

# Home fire safety guide



## PREVENTING FIRE

### Prevent a fire starting in your home:

- Never smoke in a chair if you think you may doze off, never smoke in bed.
- Do not leave a lit cigarette, pipe or candle unattended.
- Use deep ashtrays so that cigarettes can not roll out, and don't throw hot ash into a waste paper basket.
- Keep matches and lighters well out of the reach of children.
- Sit at least three feet away from heaters. Never put a heater near clothes or furnishings.
- Don't overload electrical sockets.

### REMEMBER

Don't smoke in bed.

Keep matches safe.

Don't sit too close to a fire.

Don't overload electrical sockets.

### Avoiding damage and injury from fire at home:

- Fit a smoke alarm, this gives extra time for you and others to get out safely.
- A smoke alarm is cheap and simple to install. Make sure it is a good one and complies with the British Standard or equivalent type of international standard. They are widely available from DIY and hardware shops.
- If you have difficulties, local voluntary organisations or the fire brigade may be able to fit the alarm for you.
- Some smoke alarms for people with poor hearing set off a vibrating pad or flashing light. The vibrating pad is particularly useful for deaf-blind people.

### REMEMBER

Fit smoke alarms.

Check it is an approved standard.

## BEDTIME ROUTINE

### Before going to bed:

- Make sure the cooker and heaters are turned off.
- Rake out open fires and put a fire guard in place.
- Switch off and unplug all electrical appliances except those that are meant to stay on, like a video or fridge.
- Ensure you have access to a phone.
- Empty ashtrays, making sure the contents are cold.
- Close all the doors as this prevents fire spreading.
- Always turn underblankets off when you get into bed and never use an electric blanket and hot water bottle together.
- Have your electric blankets checked by an expert at least every three years.

### REMEMBER

Check everything is safe before you go to bed.

Switch off electric blankets when in bed.

Have electric blankets checked regularly.

## KITCHEN SAFETY

### Prevent a fire starting in the kitchen:

- Never fill a pan more than one third full of fat or oil.
- Never leave the pan unattended with the heat on.
- Dry food before placing it in the hot oil – wet food will cause the oil to bubble up and possibly spill over the edge of the pan.

### If the pan does catch fire:

- Don't move it or throw water on to it.
- Turn off the heat if it is safe to do so.
- If in any doubt, leave the room, close the door, shout a warning to others and call the fire brigade.

### REMEMBER

Don't overfill pans and deep fat fryers.

If the oil catches light – turn off the heat.

## ESCAPING FROM FIRE

### Planning your escape:

- You will only have a short time to get out, so plan your escape route rather than waiting until there is a fire.
- Think of another way out in case the normal one is blocked.
- Keep the escape routes clear of obstructions at all times.
- Tell everyone in the house where the door and window keys are kept.
- Keep valuable documents in a metal fire-proof box.

### Escaping from fire:

- Fire can strike when you least expect it, often during the night.
- If your smoke alarm goes off while you are asleep, don't investigate. Shout to wake everyone up, and get them out as quickly as possible. Never assume that it is a false alarm.
- Dial 999 if you have time.
- Check closed doors with the back of the hand. If they are warm do not open because this means there is a fire on the other side.

- Smoke and fumes can also kill. If there is a lot of smoke, get down as near to the floor as possible where the air will be cleaner.
- Don't rush, keep calm and get everyone out as quickly as possible.
- Don't stop to pick up valuables.
- If your escape is blocked by fire it may be safer to stay put until the fire brigade arrives. Close the door and use towels or sheets to block any gaps to stop the smoke. Go to a window, call for help and wait to be rescued.

### REMEMBER

Make an escape plan.

Keep keys to window locks by the windows.

Get everyone out as soon as possible.

Dial 999.

Crawl under smoke and fumes.

Block gaps around doors if trapped by fire.

## ESCAPING FROM FIRES IN FLATS AND MAISONNETTES

### If you live in a flat or maisonette please follow this extra advice:

- Flats and maisonettes are built to give you some protection from fire. Walls, floors and doors will hold back flames and smoke for a time. If there is a fire elsewhere in the building you're usually safer staying in your flat unless heat or smoke is affecting you.
- If there is a fire in your flat, leave the building closing the door to your flat behind you.

- If there is a lot of smoke, crawl along the floor where the air will be clearer.
- If you live in a building with a lift, do not use it if there is a fire, go down the stairs instead.
- Call 999 from any phone. Give them the address including the number of your flat, and tell them which floor the fire is on.

### REMEMBER

Communal staircases, corridors and balconies should be kept clear of all combustible material, ie prams, bicycles.

Domestic waste, ie rubbish should be removed to the appropriate refuse area immediately and not stored in communal areas.

Everyone can be a fire safety champion

KEEP YOUR COMMUNITY SAFE &  SOUND

[www.london-fire.gov.uk](http://www.london-fire.gov.uk)