make it safe™

BBSA®
BRITISH BLIND & SHUTTER ASSOCIATION



2014 legal requirements for internal window blinds

What to look for in new blinds and how to make existing blinds safer - this leaflet will tell you how

What to look for in your new blinds

Blinds come in an endless range of colours and finishes but when buying new blinds for your home, you must consider the way they are operated.

Safe by design >

A blind which is safe by design is one that is cordless or has concealed or tensioned cords.

Typically these blinds are pushed or pulled into position.

Motorised blinds also remove the need for operating cords. Wooden shutters and external blinds are other cordless styles of window dressing.



Wand operated vertical blinds - pushed and pulled into position by the wand which when twisted tilts the louvres



Spring operated roller blind - some styles operate with a decelerator so the blind retracts at a constant, gentle speed



Tensioned pleated blind - all cords are held under tension and the blind is just pushed or pulled into position



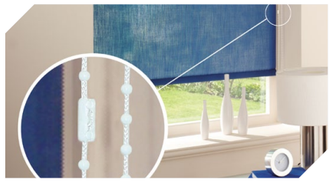
On this venetian blind the slats are tilted and the blind raised or lowered with the wand on the right of the blind

In-built safety systems >

In-built safety systems are those that are built into the product and so do not require additional installation or operation in use.

Some window sizes or shapes may not lend themselves to cordless window blinds or you may specifically wish to co-ordinate with your existing blinds. If this is the case then choose a blind style with an in-built safety device, such as a chain break connector where the chain is designed to separate under any undue pressure. Breakaway tassels at the bottom of cords work in the same way.

Note: By law there are limitations on cord and chain lengths for in-built safety systems.



Chain break connector will part under any undue load but after inspection can be clipped back together again



A breakaway device on the cords of a roman blind. The blind raises and lowers normally but cords will separate under undue loads

Separate safety systems >

Separate safety systems are those that require additional installation and/or operation in use.

If cordless options or those with in-built safety devices are not suitable for your specific situation then the only alternative is to use a blind with a separate safety device such as a tensioning system or an accumulation device like a cleat. Make sure the device is securely fitted and always used.

Note: By law there are limitations on cord and chain lengths for separate safety systems.



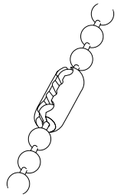
Cord and chain tensioner for vertical blinds to hold cord and chain taut



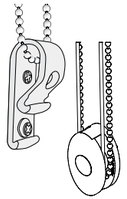
Chain tensioner to hold a single chain or cord taut

Making your existing blinds safer

If you have a window blind which has an operating cord or chain that could form a loop you must keep it out of the reach of babies and young children. There are a range of safety devices available for every type of blind.



Chain-break connector
These will break apart when undue pressure is applied on the operating chain but, after inspection, can be reconnected again. Chain sizes vary so you **must** use the chain-break connector which is designed to be used with your specific chain.



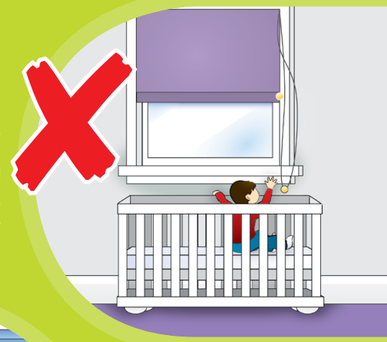
Cord/Chain tidys & tensioners
These devices should be securely fixed to an adjacent surface and at the maximum distance from the top of the blind so the cords and/or chains are held permanently taut by the device.



Cleat
This should be securely fixed to an adjacent surface out of the reach of children and at least 1.5 metres from the floor. The cord must be secured as shown after each and every operation of the blind.

Young children can be strangled by loops in pull cords, chains, tapes and inner cords that operate the product. To avoid strangulation and entanglement, keep cords out of the reach of young children. Cords may become wrapped around a child's neck.

Move beds, cots, highchars and playpens away from window covering cords and chains.





Make sure all cords and chains are always secured out of reach of babies and young children. Do not tie cords or chains together. Make sure cords or chains do not twist and create a loop.

Move furniture away from window covering cords and chains as children love to climb.



By Law: All internal blinds sold **must** comply with the 2014 standards

By Law: Professional installers **must** fit compliant (safe) blinds in **all** homes

"Make it Safe"

says Mum of three, Rachael Maynard



"My daughter, Megan, became entangled in a window blind chain in her bedroom when she was two and a half years old. She spent four days in hospital on a life support machine before we knew she was going to recover. Something as simple as an unrestrained window blind cord or chain can present a real danger to young children but with awareness and by taking some simple actions, any hazard can be eliminated. **Make sure you always Make it Safe."**

It's the law

In early 2014 the standards regarding the manufacture, supply and professional installation of internal window blinds changed significantly. It is now illegal to supply or professionally install an internal window blind which does not comply with the child safety requirements of BS EN 13120:2009+A1:2014

Blinds that are 'safe by design' are deemed to be fully compliant with this new standard.

Mandatory requirements:

The new standard aims to protect babies and small children by:

- ✔ Installation of child safe blinds to ALL HOMES whether children are present or not
- ✔ Limitations on cord and chain lengths
- ✔ Safety devices for preventing any cords or chains from creating a hazardous loop
- ✔ The fitting of safety devices on cords and chains at the point of manufacture
- ✔ The testing of all safety critical components of internal blinds
- ✔ Safety warnings and product instructions

Don't leave things to chance - Get expert advice

An accredited BBSA member or Make it Safe dealer can provide you with expert advice. They will be able to show you the safety features on new blinds and can help you make your existing blinds safer. Just visit **www.makeitsafe.org.uk** to find an approved expert nearest to you. If you are installing your own blinds or fitting your own safety devices make sure you follow all instructions provided by the supplier.

Any professional installer of internal blinds must fit safety devices - by law

See the window blind safety video at: www.makeitsafe.org.uk

The British Blind and Shutter Association

The BBSA is the UK's only trade association representing companies that manufacture, supply and install interior and exterior blinds, awnings, security grilles and shutters. The BBSA launched the Make it Safe campaign in 2009 and has campaigned for safer blinds so welcomes mandatory standards for internal window blinds. To see more about the BBSA's Make it Safe campaign visit:
www.makeitsafe.org.uk

Advice in this brochure and the Make it Safe campaign is supported by:

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

RoSPA's mission is to save lives and reduce injuries in all areas of life and has achieved significant changes through its campaigning work over the 90 years since its inception.
www.rospa.com

Child Accident Prevention Trust

A leading UK charity working to reduce the number of children and young people killed, disabled or seriously injured in accidents.
www.capt.org.uk

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