



The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

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12 steps for staying safe working from home

Introduction

Follow these top 12 steps and stay safe while working from home and caring for children

The coronavirus outbreak has changed life for everybody. Our homes have become workplaces and places of education as the whole family is encouraged to stay at home together. Home has always been the place where most accidents happen. In the current situation when we are spending all our time there, the risk of accidents is likely to increase. Home accidents cause misery and pain to individuals and families, but they also put a great deal of strain on the NHS – and the need to reduce this strain can be seen more clearly now than ever before. The good news is that home accidents are preventable if we take steps to make sure we live, work and educate safely.



Stay Home
Stay Safe



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Top Tip...

1

Eyes everywhere

Adult supervision is vital to prevent many home accidents to children. Every parent knows this is easier said than done and even more of a challenge while children are not going to school and parents may also be working from home. Find ways to keep very young children in sight while you are working. If you and a partner are both working at home, perhaps there are ways in which you can share supervision of the children by working at different times.



Top Tip...

2

Check out your home environment

Take a fresh look at the safety of your home from the point of view of everyone who lives there. Use one of the RoSPA checklists to make sure your home is safe and all hazards are removed. This is especially important now that homes are places of work and education. Make sure that workstations (whether they are a separate office or your kitchen table) are free from hazards that young inquisitive members of the family could get hold of.



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Top Tip...

3

Hot stuff hurts – keep it out of reach

Make sure you keep hot drinks and hot pans out of reach of young children. Are you doing some cooking with your children to keep them busy and help them learn? Make sure that they are supervised. Keep hair straighteners and irons out of reach and store away when not in use.



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Top Tip...

4

Move things that can choke or cut

Are things that can harm children (small choking hazards like marbles; matches; scissors etc.) out of reach? Be aware that small parts in older children's toys and educational equipment may be a hazard for younger children in the family. Make sure that items containing button batteries have lockable battery compartments or are kept out of reach of young children, and that spare button batteries are stored securely.



Top Tip...

5

Don't fall out or take a trip

Most accidents requiring hospital treatment are as a result of falls. Make sure upper floor windows have restrictors so that young children cannot fall. Keep stairs and walkways clear and use safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs if you have children under 24 months old.



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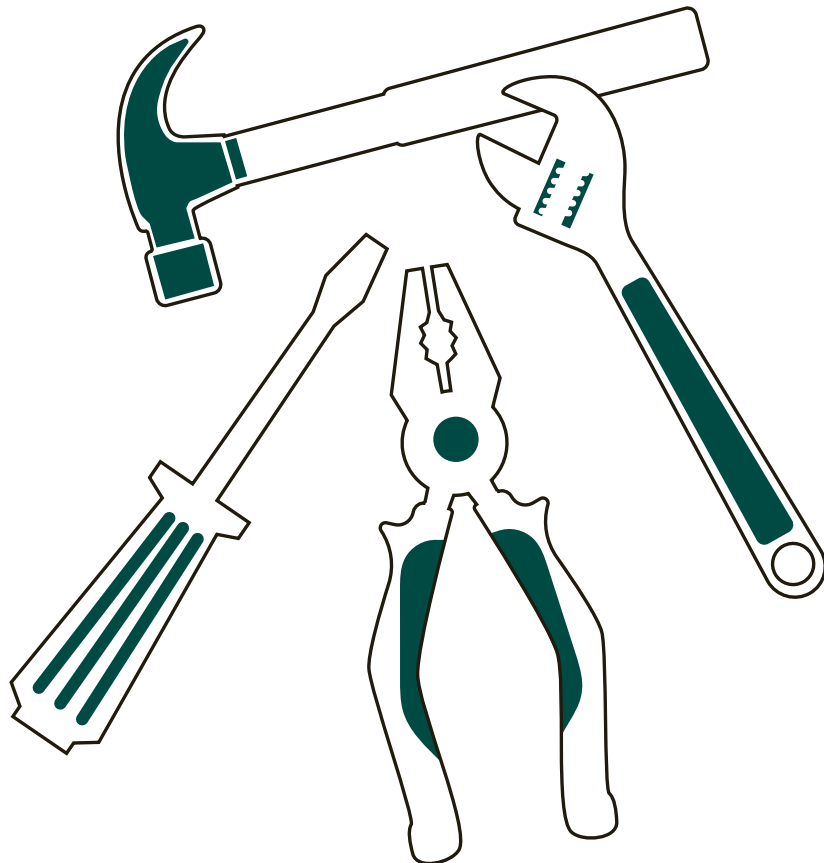
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Top Tip...

6

To DIY or not to DIY?

Thousands of people end up in hospital every year as a result of an accident while attempting DIY. You may have time on your hands at home but the best advice is not to do it while the NHS is under pressure and homes are crowded. If you do need to do some essential maintenance, follow RoSPA's safety advice.



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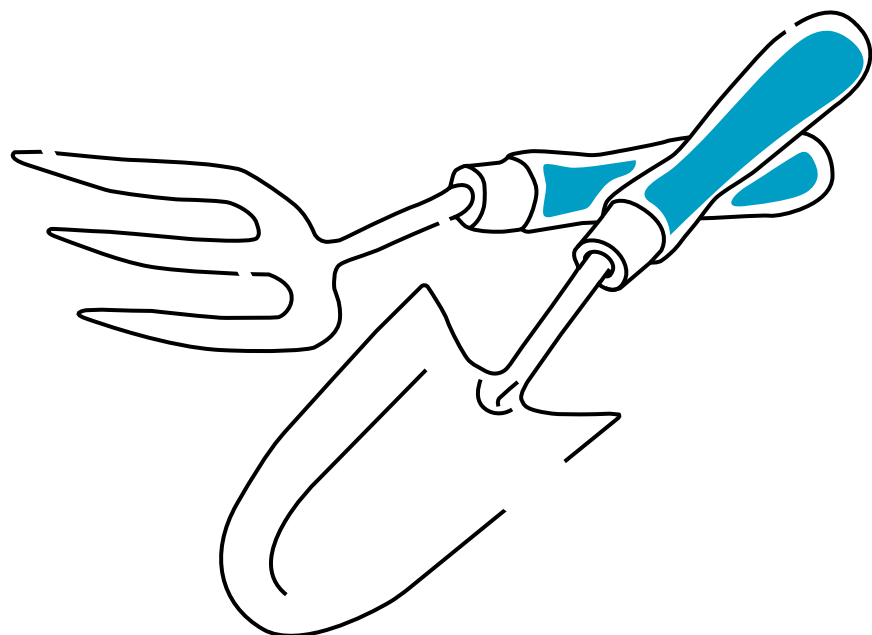
Top Tip...

7

Make sure everything's lovely in the garden

If you have a garden this is likely to be getting more use. Tidy away tools, keep sheds locked and chemicals safely stored away. Follow RoSPA's garden safety advice.

Check play equipment is in good repair and safe to use. Close the safety net on trampolines, make sure children are always supervised and know the basic rule of "one at a time". Further trampoline advice from RoSPA.



Top Tip...

8

What's cooking outside?

It's the time of year when people's thoughts turn to barbecues and with the current restrictions there is already an increase in this type of activity in the garden. Follow RoSPA's barbecue safety advice to prevent accidents. Never take or use barbecues inside - they could cause carbon monoxide poisoning.



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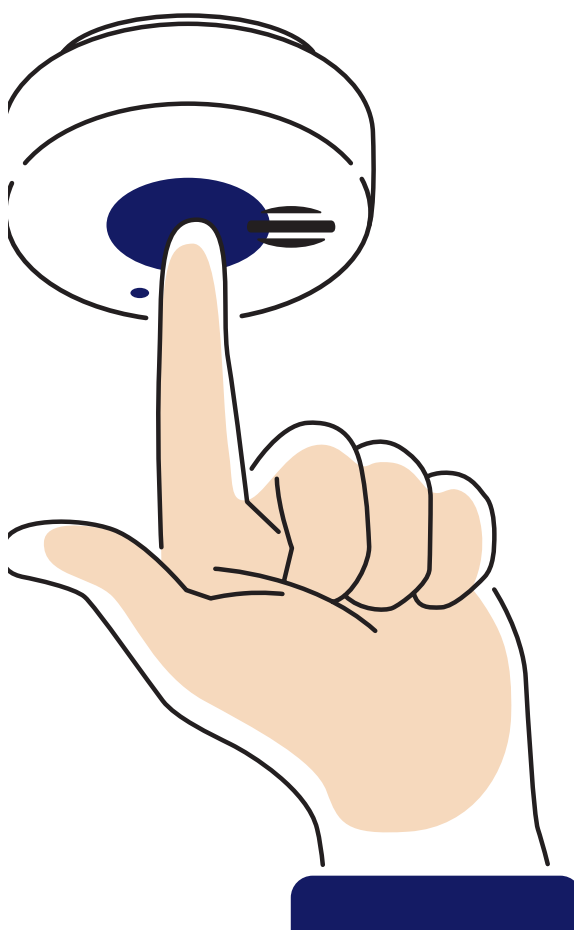
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Top Tip...

9

Guard against fire

Fire risks may increase as our homes are more crowded for a while. Use RoSPA's checklist to make sure that you have taken steps to prevent fires, have working smoke alarms fitted and that everyone in the house knows what to do in the event of a fire.



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Top Tip...

10

Avoid water hazards

Young children can drown in very small amounts of water. Always supervise at bath time. Empty paddling pools when not in use, cover or fence off garden ponds and cover or empty water butts.



Top Tip...

11

Take action today, put poisons away

Inquisitive young children can be attracted to household cleaning chemicals, liquid laundry capsules, vaping products, pills, medicines and other items that could poison them. Double check that these items are stored away out of reach in a high cupboard, preferably one which is locked.

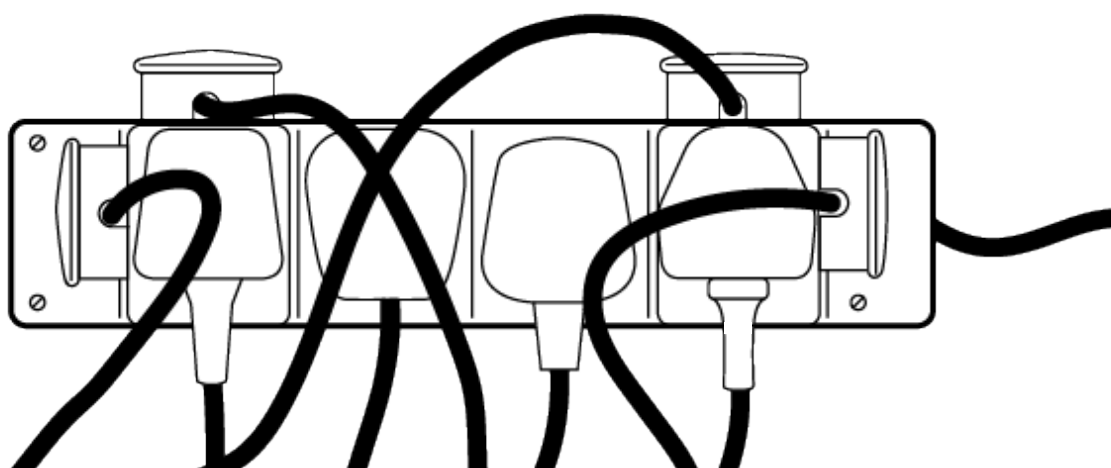


Top Tip...

12

Plug any electrical hazards

Working from home may mean you have even more electrical items in the house. Check that sockets are not overloaded as this could cause a fire. Don't leave mobile devices or laptops charging on beds or other soft furnishings. Beware cheap, counterfeit chargers that may be more likely to catch fire. Register any new appliances at <https://www.registermyappliance.org.uk/> and check the recall notices on washing machines, tumble dryers and other appliances.



Safety to do list

Why not make a list of all those jobs around the house now you have read the 12 Top Tips for staying safe while working at home.

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