

Child Safe Window Coverings

Children can become entangled in blind or curtain cords if they try to play with or play around window coverings. Even where windows are set high into the wall, children can climb onto the window sills or furniture to access the cords on the window coverings. Cords or looped cords that become tangled around a child's neck can very quickly lead to injury or strangulation.



You can eliminate the risk from loose blind cords and chains without compromising the look and functionality you require.

To date New Zealand has no safety standard on window coverings so *Santa Fe* follows the Australian regulations that prescribe a safety standard for all blinds manufactured and installed within Australia. This act essentially states that any blinds with cords or chains must be installed in such a way that a loose cord cannot form a loop 220mm or longer at a height of less than 1600 mm above floor level and that any blind installed with cords or chains lower than 1600mm must be installed with cleats, cord tensioners (that fix the chain to the wall) or have no cords.

How to ensure blinds are safe for children?

When buying new blinds the methods used during manufacture and installation to make the blinds childsafe vary depending on the type of blind you are purchasing.

Please use the guide to help ensure your blinds are childsafe.



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ROLLER BLINDS

These are very commonly used in New Zealand homes. The best option is to install motorised blinds as these will have no cords. If your budget does not allow this then ensure your blind is installed with a chain tensioner. This is a device that holds the chain to the window jamb thereby not allowing a child to pull the chain away from the window and form a loop around their neck.

VENETIAN BLINDS

Venetian blinds will always have cords and must be installed with cleats. These are fitted to the window jamb and the cords can be wrapped around them. The blinds should also have a child safety release tassel wherever two or more cords come together in one tassel. Currently in NZ many manufacturers use a solid timber or plastic tassel. Those companies that pride themselves on meeting all international safety regulations will supply blinds with tassels that come apart under pressure thereby preventing a child that is falling from their neck being caught in the strings.

Some venetian blinds, such as Aluminium Venetians, can also be operated with a wand which makes them child safe.

THERMACELL BLINDS



These cellular blinds offer a cost effective cordless option called Smart-Rise that allows you to lift and lower the blinds by hand with no cords. These are one of the best options you could choose for a child's bedroom as along with the safety aspect they are also very thermally efficient.

These blinds can also be manufactured with cords. To make these blinds child safe you should check that they have the Child Safety Breakaway Tassel, that parts under pressure.

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VERTICAL BLINDS

Choose the wand operation when purchasing these blinds rather than a cord operation and ask for the bottom of the blind to be manufactured without chains joining the blades of the blinds together at the bottom.

SHUTTERS

You do not need to worry about child safety when purchasing shutters as they do not have any cords or chains and therefore are the most child safe option that you could choose.

If you have existing blinds in your home and are concerned about their safety most blind companies will supply chain tensioners and cleats to you and be able to give you advice on how to install them safely.

Due to the lack of regulations in New Zealand some companies such as Santa Fe Shutters & Blinds have made their own decision to take the safety in your home as their number one priority and therefore all products that they supply comply with both the Australian and European regulations. They supply several blinds that have patented technology for the next generation of blinds, such as innovative cord release devices to reduce the risk of entanglement. All blinds come with cord cleats or chain tensioners as a standard feature for enhanced child safety.

Remember children will always move faster and be more inquisitive than we sometimes think they will. Loose blind cords are dangerous as a child can place the cord over their head and it only take a few minutes for them to get tangled, particularly when sleeping in a cot or bed, playing near cords and standing on a chair or sofa to look out the window. So make sure all cords and chains in your home are secured out of reach and do not place a child's cot, bed or play area near a window blind and do not put sofas, chairs or tables near window blinds.



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