



Australian
Competition &
Consumer
Commission

SAFETY ALERT

Blind and curtain cords



**Loose
blind and
curtain cords
can kill**

**Fix them out of reach so kids
are out of danger**

Blind and curtain cord hazards

Loose blind and curtain cords/chains—particularly those with loops—are dangerous.

A child can place the loop over his/her head or get tangled in loose cords when:

- sleeping in a cot or bed where cords are hanging
- playing near cords
- standing on a chair, sofa or bed to look out of a window.

Children do not understand that a cord/chain wrapped around their neck can tighten and strangle them in just a few minutes if they sit down, roll around or climb down to the floor.

Since the early 1990s at least 15 children in Australia have died in this way. In the United States, there were 200 reported deaths between 1991 and 2005—an average of one death a month.



Steps for protecting children

Take these four simple steps to ensure that blind and curtain cords/chains are out of reach of children, particularly from children under six.

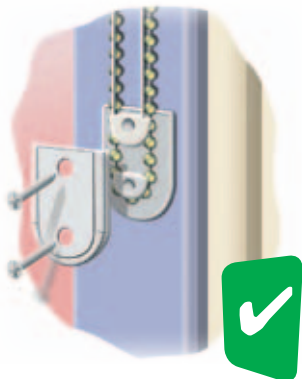
1. Check your blind and curtain cords

Do this anywhere you are staying, including on holiday.

- Check for loose or looped cords that your child can reach from the floor or by climbing on furniture.
- Immediately tie cords out of reach and move away any furniture children might climb on to reach them.

2. Secure loose cords out of reach

- Buy cleats or tensioning devices for securing cords from a hardware store or curtain and blind shop.
- Use at least two screws to fix each cleat or tensioning device in a place that is out of reach of children.
- Never secure these devices with materials that may fail when a load is placed on them, such as double-sided tape or glue.



If you cannot fix your unsafe cords and chains out of reach yourself, get a reliable tradesperson to do it for you. If you are renting your home, seek help from your landlord or agent.

3. Choose safe blinds and curtains

Only buy new curtains and blinds which:

- comply with the national mandatory standard
- have warning labels to remind you of dangers to children
- provide a way to secure cords/chains so there are no loops or strands that children can reach, or
- operate without exposed cords/chains.



4. Keep children away from all cords/chains

- Move anything a young child can sit in, stand or climb on (like cots, highchairs, beds, sofas, tables, chairs and bookshelves) away from cords/chains—even those tied around a cleat, as your child may be able to untie them.
- Do not let children play near cords/chains they can reach.
- Never leave children alone in a room with cords/chains they can reach.



Further information

For more information about mandatory standards, bans, recalls and emerging issues—and to subscribe to email alerts and RSS feeds—visit our websites:

www.productsafety.gov.au

www.recalls.gov.au

You can also follow us on Twitter: @ProductSafetyAU

ACCC Infocentre: 1300 302 502

Callers who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment can contact the ACCC through the National Relay Service: www.relayservice.com.au

Voice-only (speak and listen) users phone: 1300 555 727 and ask for 1300 302 502.

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