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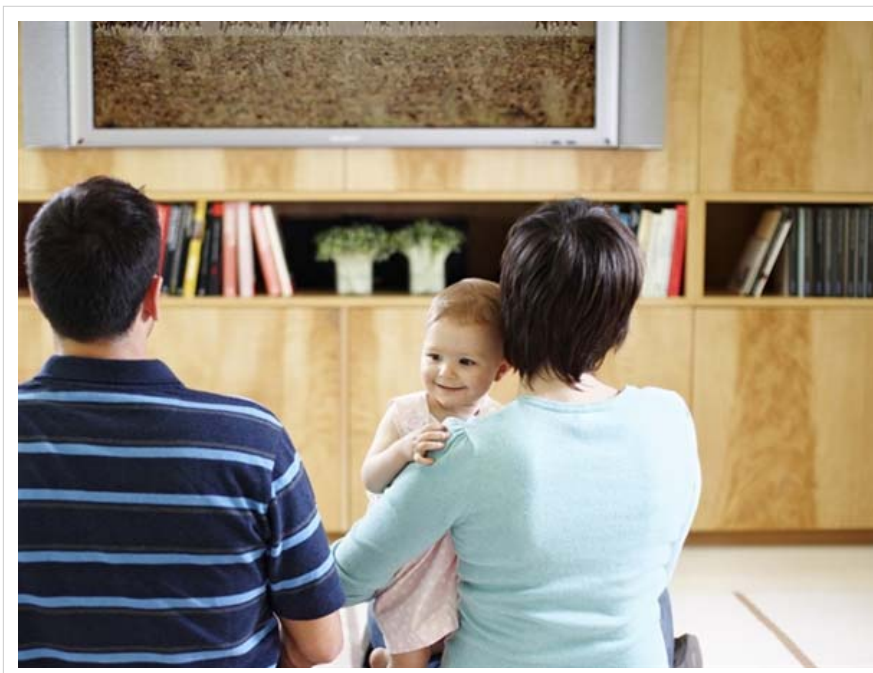
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The most dangerous tech products



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By Robert E. Calem, Techlicious.com

The electronic products in our homes enhance our lives in countless ways. But these devices can also be among the most dangerous products we have — putting some of us, especially young children and the elderly, at risk of serious injury or even death. The risks run from flat-panel TVs that topple onto toddlers, to button-sized batteries that become poisonous pills.

Yet avoiding these hazards could be as simple as taking a few precautionary measures. Here's what you should know and do, before it's too late:

No. 5 — Baby monitors: Mind the cords



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Stat: Seven deaths since 2002

By definition, a baby monitor must be placed near a crib, but this raises the risk of strangulation for the child, who may be tempted to play with the device's cord if it's within reach.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission has noted at least seven infants and toddlers who have been **strangled by baby monitor cords** and three infants and toddlers who have nearly been strangled since 2002, with the youngest victims being six months old.

Make sure your baby monitor is placed so that the cord is more than arm's-length away from the child — ideally, at least three feet away.

Also, it's not just baby monitors that present this strangulation danger. Movement-monitor sensor cords also should be kept taut and not dangling, the CPSC warns.

No. 4 — Button cell batteries: Potential poison pills**Stat: 3,500 injuries, nine deaths since 1985**

The small coin-sized button cell batteries commonly used in remote controls, garage door openers, key fobs, light-up shoes, flashing jewelry, digital ear thermometers and bathroom scales are surprisingly dangerous. According to the National Capital Poison Center in Washington, D.C., since 1985 more than 60,000 people swallowed miniature disc or "button" batteries, resulting in more than 3,500 injuries and nine deaths, most of them children under 6 years old.

The batteries can get stuck in children's throats where they can cause severe chemical burns. The effect starts within minutes of ingesting the battery and within two hours can burn a hole through the esophagus where it's lodged, says Dr. Toby Litovitz, executive and medical director of the poison center.

Parents should be careful not to leave a "dead" button battery within a child's reach when putting a new battery in a device. Even a dead battery still has enough of a residual charge to cause the same sort of burn, Litovitz explains.

The batteries that posed the greatest risk are labeled CR 2032, CR 2025 and CR 2016, or BR 2032, BR 2025 and BR 2016, she adds.

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No. 3 — Shredders: The home office is no place for kids**Stat: 2,700 injuries in 2010**

Paper shredders don't just pose a threat to sensitive documents. In 2010, the Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated that there were 2,700 emergency

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of all ages because of incidents with paper shredders.

The reasons for these visits can vary, ranging from entrapping a finger, to the paper shredder falling over and causing a foot injury. So keep kids and pets away from the home office and its paper shredder.

No. 2 — Flat-panel TVs: Bolt down or hang up

Stat: 18,000 injuries a year, one child death every two weeks

According to the CPSC, on average one child dies every two weeks when a TV, piece of furniture or appliance falls on him, and each year on average, more than 18,000 children ages 8 and younger are injured in this same way.

"Parents think about gates to prevent falls down the stairs, about safety in the kitchen to keep kids away from stoves, but there can be that hidden hazard: the TV and that old piece of furniture that you have it sitting on," CPSC spokesman Scott Wolfson says. He adds that even bulky, old-fashioned TVs can be unstable if they're perched on a bookshelf or a too-small stand.

Babyproofing your home theater by mounting the TV on the wall, or securing it to furniture which is also bolted to the wall or to the floor prevents these accidents.

No. 1 — Cellphones: The biggest killer

Stat: 995 deaths in 2009

There are three main types of distraction: visual, which takes your eyes off the road; manual, which takes your hands off the steering wheel; and cognitive, which takes your thoughts away from the primary task of driving. Unfortunately, texting on a cellphone combines all three forms of distraction, making it especially dangerous while driving.

But that hasn't stopped drivers from doing it. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2009, cellphones were a factor in 18 percent of distracted driving fatalities, leading to 995 deaths.

For drivers, there are hands-free technologies, such as Bluetooth speakerphones built into cars and **Bluetooth headsets**. Even these aren't much help, though. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety found that using a cellphone while driving — handheld or hands-free — slows a driver's reaction time to the same speed as a person with a blood alcohol content level of .08 percent, the level at which drivers are legally considered impaired. Apps that **prevent cellphone use while driving** are better options.

And the danger is not limited to drive time, texting while walking also is hazardous, and not uncommon.

There is some hope for those walking-while-texting culprits, though: A variety of apps for

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the iPhone and iPad 2 use the devices' back-facing cameras to create a live-action background for messaging functions, allowing users to keep an eye on where they're going even as they type e-mails, text or chat . Text Vision (iPhone \$0.99, Android free), Text Vision for Facebook (iPhone \$0.99), Chat & Walk for Facebook

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Julian Brock

electronics are not the culprit... it's the users.

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Jeff B Hung · Works at Metro PCS

Numbers 1-3 deserve to be mentioned... number 4's a maybe... but number 5... 7 incidents in over 8 years... out of the millions of monitors sold... maybe they should put a warning label on those monitors... "keep parents without common sense away from baby".

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Joseph Miller · Waco, Texas

everywhere I go a cell phone Is the Culprit. I have to swerve my car out of the way, I have to move out of the way while walking, I have to listen to the stupid conversation while waiting for my Starbucks and of course to top it all off I have to wait in line because the paramedics have the road blocked from an accident caused by talking on the cell phone. I'm not so sure they should be put in the hands of your responsible people. I'm getting CELL PHONE RAGE.

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Myra Henson

I so agree, Joseph. It is annoying and rude as hell. People in dept. stores, grocery store, all stores, talking loud enough for the whole store to hear. Makes my blood boil.

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Cameron Grace

There is a solution. Cell phone jammers. Illegal in the U.S but still obtainable. (Google it.) If caught around \$12,000 fine. Watching idiots freak out cause their cell phones don't work? - priceless

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Phil Leahy · North Central High School

Myra Henson You need these: <http://www.draplindustries.com/pics/shhh.pdf>

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