Hope
Autism Clinic

# Home Water Safety Checklist

*A layer-by-layer guide to keeping your child safe around water.*

Use this checklist to put multiple layers of protection in place at home. Remember, no single safeguard is enough on its own. The goal is to stack several safeguards so that if one were to fail, another is there to catch it.

## Supervision

- [ ] Assign a specific "water watcher" for every water activity, with no phone or distractions.
- [ ] Stay within arm's reach of younger or higher-risk children in or near water.
- [ ] Rotate the water-watcher role so no one's attention has to last too long.
- [ ] Never rely on older children to supervise younger ones near water.

## Barriers at Home

- [ ] Surround home pools and hot tubs with four-sided fencing.
- [ ] Use gates that self-close and self-latch, with the latch above your child's reach.
- [ ] Remove toys and tempting items from the pool area when it is not in use.
- [ ] Empty and store wading pools, buckets, and water tables right after use.
- [ ] Cover and secure hot tubs, rain barrels, and decorative ponds.

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## Alarms and Locks

- [ ] Place alarms on doors and windows your child could use to leave the house.
- [ ] Install locks out of your child's reach on exit doors and pool gates.
- [ ] Consider a pool gate alarm or a pool-surface alarm.

## Locating Tools

- [ ] Use a GPS tracker or wearable device if your child tends to wander.
- [ ] Provide an ID bracelet with your contact information.
- [ ] Keep a current photo of your child on your phone at all times.

## A Shared Plan

- [ ] Make sure every caregiver knows the wandering and water-safety rules.
- [ ] Brief grandparents, babysitters, and hosts before visits.
- [ ] Identify all water near your home and any home you visit.
- [ ] Agree on one rule: if your child goes missing, call 911 and check water first.

**Remember**

- Most elopement or wandering incidents begin at home, often in the afternoon.
- Knowing how to swim lowers risk but never removes the need for supervision and barriers.

*For informational purposes only. This resource does not replace professional advice, constant supervision, or emergency services. In an emergency, call 911.*