

Curtain and blind cords

May 2009



Need more information?



Call Consumer Affairs Victoria
on 1300 55 81 81.



Cords used to control curtains and blinds can be dangerous. Avoid the risk of children strangling themselves by keeping cords out of their reach.

From 31 December 2008, the Minister for Consumer Affairs has banned the supply of window coverings that do not meet certain safety standards. See 'New curtains or blinds' below for more information.



The risks

Children in Australia and overseas have died as a result of strangulation by curtain or blind cords. It can take only a few seconds for a baby or young child to become entangled, especially if the cords are too long and form a loop. Playing with a curtain or blind cord can turn it into a noose around a child's neck.

Safety tips

- Move all nursery furniture—such as cots, beds, high chairs or playpens—away from windows or doors, where a child can reach the curtain or blind cord.
- Do not place household furniture that could be climbed—such as sofas, chairs, tables, shelves or bookcases—near windows with curtain or blind cords in reach.



New curtains or blinds

Full details of the mandatory safety requirements for new curtains and blinds can be found on the Consumer Affairs Victoria website, www.consumer.vic.gov.au, under 'Banned and regulated products'. The following information is a summary only.

- ☒ Any exposed looped cord, looped bead chain or other flexible looped device should be at least 160cm above the floor when the covering is in its lowered position.
- ☒ Written information must be supplied with the product that explains:
 - how to install the covering
 - how to install any safety device the covering has
 - how the safety device is designed to function.
- ☒ The product must carry the following warning label:

WARNING Looped cords, looped bead chains or other flexible looped devices may cause a strangulation hazard for children under 5 years.

KEEP CORDS AND CHAINS OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

If you are ordering new, made-to-measure curtains or blinds, ask the supplier to show you what safety features or child-safe products are available to ensure the cords are not a strangulation hazard.

Making existing curtains or blinds safer

Curtain and blind cords with loops can be made safer in a number of different ways:

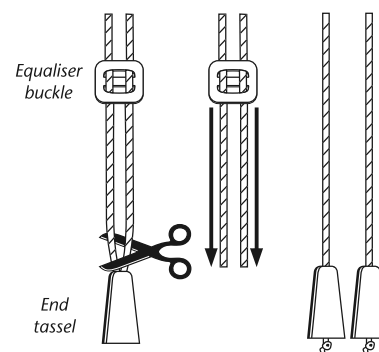
Attach a cleat

Attach a cleat to the wall or window frame near the top of the curtain or blind, at a height of 160 cm or more from the floor, and wrap the cord around the cleat.



Cut the cord

Cut the cord in half to get rid of the loop. Remove the end tassel and equaliser buckle. Then attach a tassel to each of the cord ends and knot the ends to hold the tassels in place.

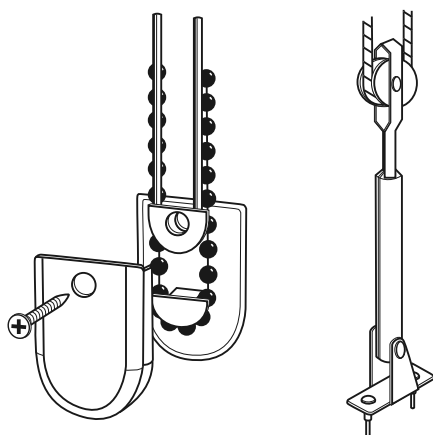


Product Safety Factsheet

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Use a tie-down

Cords or chains on vertical blinds and some curtains need a continuous loop to operate and cannot be cut. Use a tie-down or tension device and fix it securely to the floor or to the wall near the floor so that the cord is pulled tight.



All the above products are available from hardware stores and curtain shops.

Further reading



Consumer Affairs Victoria has a range of Product Safety factsheets:

- Baby bath seats and supports
- Baby walker safety
- Bunk bed safety
- Choosing a cot
- Children and water: keeping them safe
- Hot water bottles
- Inflatable play equipment (toy jumping castles)
- Laser pointers
- Monkey bikes
- Portacots (children's folding portable cots)
- Pram and stroller safety
- Soccer goals
- Toughened glass
- Toys containing lead
- Toys for children under three: safety regulations for traders
- Toy safety checklist

More information



Information on product safety is available from:

Consumer Affairs Victoria

Victorian Consumer & Business Centre

113 Exhibition Street
Melbourne 3000

Tel 1300 55 81 81

www.consumer.vic.gov.au

Consumer Affairs Victoria has offices in Ballarat, Bendigo, Berwick, Box Hill, Geelong, Mildura, Morwell, Wangaratta and Warrnambool. Our mobile service regularly visits rural communities. Call 1300 55 81 81 or visit www.consumer.vic.gov.au for more information.

Because this publication avoids the use of legal language, information about the law may have been summarised or expressed in general statements. This information should not be relied upon as a substitute for professional legal advice or reference to the actual legislation.

Authorised by the Victorian Government 121 Exhibition Street Melbourne Victoria 3000.

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