

Parents: Replace or Retrofit Outdated Window Blinds

If your mini-blinds or corded shades were purchased before 2001, they should be retrofitted or replaced — and not just because they may be out of fashion. More importantly, they may be a potential hazard to infants and toddlers, say safety experts who warn of the dangers of accidental strangulation on window cords.

Outdated mini-blinds and corded window coverings can be replaced with the cordless window coverings available today. Those who don't want to part with their window coverings, however, can retrofit them using these steps recommended by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the Window Covering Safety Council (WCSC).

Eliminate Looped Pull Cords

For mini-blinds and pleated shades made before 1995, consumers should cut the looped pull cord just above the tassel and remove the equalizer buckle, if any. Thread replacement tassels onto the newly cut cords and knot into place.

Install Cord Stops

Cord stops should be retrofitted on all mini-blinds and corded shades made before 2001:

(1) Lower the blind to its proper maximum length, and lock the cords into position at the head rail.

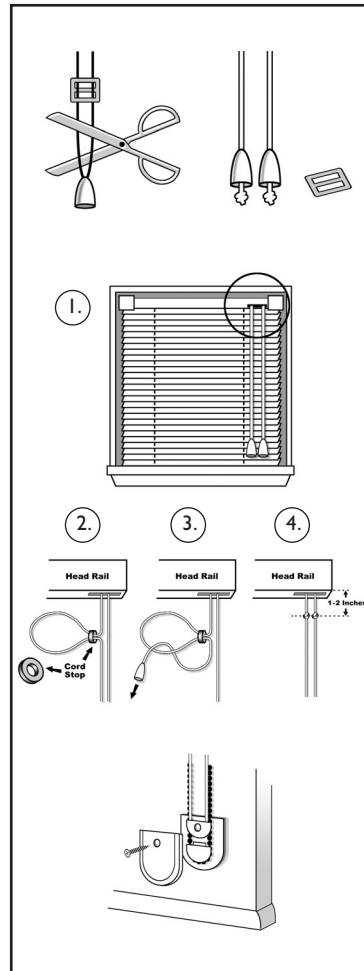
(2) Pinch together a portion of the pull cord near the head rail to create a loop, then slide cord stop over loop end.

(3) Slip the free end of the cord through the loop to loosely knot the cord stop onto the pull cord.

(4) Tighten knot to secure cord stop 1 to 2 inches below the head rail. Repeat steps for other pull cord.

Install Tie-Downs

Tie-downs should be used to permanently anchor the continuous-



looped pull cords of pre-1997 vertical blinds or traverse draperies to the floor or wall. The pull cord or chain should be inserted into the tie-down device, and then attached to the floor or wall so that the cord is fully extended and securely fastened.

Free retrofit kits can be ordered online at www.windowcoverings.org or by phoning the Window Covering Safety Council at 1-800-506-4636. **HP**