

Ask the Experts: Drop-Side Crib Recalls

Our Contributors

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How do I know if my crib is on the recall list?

BPE: You can find a complete list of crib recalls on the [Consumer Product Safety Commission \(CPSC\)](#) web site.

Are drop-side cribs defective?

JPMA: Our position is that these cribs are perfectly safe when used and assembled in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and provided they are not damaged or broken. Properly assembled and maintained drop-side cribs have been in safe use for decades. They are not inherently defective. The mere fact that there were hardware complaints on drop-sides over time does not mean the cribs are defective. Such complaints are within the range of a reasonably expected complaint rate due to a variety of causes over many years. Drop-side incidents can occur due to incorrect assembly and with age-related wear and tear.

Why are all these cribs being recalled?

JPMA: The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) uses the word "Recall" to describe all product-related actions, including repair and provision of new or additional parts. We have recommended that they consider using alternate language so that consumers are not confused and think they need to return the product. Please note that this is not a recall of the product (crib), but rather a recall that offers interested consumers a safe way to immobilize drop sides on their cribs or other solutions so they can conform to the latest standards.

What should I do if my crib is on a recall list?

WARD: If your crib is on the recall list outlined by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), you should go to the [CPSC web site](#), where you will find specific directions on what you should do. In most cases, the website will provide contact information for you to get in touch with the appropriate party.

BILL: Then, the best and only thing you should do is to contact the manufacturer for the proper repair kit, which makes the drop-sides stationary.

BPE: It's important that you use the repair kit specific to your manufacturer and crib model. Don't try a "home remedy" or some other repair kit, because it may still place your baby in harm's way. Besides, there is no cost for the repair kits.

Also, if your crib is on the list, stop using it immediately. Until you are able to get the repair kit or a new crib, find a safe alternate place for your baby to sleep. Depending on their size, a bassinet or play yard can work for the short term.

JPMA: We wish to remind parents and care givers, that when you assemble a crib to the manufacturer's instructions and use it properly, a crib provides the safest sleeping environment for baby. Never place infants to sleep on pillows, sofa cushions, adult beds, waterbeds, beanbags or any other surface not specifically designed for infant sleep.

What if I have a drop-side crib that's not on the list?

WARD: It can be a confusing time right now for consumers to know what's safe and what's not. The most recent recall involved a voluntary recall by the importers and retailers whose cribs were affected. Only the cribs previously recalled – or those involved with the recent voluntary recall – are affected. This doesn't necessarily mean that all remaining drop-side cribs are safe.

Establish contact with the manufacturer and make certain that you are aware of any issues that their products have. If you have a drop-side crib that is not part of the recall, we still recommend that you contact your manufacturer or visit their web site to determine the status of your product.

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What if I have a drop-side crib that's not on the list? (continued)

If you have a crib not involved in the recall, we recommend that you inspect your crib regularly to ensure that the mechanisms are operating properly. If there is any indication that a mechanism is worn, not functioning properly or missing any hardware, stop using the crib immediately and contact the manufacturer of your crib.

Cribs are often disassembled and stored; frequently for several years. When the crib is reassembled, it is very important that the manufacturer's assembly instructions are followed carefully. Improper storage can result in damage to the hardware, causing it to become unsafe for use. When in doubt, we suggest purchasing a new model. Cribs over 10 years of age should not be used.

BILL: Most companies that have made drop-side cribs in the past, even if there has never been an issue with them, are providing repair kits just to put the consumer's mind at ease.

What should I inspect on my drop-side crib?

JPMA: Check to make sure the drop-side or any other parts are not missing or damaged and that they operate properly. Be sure that hardware is installed properly. When assembling and disassembling drop-side cribs, parents should always confirm that the crib is reassembled following the manufacturer's instructions. Instructions are attached to all cribs when sold; if they are missing, contact the manufacturer for a replacement copy.

How do I determine if a crib I already own is safe, especially if it is older?

WARD: First, confirm your crib is not part of any recall. We then recommend that you visually inspect the crib to confirm all components are in full working order. If the crib is more than 10 years old, and has been re-assembled over and over for new infant use, we recommend that you invest in a new crib to ensure all current safety standards have been met. Look for manufacturers that offer customers the opportunity to register their purchases, so the manufacturer can keep the customer informed with product updates on a consistent basis.

Which are the safest types of cribs?

BILL: The safest cribs are the ones made with no moving parts at all. Convertible cribs and the new cribs that are made to look like the old drop-sides but with no moving parts are good choices. Incidentally, these repair kits are all made to secure the drop-sides so there are no moving parts, so your current crib will then be safe as well.

How do I choose a new crib?

WARD: As with many products across any industry, consumers have a range of price points from which to choose. In most cases, associating low price with greater value can often be misleading. We encourage consumers to purchase from reputable retailers and to research the manufacturer before they purchase.

The federal government establishes mandatory safety standards that all manufacturers must comply with. Additionally, industry organizations establish voluntary standards that a manufacturer may choose to comply with.

A third level of independent third party testing, such as [Intertek Crib Check Certification](#), creates yet another level of assurance that an impartial organization certifies the products have been tested to an even higher standard. Cribs that meet Federal standards as well as the third party certification offer consumers the greatest piece of mind.

BPE: Visit one of our Baby Product Experts stores. All of our stores are independently owned and operated by people who have a passion for the safety of babies and children. Trained staff members are readily available to explain the construction and functionality of all of their cribs, and can help you select the best crib for your needs.

Where can I get more information?

- [Consumer Product Safety Commission \(CPSC\) Crib Information Center](#)
- [JPMA Statements on Drop-Side Crib Recalls \(June 24, 2010\)](#)
- [JPMA Safe Sleep Center](#)
- [JPMA Drop-Side Initiative FAQs](#)
- [BabyProductExperts.com](#)

Baby Product Experts specialty stores provide safe, high-quality products and expert advice. Be sure to consult a store near you when planning a nursery for your new baby.