

12 Household Goods That Could Go Bad

Whether you're scouring the secondhand market or doing a safety sweep of your own home, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission offers the following tips to evaluate the safety of some commonly used items.

Cribs

Don't use cribs with cutouts in the head or footboard, with corner posts that could snag clothing, or with side slats that are further than 2 3/8 inches apart. The mattresses should fit snugly and the bed should have all of its hardware.

Halogen Floor Lamps

Flammable materials like curtains can catch fire when they get too close to these lamps. Make sure glass or wire guards cover the bulb shield and that the bulb is 300 watts or less.

Playpens and Play yards

Check for recalls on these items. Unsafe products have protruding hardware that can snag pacifier strings or clothing. Rotating top rails that don't properly lock into place can cause the play yard to collapse.

Car Seat Carriers

Check for recalls. Some car seat carrier handle locks can unexpectedly release when used as a carrier outside of a car, causing infants to fall to the ground.

Bunk Beds

The spaces between the guardrail and bed frame and all spaces in the bed headboard and footboards of the top bunk should be less than 3 1/2 inches. Make sure there are guardrails on both sides of the top bunk.

Toy Basketball Nets

The CPSC has recalled millions of hazardous toy basketball nets that come unhooked from the rim or have knots that slide. Children can strangle if they put their heads through net loops or openings.

Accordion-Style Safety Gates

Nine children died and 25 were injured after becoming trapped in the "v" opening of these gates. Be safe and don't use them. The newer-style gates meet current safety standards.

Bean Bag Chairs

CPSC has recalled more than 12 million beanbag chairs with zippers after five children suffocated on the small pellets of foam filling and 27 children were injured.

Lawn Darts

CPSC banned lawn darts in 1988 after three children died when lawn darts punctured their skulls.

Ride-on Battery Powered Vehicles

More than 10 million vehicles have been recalled after causing more than 180 fires. At least 10 children were burned.

Cedar Chests

Lane recalled 12 million chests that lock automatically when the lid is closed after seven children became trapped and suffocated. The affected chests were manufactured before 1987.

Infant Swings

More than 1 million swings made by Century, Cosco and Graco were recalled after four children died and 50 were injured from hardware and seat support failure. The specific models were manufactured before 1998. For details about these and other recalls, visit www.cpsc.gov.