



[Skateboard Safety Tips: How to keep your children from suffering serious injuries](#)

by [John Demas](#) on 02/18/09 at 8:47 pm

If you grew up in a typical American neighborhood, you probably spent at least one summer flying down the sidewalks of your neighborhood on a skateboard. When you're too young to drive, sidewalk surfing can seem like the next best thing.

Unfortunately, skateboarding has become a dangerous past-time for far too many kids and teens. According to a U. S. Product Safety Commission report, approximately twenty-six thousand (26,000) people are annually treated in emergency rooms for injuries sustained while skateboarding. Children under the age of fifteen incur more than half of those injuries. Beginners are most at risk: those who have been skateboarding for less than one week account for nearly one-third of all of the injuries. [Read more about skateboarding safety.](#)

Parents must take note of these alarming statistics and make sure their sons and daughters wait to begin riding skateboards until they have:

- developed a good sense of balance,
- become willing to accept close adult supervision while mastering many of the most basic skills and
- made a sincere commitment to always wear a helmet and other protective gear.

The following list of precautions should help parents prepare their children for skateboarding experiences:

- Riders must always wear a protective helmet, gloves and knee pads. They'll also need sturdy, rubber-soled shoes that provide plenty of traction
Skateboarders must make sure they properly maintain all parts of their skateboard. Only the best substances should be used to clean or wax a skateboard. If safety strips are wearing away, they should be immediately replaced to prevent an unnecessary fall or head injury.

- All children and teens should be regularly reminded to never try and imitate the stunts they see more advanced skateboarders perform on TV or at local skate parks. Children should never ride their skateboards in traffic or in a parking lot. When riding down a residential sidewalk, skateboarders must constantly be on the lookout for cars preparing to exit or enter a nearby driveway. Furthermore, no child should ever try to “hitch a ride” on a car by grabbing hold of it and then trying to sail effortlessly down the street holding onto it.
- When parents believe their children are ready to ride their skateboards without adult supervision, they should be instructed to carry along their cell phones so they can summon help via 9-1-1 if anyone in their group should sustain a serious injury.
- Always discourage neighborhood skateboarding after dark. It’s really only safe if it’s done at a well lit and fully supervised local skateboard park. Also, kids should never tried to ride their skateboards in inclement weather.
- Make sure the length, width and weight of your child’s skateboard is proper for his or her size. Serious accidents can occur when kids ride skateboards that are too large or heavy for them to maneuver.
- Insist that you or another responsible adult be present throughout the first months of your child’s skateboard learning curve. After that, make sure they always ride with at least one friend so they can help one another in case of an accident.

If you follow all of the suggestions listed above, you should be able to protect your children from many of the most serious skateboarding injuries.