



Secondhand Furniture Safety Checklist

Simple Steps to Help Your Family Reduce Furniture Risks

Secondhand furniture is a more affordable option for families on a budget. But before you add that unique thrift-store-find to your décor, consider these cautions, especially if you have young children at home.

- ✓ **Inspect for structural damage.** The marketplace for secondhand furniture today not only includes neighborhood yard sales, antique shops and thrift stores but also an abundance of e-commerce sites offering vintage, repurposed and restored furnishings. While these outlets may offer money-saving options, any secondhand furniture should be inspected carefully for structural damage. In homes with small children, make sure chests, dressers and cabinets of any kind do not have loose or broken legs that will increase tip-over hazards. *As with newer furniture, anything with drawers or shelves a youngster might be tempted to climb should be securely anchored to the wall.*
- ✓ **Beware of painted finishes.** That piece with worn, chipped paint might be just the vintage vibe you're looking for, but remember that lead paint was not banned until 1978. If you have a piece that may have been painted prior to the 70s, you'll want to test it. (Instant lead tests are sold in home improvement and hardware stores.) In households with children, it's best to bypass anything with peeling or chipped paint.
- ✓ **Be aware of recalls.** In 1996, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recalled 12 million cedar chests manufactured between 1912 and 1987 because the latches lock automatically when the top is closed. At least 14 children have suffocated inside these chests. Replacement locks and latches are no longer available, and the CPSC advises consumers to remove the old latches to eliminate the hazard. These chests are often handed down through families or purchased secondhand. But they're not the only recalled furniture. IKEA recalled more than 17 million chests and dressers in 2016 because they tipped over if not anchored to the wall. You can search for other recalled furniture products at www.saferproducts.gov.