

Child safety in the home at Christmas

At Christmas time many new hazards for children appear around the home, so don't forget your usual safety routines in all the excitement. You might also want to keep in mind the following tips.

Keeping safe with presents

For obvious reasons, young children are attracted to presents, regardless of who they are for. So remember to:

- keep toys, games and decorations with small parts out of reach of young children – babies and toddlers can choke on small things
- make sure presents are suitable for your child's age
- keep button batteries (the small circular silver batteries) out of reach of young children – many of these are swallowed every Christmas
- put gifts of perfume and aftershave where toddlers can't reach them – they contain alcohol that's harmful if swallowed

Lights and decorations

Follow these basic rules to avoid accidents with lights and decorations:

- always check Christmas lights for frayed wires, broken sockets or loose connections
- turn all lights off when you go to bed or go out, as they could cause a fire
- avoid decorations like baubles that break easily, as the pieces can be very sharp
- put candles out of children's reach, in containers that won't tip over and aren't made of plastic
- remember to blow out all candles before going out or going to bed
- keep candles away from Christmas trees and decorations
- don't hang decorations from lights or heaters as they can burn easily
- Choking hazards include balloons so be mindful when they burst to pick up all the pieces

Fire safety

There is an increased risk of fire in the home at Christmas time, so check your smoke alarms are still working.