age of 3 toys that contain small or metal parts or toys that break easily. An easy gauge us using an empty toilet paper roll. If a toy can fit through the roll it is too small for the child.
- √ Include helmets and other protective gear when giving bicycles, skates, or skateboards.

*Tips provided by SafeUSA



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Identity Theft Prevention Tips



- √ Shred and destroy unwanted documents that contain personal info.
- √ Bring your mail in daily - don't leave mail in your mailbox.
- √ Immediately report lost or stolen credit cards.
- √ Review and monitor your consumer credit reports regularly.

- √ Do not carry your social insurance card or your birth certificate.
- √ Keep these tucked away in a safe place.
- √ Be aware when your monthly financial statements arrive in the mail.
- √ Notify your financial institutions when they don't arrive when expected.

- √ Watch your financial statements and ensure all charges made are yours.
- √ Keep your ATM and Debit Card receipts, do not leave these behind.
- √ Shred every piece of mail containing personal and financial information.
- √ Never reveal your bank account, credit card, mother's maiden name or social insurance number over the phone (unless dealing with a trusted business or organization). Ask the caller to send information by mail.

- √ Keep a list of all your financial accounts such as account numbers, expiration dates, and customer help telephone numbers. Ensure this list is kept in a safe place & use to contact in case of lost or stolen cards.

- √ When creating passwords or PINs, do not use digits of your social insurance number, mother's maiden name, your birthdate, any part of your name (first, middle, last).

- √ Watch your credit card expiration dates, if you don't receive a replacement card - contact the issuer.

**Source: www.identity-theft-tips.com*



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Important Winter Safety Tips...



- **With its cold and often stormy weather, winter presents many safety challenges-both indoors and out.**
- **Being prepared and following these simple safety tips can help you stay safe and warm this season*.**
- **Install a smoke alarm near bedrooms and on each floor of your home.**
- **Install a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm near bedrooms and on each floor of your home.**
- **Keep portable space heaters at least 3 feet from anything that can burn, including bedding, furniture, and clothing.**
- **Have your fireplace chimney and flue inspected each year and cleaned if needed and burn only untreated wood.**
- **For long car trips keep food, water, extra blankets, and required medication on hand.**

**Tips provided by SafeUSA*



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Heads Up: Preventing Brain Injuries



There are approximately 1.4 million new occurrences of brain injury annually in the United States. Even with today's technological advancements there is still no cure for brain injury. The best way to protect yourself and your family from brain injuries is to prevent them from occurring.

- **Wear a seatbelt every time you drive or ride in a vehicle**
- **Always buckle your child into a child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt**
- **Never drive while under the influence of drugs or alcohol**
- **Wear a helmet when riding a bike, motorcycle, snow vehicle, A.T.V. , or when playing sports**
- **Make sure your child's playground surface is made of shock-absorbing material such as wood, mulch, or sand.**
- **Keep firearms stored unloaded in a locked cabinet or safe. Store bullets separately.**
- **Avoid falls in your home by removing tripping hazards such as loose cords or small rugs**
- **Use safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs when young children are around**

**Tips provided by The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control*



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Firework Safety Tips

- √ CHILDREN SHOULD NOT HANDLE FIREWORKS
- √ DO NOT USE ALCOHOL WITH FIREWORKS
- √ FOLLOW THE LAWS; USE COMMON SENSE
- √ USE FIREWORKS ON A HARD SURFACE
- √ USE IN A CLEAR, OPEN AREA
- √ KEEP CLEAR OF THE FIREWORKS
- √ USE CARE IN LIGHTING THE FIREWORKS ONE AT A TIME
- √ DON'T USE MALFUNCTIONING OR "DUD" ITEMS
- √ HAVE WATER CLOSE BY
- √ BEWARE OF WINDY CONDITIONS
- √ USE CARE IN HANDLING FIREWORKS
- √ NEVER USE THE FIREWORKS AS WEAPONS
- √ STORE FIREWORKS IN A COOL, DRY PLACE
- √ USE FIREWORKS OUTDOORS
- √ PURCHASE FIREWORKS FROM RELIABLE DEALERS
- √ WEAR SAFETY GLASSES
- √ BE CAREFUL WITH ANIMALS
- √ DO NOT TRANSPORT FIREWORKS ON AIRPLANES

Source: <http://www.fireworks.com/safety/tips.asp>



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Swimming Pool Safety

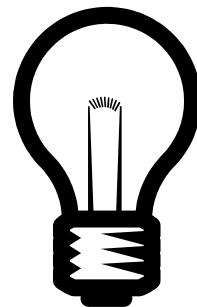
No national laws or regulations mandate the safekeeping of children in and around swimming pools. State and local regulations regarding safety equipment, pool design, and water quality do exist, but enforcement is a problem. Below are a few tips as suggested by the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission.

- Do not permit alcohol
- No diving boards unless lifeguards on duty
- Install pool alarms
- Prevent body entrapment/entanglement potential
- Conduct maintenance checks and surveillance before each use
- Maintain proper chemical mixture
- Stock first aid equipment
- Provide constant supervision to all children
- Learn CPR and rescue techniques



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Tips to Lower Your Gas & Electric Bill This Winter

- Install energy –saver showerheads.
- Use compact fluorescent lamps.
- Clean or replace furnace filters regularly.
- Close the damper when the fireplace is not in use.

- Close heating vents in rooms that are not used often.
- Defrost refrigerators and freezers before ice buildup becomes 1/4-inch thick.
- Load dishwashers, washing machines and dryers to full capacity before turning them on. Use the shortest cycle that will get your dishes and clothes clean.
- Caulk windows, doors and anywhere air leaks in or out. Weather strip around windows and doors. Wrap heating and cooling ducts with duct wrap, or use mastic sealant. Wrap heater in insulating blanket to minimize heat loss.

- Set the water heater at 140 degrees of “normal” if you have a dishwasher. Otherwise set is at 120 degrees or “low.”
- When you have a choice between using the microwave or an electric stove, always use the microwave which can consumer as much as 90 percent less energy.

Source: Santa Cruz Sentinel, 2/2007



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Halloween Safety Tips



- √ Walk, slither, and sneak on sidewalks, not in the street.
- √ Cross the street only at corners.
- √ Wear light-colored clothing or reflective-type clothing to be more visible.
- √ Plan your route and share it with your family. If possible have an adult present at all times.
- √ Carry a flashlight to light your way.
- √ Visit only homes that have the porch light on.
- √ Accept treats at the door and never go into a stranger's house.
- √ Be cautious of animals and strangers.
- √ Keep away from open fires and candles (costumes can be extremely flammable)

**Safety Tips from the American Red Cross*

Pollution Prevention Tips

In honor of Earth Day This April, below are several simple tips to live a “greener” lifestyle.

- Reuse shopping bags or ask that your purchases be placed into as few bags as possible
- Donate unwanted paints, pesticides, furniture, clothes and appliances to friends, neighbors, community groups or charitable organizations
- Stop filling your gas tank after the first “click” to reduce vapors. Do not “topoff” your tank
- Install low-flow showerheads and toilets
- Turn off lights and appliances when you are not using them
- Pull weeds by hand instead of using a chemical herbicide
- Run errands on your way to or from work or organize them so that you’re not driving unnecessary miles
- Hang clothes out to dry instead of using the dryer. If you have to use the dryer, make sure the lint screen is clean before each use
- Repair leaking pipes, hoses and faucets as soon as possible
- Clean out your trunk! You get 4% less gas mileage for every 100 pounds of extra cargo, and less gas mileage means your car releases more emissions that pollute the environment

*Source: www.tchd.org



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Summer Heat Safety & Prevention

Preventing Heat-Related Illness

- Dress for the heat. Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect away some of the sun's energy. It is also a good idea to wear hats or to use an umbrella.
- Drink water. Carry water or juice with you and drink continuously even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid alcohol and caffeine, which dehydrate the body.
- Eat small meals and eat more often. Avoid foods that are high in protein which increase metabolic heat.
- Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.
- Slow down. Avoid strenuous activity. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning between 4:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.
- Stay indoors when possible.
- Take regular breaks when engaged in physical activity on warm days. Take time out to find a cool place. If you recognize that you, or someone else, is showing the signals of a heat-related illness, stop activity and find a cool place.

Stages of Heat-Related Illness

- Heat-related illness usually comes in stages. The signal of the first stage is heat cramps in muscles. These cramps can be very painful. If you are caring for a person who has heat cramps, have him or her stop activity and rest. If the person is fully awake and alert, have him or her drink small amounts of cool water or a commercial sports drink. Gently stretch the cramped muscle and hold the stretch for about 20 seconds, then gently massage the muscle.
- The signals of the next, more serious stage of a heat-related illness (often called heat exhaustion) include--
- Cool, moist, pale skin (the skin may be red right after physical activity).
- Headache. Dizziness and weakness or exhaustion.
- Nausea.
- The skin may or may not feel hot.
- The signals of the late stage of a heat-related illness (often called heat stroke) include—
- Vomiting, Decreased alertness level or complete loss of consciousness, high body temperature (sometimes as high as 105°F).
- Skin may still be moist or the victim may stop sweating and the skin may be red, hot and dry.
- Rapid, weak pulse, rapid, shallow breathing.