



Government  
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# Safety is no game.

Keep your family safe from preventable injuries

Canada 

# THE FACTS



In 2005 more than **100,000 Canadians** ended up in the hospital from injuries that could have been prevented. And over **7,000** died.\* Whether you're at home, on the road or on the water, there are steps you can take to protect yourself and your family.

\*Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 102-0552, [www.statcan.ca/101/cst01/health30a.htm](http://www.statcan.ca/101/cst01/health30a.htm)

# AT HOME



## Household Hazards

Here are a few things to keep in mind to protect your family and visitors from hazards around your house.

### CHILD SAFETY

- Remember, a potentially harmful household item may look like a toy to a child.
- Keep lighters, matches and other sources of fire out of sight and out of reach.
- Store cleaning supplies and chemicals in locked cabinets, and teach children that

*A lot of injuries happen in and around the house. By taking a few precautions, you can make your home a safe haven.*

the hazard symbols on the containers mean “do not touch.”

- Stay within arm’s reach of young children when they are in the bathtub, and never turn your back on them. (Bath seats are not safety devices. They only make it easier for you to bathe your baby.)
- Tie up blind cords so kids cannot reach them, even from nearby furniture.
- Use baby gates at the top and bottom of stairs for children under 24 months of age. Use hardware-mounted gates at the top of the stairs; they are more secure than pressure-mounted gates.
- Double-check to make sure cribs, playpens, infant seats, baby gates, and other products you have purchased have not been recalled. Call the manufacturer or check their website.

- Keep cords for electrical appliances out of reach.
- Keep children away from the stove and barbecue.
- Put window guards on all windows on the second floor and above.
- Make sure swimming pools are enclosed by fencing that meets municipal requirements, and keep all doors to the pool locked. Always keep young children within arm's reach when swimming.
- Make sure children's products come with detailed instructions for use, and keep them for later reference.

### **AVOIDING FALLS**

- Wipe up spills quickly to prevent falls in the kitchen or bathroom.
- Make sure carpeting that covers stairs and stair landings is securely fastened, or replace it with rubber stair treading.
- Put handrails and lights around stairs.
- Keep stairs, halls and high traffic rooms free of clutter.
- Consider using a rubber mat or safety strips in the bathtub to prevent slipping.
- Remove ice from walkways around your home.

### **FIRE PREVENTION**

- Develop a fire escape plan and go over it with your family.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home. Test them monthly and change batteries once a year.
- Keep a working fire extinguisher on hand, and make sure everyone in your family knows where it is and how to use it.
- Make sure portable heaters are at least one metre away from flammable items such as clothing, bedding or curtains.

### **Food Safety**

**Foodborne illness can result from improper handling of food at home. Here are a few tips to help keep your family safe and healthy.**

#### **CLEAN**

- Hand washing is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of foodborne illness. Wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds or the time it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice.
- Wash hands often, e.g. before, during and after food preparation, after using the

washroom, after touching garbage, after playing with pets, etc.

- Clean and sanitize work surfaces, utensils and dishcloths often to reduce bacteria and prevent foodborne illness.

## COOK

- Cooking food to safe internal temperatures will destroy bacteria that could make you ill. Use a digital food thermometer to check that proper temperatures have been reached.
- Food safety experts say food thermometers are the only way to cook food safely without overcooking. You can't tell just by looking that food has been cooked to a temperature high enough to destroy illness-causing bacteria.
- Keep hot food hot at or above 60°C to prevent the growth of bacteria and reduce the chance of foodborne illness.

## CHILL

- Set refrigerators at or below 4°C (40°F) and freezers at or below -18°C (0°F). Use appliance thermometers to check that proper temperatures are maintained.

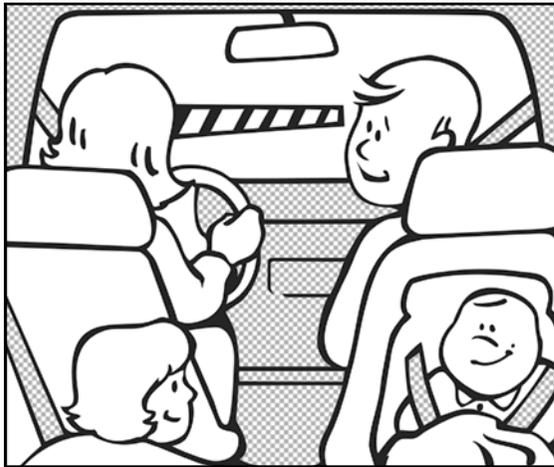


- After buying groceries, immediately put away food that needs to be refrigerated and frozen.
- Bacteria grow quickly in the temperature “danger zone” (4°C to 60°C/40°F to 140°F) so thaw food in the fridge and NOT on the kitchen counter.

## SEPARATE

- Keep raw food away from ready-to-eat and cooked food while shopping, storing and preparing.
- Bacteria can be carried in raw meat juices. Place raw meat, poultry and seafood in containers on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator. Use containers that are large enough to prevent raw juices from dripping onto other food or touching other food.
- Prevent cross contamination by using separate cutting boards for raw food, cooked food and ready-to-eat food.

# ON THE ROAD



## Speeding

Speeding reduces reaction time and increases the level of damage in a collision. Approximately 1/4 of all fatalities occurred in traffic collisions where speed was a factor. A five per cent decrease in average speed leads to approximately a 10 per cent decrease in injury collisions and a 20 per cent decrease in fatal collisions.<sup>1</sup> Keep these tips in mind when you need to get somewhere in a hurry.

*While traffic crashes injure and kill thousands of Canadians every year, the truth is that most can be prevented. With a few tips, you can reduce the risk of injury on the road.*

- The best way to ensure you arrive safely is simply to stay within the posted speed limit. It's the law, and it will increase your ability to react in time in dangerous situations.
- For better control, reduce your speed in bad weather, heavy traffic or construction zones.
- Slow down when driving at night, especially on unlit or poorly lit roads.
- Follow at a safe distance, at least three seconds behind the vehicle in front of you.
- Driving at lower speeds can help save you money. For example, driving 100 kilometres per hour on the highway instead of 120 kilometres per hour uses 20 per cent less fuel.<sup>2</sup> It's also better for the environment.

- Adapt your driving to the conditions on the road, not to your schedule.

## Distracted Driving

**Driving requires full concentration. According to a study conducted in 2001, driver distraction was a factor in about nine per cent of fatal or serious crashes.<sup>3</sup> Here are a few tips to help you keep your mind on the road.**

- Avoid the temptation to talk on your cell phone by turning it off before you start driving. Let callers leave a message. If you're expecting an important call, let someone else drive.
  - Choose your music before you start your trip to avoid the temptation to search for a CD or radio station while you drive.
  - Don't eat or drink while you drive! If you need to eat, find a safe location to stop.
  - If you're going on a long journey, make sure your kids have plenty to keep them busy. Books and travel games will keep their attention so they won't distract the driver.
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- Keep the area between your child and airbags clear of toys, books or other items that could cause injury if the airbag inflates.
  - Buckle up and make sure kids and all passengers are buckled up. It's the law, and it's essential for their safety.
  - Map your route before you go. Don't refer to a map or guidebook while driving.
  - It's simple: if you're drinking, don't drive. If you need to go from one place to another, assign a designated driver, call a cab or take public transit.

## Rail Crossings

Every year Canadians die needlessly at highway/railway grade crossings or while trespassing on railway tracks. For your safety and that of your family:

- Never drive around or under lowered gates. It is illegal and deadly.
- At a multiple track crossing waiting for a train to pass, watch out for a second train on the other tracks, approaching in either direction.
- Always expect a train. Trains do not always follow set schedules.
- Even if the locomotive engineer sees you, a freight train moving at 120 km/h can take up to 1.6 km or more to stop once the emergency brakes are applied. That's 14 football fields!
- Do not be fooled by the optical illusion — the train you see is closer and moving faster than you think. If you see a train approaching, wait for it to go by before you proceed across the tracks.
- At some locations in Canada, trains do not whistle at the highway/railway crossings. Make sure to look and listen prior to crossing any railway tracks.

- Railway tracks should not be used as a short cut or a walking trail. They are on private property and it is illegal to do so. Don't be caught dead on the tracks.

Sources:

1. OECD/CEMT, Transport Research Centre. Speed Management Report. 2006. ISBN 92-821-0378-1. [www.cemt.org/jtrc/workinggroups/speedmanagement/index.htm](http://www.cemt.org/jtrc/workinggroups/speedmanagement/index.htm)
2. [www.tc.gc.ca/aboutus/travel/travellerinfo.htm](http://www.tc.gc.ca/aboutus/travel/travellerinfo.htm)
3. Stutts, J.C., Reinfurt, D.W., Staplin, L. & Rodgeman, E.A. (2001). The role of driver distraction in traffic crashes. AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, [www.aaafoundation.org](http://www.aaafoundation.org).



# ON THE WATER



## Boating Safety

Every year, about 150–200 Canadians die in boating incidents, most of which are preventable.<sup>4</sup> Here are a few tips to keep you and your passengers safe.

- Take a course on boating safety so you know the safety equipment requirements for your watercraft, as well as current regulations and how to respond in emergency situations.

*Whether you're out for a swim, on a boat tour or riding on a personal watercraft, there are lots of things you can do to ensure safe, enjoyable days on the water.*

- Get your Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC) by passing an accredited test.
- Your lifejacket or personal flotation device (PFD) works best when worn—wear it! About 90 per cent of all drowning victims in recreational boating incidents were not wearing their lifejacket or PFD.<sup>5</sup>





- Boats must be equipped with an approved and appropriately sized lifejacket or personal flotation device for every person on board.
- Don't drink and boat. It's dangerous and illegal. Around 40 per cent of all power boating fatalities have a blood alcohol level above the legal limit for drivers.<sup>6</sup>
- Have working fire extinguishers on your vessel, in key areas such as the galley or engine room. Make sure your crew knows where they are and how to use them.

## Boat Tours

**Boat tours are a relaxing and peaceful way to take in local scenery. Note these tips and enjoy a safe day on the water.**

- Pay attention to the pre-departure safety briefing.
- Find out where the lifejackets are kept and what you should do if there's an emergency.
- Inform the boat operator how many children are in your party before you set off.

## Safety Equipment

For more detailed information on safety equipment and regulations, which vary depending on length and size of boat, refer to Transport Canada's *Safe Boating Guide* or visit [www.boatingsafety.gc.ca](http://www.boatingsafety.gc.ca).

The following safety devices are required by law on most boats and watercraft:

- Sound-signalling devices or appliances—such as a pealless whistle, compressed gas or electric horn, electric whistle or bell.



- Watertight flashlight or flares—if you're in distress, this could be the only way of calling for help.
- Lifebuoys — required by law on pleasure boats over eight metres long. When buying a lifebuoy, look for the Transport Canada approval sticker. Store the lifebuoy so it's easy to get to if someone falls overboard.

### OTHER USEFUL ITEMS

- Spare clothing—keep it in a watertight bag, in case the weather changes or you get wet.
- Drinking water and high-energy snacks.
- A first-aid kit—store it in a dry place, and replace used and outdated contents regularly.
- A tool kit and spare parts—essential for minor repairs out on the water.
- The owner's manuals for your watercraft and motor—you never know when you'll need them.

Sources:

4. [www.tc.gc.ca/aboutus/travel/travellerinfo.htm](http://www.tc.gc.ca/aboutus/travel/travellerinfo.htm)
5. [www.safety-council.org/info/sport/PFDs.html](http://www.safety-council.org/info/sport/PFDs.html)
6. [www.tc.gc.ca/aboutus/travel/travellerinfo.htm](http://www.tc.gc.ca/aboutus/travel/travellerinfo.htm)

**It's not child's play.**

**For more information on Government of Canada  
programs and services that help keep you and your family safe,**

**call 1 800 0-Canada (1 800 622-6232)**

**(TTY/TTD: 1 800 926-9105)**

**or visit [SafeCanada.ca](http://SafeCanada.ca)**

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ISBN 978-0-662-44867-9

Catalogue No. T46-41/2007E-PDF

TP 14645

(01/2007)

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