

Glass Safety in Family Day Care

Glass safety in family day care homes is an important issue that has, in many instances, now been included in State Regulations. It is vital that family day care carers understand the risks associated with the glass in their homes, and to manage this risk effectively. This information package has been designed to step carers through the issues and to provide practical information on how to manage glass safety in a cost effective way.

Background on glass safety

The Australian Standard on Glass (AS 1288-1994 and AS 2208 Human Impact) was introduced in 1994 to 'provide uniform direction for the use and installation of glazing and safety glazing throughout Australia'.

Those standards were updated on 13 January 2006 and are now referred to as:

Australian Standard AS1288-2006 & AS/NZS 2208 (Human Impact)

These standards recognise that '*accidents involving glass continue at a high rate and at considerable cost to the community*'.

Why is glass an issue for carers?

Family day care carers have a responsibility (known as a 'duty of care') to ensure a safe environment for the children in care.

What glass areas need to be checked?

All glass areas of your *home* where children can come into contact with glass needs to be checked to ensure that any risk they pose to children in care is managed effectively. This also includes external buildings such as sheds, garages and granny flats, and:

- Entrances/exits even if the children only walk past the glass area coming to and from the property – as they could trip and fall against the glass.
- Play areas within 5 metres of glass (both inside and outside)
- Sleeping areas
- Bathrooms/toilets
- Kitchens

What if glass is believed to be safe?

Carers should ideally have documented evidence that safety glass or safety film has been installed. This can be a report from a glazier or a building report. Unless a professional has confirmed that the glass is safe, it should be assumed to be unsafe and assessed as such.

How can glass be made safe?

All glass in *Home/Family Day Care/Child Care Centres* must meet the Australian Standard AS/NZS 2208 which requires all glass up to 1 metre from floor level to be safety glazed.

To meet these standards family day care carers can use safety glass or glass with safety film applied to it to render the glass shatter proof. They can also guard the glass with a barrier. These options are discussed later in this information kit.

The requirement is slightly different in NSW where State Regulations require all glass 750mm from floor level to be safety glazed.

In NSW, childcare services must comply with the rules set out in the NSW Children's Services Regulation 2004 which state:

*All children's services (including Family Day Care) must ensure that where there is glass up to 750mm from floor level, that it is either glazed to a safety glass standard, as required by the Building Code of Australia (rendering the glass shatter proof), **OR** guarded by barriers that prevent a child from striking or falling against the glass.*

Important: Australian Standard AS/NZS 2208 (Human Impact) requires all schools and Early Childhood Centres with glass up to 1m from the floor level to be compliant. In NSW only – the glass height requirement is up to 750mm from the floor level.

Who can provide a glass inspection report?

A person who installs safety film or a licensed glazier can carry out an inspection and provide a report on the glass that is required to be made safe.

- **Safety Film**

Family Day Care Australia has arranged with national glass safety film company, MEP Films, to conduct glass audits of carers' homes. MEP's licensed professionals operate in most areas. By contacting MEP through a freecall number in each State and Territory, carers can arrange for a representative to come and inspect their glass. The MEP representative will provide a report that will identify glass that needs to be made safe and glass that meets the required standard.

In NSW, the MEP will provide a Statement of Compliance to Children's Services Regulation 2004.

A fee is charged for this service.

MEP Films is FDCA's recommended supplier of safety film. They can be contacted as follows:

WA/NT 1800 999 070	NSW/ACT	1800 251 266
VIC/TAS/SA 1800 998 634	QLD	1800 777 263

- **Glazier**

Alternatively, carers can contact a local glazier to carry out the inspection. It is important to determine beforehand if they are able to provide a written report that identifies glass that needs to be made safe and glass that meets the required standard.

A fee is usually charged for this service.

Important: When a safety film company or a glazier comes to the home, they will inspect all the glass areas in the home including areas that will not be used by the children. This is a 'Duty of Care' and company liability insurance requirement.

What if there is no-one in the local area available to carry out glass checks?

A Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Glass Checklist has been included in this information package. The checklist has been designed to identify glass around the home that should meet the Australian Standard. This is done by measuring and noting on the Glass Checklist all the relevant glass area measurements from inside the home and checking it against the requirements of the standard. The checklist does not identify whether or not the glass meets the standard or not, only whether it should meet the standard.

Carers can provide this information to a safety film company or glazier to get an idea of the work and costs involved in upgrading the non-compliant glass.

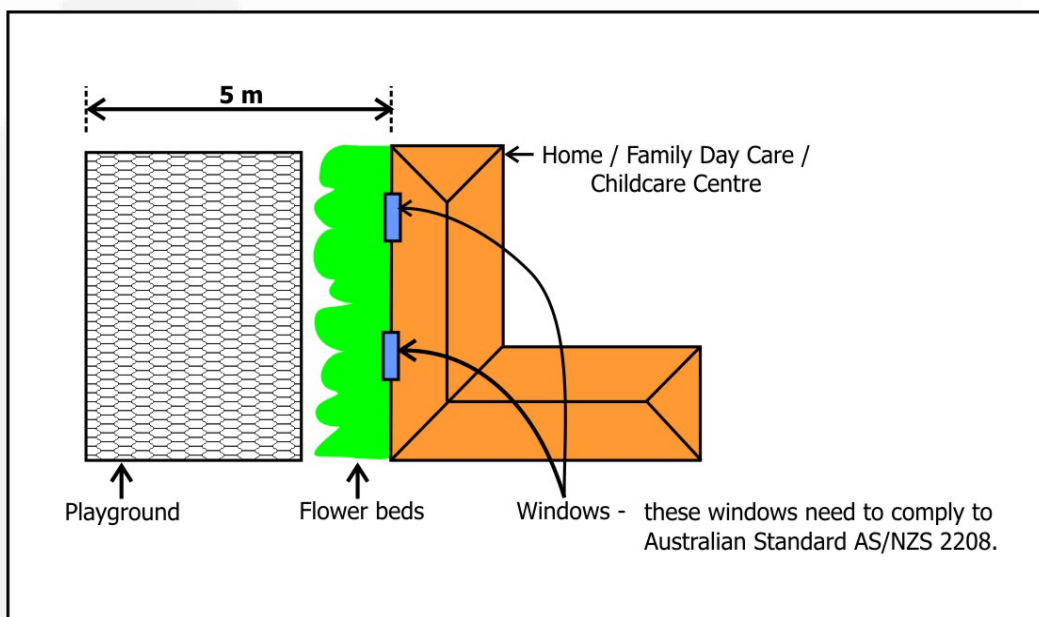
Important: Glass in most homes is generally only 3mm thick and does not comply or meet the required safety glass standards for family day care.

What next?

Included in this information package is a Glass Checklist. Use this checklist to measure all glass in areas inside and outside the home that are accessible to children. There is no need to measure glass in rooms or areas where the children cannot come into contact with the glass, eg rooms kept locked whilst the children are in care.

Important: Any glass in locked rooms that are accessible from the outside by children playing within 5 metres of the glass area needs to be made safe and therefore measured. See Diagram 1 below:

Diagram 1:



How to Complete The Glass Checklist

The following tools are needed to complete the Glass Checklist sheet:

- Metric Tape Measure
- Glass Checklist
- Pen
- Calculator

Step 1 The first step is to work out which glass needs to be measured, that is, all glass in areas inside and outside the home that are accessible to children.

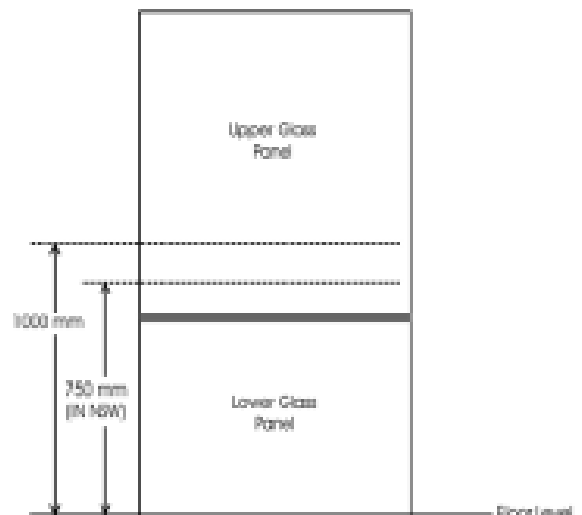
On the Glass Checklist sheet fill in the columns as follows:

- A. Write the name of the room to be measured , eg lounge, dining room, sun room etc
- B. Write what type of glass is to be measured, ie window or door
- C. Write if the glass is an upper panel, lower panel or if it is a single panel. Each panel is treated separately when measuring.
- D. Place the tape measure on the floor and measure up to the edge of the glass.
 - If this measurement is **below 750mm** (NSW only) or **below 1 metre**, place a tick (✓) in column D – this glass is required to comply with the glass safety standard.
 - If this measurement is **above 750mm** (NSW only) or **above 1 metre**, place an 'X' in column D – this glass does not need to comply with the glass safety standard.

Example Step 1 – Lounge Room Window

In the diagram below, the window is situated in the lounge room and there are two separate glass panels. On the Glass Checklist, write 'lounge' in column A and 'window' in column B. In column C - write either the word, 'upper' or 'lower' depending on which panel is being measured.

In this example diagram, both the lower panel and the upper panel fall into the 1 metre (750mm in NSW) height criteria from floor level, and therefore need to be made safe.



When Step 1 has been completed, the Glass Checklist should show the status of all of the glass in areas inside and outside the home that are accessible to children. The glass that has been marked with a tick (✓) in column D is required to meet the Glass Safety Standard.

Step 2: Step 2 involves the measurement of individual glass panels that have had a tick (✓) placed next to them in column D of the Glass Checklist.

- Measure the width of the glass panel and put the width measurement in column E
- Measure the height of the glass panel and put the height measurement into column F
- To calculate the glass panel area (in square metres), multiply the figure in column E with the figure in column F. Write this measurement in column G on the Glass Checklist sheet.

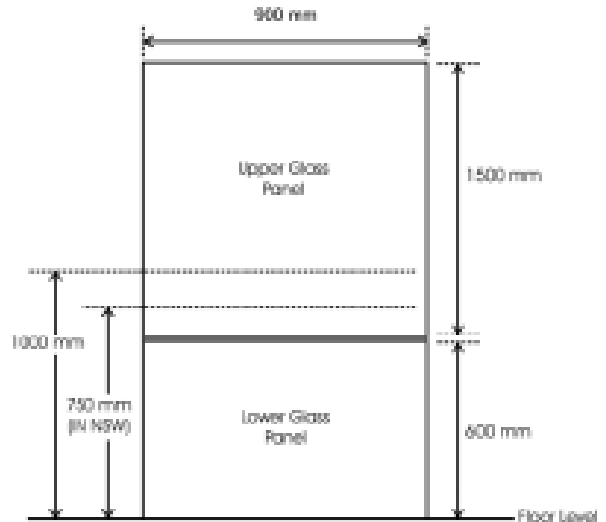
Example Step 2 – Lounge Room Window

Using the diagram below as an example, columns E, F and G should be completed as follows.

Upper Glass Panel

1. In column E write down the width of the upper glass panel, ie 0.9m (900mm)
2. In column F write down the height of the upper glass panel, ie: 1.5m (1500mm)
3. With a calculator, multiply the two figures in columns E and F In column G and write down this figure which is the square metre area of the upper panel, ie

$0.9\text{m} \times 1.5\text{m} = 1.35 \text{ m}^2$



Lower Glass Panel

1. On the next row of column E write down the width of the lower glass panel, ie 0.9m (900mm)
2. On the next row of column F write down the height of the lower glass panel, ie: 0.6m (600mm)
3. With a calculator, multiply the two figures in columns E and F In column G and write down this figure which is the square metre area of the lower panel, ie $0.9\text{m} \times 0.6\text{m} = 0.54 \text{ m}^2$

Important: If you are unsure how to measure the glass panels, or complete the Glass Checklist sheet, call the MEP Films phone number in your State or Territory (listed on page 2) for assistance.

Based on the example above, the Glass Checklist should look like this:

	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.	H.
	Room Name	Glass Type	Glass Panel Type	Under (√) or over (x) 1m or .75m (NSW)	Glass Panel Width	Glass Panel Height	Glass Panel Area	Is glass safety required ? √ or X
A	Lounge	Window	Upper panel	√	900 mm	1500 mm	1.35 m ²	√
B	Lounge	Window	Lower panel	√	900 mm	600 mm	0.54 m ²	√
C								
D								

How to choose the most suitable solution

When measurement and calculation of each individual glass panel has been completed and all information placed on the Glass Checklist, solutions can now be determined for each glass panel.

Step 3: Columns H and K on the Glass Checklist can be completed as follows:

- For glass panels that are **less** than 2 square metres (2 m²) in area:
Apply safety film to the glass (place a tick (✓) in the Safety Film column K)

OR

Place a suitable barrier in front of the glass (place a tick (✓) in the Barrier column M)

- For glass panels that are **more** than 2 square metres (2 m²) in area:
Replace with safety glass (place a tick (✓) in the Safety Glass column H) and contact a glazier (see note below)

OR

Place a suitable barrier in front of the glass (place a tick (✓) in the Barrier column M)

Important: Safety film may be used on glass panels that are more than 2 m² in area if the panel is at least 5mm thick. Only a professional glazier or safety film company can provide advice in relation to glass thickness.

Implementing the most suitable solution

Once the glass checklist has been completed and decisions taken in relation to the most appropriate treatment of non-compliant glass, the final step can be taken.

Step 4: Contact a Safety Film Installer or Glazier or Builder

- Contact a safety film company
Call MEP Films (numbers listed on page 2) and they will put you in contact with a safety film installer nearest your area. The measurements noted on the Glass Checklist can either be read out over the phone or faxed; from those measurements the safety film company can then provide a quote to do the job.
Safety film is always installed on the inside surface of the glass.
- Contact a professional glazier (glass replacement company)
Call a glazier to obtain a quote for glass replacement. The measurements noted on the Glass Checklist can either be read out over the phone or faxed; from those measurements the glazier can then provide a quote to do the job.
- Contact a builder
Contact a registered builder or similar, to obtain advice on the manufacture and installation of barriers to protect children in care from glass hazards. A suitable barrier is anything that stops a child from striking or falling against the glass. The 'rules of thumb' listed below can identify whether a barrier is suitable.

Important Note: A warranty must be supplied by the safety film company or glazier or builder for any work carried out. Ensure that the safety film company or the glazier provides a report that verifies that glass complies with the Australian Standard.

Rules of Thumb on barrier requirements/installations

Ensure that:

- The barrier itself is not a hazard in any way
- The barrier covers the full 1 metre (0.75m in NSW) from floor level and prevents children coming into contact with any of the glass when the barrier is in place
- The barrier cannot move/ bend so that it is unable to hit the glass and cause it to break

- The barrier cannot be climbed on, up, over or under enabling children to make contact with the glass
- The barrier cannot fall onto a child
- The barrier does not have sharp edges that could injure children
- The barrier protects both sides of the glass if the children can come into contact with both sides of the glass eg. If a barrier is only placed on the inside and the child is outside playing and falls against the glass the glass may still break. In this instance both sides of the glass must be protected and any combination of suitable barriers can be used.

Important: A barrier can be an item of furniture as long as it fulfils the above rules of thumb. The use of plywood or polycarbonate sheeting can also be used as a barrier to cover glass areas **provided that all the barriers installed comply with the required Australian Standards.**

Glass In Furniture

Although State Regulations do not mention glass in furniture, carers must still comply with their duty of care to provide a safe environment for the children in care. Therefore, glass in furniture is also required to be made safe.

Any furniture that contains glass such as a glass top table, fish tank, shower screen or glass doors in an entertainment unit will need to be made safe, either by:

- moving the item of furniture to an area that the children cannot access
- placing a suitable barrier in front of the glass
- replacing the glass with safety glass
- coating the glass with safety film

Other Glass Areas that may be of concern

Any glass in a door, above the door or beside a door even if the panel is above 1 metre (0.75m in NSW) can be a hazard **and must comply with the new Australian Standard.** It is advisable to either replace the glass with safety glass or install safety film or cover it with a barrier.

Taxation Issues

- Safety Film
The installation of safety film can be claimed as an expense to the business as it is deemed a 'repair' as opposed to a 'capital expense'
- Safety Glass
Safety glass is deemed to be a 'capital expense' and can only be claimed as a depreciable item over a number of years
- Barriers
Check with your accountant on the taxation issues when choosing this option

Important: This information is provided as a guide only. Carers are advised to seek their own taxation advice in relation to the tax deductibility or otherwise of glass treatment.

Disclaimer: Family Day Care Australia provides this information on glass safety as a guide only and believes, in good faith, that it is accurate as at 1 October 2006. FDCA expressly disclaims all and any liability in relation to this publication. No form of legal action or remedy will apply or be available to the user of this guide as a result of reliance, whether wholly or partially, upon the contents, errors or omissions in this publication.

How to Complete the Glass Checklist

Column A	Write the name of the room
Column B	Write the type of glass, eg window, door etc
Column C	Write if the glass panel is an upper panel, or lower panel or if it is a single panel. Each panel is treated separately when measuring.
Column D	Tick, if the glass panel falls within the 1m (750mm in NSW) height criteria. Even if the 0.75m falls within reach of any section of the glass panel, the whole glass panel is affected and a tick would be written in this column. If none of the glass panel falls within the height criteria then put an 'X' in the column.
Column E	Write the width measurement
Column F	Write the height measurement
Column G	Use a calculator to multiply the width measurement (Column E) x height measurement (Column F) and write the answer in this column. This is the area of the glass panel.
Column H	If the glass is 2 m ² or less then one of the glass safety solutions is to apply safety glass – tick to select
Column K	If the glass is 2 m ² or less then one of the glass safety solutions is to apply safety film – tick to select
Column M	If the glass is 2 m ² or less then one of the glass safety solutions is to apply a barrier – tick to select
Column H	If the glass is more than 2 m ² then one of the glass safety solutions is safety glass. Safety film is unlikely to be an option for a glass panel this size.
Column L	If the glass is more than 2 m ² then one of the glass safety solutions is a barrier. Safety film is unlikely to be an option for a glass panel this size.
Column J	For each glass panel indicated with a tick in column H, write the dollar amount quoted by the glazier in column J. Once quotes have been obtained for each of the panels use a calculator to add all the dollar amounts in this column and write the total down the bottom. This will then give you an idea of the total cost of using safety glass as a solution.
Column K	For each glass panel indicated with a tick in column K, write the dollar amount quoted by the safety film company in column L. Once quotes have been obtained for each of the panels use a calculator to add all the dollar amounts in this column and write the total down the bottom. This will then give you an idea of the total cost of using safety film as a solution.

Glass Checklist

	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.	H.	J.	K.	L.	M.
	Room Name	Glass Type	Glass Panel Type	Under (√) or over (x) 1m or .75m (NSW)	Glass Panel Width (mm)	Glass Panel Height (mm)	Glass Panel Area in m ² Multiply Column E by Column F	Is Safety Glass Required? (√) / (X)	Cost of Safety Glass	Is Safety Film required (for glass less than 2m ² in area) (√) / (X)	Cost of Safety Film	Barrier to be used (√) / (X)
1									\$		\$	
2									\$		\$	
3									\$		\$	
4									\$		\$	
5									\$		\$	
6									\$		\$	
7									\$		\$	
8									\$		\$	
9									\$		\$	
10									\$		\$	
11									\$		\$	
12									\$		\$	
13									\$		\$	
14									\$		\$	
Total									\$	Total	\$	