

TOY AND GIFT SAFETY

December 2017

**DECEMBER IS
SAFE TOYS AND
GIFTS MONTH**



Traditionally December starts the search season for the perfect holiday gifts. It can include gift cards, clothes, phones, jewelry and food items. The list is endless, but toys for younger kids are most likely to be on every family's shopping list.

Millions of toys are on the market these days. Toys may be fun for kids and play an important role in their development, but toys could also be dangerous and pose a health risk if not manufactured properly.

Manufacturers follow certain guidelines, while Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) monitors toy safety.

What to Look For

- Always follow the age recommendation set by a manufacturer and read the package's warning.
- Toys should be at least 1.25" in diameter and 2.25" in length to prevent them from being swallowed. Small toys pose a choking hazard.
- Toys with batteries should have a secure battery case so children cannot open it easily. Old batteries can leak fluids and cause chemical burns. Small batteries in particular pose a choking hazard.
- Cords should not be longer than 7 inches so children will not choke themselves.
- Always check the toys you won at the fairs and carnivals. They are not required to meet safety standards.
- Watch for sharp corners and small parts, like wheels or buttons that can be pulled loose.
- Never give kids younger than 8 years old latex balloons, as blowing them up or chewing on them can cause choking.
- Stuffed toys should be washable.
- Art materials should be non-toxic. Paints and crayons should say ASTM D-4236 on the package, which means it was evaluated by the American Society for Testing and Materials.

Check toy recall list frequently at
<https://www.safekids.org/top-toy-recalls-2017>

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Riding Toys

If you are buying your child a bike, skateboard or a scooter you should always consider buying a helmet because ride-on toys are the primary reason for toy-related injuries. Bike seats should be low enough for kids to touch the floor with their feet for stability. All joints on riding toys should be fastened well and

wheels should rotate smoothly. Small children should be *always* supervised.



Electric Toys

Electric toys can pose a health hazard if they are improperly constructed. If they are wired the wrong way or are simply misused, they can cause burn or electric shock.



Electric toys must meet certain mandatory requirements for safety, which include maximum surface temperature and having visible warning labels. Toys with heating elements are recommended only for children older than 8 years of age. Children should be instructed on how to use electric toys properly, and have an adult supervision at all times.

Statistics

Supervised play is the most Important thing for a parent to do!

- Riding toys cause the majority of toy injuries among children ages 14 and younger.
- In 2015, total number of reported toy-related injured was 254,200.
- In 12 cases, the injuries caused death (2015).
- In 2016, 76 toys were recalled.
- About 50% of all toy-related injuries occur to the face and head area.
- Children under the age of 3 are at greater risk for choking on small toys than older children, due to their tendency to put objects in their mouths.

References: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (2017) <https://www.cpsc.gov/>
Child Development Institute (2015) <https://childdevelopmentinfo.com>
Choosing Safe Toys (2017) <http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/safe-toys.html>