

Childproofing Through the Ages

Using Developmental Milestones as a Guide to
Childproofing

Chad Haas,
Arizona ChildProofers, LLC

Pregnancy and Up to 3 Months

- Obviously the child is either not born yet or too young to move around on his/her own, so why childproof?
- Childproofing at this stage provides:
 - Parent Training- Installing products at this stage allows the parents to train themselves to use the products consistently
 - If the child never has access to off limits areas, there will not be an issue of having to take items away that the child should not have

Up to 6 Months

- Baby may begin sitting on his/her own, reaching for and mouthing objects, rolling or even crawling
- Childproofing Needs:
 - Pick up/ remove any items that may pose a risk to the child that are within 1-2 feet of the floor
 - Outlet covers
 - Electrical cords
 - Gates to block access to stairs and other off limits areas
 - Cabinet locks

Up to 12 Months

- Baby may be crawling, standing, cruising along furniture, walking or climbing on low furniture
- Childproofing Needs:
 - Pick up/ remove any items that may pose a risk to the child that are within 3-4 feet of the floor
 - Anchor furniture
 - Cover furniture edges and corners
 - Secure appliance doors/ controls
 - Push items away from edges of tables/ countertops

Up to 18 Months

- Child may be walking, climbing, running stiffly, pulling/ pushing and dumping things
- Childproofing Needs:
 - Secure doors to off limits areas, including front, garage and sliding glass doors
 - Remove sharp items from countertops
 - Keep small appliances out of reach and unplugged

By 2 Years of Age

- All of the child's motor skills are present, however, not perfected. The child will experiment with and explore their environment to improve these skills
- Childproofing Needs:
 - All of your childproofing should be completed by now. If a parent waits until this point, there may be severe re-training and behavior management issues. At this age, children are entering a very independence driven stage, taking objects away that they have had previous access to will cause the child to challenge the parents' decisions
 - At this age, children still do not fully comprehend the words "no" and "don't" of the consequences attached to a dangerous situation. They are still tremendously driven by impulse

By 3 Years of Age

- Children will have the cognitive ability to understand some consequences of dangerous situations, like a hot stove or moving car. They are beginning to demonstrate some shame when caught in a wrong doing and will be more able to understand right from wrong.
- Children will also have the cognitive ability and fine motor dexterity to figure out many childproofing objects such as some cabinet locks, some gate hardware, and some door locks.