

The sun is shining, the children are smeared with a mixture of sun-cream and ice lolly gloop, the smallest one is covered in grass cuttings from falling on the newly mown lawn. And the new trampoline is waiting to keep A&E busy, and to provide me with opportunity to use some terrible jokes.

Trampolines are excellent exercise and entertainment, but they must be used safely. I refuse to do health and safety paranoia, but for every person telling you that jumping on a trampoline is great fun, another will label it a death trap. So, is your trampoline waiting to spring into action and cause you an injury? Or can your afternoon be bouncy?

Here are three and a half simple steps that you can take, to ensure that you won't leap off the trampoline and land in the waiting room at A&E.

1. Think carefully about letting more than one person bounce at a time. Around 60% of trampoline accidents occur when more than one person is bouncing. Collisions, becoming unbalanced, and even being catapulted off are all dangers.
2. Make sure that young children aren't on full-sized trampolines. Children under 6 make up about 15% of all trampoline injuries. Supervise them and keep them on age-appropriate trampolines to avoid accidents.
3. Buy the extra safety stuff: a safety net is essential to keep anyone from falling off, and padding over the springs will prevent fingers from being trapped or anyone slipping through.
- 3.5. Get some lessons if you can. If the kids know how move on the trampoline it will be safer.

Clearly, trampolines have their ups and downs. However, if you're thoughtful you can bounce to your heart's content.