



Crib Safety Tips

Creating a Safe Sleep Environment for Your Child

Your infant spends a lot of time in a crib, whether at home or in a child care setting, so make sure you're providing the safest place possible for your little one to get some rest. Follow these tips when selecting, assembling, and maintaining a crib:

Selecting a Crib

- **Buy a new crib if you can.** If using a secondhand or previously used crib, avoid one that is more than 10 years old.
- When purchasing a crib, **look for the JPMA Certification Seal** (pictured right).
- **Avoid drop side cribs**, which no longer meet safety standards as of 2010.
- Look for a crib with **slats that are no more than 2 3/8" apart**, as wider gaps create a place for baby's head, arms, or legs to get stuck.
- Cribs should have corner posts that are either **less than 1/16" higher than the end panels or over 16" higher than the end panels** (for a canopy). Your infant's clothing could get caught on corner posts that fall between these measurements, causing strangulation.
- **Select a firm mattress that fits snugly inside the crib**, allowing room for no more than two fingers between the mattress and the sides of the crib. This ensures that baby can't get caught between the mattress and crib sides.
- **Avoid cutout areas on the headboard or footboard**, as baby's head could become trapped in these cutouts.



Assembling Your Crib

- **Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.** If instructions are unclear, contact the manufacturer for assistance.
- **Check for any missing hardware** before beginning assembly.
- Once the crib is assembled, **make sure all features and hardware are securely in place.** Make sure that all bolts, screws, and brackets are tight.
- **Assemble the crib before baby arrives.** This will give you a chance to make sure you have all the parts and that you have properly assembled the crib.
- **Only reassemble a used crib if you have the manufacturer's instructions and all hardware.** Never use substitute hardware not intended for your particular crib or authorized by the manufacturer. If you misplace the instructions, many manufacturers provide them on their websites. If you are missing any hardware, contact the manufacturer to ask about a replacement part.

Maintaining and Storing a Crib

- **Frequently inspect the crib** for loose screws, bolts, and brackets or missing or broken parts.
- **Check bedding** for loose strings and threads, holes, and tears.
- **Make sure there is no cracked or peeling paint, splinters, or rough edges.**
- When storing a disassembled crib, **store all hardware and instructions together.** Place all small hardware pieces (screws, bolts, etc.) and the instructions in a plastic storage bag.

Source: Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association, www.jpma.org and <http://cribsafety.jpma.org>

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