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Listening, learning, and living together: it's the science of life.

Crib Safety¹

Donna Davis²

When my husband and I first learned we were going to be parents, we were very young and very broke. When we were offered a beautiful, antique, heirloom wrought-iron crib for our baby's nursery, we were thrilled...until my mother-in-law came to visit and enlightened us about crib safety. And grandma was right! While the antique was lovely to look at, it was definitely not safe.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, a crib is the safest place for a baby to sleep. However, especially if you're using an older or a custom-built crib, parents should make certain that their baby's crib has no missing or broken hardware and that the slats are no more than 2 3/8" apart (about the width of a soda can). Also, corner posts should not exceed 1/16" height, there should be no cutout designs on the headboard or footboard, and the crib should have a firm, tight-fitting mattress and fitted bottom sheet. The mattress is considered too loose if you can fit more than two finger widths between the edge of the mattress and the crib side. The Safety Commission also recommends you also look for a safety certification seal on new cribs (Consumer Product Safety Commission, n.d.).

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Nursery fashion can also be a hazard if you load the crib up with those tempting, soft, fluffy pillows, quilts, sheepskins, and stuffed animals for baby to snuggle up with. Soft and cuddly can also be suffocating. For more information on protecting your baby while they sleep, visit our Web site at <http://www.familyalbumradio.org>.

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