



FAQs About Falling Furniture and Furniture Tip-overs

Written by Robb Auspitz, Judy Lambert and Kim Beck

1. My furniture is a high-end, well-made expensive piece from a very reputable furniture store. Can it still tip?

YES. Very definitely yes. Any and every piece of freestanding furniture, a large appliance or a television set, including flat panels, can tip over. For furniture, all it takes is for a child to pull on, or stand in an open drawer, or on a shelf to cause it to tip and fall. [Furniture includes but is not limited to: bedroom furniture, dressers, bookcases, armoires, TV stands and dining room furniture.](#) No matter how small the child is, assume they can generate the force to tip the piece over. Even if the furniture is low to the ground it can tip over with devastating effects.

All freestanding furniture pieces, large appliances or television sets need to be properly secured to the wall regardless of size. Properly securing furniture to a wall means attaching one end of an anti-tip kit to a stud and the other end to the frame of the furniture. Preferably, you want to attach that end to the underside of the top of the piece. If the furniture is not secured when a child opens a drawer and pulls on it or stands in it, the furniture could become a front-heavy torpedo. The innocent, unsuspecting child could become a victim of that torpedo. Do I need to fill in the rest of that story? Protect your children, properly secure all free-standing furniture.

2. When using an [anti-tip kit](#), do I need to secure my furniture directly into a stud in the wall or will securing it into drywall be sufficient?

Assume that neither sheetrock nor drywall is strong enough to withstand the possible torpedo-like fall that an unsecured piece of furniture or television may cause. The studs in your walls are built to hold the wall and roof of a home. All furniture, large appliances or television sets must be properly secured to a stud in the wall. Additionally, remember that unless you secure the anti-tip kit or anti-tip device onto the furniture, appliance or television set you are still at risk.

3. My television is extremely heavy and I need my husband to move it when I clean. I don't think my child is strong enough to tip a TV; am I wrong?

You are completely wrong! Too many times televisions are placed on stands which are inappropriately sized for the television. That makes the stand inherently unstable. Any sudden movement can cause the television stand to crash forward, and it will crash forward with a lot of force. If you have an LCD or Plasma flat panel and cannot properly anchor it to a wall, then make sure that

television is placed on a [flat panel stand](#) that is appropriate for its size.

[TV Stands](#) should be very low to the ground and the television should be pushed as far back as possible on the stand. Both the stand and television must be properly secured to a stud in the wall with an anti-tip kit.

Remember.

Don't place a television of any type on top of a dresser.

Don't place items on top of a TV which could tempt a child to climb up to reach or grab them, especially toys.

4. My children are older and out of the climbing age. They sit on the floor now and play video games in front of the television. They're safe, right?

Wrong. Many deaths have resulted from older children sitting in front of the TV playing video games. Many older television sets are front heavy. Any slight movement, whether changing a game, turning it on or off or the excited kick from a child could easily result in both the stand and television crashing forward onto the child.

If you are unable to secure a flat screen directly to a stud in your wall, then push the television as far back as possible on its stand. Make sure the flat panel stand is low to the ground and appropriate for the size of the television. Properly secure the TV to the stand and then secure the stand to a stud in the wall with an [anti-tip kit or anti-tip device](#).

5. The risk of my child getting injured or even dying is relatively low. Do I really need to be concerned?

Unless you want to visit your child in the hospital, or worse the answer is YES!! Of course you need to be concerned. There is a reason why the [ASTM issued new furniture safety standards in May, 2009 \(ASTM F2057\)](#). No parent who has lost a child ever expected THAT to happen to them. Why not do everything you can to keep them safe? Too many people never thought it would happen to them either.

A recent study conducted by the [Center for Injury Research and Policy of The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital](#) found that from 1990-2007 an average of nearly 15,000 children younger than 18 years of age visited emergency departments annually for injuries received from [falling furniture and furniture tip-overs](#).

According to the study, published in the online issue of Clinical Pediatrics in May, most furniture tip-over-related injuries occurred among children younger than 7 years of age and resulted from televisions tipping over. More than one quarter of the injuries occurred when children pulled over or climbed on furniture. The CPSC tells us that an average of 16 children die every year. Don't let it happen to you and yours.

6. I have taught my child to NEVER climb on the furniture, so I have worries, right?

Wrong, wrong and wrong again. Play is the work of children. Even if your child

can repeat all the rules without prompting, it doesn't mean they'll follow them. This is especially true when they're playing or when they REALLY want to get that (just fill in the blank). Kids think they're invincible and never recognize danger when they're in the moment. It's our job as parents to make their environments as safe as possible.

7. I never leave my child alone and even if something happened I'd be able to save them, right?

Even the best parent is never truly within arms reach of their child all of the time. There have been parents who were standing in the same room with their child when a piece of furniture or television fell on that child. It takes just a second for [furniture to tip and fall](#). There is never enough time to stop the crash. Never.

8. I'm concerned that securing furniture and televisions to the wall will damage them and / or make them look bad?

Are your walls and possessions more precious to you than your child? Seriously, why would you even ask that question?

If your concern is the resale value of your house understand that the holes you put in walls can be repaired. If you're concerned about the [appearance of your furniture appreciate that anti-tip kits](#), can almost always be installed so they are not seen. In fact, most of the holes will be small and out of sight. Even if the holes are noticeable does it really matter? Holes in objects can be repaired. Once your child has been injured, or died, your broken heart can never be fixed.

9. If falling furniture is so dangerous, why don't the stores that sell furniture and televisions have warning labels indicating the danger? Also, why aren't devices to secure furniture and televisions to the wall readily available at my local store?

Excellent question, we wondered the same thing. The answer to the first part is found in the new [ASTM furniture safety standards \(ASTM F2057\) that require furniture manufacturers to include a warning label](#).

As recognition of the need for furniture safety and child safety increases more and more stores will carry [Hangman Products Anti-tip kits](#) and [Tip-Resistant kits](#). You can purchase [Anti-tip Kits](#) or [Tip-Resistant kits](#) online at the [Hangman Store](#).

Many thanks to Judy Lambert and Kim Beck of the [Katie Elise Lambert Foundation](#) for making major contributions to this article. Make child safety your number one household priority. Child proof your home by preventing falling furniture, furniture tip-overs and television tip-overs. Practicing furniture safety awareness could prevent injuries, or death. To learn more about [child safety visit the Hangman Products website](#) or the [Hangman Store](#).