

22 Safety Items No Home Should Be Without

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Your home is your castle, but that doesn't mean you can pull the drawbridge and all will be safe. Plenty of dangers have already invaded your home. According to the National Safety Council, there were 29,500 deaths associated with the home in the year 2000.

Take an inventory of your home safety items so that you can be prepared to battle any emergency. You'll find that these are all essential to your family's safety. And, of course, feel free to add items to this list depending on your family's needs.

1. Smoke Detectors

According to the National Safety Council, fire kills more than 2,900 people and injures 16,000 others each year. Most fires that claim lives occur at night. Install smoke detectors on every floor and outside each bedroom. Test detectors once a month, and change batteries when you adjust your clocks in the spring and fall.

2. Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Carbon monoxide - an odorless, colorless, and tasteless gas - killed 300 people last year and sent thousands more to the hospital. For between \$40 and \$170, a CO detector will alert you that deadly poison has begun to invade your home. Place a CO detector outside of your bedrooms.

3. Radon-Detector Kit

The Environmental Protection Association says radon might be responsible for up to 30,000 lung cancer deaths each year. Hardware stores carry do-it-yourself radon-detector kits for less than \$40. Follow directions carefully, especially regarding the placement and preparation of the room.

4. Night Lights

Babababooooom. That's the sound your family hears when you topple down the stairs on your way to sneak a midnight snack. Simple, inexpensive night lights can prevent late-night falls. Place night lights away from flammable fabrics like bedspreads. Also, look for new night lights with cooler mini-neon bulbs. Most stores also carry state-of-the-art plug-ins that glow in the dark and then fade as day breaks. Be sure you have adequate lighting in all of your rooms.

5. Sensor Lights

Outdoor motion-sensor lights can help you see your way at night and scare off intruders. Usually, you can replace existing light fixtures with sensor lights without additional wiring.

6. Sturdy One-Step Stool

Can't reach Aunt Minnie's purple crocheted pillow covers in the back of the closet? And she's on her way over? You look around the room and your eyes settle on ... the rocking chair. Instead of doing a circus act, invest in a sturdy one-step stool to keep on hand when your arms need a boost.

7. Rubber Suction Bath Mats/Slip-Resistant Throw Rugs

You're wet. And so is the floor. A suction-type rubber mat or adhesive-backed appliques will keep you steady in the stall and tub. A nonskid rug outside the tub will prevent slips when you step out. Use slip-resistant rugs throughout your home.