



One minute guide to...

BABY BATH SAFETY ADVICE

Why is it important?

Bath time for young children is fun but it is important to know that water can be dangerous too. Babies of any age can drown in as little as 5 centimetres (2 inches) of water, very quickly and with no noise or struggle. Babies can't recognise danger and don't have the strength to try to reach the surface. So, when their head slips under the bathwater, it stays there and if help is not immediately available the child will drown.

How to keep your baby safe in the bath:

- Stay with your child whenever they are in the bath
- Bathe your child in the smallest amount of water possible. Run the cold water first and then top up with hot water. Check the temperature of your child's bath before letting them get into the water. Your baby's bath should be 37o C to 38o C, which is around body temperature.
- Make sure you have everything you need close to hand (towels, shampoo, etc.) when you're giving your child their bath
- Keep them within arms' length at all times
- Give them your full attention (leave phones outside the bathroom)
- Only adults should be left in charge of a child or baby in the bath (not older siblings)
- If you need to move away from the bathroom, take your child with you

Baby bath aids or baby seats?

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) recommends parents do NOT use bath aids at all.

Parents use bath aids (like bath seats) to make bath time easier, but they can lead to a false sense of security, and they do not stop babies drowning. Baby bath seats might look helpful, but by leaving your hands free they can provide a false sense of security BUT they are NOT a safety device. As babies can drown quickly, quietly, and in only a few centimetres of water, you're better off without one – supervision really is key.

If you decide to use a bath seat/aid:

- **Never** leave your child
- Always keep your child within arm's reach at all time
- Make sure it is firmly stuck to the bottom of the bath
- Remember that bath aids are not safety devices.

Further Information:

Healthier Together: <https://www.nenc-healthiertogether.nhs.uk/parentscarers/keeping-your-child-safe/bath-safety-advice>

NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/caring-for-a-newborn/washing-and-bathing-your-baby/>
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/safety/baby-and-toddler-safety/>

Child Action Prevention Trust: <https://capt.org.uk/drowning/>

Guide produced by Education IPC Public Health & Communities Team in Cumberland Council Feb 24



Working for Cumberland Council and
Westmorland & Furness Council