

Childproofing a Home

When it comes to childproofing a home, the possibilities are endless as to what improvements you can make. In fact, the biggest problem may be in determining what is not possible for you to do in terms of time and money to transform your house into a safe living area for toddlers.

The best investments are ones that are as easy to remove as to install, should you want to take them out as your children grow older, and lessen if not stop a real possibility of injury to them. Using those guidelines, we recommend the following additions for a childproofed home:

- Child-resistant covers on electrical outlets (<http://www.babysafe.com/electric.htm>) will prevent any trauma that would have resulted if a youngster tried to stick his or her finger into a socket.
- Cord shorteners for curtains and blinds (<http://www.kidsafeinc.com/product/308/>) minimize the likelihood of pulling, tripping or choking on them.
- Corner bumpers on furniture and fireplace-hearth edges (<http://www.patentstorm.us/patents/5322257.html>) lower the chance of babies gashing their heads against the items.
- Plastic guards along the hinge side of frequently used interior doors help avoid the doors from pinching fingers.
- Side railings (<http://www.nextag.com/bed-guard-rails/search.html>) protect children who have outgrown their cribs from falling out of their new beds when asleep.
- Baby gates (<http://www.babygates.com/>) can be placed easily and effectively at doorways and stairways and keep out kids from wandering where they may be injured.

If you live in a new home – built within the last 20 years, let's say – the probabilities are that its new appliances likely have more child safety features than older ones. Nonetheless, you probably will want to include any of the adjustments previously listed if they are not already in place.

For more advice on what actions you can take to childproof a home, visit here (<http://www.baby chatter.com/childproof.html>), here (http://www.keepkidshealthy.com/WELCOME/safety/childproofing_new_house.html) and here (<http://www.justmommies.com/articles/baby-proofing.shtml>). If you want to childproof places outside your home, an excellent resource is available here (<http://blogs.consumerreports.org/baby/2008/07/childproof-trav.html>).

Rich Van Tassel is President of Royal Oaks Building Group, LLC, an award-winning home building company located in Raleigh, North Carolina.