



Stay safe from fire

Important fire safety
information for your home

Easy read



Fire can kill you and badly damage your home. But there are some simple things you can do to stop a fire from starting.

This leaflet tells you how to keep safe from fire.

It also tells you what to do if a fire starts.

What is in this leaflet?

Keeping safe from fire

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Keeping safe from fire

Doing some simple things can stop a fire starting in your home. This could save your life.

Smoke alarms



A smoke alarm can save your life. It will make a loud beeping noise to warn you if there is a fire. This will give you time to escape.



Where can I get a smoke alarm?

You can buy a smoke alarm from supermarkets or high-street shops. You can also get free smoke alarms from your local Fire and Rescue Service. You can find their phone number in the phone book. **Do not call 999 unless there is an emergency.**

There are special alarms for people who are deaf or have hearing difficulties. Ask your local Fire and Rescue Service.

Where should I put a smoke alarm?

You should put a smoke alarm on every level of your home.

Put smoke alarms on the ceiling in your hallway and on your upstairs landing.

Do not put a smoke alarm in the kitchen or bathroom – it could easily be set off by cooking fumes or steam.

If it is difficult to put up a smoke alarm yourself, ask someone to help you, or ask your local Fire and Rescue Service for help.



How do I make sure that my smoke alarm works?

Test the batteries in your smoke alarm once a week. You could do this at the same time every week to help you remember.



Press the button on your smoke alarm until it makes a loud beeping noise.

If you do not hear anything, you need to change the batteries. You should change the batteries in your smoke alarm once a year, or when they run out. If it is difficult for you to test the batteries in your smoke alarm yourself, ask someone to help you.

You can buy a smoke alarm with special batteries that last for 10 years. These cost more money, but you only have to change the batteries once every 10 years.

Your home may have special smoke alarms that are linked to your electricity. You do not need to check batteries in these alarms. If you are not sure, ask someone for help.

Kitchen safety

A fire can easily start in the kitchen. To keep safe from fire in the kitchen:

Do



- Keep things like tea towels and oven gloves away from the cooker and toaster.
- Make sure the wires from your kettle and toaster are away from the cooker. Keep them away from water too.
- Keep your cooker, toaster and grill clean. Crumbs, grease and fat can easily catch fire.
- Keep a special fire blanket in the kitchen. You can use it to wrap around someone whose clothes have caught fire. You can buy a fire blanket from a DIY shop.
- Check you have turned the cooker off when you have finished cooking.

Do not

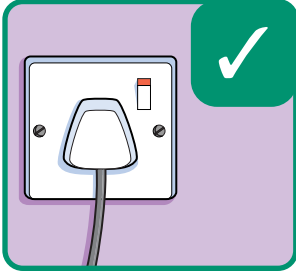


- Do not leave the kitchen when you are cooking.
 - they are safer to use because they do not get too hot.
- Do not leave saucepan handles sticking out from the hob – they could get knocked over.
- It is best not to use a chip pan at all – they can easily catch fire. You can use an electric deep fat fryer that plugs into the wall instead
 - But if you do use a chip pan:
 - never fill it more than one-third full of oil
 - dry food before you put it in the hot oil
 - if the oil starts to smoke, turn off the heat and leave the pan to cool.

Electricity

Electricity can start a fire in your home. To keep safe from fire:

Do

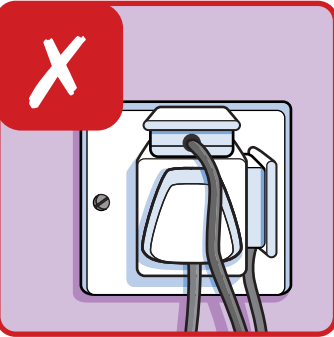


- Check that plugs and leads are safe. If you see loose wires, scorch marks or other damage, get a new plug and lead. Ask someone straight away if you are not sure or need help.
- Only put 1 plug in each wall socket.
- Unplug things like toasters, lamps and hairdryers when you are not using them. If you leave them plugged in they could start a fire.
- Unplug your electric blanket before you go to bed. When you are not using it, keep it flat or rolled up, **not** folded.
- Put heaters in a safe place where they will not be knocked over, like against a wall.

Do not



- Do not plug lots of electrical items into 1 wall socket.

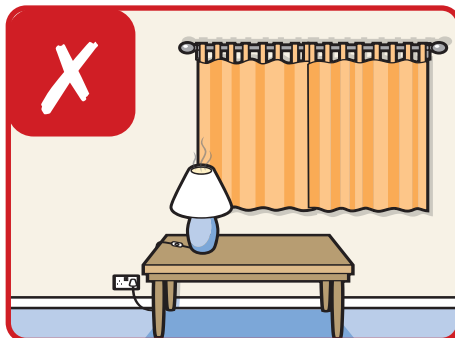
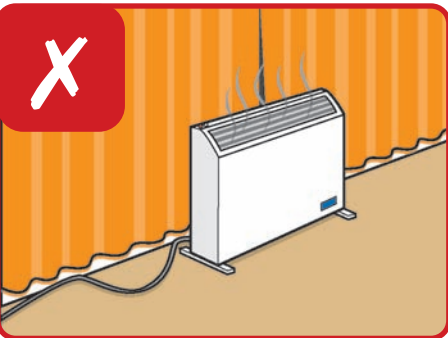


- Do not put leads under carpets or mats. This can start a fire and you cannot see if the lead is damaged.

- Do not dry clothes on a heater.

- Do not put heaters near curtains or furniture.

- Do not put lamps near curtains.

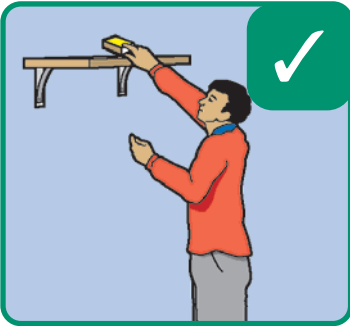


Other fire risks

Cigarettes and candles start many fires, so you need to be really careful if you have them in your home.

Cigarettes

Do



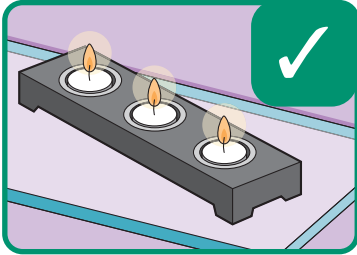
- Check that you have put your cigarette out properly.
- Use a proper ashtray.
- Be careful if you are feeling sleepy. It is easy to fall asleep with a lit cigarette.
- Keep matches and lighters away from children.

Do not

- Do not smoke in bed. It is easy to fall asleep and set your bed on fire.

Candles

Do



- Put candles in a proper candle-holder.
- Put candles out before you leave the room.
- Put candles out before you go to bed.

Do not

- Do not put candles near anything that could catch fire, like curtains or sofas.
- Do not put candles on plastic surfaces like your bath or television – they can melt!

Furniture

Do



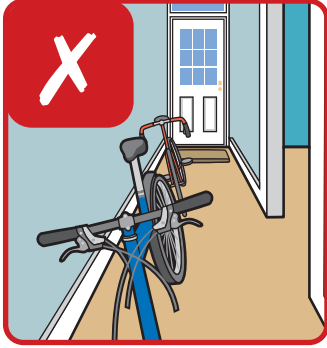
- If you buy furniture like a sofa or a bed, check that it has the fire resistant label. This label means that the furniture is less likely to catch fire.

Do not

- Do not buy furniture that does not have the fire resistant label. It could easily catch fire.

Safety plan

You should make a **safety plan** to make sure that you can get out of your home if there is a fire.



Plan the way you would get out of your home. This is called your escape route.

The best escape route is the way you normally leave your home. But think about how you could get out if the fire blocks this way.

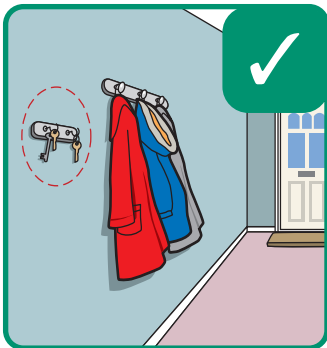
Make sure that there is nothing blocking any of your escape routes.



Make sure you know how to open windows and doors.

If you live with other people, talk to them about how you will all get out if there is a fire.

You could stick a reminder of what you need to do where everyone can see it.



Know where keys are.

Make sure that you know where door keys and window keys are.

If you live with other people, agree with them where the keys will be kept.

If you will need help to get out if there is a fire, talk to someone like a support worker about how you will get this help.

Make sure you have a way of getting help by your bed, like a telephone, an emergency alarm or a whistle.

What to do if there is a fire

If there is a fire in your home, you need to get out safely, stay out, and call 999 for the Fire and Rescue Service.

There could also be a fire where you are when you are out. You could be somewhere like a leisure centre, cinema, hotel or at the shops. You need to know how to get out safely.

What if there is a fire at home?

This is what you should do if there is a fire at home.

Get out



- Try to keep calm.
- Get out as quickly as you can – do not stop to collect things.
- If there is smoke, keep low where the air is clearer.

Stay out



- Make sure that you are a safe distance from your house.
- Stay out of your house.

Call 999

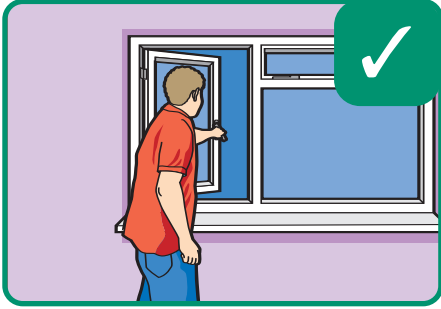


- Call 999 from a mobile phone or a neighbour's phone.
- Wait outside for the Fire and Rescue Service.

Get out, stay out, and call 999.

What if I cannot get out?

Sometimes a fire can block your way and stop you from getting out of your home. This is what you should do if you cannot get out.



- If you have a support worker at home and you can easily get to them, do what they say.
- If you are on the ground or first floor and you are able to, carefully go out of a window.



- Drop some cushions, pillows or blankets out of the window to land on. Carefully lower yourself out.



- If you cannot open the window, use something heavy like a chair to break the glass in the bottom corner.
- Keep breaking the glass until there is a big enough hole for you to get through.



- Put a towel or blanket on the edge of the hole so you do not cut yourself.
- Be careful!



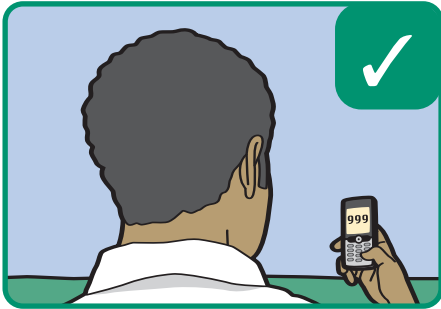
- If you cannot get out of any doors or windows, go into a room where there is no fire.

- Shut the door.

- Put a towel, blanket or clothing at the bottom of the door to stop smoke coming in.

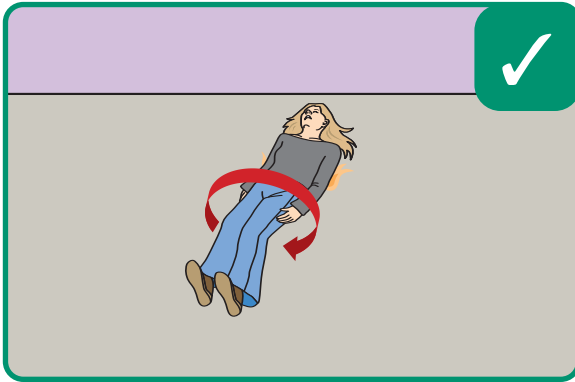
- If you have a phone, call 999.

- Do not hide. Go to the window and shout for help.



What if my clothes catch fire?

Stop! Drop! Roll!



- **Stop!** Do not run around.
- **Drop!** Get on the ground.
- **Roll!** Roll around to put out the flames. You can also use a heavy coat or fire blanket to put over the flames.

What if a pan catches fire?

Do not try to put the fire out and never throw water over the pan. **Get out, stay out, and call 999.**

What if there is a fire when I am out?

There could be a fire where you are when you are out. You could be somewhere like a leisure centre, cinema, hotel or at the shops. This is what you should do if there is a fire when you are out.

You will hear the fire alarm. This is a very loud sound. It tells you that there is a fire.

Get out



- Try to keep calm.
- Listen to staff and other people who are in charge. Do what they tell you to do.
- Leave the building by the nearest door. Look for the fire escape sign.
- Get out as quickly as you can – do not stop to collect things like your coat or bag.
- If there is smoke, keep low where the air is clearer.

Stay out



- There will be a place to wait outside the building. This is called an assembly point.
- Wait outside until a fire officer or member of staff tells you that it is safe to go back in.

If you are staying in a hotel, make sure that you know what to do in case there is a fire. There will be a sign in your room that tells you what to do. Or you can ask a member of staff.

Checklists to help you stay safe from fire

Is your home safe from fire?

You can use this checklist to see if your home is safe from fire. You could use it to check your home every week.

Take the checklist around your home to check if it is safe from fire.

Remember, this could save your life!

Smoke alarms

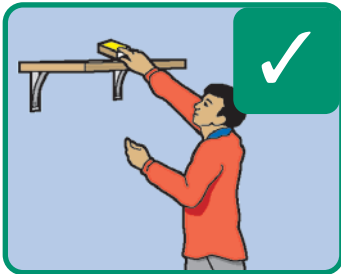
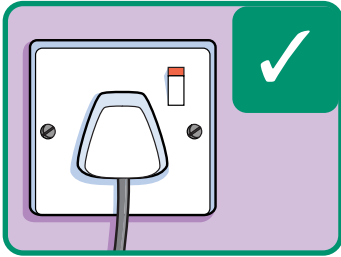


☐ Is there a smoke alarm on the ceiling in your hallway and upstairs landing?

☐ Have you tested your smoke alarm this week?



☐ Do you change the batteries in your smoke alarm every year or when they need changing (unless you have a special 10-year alarm)?



Kitchen safety

- ☐ Are the cooker, toaster and grill clean?
- ☐ Are the wires from your kettle and toaster away from the cooker?
- ☐ Are things like tea towels and oven gloves away from the cooker and toaster?

Electricity

- ☐ Is there only 1 plug in each wall socket?
- ☐ Are plugs and leads safe? Look out for loose wires and scorch marks.

Other fire risks

- ☐ Are lamps away from things like curtains which can easily catch fire?
- ☐ Are matches and lighters out of children's reach?

Safety plan

- ☐ Do you and everyone you live with know your safety plan?

Ask someone for help if you are not sure what to do.

Before you go to bed

You are much more likely to be hurt in a fire at night. You or someone you live with should go through this checklist every night before bed.



☐ Unplug all electrical things except things like the fridge, freezer and video recorder, which should stay on all night.



☐ Check that the cooker is turned off.

☐ Make sure that the washing machine, tumble dryer and dishwasher are switched off.

☐ Switch off heaters.

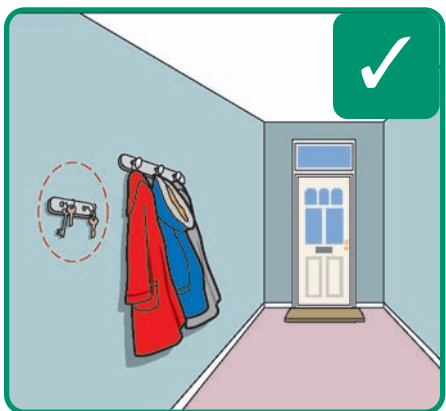
☐ Check that candles are not left burning.

☐ Make sure that cigarettes are put out properly.

☐ Check that door and window keys are in the right place.

☐ Check that your escape routes are clear.

☐ Close all doors. This will help stop a fire spreading.



Where to get more information and help



If you would like more information about fire safety, look at the website: **www.firekills.gov.uk**

Your local Fire and Rescue Service can give you advice and can help you put up a smoke alarm. You can find their phone number in the phone book. **Do not call 999 unless there is an emergency.**



The Learning Disability Helpline can give you advice and information about fire safety.

If you live in England:
call **0808 808 1111**
textphone **0808 808 8181**
email **helpline@mencap.org.uk**

If you live in Wales:
call **0808 8000 300**
email
helpline.wales@mencap.org.uk

With thanks to Listening to Us, Peter Holcombe – Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service, and Barbara, Brenda, Chris, Jake and Jason.



Published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
© Crown Copyright 2005. Printed in the UK, September 2005, on material containing 75% post-consumer waste and 25% ECF pulp. Product code: FS037