

# Setting up a safe nursery

Setting up your baby's nursery is an exciting time for parents and caregivers. Your baby will spend a lot of time in their nursery so make sure it's set up safely from the beginning. Remember to keep your baby's nursery smoke free.

## Create a safe sleep space

One of the most important things you need to consider when setting up your nursery is your baby's sleep space. The safest place for your baby to sleep is in a crib, cradle or bassinet that meets current **Canadian safety regulations**.

Remember that "bare is best." All you need is a tight-fitting mattress and a fitted sheet designed for the mattress.

## Decorate the room, not the crib, cradle or bassinet

Bedding sets, pillows and bumper pads, even the mesh ones, may look nice but they are not safe for your baby. Any loose or soft items in your baby's crib can suffocate your baby.

### Tip:

- Hang artwork and other wall decor away from your baby's crib, as it can:
  - fall into your baby's sleep space and injure your baby
  - be pulled down into the crib as your baby learns to stand and climb



## Choose a safe place for your crib

Deciding where to place your crib in your baby's room is an important decision. Keep safety in mind when choosing the best spot.

- Place your crib away from windows. Your baby could use the crib to climb up to the window and get caught in window coverings or fall through a window screen.
- Make sure that your window coverings do not have long accessible cords. Window coverings with long accessible cords do not meet Canadian requirements and can strangle your baby.
- Place your crib away from other furniture so your baby cannot use it to climb out of their crib.

## Check your cords

Cords and kids don't mix! Loose cords can strangle your baby and can also be a tripping hazard.

- Make sure that all cords from baby monitors, lamps, sound machines and other electronics are out of reach from your baby's crib.
- Mount the baby monitor to a wall out of reach of your baby, and not on your baby's crib.

## Secure all furniture

Anchor it. Even furniture that looks stable can tip over if your curious toddler tries to pull themselves up on it. Furniture tip-overs can cause devastating injuries or even death.

- If you put your furniture together, make sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Use angle braces, anchors or safety straps to anchor your baby's nursery furniture to the wall.
  - Keep this in mind for furniture in other parts of the house too.
- Install locking devices on drawers so your child can't open drawers and use them as steps to climb a dresser.
  - Open drawers also make your furniture more unstable.

Secure the furniture in your baby's nursery to a stud or with heavy-duty dry wall anchors or anchors made for specific furniture types.



## Toy safety

Toys are a fun and important part of your baby's development. Follow these tips to keep your baby safe while encouraging their learning:

- Choose open storage without sharp corners like baskets or canvas bins to keep your baby's toys organized.
- Remove the lids from toy bins.
  - Injuries can happen if a lid falls on your baby or accidentally traps them inside your toy bin.
- Choose toys that are age-appropriate by looking for the age recommendations on the packaging.
- Keep toys with loose pieces, small pieces, strings or cords out of reach until your child:
  - is at least 3 years of age
  - has stopped putting non-food items in their mouth

## Transitioning to the next bed

Each new milestone in your baby's life is a time for celebration.

It's time to make changes to your baby's sleep environment to protect them from harm when your baby shows the following signs:

<p><b>Rolling over</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move them from a bassinet to a crib or cradle.</li> <li>• Stop swaddling your baby.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pushing up on their hands and knees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move them from a cradle to a crib.</li> <li>• Place the crib mattress in its lowest position.</li> <li>• Remove mobiles and toy bars.</li> <li>• Check that there are no hazards within arm's reach, including furniture, window covering cords, lamps, corded baby monitors and small objects.</li> <li>• Secure your furniture to the wall if you haven't already done so.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pulling themselves up to stand</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep all toys out of the crib during every sleep so your baby can't use them as a step to climb out of their crib.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Trying to climb out of their crib</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move them to a toddler/junior bed.</li> <li>• Don't use portable bed rails for children under 2 years old.</li> <li>• Check for any new hazards that your toddler might find as they explore their room.</li> <li>• Check that cords aren't accessible by climbing on furniture or toys.</li> </ul>



Also:

- Install safety gates to limit access to stairs.
- Make sure that household cleaners, laundry detergents, button batteries, small magnets and other harmful substances and products are out of sight and out of reach.
- Keep toys and other safe, appealing items at ground level so your baby can reach them without climbing furniture.

## Products your baby doesn't need

Parents and caregivers often assume that if a nursery product is sold in stores it must be safe.

Consumer products in Canada **do not** have to be approved or tested before they're available in stores. It can be difficult to know what is safe for your baby.

As a general rule, avoid products:

- with soft padding
  - they may be a suffocation risk
- without a firm, flat sleeping surface
  - they can allow your baby to move into a position where they cannot breathe
- that can cause your baby to overheat
  - overheating is a risk factor for SIDS

Before you buy, check for **product recalls and advisories**.

### Ask yourself if:

- the product is safe for your baby
- your baby really needs this product
- it's safe for your baby to fall asleep in the product
- you know how to use this product safely

The manufacturer or importer is responsible for making sure that the products they supply in Canada are safe. Health Canada monitors the marketplace and takes action when and where we identify an issue.

You can help by **reporting any incidents or unsafe products**.

Some products that you may find in stores or online that your baby doesn't need and that might not be safe include:

- indoor hats
- in-bed sleepers
- bed-side sleepers
- crib wedges
- baby hammocks
- teething necklaces and pacifier cords
- soft bedding
- sleep positioners
- baby nests, pods and loungers
- car seat covers

Learn more:

[canada.ca/safesleep](https://canada.ca/safesleep)