Window blind safety

What to look for in new blinds and how to make existing blinds safer

Separate safety systems
Separate safety systems are those that require additional installation and/or operation in use.
If cordless options or those with built-in 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 built-in safety systems. Fixing height limitations also apply.

Examples

A breakaway device on the cords of a roman blind. The blind raised and lowered normally but cords will separate under undue load.

Built-in safety systems
Built-in safety systems are those that are built into the product and 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 a built-in 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.
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Examples

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

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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 improved safety standards for internal window blinds. To see more about the BBSA’s Make it Safe campaign visit: www.makesafesafe.org.uk

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

The Make It Safe campaign and advice in this brochure is supported by:

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Your BBSA member or approved Make it Safe dealer is:

The British Blind and Shutter Association
PO Box 232, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 9AR
E: info@bbsa.org.uk
W: www.bbsa.org.uk

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Safe by Design 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.

- Usually these blinds are pushed or pulled into position
- Motorised blinds can also remove the need for operating cords at the side of the blind
- Wooden shutters and external blinds are other cordless styles of window dressing

Always consider these blind styles first when choosing your blinds.

**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 cords must be secured in a figure of eight after each and every operation of the blind. Ensure all spare cord is securely contained on the cleat.

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Examples

- Chain break connector will part under any undue load but after inspection can be clipped back together again.
- Cord and chain tensioner for vertical blinds to hold cord and chain taut.
- Chain tensioner to hold a single chain or cord taut.
- Breakaway device on the cords of a roman blind. The blind raises and lowers normally but cords will separate under undue load.

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