



Australian  
Competition &  
Consumer  
Commission

## USING SAFELY

- Always use a cover or wrap a towel around the bottle to prevent contact burns.
- Only use a hot water bottle to warm the bed. Remove the bottle before you get into bed and empty it or place it out of reach.
- Never use hot water bottles where babies or children may come into contact with them.
- Never use a damaged hot water bottle—throw it away and get a new one.
- Never use a hot water bottle in a bed fitted with an electric blanket.
- Never lean on, roll on, press against or lie on a hot water bottle.
- Never place a hot water bottle in a microwave or ordinary oven.

## STORING SAFELY

- Remove the stopper and attach it to the neck with string.
- Attach the hot water bottle to a coat hanger and hang it upside down in a wardrobe. This will allow it to empty completely and dry out.
- Never store the bottle with water in it or where it may come into contact with sunlight, household chemicals or grease. These can cause the bottle to perish and become weak before its next use.

## WATCH THE VIDEO

- Watch *Hot Water Bottles—The hidden dangers* on [productsafety.gov.au](http://productsafety.gov.au)

## Further information

For more information about mandatory standards, bans, recalls and emerging issues—and to subscribe to email alerts and RSS—visit our websites:

[productsafety.gov.au](http://productsafety.gov.au)

[recalls.gov.au](http://recalls.gov.au)

You can also follow us on Twitter: [twitter.com/productsafetyau](https://twitter.com/productsafetyau)

ACCC Infocentre: 1300 302 502

Callers who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment can contact us through the National Relay Service: [relayservice.com.au](http://relayservice.com.au)

Voice-only (speak and listen) users phone: 1300 555 727 and ask for 1300 302 502

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### Important notice

The information in this publication is for general guidance only. It does not constitute legal or other professional advice, and should not be relied on as a statement of the law in any jurisdiction. Because it is intended only as a general guide, it may contain generalisations. You should obtain professional advice if you have any specific concern.

The ACCC has made every reasonable effort to provide current and accurate information, but it does not make any guarantees regarding the accuracy, currency or completeness of that information.

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SAFETY ALERT

# Hot water bottles



**Stay warm and safe this winter**

# Avoid **HOT** water bottle burns

While hot water bottles can give you warmth, comfort and relief from aches and pains, they can also cause serious burns.

Every year up to 200 Australians are admitted to hospital because of serious burns from hot water bottles. These burns can be deep and painful and can become infected. They can require long hospital treatment, including skin grafts, and often result in permanent scarring.

Burns can occur quickly if:

- you splash hot water on yourself or others while filling a hot water bottle
- you place a hot water bottle filled with boiling water onto your skin
- a hot water bottle bursts and leaks hot water onto your skin.

Severe burns can also occur slowly if you leave a hot water bottle on one part of your body for more than 15 minutes. By the time you feel the pain of this type of burn, the damage is done.

Fortunately there are easy steps you can take to minimise the risk of burns from hot water bottles.



## Your hot water bottle safety checklist

### BUYING SAFE HOT WATER BOTTLES

- ✓ PVC and rubber hot water bottles sold in Australia must meet the mandatory safety standard for hot water bottles.
- ✓ Be aware that rubber hot water bottles can perish over time. PVC ones may last longer.
- ✓ Choose a hot water bottle with a large opening—this can reduce the risk of water spilling onto you while you are filling the bottle.
- ✓ Buy a new hot water bottle at least every year or as soon as yours shows signs of wear, cracking, perishing or leaking.
- ✓ Keep the packaging and receipt for your hot water bottle in case it fails and you need to report it to the ACCC.

### FILLING SAFELY

- ✓ Before using a hot water bottle, check it for cracks, splits, brittleness, breaks and other damage.
- ✓ Heat the water in a kettle using cold tap water. Do not fill the bottle with water from the hot water tap, which can cause the rubber to perish.
- ✓ Do not use boiling water. If the water is very hot, add cold water from the tap.
- ✓ Hold the hot water bottle upright, over the sink and away from your body when filling it.
- ✓ Pour water into the bottle slowly until it is two-thirds full.
- ✓ Remove excess air from the bottle before closing it. To do this, lower the bottle slowly towards a lying position on a flat surface. When you see water at the opening, put in the stopper and tighten it.