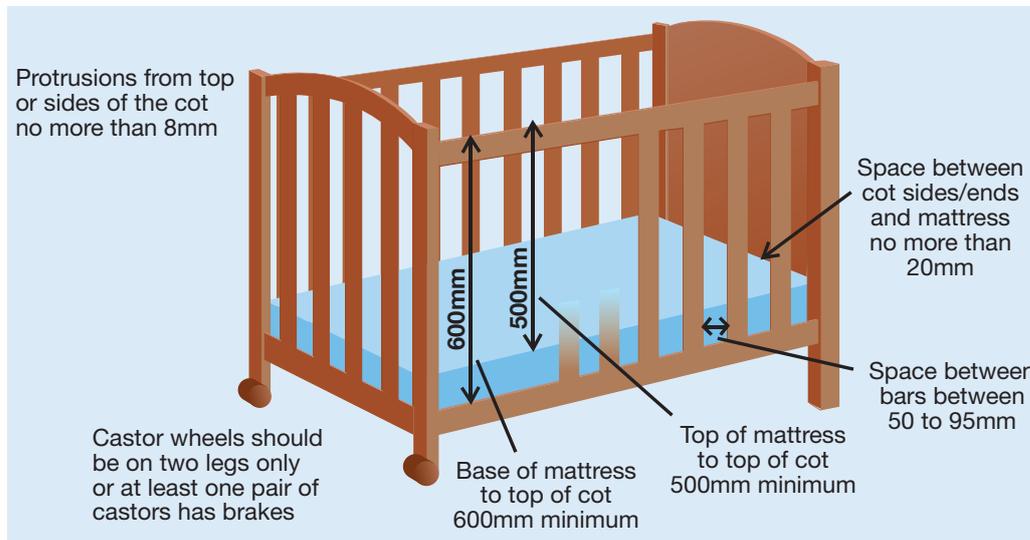


# Maternal and Child Health Service: Safe Sleeping Checklist

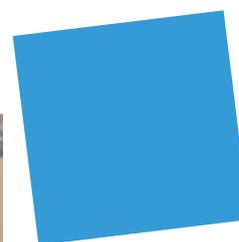


For further information about cots and safe nursery products: [www.productsafety.gov.au](http://www.productsafety.gov.au)

Source: *Keeping baby safe*. Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, Dickson ACT, 2006

**PLEASE CHECK:** ✓ close match to statement ✗ does not match N/A not applicable

- Baby is placed on his/her back to sleep with head and face uncovered (no bonnet, no hat, no hooded clothing).
- Cords hanging from blinds, curtains, electrical appliances and mobiles are out of reach of a child inside the cot.
- Heaters or electrical appliances are well away from the cot to avoid the risk of overheating. No electric blankets.
- Cot (new or second hand) meets the mandatory Australian Safety Standards (AS 2172).
- Portable cot complies with the mandatory Australian Safety Standard (AS 2195).
- Locking pin is firmly in place in bassinets/cots that rock whenever baby is unsupervised.
- Mattress is firm, clean, well fitted and flat (not elevated or tilted), with less than 20mm gap between mattress and cot sides and ends.
- Plastic packaging is removed from the mattress before use.
- Cot is made up with baby's feet positioned at the bottom of the cot.
- No loose bedding, quilts, doonas, pillows, cot bumpers, sheepskins or soft toys in the cot.



# Topics for discussion with parents

## Sleep baby on the back from birth, not on the tummy or side

- Healthy babies placed on the back to sleep are less likely to choke on vomit than tummy sleeping infants
- The chance of babies dying suddenly and unexpectedly is greater if they sleep on their tummies or side
- Tummy play is safe and good for babies when they are awake and an adult is present
- Older babies can turn over and move around the cot. Put them on their back but let them find their own sleeping position and make sure that the sleeping environment is safe for baby for when they can roll on their tummy. The risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in babies over six months is extremely low.

## Sleep baby with head and face uncovered

- All head coverings including hats, bonnets, hooded clothing, are all removed before baby is placed for sleep
- Baby's feet are positioned at the bottom of the cot
- Bedclothes are tucked in securely so bedding is not loose, or place baby in a safe sleeping bag.

## Keep baby smoke free before birth and after

- The risk of SIDS is increased if parents are smokers, both during the pregnancy and after the baby is born
- If the mother smokes the risk of SIDS doubles and if the father smokes too the risk doubles again.

## Provide a Safe Sleeping Environment night and day. Adding to the key messages on the front of this Safe Sleeping Checklist

- Soft bedding, such as soft mattresses, or folded doonas, pillows and cushions and sheepskins should not be used as substitutes for mattresses
- Do not sleep baby or sleep with baby on a sofa or couch, chair, water bed or bean bag. There is a very high risk of a sleeping accident occurring.
- Portacots:
  - Use the mattress that is supplied with the cot (**AS2195**)
  - Never add a second mattress or additional padding under or over the mattress supplied with the portacot
  - Portable cots are only intended for temporary use and convenience when travelling and should not be used on a long-term or permanent basis
  - A bassinet should be used for a short period only. Once baby becomes active and starts to roll, it is best to place baby into a safe cot

- Bouncinettes, rockers and prams should not be used as a sleeping environment unsupervised and restraints should be done up properly when in use
- Hammocks can be dangerous and are not considered a safe sleeping environment for infants
- The risk of an accident is increased if baby or toddler is left unsupervised and alone on an adult bed or a bunk bed.

## Sleep baby in their own Safe Sleeping place in the same room as an adult caregiver for the first six to twelve months

- Sharing a sleep surface with a baby increases the risk of SIDS and fatal sleep accidents in some circumstances
- Sleeping a baby in a cot next to the parent's bed for the first six to twelve months of life has been shown to lower the risk of SIDS
- There appears to be no increased risk of SIDS whilst sharing a sleep surface with a baby during feeding, cuddling and playing providing that the baby is returned to a cot or a safe sleeping surface before the parent goes to sleep
- Babies who are most at risk of SIDS or sleeping accidents whilst sharing a sleep surface, are babies who are less than four months of age and babies who are born premature or small for gestational age.

## Breastfeed baby if you can

- There is strong evidence that breastfeeding baby reduces the risk of SIDS.

## Carers and baby sitters

- Carers and baby sitters need to know the recommendations to reduce the risk of SIDS and how to create a safe sleeping environment for babies and infants. This includes grandparents, family day care, early development education and care services and the homes of family and friends.

Authorised by:  
Department of Education and Early Childhood  
Development

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## Useful Contacts

Toy & Nursery Safety Line 1300 364 894  
[www.consumer.vic.gov.au](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au)

Maternal and Child Health Line 132229  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/mch/](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/mch/)

Information Statements available at:  
<http://www.sidsandkids.org/safe-sleeping/>