



An Extended Guide · No. 1882

Robot Mower Safety — Kids, Pets, Wildlife & Night Mowing

A protective, plain-English
guide for families

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Keeping everyone safe around your robot mower

A robot mower is a marvel — but it is still a machine with spinning blades, running around a yard where children play and pets roam. This guide is the plain, protective talk about keeping your family, your animals, and your neighbors safe around it.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. I've spent 30+ years helping families get comfortable and safe with their gear. This one's written especially for households with kids or pets, because that's where the care matters most.

The good news is that robot mowers are built with real safety features and, used sensibly, they're very safe. The job of this guide is to show you those features, set a few simple house rules, and steer you clear of the one habit I most want families to avoid — night mowing.

★ I'll set it up safely with you

When I set up a mower for a family, we go through the stop button, the PIN lock, and the safe schedule together before it ever runs on its own. If you'd like that peace of mind, call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

The safety rules, on one page

If you remember only these things, your family is on solid ground around a robot mower.

- ❑ Lift or tip the mower and the blades stop — that's the key safety feature, but never test it with your hands near the blades.
- ❑ Set a PIN lock so children can't start it, and teach everyone where the big stop button is.
- ❑ Mow only when kids and pets are not out in the yard — supervise until you trust it.
- ❑ Never mow at night: that's when wildlife and pets roam, and the noise bothers neighbors.
- ❑ Pick up toys, hoses, shoes, and pet mess before every run.
- ❑ Teach children the mower is not a toy and never something to ride, chase, or pick up while it's running.

! The one rule above all

Keep hands and feet away from a running mower, and never reach under it while the blades could turn. Always use the stop button first, then the PIN, before you touch it.

How the blades are built for safety

The blades are the heart of the safety question, so it helps to understand how they're different from a push mower's.

Most robot mowers use **small, light razor-style blades** — little pivoting blades, not the big heavy fixed blade of a gas mower. They cut a tiny bit off the top often, rather than a lot at once, so they spin with far less force. That lighter design is gentler if something it shouldn't hit ever reaches them.

Lighter does not mean harmless. The blades are sharp and they turn fast, and they can cut a finger, a toe, or a paw badly. The safety story isn't that the blades can't hurt you — it's that the mower is built to **stop them before they reach you**. That's what the sensors are for, and that's what the next pages are about.

! Sharp is still sharp

A robot mower's blades are small, but treat them with the same respect you would any mower blade. Never run a finger along one, and keep children's hands well away.

Lift and tilt sensors: the main safeguard

This is the single most important safety feature, and the one that makes a robot mower safe to have around a family at all.

Every reputable robot mower has **lift and tilt sensors**. If the mower is **lifted off the ground** — say a child or an adult picks it up — the blades stop almost instantly. If it's **tipped or tilted** too far, say it rides up on a foot or an obstacle, the blades stop too. The idea is that the blades only spin when the mower is sitting flat on the grass doing its job.

This is why the mower can be lifted to carry it, and why it won't keep cutting if it climbs onto something. It's a genuine, reliable safeguard — but it's a backstop, not a license to be careless. The blades stopping when lifted is exactly why you should never deliberately lift it to look underneath while it's powered.

! Never test the sensors with your hands

Trust that the lift and tilt sensors work — do not test them by putting a hand or foot near the blades. To check or clean underneath, always power the mower fully off and follow the manual, not just lift it.

Bumper and obstacle sensors

The second layer of safety is the mower's ability to notice things in its path and go around them instead of into them.

A robot mower feels a **bump** and backs away and turns — so if it gently nudges a foot, a toy, or a tree, it changes course rather than pushing through. Newer models add **cameras or obstacle sensors** that see things coming and steer around them before touching, which is better still around pets and children.

These sensors are good, but not perfect. A small, low thing — a sleeping kitten, a child's hand flat on the grass, a low toy — can be harder for a mower to notice than a chair leg. That's exactly why the sensors are a backup to the real safety rule: **don't run it while kids and pets are out**, which we'll come to.

! Sensors are a backup, not a babysitter

Obstacle sensors reduce risk; they do not remove it. Never rely on them to keep a small child or a napping pet safe. The schedule and supervision do that — the sensors are just the extra layer.

The PIN and child lock

A curious child and an easy-to-start mower are a bad mix. The PIN lock is how you prevent it, and it belongs on from day one.

Robot mowers have a **PIN code** — a short number you set that's needed to start the mower, change its settings, or sometimes even move it. With the PIN on, a child pressing buttons can't set the blades spinning. Many mowers also tie to the owner's phone account, adding another lock a child can't get past.

Set the PIN during setup, keep it to yourself and other responsible adults, and don't tape it to the mower or leave it at the factory default. The whole point is that only a grown-up who knows the code can start the machine. The same PIN also discourages theft — our security guide covers that side.

! Set the PIN before the first mow

Turn on the PIN lock during setup, not someday later. It takes a minute and it's the difference between a child being able to start a bladed machine and not. Make it a non-negotiable step.

The big stop button everyone should know

When something's wrong, you want to stop the blades right now — not fumble for a phone. Every mower has a way to do exactly that.

There's a **large, obvious stop button** on top of the mower — often a big red one — that halts the blades and the wheels the instant you press it. Learn where it is, press it once yourself so you know the feel, and make sure every adult in the house knows it too. It's the fastest way to make the mower safe if a child, a pet, or a problem appears.

Teach older children where the stop button is as well, with one firm rule: you press it to **stop** the mower in an emergency, never to play with starting and stopping it. For little ones, the rule is simpler — stay away from the mower entirely and call a grown-up.

✓ Practice the stop once, calmly

On a quiet afternoon, have each adult press the stop button once so it's second nature. In a real moment — a toddler toddling over, a dog bounding up — you won't have to think about it.

Mow when the yard is empty

No sensor is as safe as a simple habit: run the mower when nobody's out in the yard. This is the heart of family mower safety.

Set the schedule for times the yard is **empty of children and pets** — a weekday mid-morning while the kids are at school, say, or an hour when the dog is inside. That way the mower does its work with no one in its path, and the clever sensors never even have to be the thing keeping anyone safe.

When the kids and the dog come out to play, the mower should be **done and docked**. If plans change and children head outside mid-mow, pause it from the app or press the stop button and send it home. The yard is either a mowing space or a playing space — not both at once.

! Empty yard, every time

The firmest rule in this whole guide: the mower runs only when kids and pets are not in the yard. Build the schedule around your family's day, and pause it the moment someone goes out to play.

Why you should never mow at night

This is the habit I most want to talk families out of. It's tempting — a quiet mow while everyone sleeps — but it's the wrong call for several real reasons.

Night is when **wildlife is on the move**. Toads, hedgehogs where they live, young rabbits, and other small creatures come out after dark and freeze or hide when threatened rather than run — so a night-mowing robot can run right over them. There are sad, well-documented cases of robot mowers injuring wildlife at night. It's also when **roaming pets** — the neighbor's cat, your own dog let out last thing — are about.

On top of that, a mower whirring around at 2 a.m. **disturbs the neighbors**, and you're not there to notice if it gets stuck, climbs somewhere it shouldn't, or meets a problem. Daylight mowing fixes all of it: you can glance out, wildlife is settled, and the neighbors sleep.

! Daylight hours only — please

No matter how convenient it sounds, keep the mower to daytime runs. The small wildlife that comes out at night can't get out of its way, and that's a line worth holding for every family.

Two kinds of homes, two sets of needs

A home with young children has different safety needs than a home with pets and no little ones — though both matter. Picture your own household as you set the rules.

A home with young children

With toddlers and young kids about, the mower is a machine to keep them well away from, and the rules are strict and simple.

- Mow only while children are napping, at school, or safely indoors.
- PIN-lock it so no small hand can ever start it.
- Teach the simple rule: the mower is not a toy — stay away from it.
- Always do a toy pick-up before a run so nothing precious is in its path.

A home with pets

With dogs, cats, or outdoor animals, the care is about timing and keeping the yard clear of things that trip the mower or endanger a pet.

- Run it when pets are indoors, and introduce a nervous animal slowly.
- Pick up pet mess first — a mower spreads it everywhere.
- Keep the schedule to daylight so roaming cats and wildlife are safe.
- Watch the first runs to see how your animal reacts before leaving it.

★ A busy family home?

Plenty of homes have both little ones and pets, and that just means a little more care with the schedule. Tell me about your household and I'll help you set it up so it runs safely around everyone. Call (330) 200-8042.

Simple house rules for the whole family

Safety sticks when everyone knows the same few rules. Keep these short enough that even young children can remember them.

- **The mower is not a toy.** We don't ride it, sit on it, or push it.
- **We don't chase it or tease it,** and we don't try to make it bump us.
- **We never pick it up** while it's running — a grown-up stops it first.
- **Keep hands and feet away** from it, especially underneath.
- **If the mower is out, we tell a grown-up** before we go play in the yard.
- **Only grown-ups start it,** using the code.

✓ Say it once, out loud, together

Walk the kids out to meet the mower once, point to the stop button, and say the rules together. Children follow rules far better when they've seen the machine and heard the why.

The two-minute walk before every run

Most mower mishaps aren't about the machine at all — they're about what got left on the lawn. A quick walk-around prevents nearly all of them.

Before the mower runs, take a quick lap of the yard and pick up the things that cause trouble: **toys, balls, shoes, garden hoses, extension cords, dog bones and chews, and pet mess.** A mower chews up a left-out toy, flings small objects, tangles on a hose, and smears anything soft across the whole lawn.

It's also the moment to make sure **no child or pet is out** and that the gate is shut so none wanders in mid-mow. On a scheduled run when you're not home, that's where an earlier tidy and a closed gate do the job for you.

! A left-out toy is the usual culprit

The most common real-world mower problem in a family yard isn't the blades or sensors — it's a toy, a hose, or a pile of pet mess left on the grass. Two minutes of pick-up saves the mess and the mower both.

Helping pets get along with the mower

Animals react to a robot mower in all sorts of ways — some ignore it, some bark, some want to herd it. A gentle introduction keeps everyone calm.

Introduce a **nervous or protective dog** to the mower slowly, with you there, on short daytime runs, so it learns the machine is dull and harmless and not a threat to chase or guard against. Most animals soon treat it as part of the furniture. A dog that insists on chasing or biting the mower, though, needs to be kept in while it runs — for its safety and the mower's.

Keep up the **pet-mess pick-up** every time — it's the single biggest pet-and-mower nuisance. And remember that small outdoor pets or visiting animals, like rabbits or a neighbor's cat, are the ones the sensors may miss, which is one more reason for daylight-only, empty-yard mowing.

✓ Short, supervised introductions

A few short runs with you standing by usually settle a curious pet. If yours stays frantic around the mower, keep it indoors during runs rather than hoping it'll get used to it.

Looking out for the small wildlife

Our Ohio yards share space with a lot of small creatures, and a little thought keeps a robot mower from harming them.

Beyond avoiding night mowing, a couple of habits help. **Walk the yard before a run** in the warmer months and gently move along any toad, young rabbit, or nesting critter you spot. Keep tall-grass corners and brush piles — where little animals shelter — as **keep-out zones** so the mower never enters them.

Ground-nesting rabbits sometimes tuck a nest right in the lawn in spring. If you find one, zone around it for a few weeks until the young move on. These small kindnesses cost nothing and spare the kind of accident that upsets a whole family — especially the kids.

✓ Teach the kids to be the lookouts

Children love a job. Make them the yard's wildlife lookouts — walking ahead of a run to spot toads and bunnies to move to safety. It teaches care and keeps little creatures out of harm's way.

Edges, water, and slopes near the family

A few spots in the yard deserve extra caution, especially where children and pets gather.

Fence off anywhere the mower could get into trouble near people: the edge of a **pool or pond**, a steep **slope** where it could slide toward a patio or play area, a drop-off or retaining wall, and the immediate area around the **play set, sandbox, or patio**. A keep-out zone around each keeps the mower well clear of where the family is.

Water deserves special mention: a mower is not meant to drive into a pool, and a child and a mower near open water is a situation to design out entirely with a generous keep-out zone. When in doubt, zone wider around anything where a slip would matter.

! Zone wide around water and play areas

Around a pool, pond, steep bank, or the kids' play set, draw the keep-out zone generously. A little extra clear space there costs you nothing and keeps the mower far from where it could do harm.

Talking to children about the mower

How you introduce the mower shapes how your kids treat it. A calm, clear first meeting works better than a scary warning.

Show them the mower while it's **off and still**. Let them see it's a working machine with sharp parts underneath, not a pet and not a toy. Point to the stop button, say the house rules, and answer their questions — there's no silly question from a curious child, and understanding keeps them safer than fear does.

For **little ones**, keep it to one idea they can hold: stay away from the mower, and get a grown-up. For **older children**, you can trust them with the stop button for emergencies and the rule that only adults start it. Repeat the rules now and then — kids forget, and a gentle reminder keeps the habit fresh.

✓ Understanding beats fear

A child who understands the mower has sharp blades and stops when lifted is safer than one who's just been told 'no' without knowing why. Explain it at their level and the rules stick.

Staying safe when you clean or service it

The one time you're meant to be near the blades is when you clean or check the mower. That's exactly when to be most careful.

Before you ever reach underneath — to clear packed grass, check or change a blade, or pull out a stuck stick — **power the mower fully off**, not just pause it, and follow the manual's steps. Don't rely on the lift sensor alone to keep the blades still while your hands are near them. Many folks wear a sturdy glove for blade work, and keep children and pets away while the mower is opened up.

Do this upkeep somewhere flat and well-lit, like the garage, not crouched over it in the yard. A couple of minutes of care, done safely and out of a child's reach, keeps the mower running well and keeps your fingers where they belong.

! Power off, not just pause, before you reach under

Pausing stops the mower for now; powering fully off is what makes it safe to put hands near the blades. Make that your unbreakable habit for any job underneath the machine.

A family safety checklist

Keep this on the fridge. Run through it when you set the mower up, and glance at it now and then as a refresher.

- ☐ PIN lock is on, and only responsible adults know the code.
- ☐ Every adult knows where the big stop button is and has pressed it once.
- ☐ The schedule runs only when kids and pets are not in the yard.
- ☐ It never, ever mows at night.
- ☐ We do a two-minute toy, hose, and pet-mess pick-up before every run.
- ☐ Keep-out zones protect the pool, pond, slopes, and play areas.
- ☐ The kids know the house rules and that only grown-ups start it.
- ☐ We power the mower fully off before reaching underneath it.

★ Want me to set the safe defaults?

On a visit I'll turn on the PIN, build a safe daytime schedule, draw the keep-out zones around your water and play areas, and walk the whole family through the rules. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

Common safety mistakes families make

A handful of slip-ups account for most of the scares. Knowing them keeps your family on the safe side.

- **Skipping the PIN lock**, leaving a bladed machine a child can start.
- **Mowing at night**, harming wildlife and pets and bothering neighbors.
- **Letting it run while kids play**, trusting sensors to do the job a schedule should.
- **Forgetting the pick-up**, so a toy or pet mess meets the blades.
- **Reaching underneath without powering off**, relying on the lift sensor with hands near the blades.
- **Treating the sensors as a babysitter** instead of the backup they are.

! Sensors reduce risk; habits remove it

Every safety feature on the mower is a backup to the real protection: a safe schedule, a PIN, a pick-up, and supervision. Lean on the habits first and the sensors catch what's left.

Safety questions to ask about any mower

Whether you're shopping or setting one up, these questions get you to a mower that's safe for a family yard.

Q: Does it stop the blades when lifted or tipped?

Yes on any reputable model — lift and tilt sensors are the key safeguard. Confirm it has them, and never test them by hand.

Q: Can I lock it so my child can't start it?

Look for a PIN lock and an owner account. Set the PIN during setup and keep it to responsible adults.

Q: What obstacle sensing does it have?

Bump sensing is the minimum; camera or obstacle sensors that steer around things are better around pets and children — but still a backup to a safe schedule.

Q: How do I stop it fast in an emergency?

Find the big stop button and make sure every adult knows it. Press it once yourself so the feel is familiar before you need it.

✓ There's no silly question

When it comes to a bladed machine around your kids and pets, ask every question that's on your mind. A good salesperson — or I — will answer every one of them plainly.

Common Questions

The safety questions I hear most from families, answered plainly and without sugar-coating.

Q: Is a robot mower safe around my kids?

Used sensibly, yes. The blades stop when it's lifted or tipped, a PIN stops children starting it, and sensors help it avoid obstacles. The real safety comes from mowing only when kids aren't out and picking up the yard first.

Q: Can it hurt my dog or cat?

It can if a pet is in its path and the sensors miss a low animal, so run it only when pets are indoors. Introduce a curious pet slowly on short supervised runs, and keep a mower-chaser inside during mows.

Q: Why is night mowing such a big deal?

Night is when toads, young rabbits, and other small wildlife come out and freeze rather than flee, so a mower can run right over them. It's also when roaming pets are about and the noise disturbs neighbors. Daylight mowing avoids all of it.

Q: Will the blades stop if my child picks it up?

On any reputable mower, yes — lifting it trips the sensor and the blades stop. But never rely on that: PIN-lock it so a child can't start it, and teach kids never to pick it up at all.

Q: What's the most important thing I can do?

Two things: run it only when kids and pets are not in the yard, and never mow at night. Those two habits prevent the great majority of any risk, with the sensors as the backup.

★ Setting one up for your family?

Keeping a robot mower safe around kids and pets is exactly the kind of thing I love helping families get right. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and I'll set the safe defaults and walk everyone through the rules.

You don't have to do this alone

You just have to remember that a friendly, patient person is one call away.

I hope this guide made robot mower safety for your family feel a little less daunting and a lot more doable. Keep it in a drawer with your other home papers, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything.

When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. I'll help you choose the right machine, get it set up and mapped, connect it to your Wi-Fi and your phone, and show you how to run it. A first visit is a flat \$99, and for the parts that don't need me on-site — app settings, schedules, a quick question — I can often help right on your screen for \$49. Every visit comes with a 30-day, come-back-free guarantee. For anything that calls for a ladder, wiring, or digging, I'll help you line up a trustworthy local pro rather than risk it.

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The Layers That Keep a Family Safe

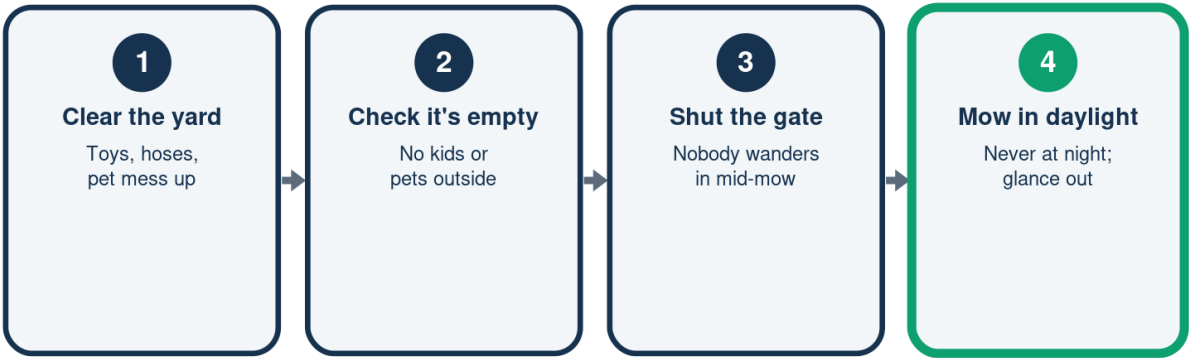
Habits first, sensors as the backup

Safety layer		What it does
Safe schedule	Mow when yard	is empty
PIN lock	Child can't	start it
Lift / tilt	Blades stop	if lifted
Obstacle sense	Avoids things	in its path
Stop button	Halts it	right now

The schedule and PIN do the work; sensors catch the rest.

Before Every Run

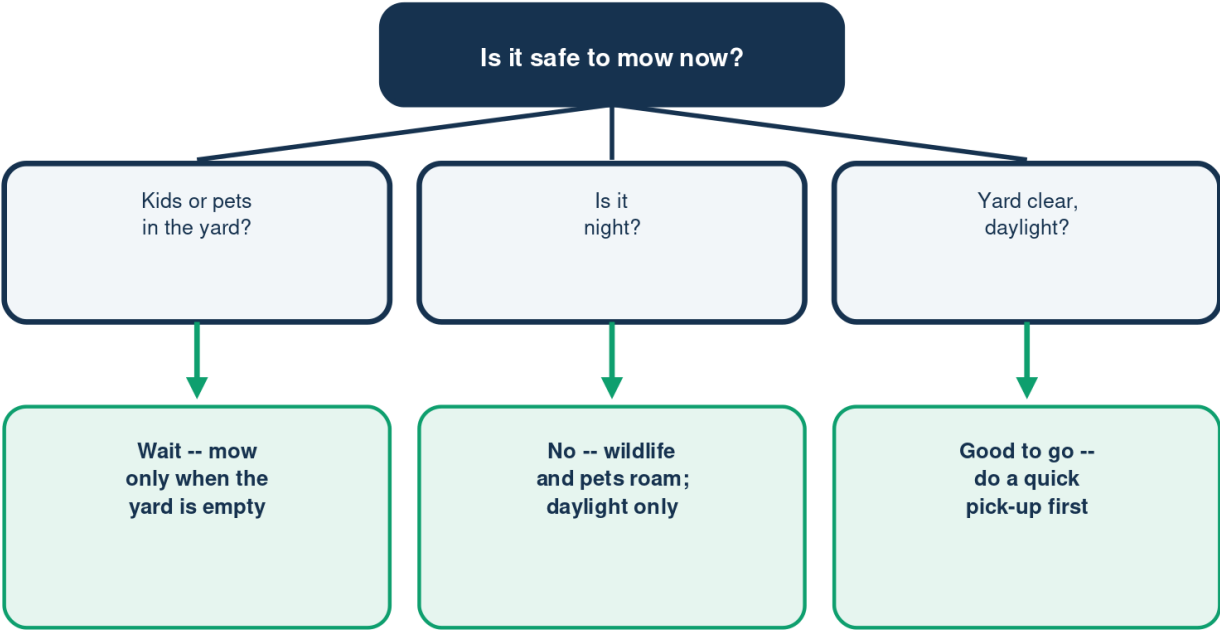
The two-minute family safety walk



A quick walk before a run prevents nearly every mishap.

Is It Safe to Mow Right Now?

A simple check before you press go



Never mow at night and never while children or pets are out.

Illustration - a schematic, not to scale. Your setup may differ.

Family House Rules

Keep them short enough for little ones

	The rule	Why
Not a toy	Sharp blades	underneath
Don't chase it	Stay out of	its path
Never lift it	A grown-up	stops it first
Hands, feet away	Especially	underneath
Grown-ups start it	With the	PIN code

Say the rules together once, out at the mower.



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A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill.

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— *Bill*



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