



## In Home Location Fact Sheets

# Kitchen

**The kitchen is always the busiest room in any household - and for a young child, it can be the most dangerous too.**

- Never leave a young child alone in the kitchen, even for a moment.
- When cooking, always use the back rings. If you have to use all the rings, turn pot and pan handles towards the back out of reach of inquisitive little fingers.
- Keep children away from hot surfaces such as oven doors, toasters and kettles.
- Keep hot food and drinks away from the edges of tables and worktops. Be especially careful with hot drinks, as a mug of tea or coffee can stay hot enough to scald a baby or toddler 20 minutes after it has been made.
- Do not hold a child when you have a hot drink in your hand.
- Chip pans are the most common cause of house fires. Never fill a chip pan more than one third full of oil and never leave a hot chip pan unattended.
- Never warm your baby's bottle in the microwave. The milk may heat up unevenly and leave spots of very hot milk that can scald a baby's mouth.
- Check that there are no dangling flexes for your child to grab and pull on - the iron cord, for example. Also, make sure you put the iron well out of reach to cool down after using it. Use a cordless kettle or one with a short or curly flex.
- Slippery spillages such as oil, water or food should be cleaned up from the kitchen floor immediately as these can easily lead to a fall. Broken glass or china should also be swept up immediately and the floor vacuumed thoroughly afterwards.
- Never leave sharp objects such as knives and scissors lying around. Store them away out of sight and out of reach.
- Make sure all cleaning materials, detergents, sprays and pesticides are kept well out of your child's reach on a high shelf or in a locked cupboard.

- Never leave bowls of pet food on the floor.
  - If you smoke, make sure all matches, lighters and cigarettes are locked away in a drawer or kept on a high shelf. Cigarette butts should never be left in an ashtray and should be disposed of immediately, preferably in an outside bin.
  - Never leave alcoholic drinks lying around for curious children to taste.
- Baby bouncers should always be placed on the floor and never on a raised surface as the baby's movements can easily cause it to topple and fall.
- High chairs should always be placed in the middle of the kitchen floor away from tables, sinks and work surfaces. Also, make sure your baby is securely strapped in, preferably with a 5-point harness.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** You can't see it, hear it, smell it or taste it yet carbon monoxide poisoning due to poorly maintained heating systems accounts for over 20 deaths and around 200 serious incidents every year. So fit a carbon monoxide detector and make sure your heating system is professionally serviced at least once a year.

Never smoke near your baby. Second hand smoke can have a serious effect on vulnerable young children, causing breathing difficulties which may also increase the risk of cot death. Always take your smoking break outside if you can, but bear in mind that the fumes from stale smoke on clothes can be just as harmful. So if you've always wanted to give up smoking, what better time to quit than now? Your local GP surgery may run stop smoking clinics, but you might prefer to make a start by visiting [smokefree.nhs.uk](https://www.smokefree.nhs.uk) or by calling the free helpline on **0800 84 84 84**.