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Window and balcony safety

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Window locks save lives

Each year, around 50 children fall from windows or balconies in Australia. Many suffer serious injuries. Sometimes these falls are fatal.

Children aged between 1 and 5 years are most at risk and too young to judge potential danger.

Fair Trading has produced a series of short videos. The first two in the series are about the simple things you can do around your home to prevent these falls. They are presented by DIY guru and TV personality, Rob Palmer, and include easy step-by-step instructions on how to install window safety devices yourself.



Watch our video *Window locks save lives*.



Watch our video *How to install window locks*.

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Window locks and your rights

The third video in the window safety series helps tenants, landlords and strata owners understand their rights and obligations when installing window safety devices.



Watch our video *Window locks and your rights*.

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Safety tips

Here are some tips to keep kids safe:

- **Don't be fooled by fly screens**, they are designed to keep insects out, not your kids in. They are simply not strong enough.
- **Windows should not be opened more than 12.5cm** if they are above the ground floor. This is enough to let air in, but

not enough for a child's head to fit through.

- **Window locks can be easy and cheap to install.** Watch our How to install window locks video on YouTube. And remember, there are options that don't require drilling.
- **If you rent, you must get written permission** from your landlord before you drill. Landlords cannot refuse permission unless they have a very good reason.
- **Keep furniture away from windows** and the edge of balconies to prevent children climbing up and falling off. Beware of light furniture that children can move around.

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Where can I get more information?

If you are a renter, go to the [Asking to make an alteration](#) page for information about making minor changes to your home including installing window locks.

If you are a landlord, go to [Alteration requests from your tenant](#) for more information.

If you own a strata unit, more information about your rights and responsibilities is available from the [Repairs and maintenance in a strata scheme](#) page.

For a handy window safety product guide, safety checklist, information brochure and poster, visit the [Kids Don't Fly page](#) on the Kids Health website. Information is provided in 11 languages.

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What is being done about this?

The NSW Government has developed a range of measures to help prevent the incidence of falls. These measures include:

- requiring strata schemes with residential lots to install safety devices on all windows that present a risk to young children
- allowing individual strata owners to install window safety devices regardless of their scheme's by-laws
- changes to the Residential Tenancies Regulation 2010 to include window safety devices in the prescribed condition report for rental premises.

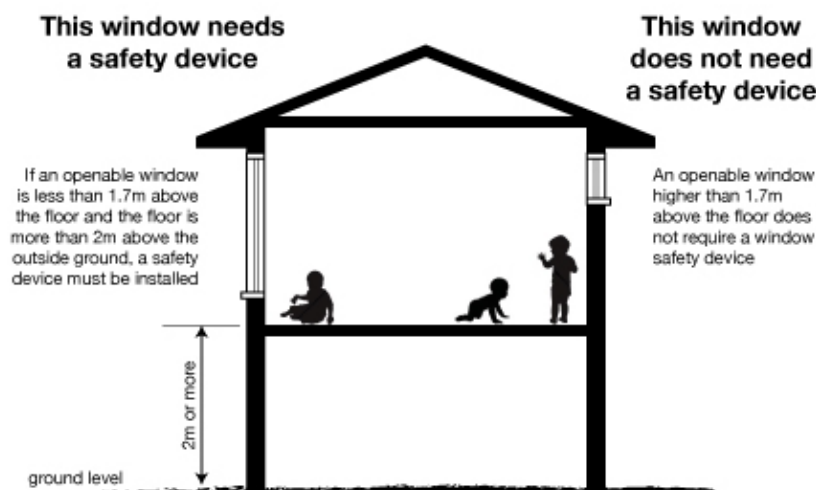
The changes to the prescribed condition report for rental premises apply from 1 March 2014. The new version includes the addition of 'window safety devices' wherever 'windows/screens' appears. You can download the new condition report from the [forms](#) page.

The child window safety requirements for owners corporations commenced on 11 December 2013. If the window safety requirements have not been met by 13 March 2018, owners corporations will risk being fined.

Generally, all openable windows above the ground level that are accessible to children from inside the building must have safety devices fitted. The details of the new laws are explained in the regulations, but you can check your windows by taking two simple measurements. An openable window will need a safety device installed if:

1. the lowest part of the window is less than 1.7m above the floor; and
2. the internal floor under the window is 2m or more above the outside surface.

The safety devices must be able to limit the maximum window opening to 12.5cm, must be robust, and must be childproof. Suitable window safety devices would include window locks or safety screens, but not ordinary insect screens.



The Children's Hospital at Westmead (CHW) Working Party for the Prevention of Children Falling from Residential Buildings released a report with recommendations about how to address this issue. The outcomes report is available on the Kids Don't Fly page on the CHW website.

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Related information

- [Safety and security - information for tenants](#)
- [Safety and security - information for landlords](#)
- [Australian Window Association](#)
The AWA has prepared downloadable brochures about window safety.
- [Strata Schemes Management Amendment \(Child Window Safety Devices\) Act 2013 No 83](#)
- [Strata Schemes Management Amendment \(Child Window Safety Devices\) Regulation 2013](#)

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Page URL: http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/sites/ftw/Tenants_and_home_owners/Strata_schemes/Window_and_balcony_safety.page?DCSext.ref=HomePageClick:Whats_new

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