

Toy-Buying Checklist

IMPORTANT NOTE:

If you see a toy that you believe to be dangerous for the age group it is advertised or intended for, alert the Consumer Product Safety Commission immediately. They will have the authority and resources to investigate and possibly recall the toy from stores.

Make sure this holiday season that you are buying only safe toys for your children. It is important to look over each and every toy before you buy it. Many toys can end up being recalled due to safety issues but if you follow these guidelines, you may be able to spot safety hazards before you give the toy to a child.



- Read the warning labels. The age on those labels should be followed at all times, no exceptions. Even if a child is as large as a normal 3 year old, he or she may not be mature enough to play with certain types of toys without hurting him or herself.
- Look over the toy for any choking hazards. Make sure that no parts can be easily broken off or swallowed.
- Look over the toy to make sure that it has no sharp points or edges.
- Test the volume of noisemaking toys. If it is too loud for you, then it will be too loud for the sensitive ears of a child. If a toy has speakers, try a layer of tape over them to muffle the sound.
- Make sure that hanging mobiles or toys at the top of a crib are not reachable by the child.
- If you buy your children a toy chest, make sure that it is ventilated and that the child will not be easily trapped inside.
- Children under 5-6 years old should never have balls that are small enough to fit in their mouths, including marbles.
- Latex balloons, which pop easily, should not be given to a child under 8.
- Keep any toys bought for an older child are kept away from younger children.
- Always watch children when they play with projectile toys such as darts or any kind of shooting toy. Instruct them not to aim the projectile at other people.
- Ensure that markers and other art toys are non-toxic. Most products will have a number to call regarding ingredients, and if they do not, don't buy the product.
- When buying mobile toys such as scooters, bicycles or skates, make sure that you also buy your children safety gear such as helmets, and knee and elbow pads
- When buying toys online, beware that some may not have passed US regulations for toy safety. They may have even been involved in a safety recall.

After you buy a toy, teach your child how to properly play with it. Watch them to make sure they are not finding out on their own any safety hazards you may have missed!