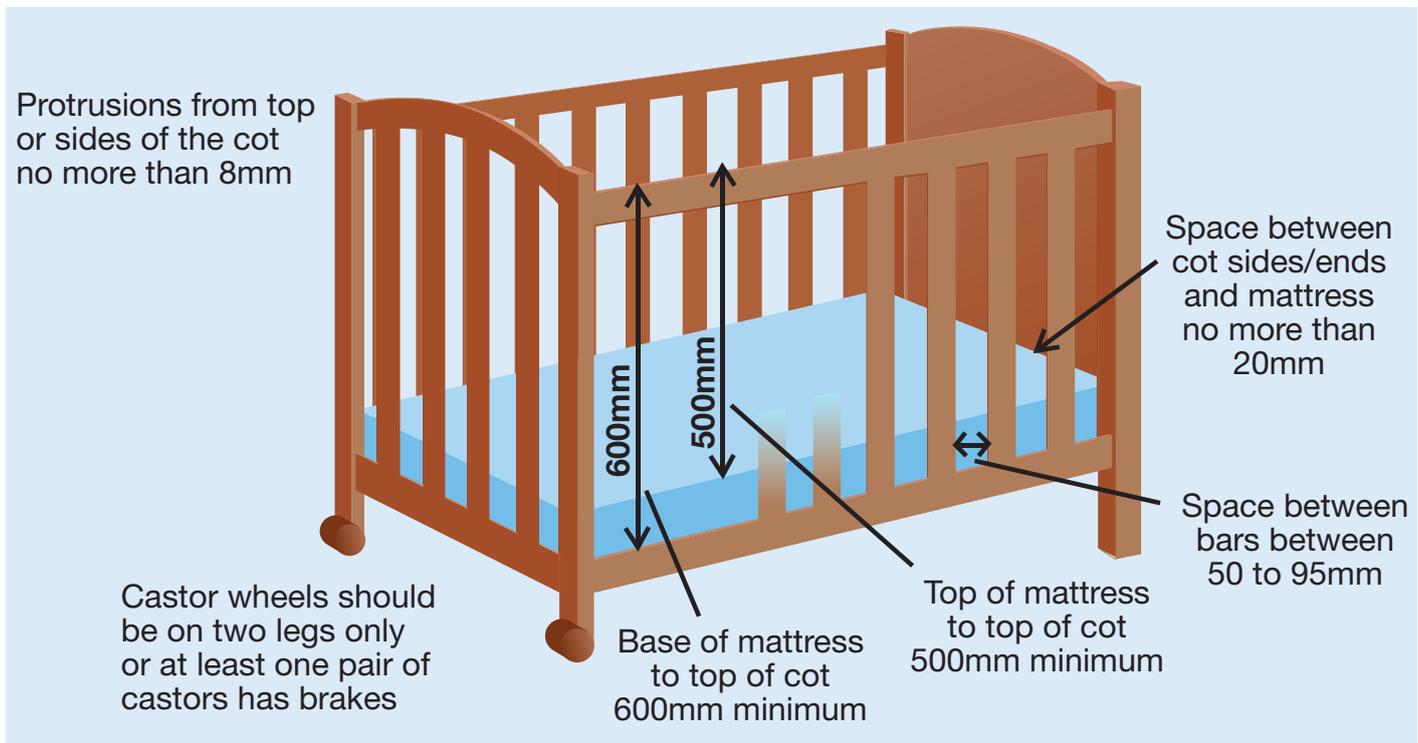


Maternal and Child Health Service: Safe Sleeping Checklist



For further information about cots and safe nursery products: www.productsafety.gov.au

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

PLEASE CHECK: ✓ close match to statement X 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 need to be appropriately secured and well 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, hot water bottles or wheat bags.
- Cot (new or second hand) meets the mandatory Australian Safety Standard (AS/NZS 2172:2003).
- Portable cot complies with the mandatory Australian Safety Standard (AS/NZS 2195:2010).
- 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 no more than 20mm gap between mattress and cot sides and ends when centred.
- 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
- Cease wrapping once baby starts showing signs of that they can roll
- Baby must not be wrapped when sharing a sleep surface with another person

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 and only drawn to the level of the chest so bedding is not loose, or place baby in a safe sleeping bag
- A safe sleeping bag is one that fits correctly across the neck and chest, has no hoods or head coverings, with arms out

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

- Cot meets Australian Safety Standard (AS/NZS 2172:2003).
- 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 (AS/NZS 2195:2010)
- 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 only be used for the first 3 months and once baby has started 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

- 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
- Sharing a sleep surface with a baby increases the risk of Sudden Unexplained Death in Infancy and fatal sleep accidents in some circumstances
- 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.
- Never share a sleep surface with your baby if:
 - you are overly tired or unwell
 - you or your partner have consumed alcohol
 - you or your partner smoke
 - you or your partner have taken drugs including prescription medication that make you feel sleepy or less aware
- There appears to be no increased risk of SIDS whilst sharing a sleep surface with a baby during feeding, cuddling and playing provided that the baby is returned to a cot or a safe sleeping surface before the parent goes to sleep
- For more information download the Red Nose Co-sleeping information tool: <https://rednose.org.au/downloads/CosleepingGuideforParents.pdf>

Breastfeed baby

- There is strong evidence that breastfeeding baby reduces the risk of SIDS
- However, should you need to formula feed your baby, follow the other five safe sleep recommendations to reduce the risks 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.

Useful Contacts

Toy & Nursery Safety Line **1300 364 894**
www.consumer.vic.gov.au

Maternal and Child Health Line **132229**
www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/maternal-and-child-health-services

Information Statements available at:
www.rednose.org.au