

Swimming Pools

- Safety Barrier Guidelines -

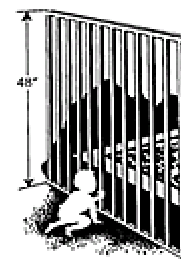
Intro

Every year thousands of American families confront swimming pool tragedies – drownings and near-drownings of young children. These tragedies are preventable. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) offers guidelines for pool barriers that can help prevent most submersion incidents involving young children.

Inground Pools

A young child can get over a pool barrier if the barrier is too low or if the barrier has handholds or footholds for a child to use when climbing.

- ❑ The top of a pool barrier should be at least 48 inches above grade, measured on the side of the barrier which faces away from the swimming pool.



For a Solid Barrier:

- ❑ No indentations or protrusions should be present, other than normal construction tolerances and masonry joints.

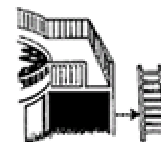
For a Barrier (Fence) Made Up of Horizontal and Vertical Members:

- ❑ If the distance between the tops of the horizontal members is less than 45 inches, the horizontal members should be on the swimming pool side of the fence.
- ❑ The spacing of the vertical members should not exceed 1 – ¾ inches. (This size is based on the foot width of a young child and is intended to reduce the potential for a child to gain a foothold.)
- ❑ If there are any decorative cutouts in the fence, the space within the cutouts should not exceed 1 – ¾ inches.

Aboveground Pools

Aboveground pools should have barriers.

- ❑ The pool structure itself serves as a barrier or a barrier is mounted on top of the pool structure.
- ❑ The steps or ladder can be designed to be secured, locked or removed to prevent access, or a barrier such as those described above can surround the steps or ladder.



When the House Wall Forms Part of the Pool Barrier

In many homes, doors open directly onto the pool area or onto a patio that leads to the pool area.

- ❑ In such cases, the wall of the house is an important part of the pool barrier, and passage through any doors in the house wall should be controlled by security measures.
- ❑ All doors that give access to a swimming pool, should be equipped with an audible alarm, which sounds when the door and/or screen are opened.
- ❑ The alarm should sound for 30 seconds or more immediately after the door is opened.
- ❑ The alarm should be loud (at least 85 dBA (decibels) when measured 10 feet away from the alarm mechanism).
- ❑ The alarm should be distinct from other sounds in the house.
- ❑ The alarm should have an automatic reset feature.
- ❑ The alarm should have a switch that allows adults to temporarily deactivate the alarm for up to 15 seconds to allow them to pass through house doors without setting off the alarm.
- ❑ The deactivation switch could be a touchpad or manual switch and should be located at least 54 inches above the threshold of the door covered by the alarm.



Indoor Pools

When a pool is located completely within a house, the walls that surround the pool should be equipped to serve as pool safety barriers. Measures recommended above where a house wall serves as part of a safety barrier also apply for all the walls surrounding an indoor pool.