

## PLAYSPACES

- Apply recommendations from Main Living Area
- Wash/wipe hands frequently
- Choose items that do not have flame retardants or stain guards - mattresses and nap mats; swings, rockers, and bouncers. car seats; play yards (often made of vinyl)
- Use washable cloth diapers and wipes if possible
- When purchasing single-use diapers and wipes, choose chlorine-free, fragrance-free, dye-free and made from renewable, biodegradable materials
- Eliminate use of baby powder and petroleum-based products like petroleum jelly and baby oil
- Avoid all products labelled anti-bacterial: wipes, foam sanitizers, soap
- Eliminate alcohol-based hand sanitizers
- Clean with vinegar and water or choose a safer cleaning product
- Remove wi-fi routers and cordless phones from area
- Hard-wire ipads and other hand-held devices and turn off antennas (airplane mode + location services off)
- Choose toys made with natural materials such as solid wood (unfinished or with a non-toxic finish), hemp, organic cotton, wool, natural rubber, or safer plastics
- Choose PVC-free and BPA-free products (typically squishy or flexible plastics like rubber duckies and baby dolls contain PVC)
- Eliminate plastics labelled #3, #7 or with a "V" inside the chasing arrows symbol
- Avoid toys with wi-fi components like bluetooth
- Avoid cheap toys, pacifiers, teething rings, children's jewelry, tea sets and make-up made in China
- Be careful with used children's toys made before 2009 in the US or 2006 in Europe
- Use caution when choosing used toys
- Dispose of toys with chipped paint

## AUTOMOBILE

- Change air filters regularly
- Avoid air fresheners & chemical cleaners

## SCIENCE REFERENCES MAY BE FOUND AT:

[www.familyacts.org/sciencebased-evidence/](http://www.familyacts.org/sciencebased-evidence/)  
updated 10/17/18

## BEDROOMS/NURSERY AREAS

- Choose mattresses made from all-natural materials like organic wool, 100% latex, organic cotton, and avoid metal coils
- Choose bedding made from bamboo, silk, linen, wool, organic cotton, hemp, or cashmere
- Avoid flame-retardants and stain guard treatments
- Choose mattress covers made from safer plastics (polypropylene) and avoid vinyl, other PVC materials
- Choose untreated solid wood furniture instead of particle board, plywood, or metal
- Clean surfaces with vinegar/water or choose safer products [www.epa.gov/saferchoice/products](http://www.epa.gov/saferchoice/products) and avoid mold/mildew sprays
- Wash bedding with safer laundry products; avoid fabric softeners; always wash new bedding before use
- Eliminate chlorine bleach, stain remover treatments, detergents with fragrance, fabric softeners, and dryer sheets
- Remove wi-fi routers and cordless phones
- Turn cell phone off or on airplane mode when sleeping and avoid sleeping with cell phones near head or body

## CLOTHING & LAUNDRY

- Choose natural and sustainably-made clothing from natural fibers: cotton, silk, bamboo, hemp, wool, linen, and cashmere
- Avoid synthetic fibers: polyester, acrylic, rayon, nylon, acetate and triacetate
- Avoid clothing that is static resistant, stain-resistant, permanent press, wrinkle-free, and water-proof
- Choose used clothing when appropriate
- Wash all new items before use
- Choose all-natural laundry products and avoid detergents with sudsing agents like sodium laureth sulfate
- Discontinue use of chlorine bleach
- Use hydrogen peroxide to whiten laundry
- Opt out of using softeners and dryer sheets
- Opt out of dry-cleaning systems that use perchloroethylene (PERC) and choose organic/green dry cleaners

# FACTS

Families Advocating for Chemical  
& Toxics Safety  
A project of  
Center for Environmental Health

## Healthy Home, Healthy Family Best Practices Checklist

### MAIN LIVING AREA

- Take off shoes when entering home
- Vacuum (HEPPA preferred) and mop frequently
- Choose furniture and carpets/rugs that do not contain flame retardants or stain guards
- Choose wood, bamboo, cork, or phthalate-free vinyl flooring
- Choose VOC-free or low-VOC paint products and building materials
- Discontinue use of air fresheners (sprays, plug-ins, scented candles). Choose aromatherapeutic essential oils or beeswax candles if no allergies
- Be sure your cleaning products are the safest option [www.epa.gov/guides/cleaners](http://www.epa.gov/guides/cleaners)
- Choose untreated solid wood furniture instead of items made with particle board or vinyl
- Choose organic soil and plant fertilizers for potted indoor plants
- Implement a Non-Toxic Pest Management approach; stop using synthetic insecticides, pesticides and rodenticides
- Use pheromone traps instead of mothballs
- Use rodent traps instead of poisons
- Use bait traps for insect infestations
- Frequently open windows and doors if the outside air is safe ([airnow.gov](http://airnow.gov))
- Use an ozone-free HEPA air purifier indoors (or focus on sleep areas)
- Eliminate exposure to smoke (tobacco, wood, and cooking fumes)

**FAMILYACTS.ORG**

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## MAIN LIVING AREA CONTINUED...

- Use a landline and corded telephone and minimize cell phone use
- Turn wi-fi router off when not in use and at night when sleeping or hardwire your home
- Install a carbon-monoxide detector
- Properly handle and dispose of compact fluorescent light bulbs (especially when broken)
- Eliminate mold/mildew sprays (these contain chlorine)

## KITCHEN & DINING AREAS

- Breast feed your baby if you can; use organic formula and filtered water when unable to breast feed (be sure water is lead free)
- Choose organic, local food whenever possible
- If organic is unavailable or too expensive, avoid GMOs and foods on EWG's Dirty Dozen List [https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/dirty\\_dozen\\_list.php#.WmqtoK2ZOgZ](https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/dirty_dozen_list.php#.WmqtoK2ZOgZ)
- Eat from the Clean Fifteen List [https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/clean\\_fifteen\\_list.php#.WmquAK2ZOgZ](https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/clean_fifteen_list.php#.WmquAK2ZOgZ)
- Choose healthy and sustainably farmed/harvested fish, cage-free, free-range, and sustainably farmed eggs and meats
- Avoid canned food and beverages
- Choose sea salt or iodized salt
- Buy in bulk and steer clear of products with a lot of plastic packaging, such as individually wrapped items
- Avoid microwave popcorn, brown rice syrup, artificial sweeteners, corn syrup, high fructose corn syrup, preservatives, artificial colors and flavors
- Choose organic rice grown in the USA (soak rice)
- Test water quality and choose a filter that best meets your needs [www.ewg.org/tapwater/](http://www.ewg.org/tapwater/)
- Use a water filter for drinking tap water
- Opt out of buying single-use, recyclable plastic bottled water
- Use refillable glass or stainless steel water bottles
- Stop using non-stick cookware and replace with cast iron or ceramic
- Choose safer cleaning products
- Cook on the farthest back burners

- Use vinegar and water to clean windows and laminate floors (you can add essential oils if tolerated)
- Use baking soda or salt as a natural cleaning abrasive
- To clean oven and stove: use baking soda on difficult-to-clean areas, spray oven with vinegar, let sit 10 minutes then wipe clean (vinegar infused with lemon and orange peels is especially effective at cutting grease)
- Do not use chemical drain cleaners or bleach to clear drains
- Use strainers in your sink to catch food and particles that might clog the drain; dispose of fat, oil, and grease in the garbage, not down the drain with hot water
- Use hot soapy water, salt and hot water, or, if that doesn't work, a biological enzyme to unclog fat, oil,
- Use a plunger to unclog food stuck in curved pipes
- Replace mercury thermometer with digital. Safely dispose of all mercury products.
- Be sure your tableware (cups, plates, bowls, etc.) and cookware (baking & microwaveable dishes) do not contain lead
- Use the up or down-draft on the stove when cooking to keep air circulating and reduce exposure to chemical byproducts from cooking
- Reheat food on the stovetop or oven
- Minimize use of microwave for cooking/reheating food and beverages; only microwave in glass (lead-free). Do not heat infant formula/milk in plastic bottles in microwaves.
- Do not cook, bake, or microwave food/beverages in any plastic product (containers, plastic wrap, etc.), even those labelled "microwave safe" may leach chemicals into food/beverages
- Reduce and eliminate plastics, especially avoid plastics with the recycle symbols #3, #6, & #7

## BATHROOM

- Eliminate use of air fresheners and fragrances
- Replace chemical cleaning products with vinegar and water (use baking soda or salt as a cleaning abrasive for the shower, tub, and toilet)
- Choose toothpastes that are free of whiteners, micro-bead scrubbers, and avoid ingesting fluoride unless Rx
- Avoid anti-bacterial soaps

- Choose soaps, shampoos, and products that do not have sodium laureth sulfate and other foaming agents, parabens, phthalates, or fragrances
- Stop using products with micro-beads
- Choose mineral/sea salts instead of liquid bubble baths
- Check cleaners for safety at EWG's Guide to Healthy Cleaning [www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners](http://www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners)

## PERSONAL CARE

- Properly store prescriptions and over-the-counter medications in a safe place out of reach of children
- Properly dispose of prescriptions /medications and do not put them down the drain or toilet
- Prescription/Medication take-back locations: <http://www.safemedicinedisposal.org/drop-off-locations/>
- Be an informed consumer regarding anything you put on or in your body. Go to EWG's Skin Deep <http://www.ewg.org/skindeep/> for product recommendations for shampoos, conditioners, toothpastes, sunscreens, cosmetics, etc.

## PETS

- Choose non-toxic flea and tick control - no flea collars or topical treatments
- Flea and tick shampoos often contain the same toxic ingredients as topical treatments, so choose all-natural products for pets too
- Groom pets regularly with a fine-tooth comb
- Wash pet bedding regularly in hot, soapy water
- Regularly vacuum and wipe down pet-frequented areas
- For flea infestations, use soap and water to kill adult fleas, do the above daily and steam clean carpet (choose green-cleaning company + products or buy a steam cleaner)
- Use diatomaceous earth around the house to prevent flea infestations

## OUT & ABOUT IN THE COMMUNITY

- Wash hands frequently (use baby wipes when needed)
- Bring your own cup for to-go beverages (hot and cold)
- Bring your own food and snacks in reusable containers/bags and avoid eating fast foods
- Bring your own reusable shopping bags and avoid using plastic bags
- Avoid using plastic straws