

# Lawn Mower Safety Facts for You and Your Children

Lawn mowers are one of the most dangerous items in our home. According to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 253,000 people were treated for lawn mower-related injuries in 2010, nearly 17,000 of them children under age 19. Some of these injuries include deep cuts, loss of fingers and toes, broken bones and burns.

## Keep Children Safe

- Children under 6 years of age should be kept indoors during mowing.
- Make sure children are a safe distance away from the area that you plan to mow because rocks and debris often can shoot out while the lawn mower is running.
- Keep a close eye on children when a lawn mower is in use! Make sure they do not run into the mower's path.
- Never allow children to play with the mower, even when it is turned off. A lawn mower is not a toy.
- Children should be at least 12 years old before operating a walk-behind lawn mower and at least 16 years old to operate a riding mower.

- Never allow children or any other passengers on a riding lawn mower because of the potential for falling under the mower and sustaining serious injuries.

## Weather and Terrain

- Do not cut grass when it's wet because it can cause your feet to lose traction and slide.
- Do not use a mower on hills or slopes, to avoid having it tip over and cause injury.



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## **Prior to Lawn Mowing**

- Read your mower's instruction manual and familiarize yourself with the product prior to use.
- Use a mower with a control that stops it from moving forward if the handle is released.
- Check your lawn for items such as nails, sticks, rocks, toys, sports entertainment, dog bones, wire and equipment parts, so the debris does not hit bystanders while mowing.

## **During Usage**

- Wear close-fitting long pants and long-sleeved shirts, eye protection and heavy gloves.
- Do not wear sandals or be barefoot. Make sure to have sturdy shoes with good traction.
- Do not wear jewelry.
- Always fill and start lawn mowers outdoors.
- Never fill the tank with gasoline when the lawn mower is on or hot.
- Do not remove safety devices or guards on switches.
- Never reach underneath a mower because the blade remains engaged even when it is shut off.
- Never mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary.
- To remove debris use a stick or broom handle, not your hands.
- Always shut off the engine before leaving the mower unattended.
- Stay away from the engine cowling, as it can become very hot and burn unprotected flesh.
- Wait for blades to stop completely before crossing gravel roads, unclogging the chute, or removing the grass catcher.

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