



حكومة الشارقة
هيئة الشارقة للدفاع المدني
Government of Sharjah
Sharjah Civil Defense Authority

BALCONY SAFETY & DEATHS FROM FALL

2025

Balcony accidents can be avoided

- Falls often happen silently and suddenly—at homes, apartments, hotels and work sites.
- Victims include children, elderly, guests, and workers.
- Incidents are traumatic but preventable.
- Balcony safety is everyone's responsibility—mindfulness and simple controls save lives.

What is Balcony Safety?

Balcony safety is the set of

- **Behaviors**
- **Controls**
- **Emergency measures**

That prevent that prevent falls and injuries around balconies, windows, terraces, and railings.

Who is at Risk?

- **Young children (0–9):** Natural climbers, curiosity, small body size slips through gaps.
- **Elderly People:** Limited mobility, balance, medication effects, slower reaction time.
- **Adults:** Under the influence of Alcohol, Intoxication.
- **Special needs/mentally challenged people:** Impaired judgment, impulse control.
- **Workers/Guests/visitors:** Unfamiliar with balcony and tarrace conditions.

Where are the Risks?

- **Highrise buildings:** Balconies, terraces, open windows.
- **Construction sites:** Roof edges, scaffolding.
- **Villas:** Balconies, terraces, open windows.
- **Schools:** Open corridors, open stairs, terraces, balconies

What triggers the Risks?

- **Uncontrolled access:** Doors and windows left open, keys within child reach.
- **Inadequate supervision:** Unsupervised young children and elderly.
- **Climbable features:** Furniture, plant pots, toys near balcony railings or windowsills.
- **Railing Design:** Height below 1200 mm and openings/gaps > 100 mm.
- **Damaged elements:** Cracked balcony glazing, Corroded rails, loose fixings, weak substrates.

How to prevent falling?

- **Supervision**
- **Child proofing windows and access to balcony**
- **Common sense about climbable features**
- **Working at height awareness**
- **Safe use of balconies and terraces**
- **Railing and Glazing compliance**
- **Inspection and maintenance**

Supervision

Do's

- ✓ Provide close and constant attention to children and vulnerable persons.
- ✓ Supervise pets on balconies. use pet barriers where appropriate.
- ✓ Establish clear house rules for children, guests and domestic staff

Don'ts

- × Do not leave children, elderly or intoxicated persons unattended near balconies.
- × Do not leave young children in the care of ignorant domestic staff and siblings.
- × Do not leave special needs individuals unsupervised near edges.

Child proofing windows and access to balcony

Do's

- ✓ Install self-closing, self-latching balcony/terrace doors.
- ✓ Use childproof locks, door/window alarms.
- ✓ Keep keys out of reach.
- ✓ Close and lock doors/windows when not in use.

Don'ts

- × Do not leave balcony or terrace doors accessible to children.
- × Do not assume risk ends if access is locked. Do not allow children to open without your permission.

Common sense about climbable features

Do's

- ✓ Keep furniture, planters, toys and appliances away from railings and windows.
- ✓ Arrange bedding and seating well inside, maintaining a clear setback from windows and edges.

Don'ts

- × Do not keep stools, tables, or climbable items near balcony and window edges.
- × Do not allow children to climb onto planters, AC units or furniture to look out the windows and balconies.

Working at height awareness

Do's

- ✓ Appoint trained professionals for light-bulb changes, decorations, cleaning and plumbing.
- ✓ Use proper access equipment with fall protection when required.

Don'ts

- × Do not stand on stools and chairs near edges or lean out of windows.
- × Do not carry out risky work at balcony and terraces, in high winds or poor lighting.

Safe use of balconies and terraces

Do's

- ✓ Keep balconies clear for safe movement and emergency access.
- ✓ Secure light items in high winds.
- ✓ Use proper drying racks away from edges.

Don'ts

- × Do not store toys, bicycles in balcony.
- × Do not let children play in balcony. balcony is not a play area.
- × Do not overload with heavy storage or combustible clutter.

Railing and Glazing compliance

Do's

- ✓ Ensure guard height is not less than 1200 mm from finished floor level.
- ✓ Ensure gaps/openings is not more than 100 mm.
- ✓ Ensure no climbable horizontal members in railing design.
- ✓ Replace cracked glazing and repair corroded/loose rails immediately.

Don'ts

- × Do not ignore damaged glazing, loose joints, corrosion, or weak members.
- × Do not accept decorative patterns that create footholds and ladder effects.

Inspection and maintenance

Do's

- ✓ Inspect glazing, guard, balustrade regularly for cracks, loose joints, corrosion.
- ✓ Engage competent professionals for repairs and alterations.
- ✓ Verify fixings and substrates are sound.

Don'ts

- × Do not bypass professional advice and avoid makeshift fixes.
- × Do not assume old railings are safe without periodic checks

WARNING:

Rectify Your Balcony if Non-Compliant

- **Guard/railing height:** Minimum 1200 mm from finished floor.
- **Openings/gaps in railings:** Maximum 100 mm. No climbable patterns.
- **At floor level:** No climbable features near the edge.
- **Cracked glazing or weak railing:** Replace immediately.

Emergency Readiness:

- **Keep first-aid kit accessible:** Train family/staff in first aid and calling for help.
- **Know local emergency numbers:** 999 Police • 998 Ambulance • 997 Civil Defence.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

**SAVE YOUR LOVED ONES FROM
BALCONY ACCIDENTS & DEATHS.**

Sharjah Civil Defence Authority — Together for a safer community.