

Watch out for dangerous baby products when shopping online

We're used to thinking that if you can buy something for your baby, it must be safe. And when they look like decent, well-made, helpful products you'd be fairly confident they are.

But in reality, there are lots of products for babies online that can be deadly.

Real examples of dangerous baby products

Here we share recent examples of unsafe baby products to help you understand:

- the sorts of dangerous products you can come across when shopping online
- why they're so dangerous.

1. Hug pillows



They may look cute and cuddly but hug pillows can cause a baby to overheat or suffocate.

An advert of a [Baby Elephant Hug Pillow](#) on The Little Ones website was ruled “irresponsible” by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) as it encouraged an unsafe sleep practice.

The image (above) shows a baby sleeping on its side and using a pillow, which are both unsafe sleep practices associated with sudden infant deaths (SIDS).

Likewise, these [Giraffe and Swan Baby Hugging Sleeping Pillows](#) were recalled because they present a serious risk of suffocation, overheating and death.

Stay safe:

Lullaby Trust recommend that pillows should not be used for babies until they are at least 12 months old.

This is because babies lose a lot of heat through their heads. If a baby is sleeping on a soft surface that their head can sink into, heat is prevented from escaping and they can get too hot. There is a higher risk of SIDS if a baby overheats.

So, despite what some listings suggest, it's not safe for a baby to fall asleep cuddling a pillow.

Soft, squishy materials can also cover baby's mouth and nose if they are pressed against it and could cause the baby to suffocate.

2. Sleeping bags



Several sleep bags have been recalled as they present a serious risk of suffocation, overheating and death. But many are still available to buy online.

- [Baby swaddle blanket sleep bag](#)
- [Baby knitted swaddle sleep bag](#)
- [Baby swaddle hooded sleep bag](#)
- [Baby sleep bags](#)

Stay safe:

Sleep bags should be well fitted, (think neck and arm holes that fit well) so that your baby can't wriggle down inside and overheat or suffocate.

The presence of hoods or head coverings can also be dangerous as they can raise a child's core temperature or obstruct the baby's airways.

3. Moses basket



This [Little Laughs Moses Basket](#) was recalled because it presents a serious risk of entanglement and strangulation. The waist straps are longer than British standards allow and could make a loop larger than allowed.

Also, during testing, the test mass (mimicking a baby) rolled out of the basket. If this occurred during use, it could result in a serious fall for the baby.

Stay safe:

If you're buying a Moses basket check it has been made to the correct British standard (BS EN 1466:2014). If you're not sure, don't buy it.

If you're buying second hand do the same checks and make sure you have the manufacturer's instructions.

The Lullaby Trust have put together a [handy guide for buying safer sleep essentials](#).

4. Baby self-feeding pillows



In 2022, an [urgent safety alert](#) was issued for baby self-feeding pillows. These self-feeding pillows are still available to buy in some places. But they can be deadly. That's because the baby can't push the bottle away, so can choke or suffer aspiration pneumonia.

Stay safe:

A baby needs their caregiver with them while they are feeding, so they can react if the baby starts gagging or choking. Any product which encourages parents to leave their baby alone to feed with a propped-up bottle should never be used.

Why are so many dangerous baby products available to buy?

[According to our research](#), 74% of parents believe that any product aimed at children under 5 has to be fully tested and certified safe by an independent body before it can be sold online.

But in reality, if an online seller is based overseas, and sells through an online platform, they can evade their safety responsibilities – even for toys or nursery products.

And while a product may have been recalled from one online marketplace, a seemingly identical product may well be available to buy on another site.

Our advice when buying for your baby online:

- **Check who you are buying from and where they are based.** Is it a reputable company or brand? Remember, not everything advertised on well-known online platforms is sold by that platform. You can be buying from a company you've never heard of, based overseas, that's ignoring UK safety laws.
- **Check if the product is dangerous** and has been removed from sale. Visit [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) for a list of recalled products.
- **Stop using recalled baby products** straight away. Return them for a refund.

What to do if you find a dangerous baby product

We hope that sharing this information will help you spot products that may be unsafe so you can avoid them.

If you think you've bought something unsafe, please report it so action can be taken to protect other families. Simply call:

- Citizens Advice consumer helpline (England and Wales): [0808 223 1133](tel:08082231133)
- Citizens Advice consumer helpline (Welsh-speaking adviser): [0808 223 1144](tel:08082231144)
- Advice Direct Scotland helpline: [0808 164 6000](tel:08081646000)
- Northern Ireland Consumerline: [0300 123 6262](tel:03001236262). Or report your worries to your local district council.



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Dangerous baby products in UK homes

Many parents are unaware that products they're buying from online marketplaces could suffocate, strangle or even choke their baby.



Rogue online sellers abuse parents' trust

Survey reveals parents at risk of buying unsafe, recalled toys and nursery goods.



Urgent safety alert issued for baby self-feeding pillows

An urgent safety alert has been issued for baby self-feeding pillows which can kill small babies. Learn more.



Learn how to be a savvy shopper

Discover why you should be wary when buying products from online platforms and how to check whether they have been recalled.

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