

FIRE SAFETY - The Three Steps to a Safer Home

1 Education

Know the facts

You don't think it can't happen to you?
Fires occur more frequently than you may realise.

Fire is one of the major causes of accidental death in the home.
Over 500 British people will die each year in home fires, and an additional 13,000 will be injured.
Over the course of an average lifetime, the odds are approximately 1 in 250 that it could happen to you.

Property damage from fire exceeds **£500 million annually**.
Over 60,000 homes each year will be damaged or destroyed by fire.

Many of the deaths and injuries from fire could be prevented.

By practising good safety habits at home and installing devices that can provide early warning, you and your family can avoid becoming statistics.

2. Prevention

Always ensure that;

- Children have been thoroughly instructed about the dangers of playing with fire.
- Cars are never left running or allowed to warm up in an attached garage.
- The heating system, vents, chimney and flue have been inspected in the last year by a qualified technician.
- Vents and chimneys are routinely examined for improper connections, visible rust or stains.
- Portable heaters are kept at least one metre away from blankets, clothing, curtains or furniture.
- Portable heaters are always unplugged when not in use.
- When preparing for bed all portable heaters are turned off.
- Kitchen towels and oven gloves are kept away from the cooker.
- The family has a planned fire escape route.
- All electrical appliances have been inspected for frayed cords.
- Kitchen curtains cannot blow near a fire's open flame if the window is left open.
- The boiler is checked regularly for cracked or loose fittings.

If you answered "NO" to any question, your home could easily be made a safer place to live.

3. Prevention

Safety Products and a plan that can Save your Life

Install Fire Extinguishers that have a pressure gauge

Make sure every one in your family knows how to use a fire extinguisher by discussing the PASS technique.

ONLY TACKLE A FIRE IN IT'S EARLY STAGES AND ONLY IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO. ALWAYS ENSURE THAT SOMEONE HAS CALLED THE FIRE BRIGADE. IF YOU CANNOT EXTINGUISH A FIRE IN YOUR FIRST ATTEMPT: GET OUT - CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE - STAY OUT.

Before using a fire extinguisher, check it is suitable for the type of fire you are tackling. The fire classifications are:

- A - Wood, Paper, Textiles.
- B - Petrol, Oil, Paints.
- C - Flammable Gases.

ALL OF KIDDE SAFETY'S NEW 'EASI-ACTION' FIRE EXTINGUISHERS HAVE ALL OF THE ABOVE CLASSIFICATIONS AND ARE BS EN3 APPROVED

Install and maintain Smoke and Fire alarms

- A working smoke alarm doubles a person's chance of surviving a fire and can reduce fatalities by up to 90%.
- Smoke alarms should be placed on every level of the home and outside bedrooms for minimum protection.
- Never remove the batteries or disable a smoke alarm. If smoke from cooking or bathroom steam causes nuisance alarms, use smoke alarms with the hush feature or vent fans.
- Test smoke alarms weekly to ensure alarm circuitry and power source are operating properly. Simply press the test button on each smoke alarm manually or with a broom handle.
- Replace the batteries in battery-operated smoke alarms once a year or, to help you remember, replace them at the same time you change your clocks.

Provide Fire Escape Ladders

- Ideally, each bedroom above the ground floor should have a fire escape ladder. If stairways are blocked by fire, windows may be the only exit to safety.
- Store the fire escape ladder under the bed where it will be easy to reach if the room fills with smoke.

Fire Blankets

- First line of attack for fat pan fires in the kitchen.

Establish an Escape Plan and Practice it Routinely

- Plan two ways out of every room. The most obvious route may be blocked by fire.
- Advise your family that in a fire they must stay low to the ground to avoid heat and smoke. They must also understand the room may be totally black with smoke. They may be disorientated even in familiar surroundings. Have everyone exiting each room blindfolded, on their hands and knees.
- Teach your family to feel any closed door before exiting when the alarm is sounding. If the door is warm, it should be opened slowly. Be prepared to slam it shut if heat or smoke rushes in.
- Only consider opening a door if it is absolutely essential.
- Identify a meeting place outside the home where everyone will gather in case of fire.
- Most importantly, everyone should understand that in a fire every seconds count. Do not stop to gather possessions, pets or call the fire brigade. Your only priority is to get out. When outside call the fire brigade from a call box or a neighbour's phone (Dial 999 - IT'S FREE).