

Electrical Safety Tips for Children in Your Home and Outdoors

Electrical safety in the home is important for everybody, but it is particularly important if you have children—and small children especially. Small children tend to be curious and mischievous, and love to explore. They also have a limited ability to understand the concept of basic safety for themselves, for others around them, and for the home in general. Ensuring your small children practice safety around electricity will help prevent electric shocks or electrocution to themselves or another family member, as well as electrical fires. When your children are very young (babies and toddlers), ensuring their safety around electricity will involve your direct supervision of them. As they get older and begin to understand more, you can start teaching them electrical safety rules. Here are some electrical safety tips for small and older children in your home, whether you are directly supervising your children or are teaching them the rules.

Electrical Cords and Plugs

- Don't bite or play with electrical cords, either plugged or unplugged. Cords are not toys!
- Don't bite or play with the plugs at the end of an unplugged cord. Plugs are not toys!
- Never pull on cords to unplug something (parents should remove the plug from the outlet).
- Don't touch broken or frayed (with the wire showing) cords; these cords should not be used.
- Keep cords away from heat and water.
- Older kids should ask parental permission before plugging in or unplugging something.
- Older kids should report to their parents any broken or damaged cords.



Electrical Outlets and Sockets



- Never stick fingers, tongues, toys, or other body parts or objects into electrical outlets or light sockets. Outlets and sockets will look fun and interesting to children, but they can be very dangerous if they're treated as toys.
- Use safety covers on all used outlets and sockets to deter small children.
- Avoid overloading circuits; too many appliances plugged into one socket can create a fire hazard because of the overheating.
- Don't play with light bulbs in lamps and lights; this could cause burns, electrocution, or a fire.
- Light bulbs that are burned out or damaged should be replaced by an adult immediately.

Electricity and Water

- Make sure all electrical appliances are removed from any sources of water.
- Don't touch appliances, switches, outlets, sockets, cords, or plugs with wet hands. Parents should keep towels handy near bathroom and kitchen sinks so little hands can be dried easily after they are washed.
- Don't touch anything electrical while wet or standing in water.

Electrical Safety Outdoors

Electrical safety outdoors is an important consideration for small children. Children love to—and should—play outdoors regularly, for fresh air, sunlight, and physical activity. However, electricity can pose a hazard outside if kids aren't careful. Here are a few tips that you should be aware of when it comes to children and electrical safety outdoors.



- Don't fly kites, toy airplanes, balloons, or other toy flying devices anywhere near power lines. They can become great conductors of electricity, so keep them far away!
- Don't fly these toys in the rain or during a storm.
- Never climb power poles or towers; don't climb trees close to power lines.
- Never go swimming outside during a storm, especially when you hear thunder and see lightning.
- Stay away from electrical substations and outdoor electrical equipment marked "Keep Out," "High Voltage," or "Danger."
- Don't touch downed electrical wires.

Many accidental electricity-related injuries and fires can be prevented when small children are supervised and kept safe around electricity and, when they get a bit older, learn and follow basic electrical safety tips and rules. It is never too soon or too late to begin ensuring your children's safety around electricity.