

Garden & DIY Safety



For safety in the garden think **FLOWERS**

These are seven key areas which
are among the most common
causes of garden accidents:

Fences. Secure all fences and close garden gates when children are playing outside.

Lighting barbecues. Keep lit barbecues in an open space and never leave children unsupervised near a barbecue. Make sure they are fully extinguished when finished. Take care when disposing of barbecues and coals and make sure they have cooled down before putting them in the bin.

Out of Reach. Keep chemicals and tools out of reach. Store them on a high shelf in a secure garden shed and never decant chemicals into unmarked containers.

Water. Always make sure that garden ponds are securely covered and children are supervised while playing in a paddling pool. Be aware of items that can fill with rain water such as buckets, plant pots and sand pit lids. As little as three centimetres of water can drown a small child.

Electrical Equipment. Lock all equipment such as power tools and lawnmowers in a shed or garage.

Remove Poisonous Plants and Berries. If you have poisonous trees in your garden, fence them off.

Soft Surfaces. Ensure all play equipment is placed on a soft surface such as grass or a mat. If you have a trampoline, ensure that it has a safety net and that it is used by only one child at a time. Remember trampolines should not be used by children under six years of age.

When gardening:

- Wear sturdy shoes, a broad-brimmed hat, sunglasses and gardening gloves
- **Move from one activity to another to avoid straining particular muscle groups, and take frequent breaks.**
- Bend at the knees and hips to avoid injury.
- **Avoid heavy lifting.**

When it's sunny:

- Avoid being in the sun between 11am and 3pm. Go outside in the morning and evenings, when the sun is low and temperatures are cooler.
- If you are outside in the sun, use sunscreen and a lip balm with SPF. You may also want to use insect repellent. Wear sunglasses and a hat, and drink water to prevent dehydration.
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- **Be aware that heat can cause a reaction to some medications**
- Symptoms of heat exhaustion include fatigue, nausea, weakness, confusion, Anhidrosis (inability to sweat) and rapid pulse.
- **If you think you may have heat exhaustion, seek medical assistance.**

Avoiding trips and falls

- Ensure paths and walkways are flat and non-slip
- **Install hand rails if necessary.**
- Store garden equipment away safely after use and tidy away hoses and power cords/extension leads.
- **Make sure there are no slippery wet leaves on pathways.**



- Maintain garden lighting to ensure the area is well lit.
- **Prune hedges and shrubs which could potentially block pathways.**
- Check that cold weather has not caused pathways, decking or steps to become uneven or loose.

DIY Safety

To help you avoid a mishap while taking on tasks around the home remember these safety tips:

- **Be realistic about your and your tools capabilities. It may look easy on TV or social media but in reality can be more difficult and take longer than anticipated.**
- Don't tackle a job unless you really have the ability. A competent, qualified person should always carry out gas and electrical renewal or repair work.

Power Tools

- Always use power tools according to the manufactures manual and use the correct protective equipment for the job.
- **Wear appropriate protective clothing and footwear when mowing the lawn and keep your feet and hands well away from the mower blades.**



- When working with mains electric powered tools, use an RCD (residual current device) if your home is not already wired with one. These devices prevent electrocution by shutting off the power to the tool should the power cord become severed or a fault develops.
- **Make sure you know what is behind a wall before drilling in to it to avoid hitting electrical cables or pipework.**

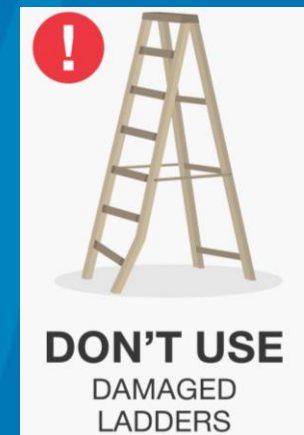


- Stop and disconnect all electrical appliances and tools before repairing or cleaning them.
- **Allow petrol powered tools to fully come to a stop before disconnecting dust/grass collection boxes or checking blades/moving parts.**
- Ensure safety guards are in place before starting and using powered tools.



Working at height

- When working at height (even just to change a lightbulb) be sure to use a suitable ladder that gives you a stable platform and something to hold on to.
- **Choose the right ladder and be aware of it's Weight Rating and always check the ladder is in good condition before using it.**



- Make sure the ladder is stable (on a level surface that will not give way) before beginning to climb it and ensure any locks/locking bars are locked securely.



- Remember alcohol and DIY don't mix.
- **Ensure good supervision of children and keep pets away from where you are working.**
- For more information on Home Safety contact 028 9034 0160 or email envhealth@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk