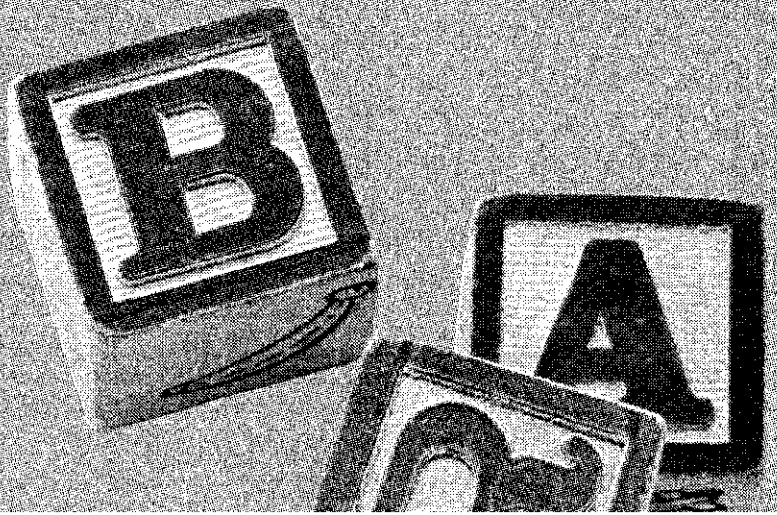




**child accident
prevention trust**

how safe are your child's toys?

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



Every year over 35,000 children under 15 go to hospital after an accident involving a toy. The vast majority of these are toddlers between one and three years old.

Find out how taking a few simple safety measures can help to prevent your child having an accident with a toy.

Choosing safe toys

- ✎ always try to buy from a specialist toy shop or a well known high street chain. Avoid markets or temporary shops. Second hand toys are not recommended. A toy library can be a safer option - find out if there is one in your area
- ✎ ask advice from the sales staff if you are not sure what to buy and look for safety and age warnings
- ✎ check the toy to make sure it is well made and will withstand play.

Look for safety marks:



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



Age warning symbols show that a toy is not safe for children under a certain age. It may be in words or as a symbol. A warning is often given because toys contain small parts that a baby or young toddler could choke on. These warnings are different from age guidance - see section on choosing the right toy for your child's age.



You might also see the CE mark on toys. This mark is required by law on all toys sold within the European Union. It is not an indication of quality or safety

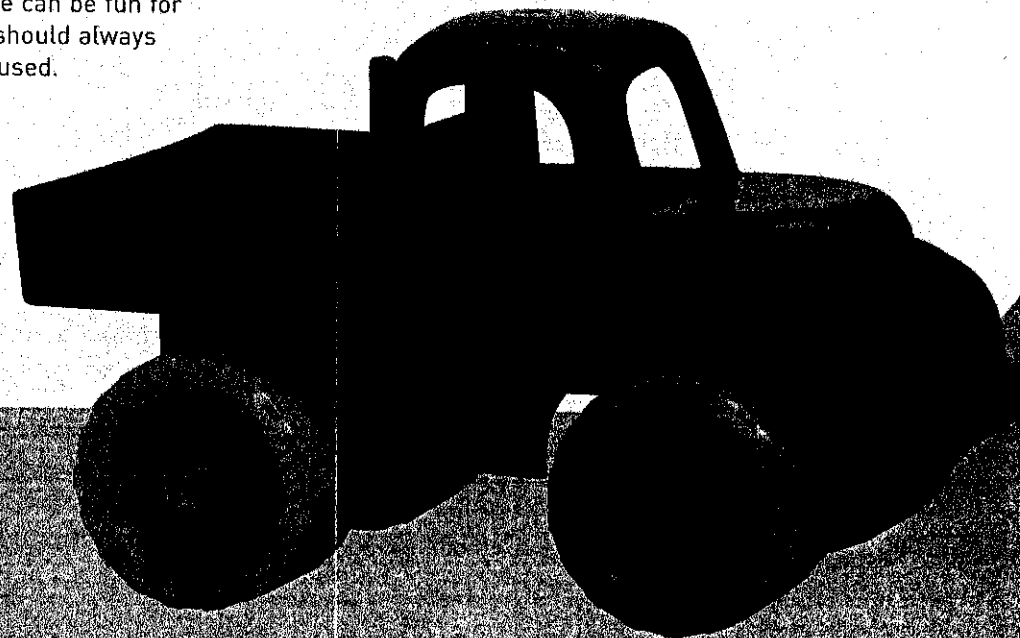
Choosing the right toy for your child's age

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

- ✎ babies under a year should not be given toys with long fur or hair that can cause choking
- ✎ think about what your child is able to do and what they will find challenging. Your child will not play with a toy for long if he/she finds it too babyish or too difficult
- ✎ remember to make sure that young children are not able to 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
- ✎ you might see guidance on some toys suggesting they need adult supervision. These are often toys that are made to be used in water or baking kits that have to be put in the oven. These can be fun for young children but you should always be there when they are used.

Looking after toys

- ✎ teach children to put their toys away when they are not being used. Most accidents involving toys happen when children and adults trip over them. Serious accidents can happen if toys are left on the stairs
- ✎ go through your child's toy box regularly and throw away any broken toys. Do not be tempted to give them away to jumble sales or charity shops - you will be passing the problem on to another family
- ✎ if your child has toys that run on batteries make sure you change them all at the same time. If you mix old and new batteries the old ones can get overheated.



Cot toys

It is a good way of keeping babies stimulated, but should be removed as soon as your baby can sit up on all fours. Babies can strangle on cot toys if they fall on the strings. They can also use them to climb out of the cot. Cot toys should not have strings that are longer than 20cm (8").

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

Kites are a great way of getting children outdoors in the open air and can be a lot of fun. Make sure they are not used near overhead power lines and be certain that your child cannot get tangled in the strings.

Garden toys such as swings should be used on a steady, use them over well-watered grass, and make sure there is plenty of room around them. Check nuts, bolts and other fittings regularly.

Padding pools must be emptied after use, either put away or turned upside down. They can drain in just 3cm (1") water. They can easily collect in an empty pool left outdoors.

Chemistry sets are usually only suitable for children over ten. Follow the age guidelines carefully and make sure you are not left in a case there are any problems.

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