



Infant Furniture: Cribs

As you look for a crib, make sure you check the following. Be sure to use a crib manufactured after June 28, 2011, when a new, stronger safety standard was set.

- When purchasing a crib, make sure it meets current safety standards. These standards prohibit drop-side rails and require stronger parts and hardware. For more information, visit the US Consumer Product Safety Commission website at www.cpsc.gov.
- If you must use an older crib that was made before the new safety standards were enacted, check with the manufacturer to see if it offers hardware to keep the drop side from moving. Check the crib frequently to make sure the hardware is tight and no parts are broken or missing. Purchase a new crib that meets the stronger standards, if possible.
- The slats should be no more than $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches apart. Widely spaced slats can allow an infant's torso to fall through but will trap the infant's head, which can result in death.
- All joints and parts should fit tightly, and the wood must be smooth and free of splinters.
- Check for cracked and peeling paint. All surfaces should be covered with lead-free paint safe for nursery furniture.
- The end panels should be solid, without decorative cutouts. Cutout areas on panels can trap an infant's head.
- Corner posts should be flush with the end panels or else be very, very tall (such as posts on a canopy bed). Clothing and ribbons can catch on tall corner posts and strangle an infant.
- The crib side should be at least 9 inches above the mattress support in its highest position to prevent the infant from falling out and should be at least 26 inches above the mattress support in its lowest position.
- All hardware, including screws, bolts, nuts, plastic parts, etc, should be present and original equipment. Never substitute original parts with something from a hardware store.
- Do not use the crib if there are any missing, damaged, or broken parts.
- The mattress should be the same size as the crib so there are no gaps to trap arms, body, or legs. If you can fit more than 2 fingers between the mattress and the side of the crib, the crib and mattress combination should not be used.

USING A CRIB

- Check to see if your crib has been recalled at www.cpsc.gov/Recalls.
- Read and follow the directions to set up, use, and care for the crib.
- Never use a crib with loose or missing attachments or support hardware.
- Never place anything under the crib mattress to prop it up on one end. Babies are safest sleeping on a flat surface.
- Hanging crib toys (eg, mobiles, crib gyms) should be out of the baby's reach. Any hanging crib toy must be removed when your baby first begins to push up on his or her hands and knees or when the baby is 5 months old, whichever occurs first. These toys can strangle a baby.
- The crib mattress should be lowered before the baby can sit unassisted. The mattress should be at its lowest point before the baby can stand.
- Children should be taken out of a crib by the time they are 35 inches tall.
- Never place a crib near cords from a hanging window blind or drapery. Children can get caught in the cords and become strangled.
- It is safest to use cordless window coverings.

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- Be sure to inspect every crib your child uses for safety—those at the grandparent’s home, the babysitter’s home, or the child care center.
- Hammocks and other swinging devices should not be installed onto a crib because the baby may be strangled.
- If parts are missing, stop using the crib and contact the crib manufacturer for replacements. Do not attempt to replace them with hardware store parts.

SAFE BEDDING PRACTICES FOR CHILDREN

- Place your baby on his or her back on a firm, tight-fitting mattress in a crib that meets current safety standards.
- Do not use pillows, bumper pads, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, other soft products, or any objects that could increase the risk of suffocation or strangulation.
- Consider using a sleeper or other sleep clothing as an alternative to blankets, with no other covering.
- Make sure your baby’s head remains uncovered during sleep.
- Do not place your baby on a waterbed, sofa, soft mattress, or pillow, or other soft surfaces.

PORTABLE CRIBS AND PLAY YARDS

- Never leave the side of a mesh play yard lowered because a baby can become trapped and suffocate.
- Never add extra padding or use a mattress that did not come in the box with the play yard. The mattress that comes with the play yard will be comfortable and safe for your baby.
- When your child can pull himself to standing, remove any large toys that could be used as steps.
- Check the top rails for tears and holes because teething children often bite off chunks of the covering. If the tears are small, you can fix them with heavy-duty cloth tape. If the tears are large, you may need to replace the product.
- Make sure that there are no tears, holes, or loose threads in the mesh and that openings are less than ¼ inch across. Make sure the mesh is securely attached to the top rail and the floor plate. If staples are used, make sure they are not missing, loose, or exposed.

From Your Doctor

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