

# Home fire safety guide



## KEEP YOUR HOME SAFE

### Fit a smoke alarm and test it

- Fit at least one smoke alarm on each level of your home. Test it weekly.

### Smoking

- Never smoke in bed.
- Never smoke in an armchair if you think you may fall asleep.
- Do not leave a lit cigarette, pipe or candle unattended.
- Use deep ashtrays so that cigarettes cannot roll out, and don't throw hot ash into the bin.

### Matches and candles

- Keep matches and lighters well out of the reach of children.

### Heating and electrics

- Sit at least three feet away from heaters. Never put a heater near clothes or furniture.
- Don't overload electrical sockets.

### Communal areas, stairs and balconies

- Never store anything in communal areas including balconies. Items can block your escape route and be a fire risk.

## TAKE EXTRA CARE IN THE KITCHEN

- Don't cook if you are tired or have been drinking.
- Never leave pans unattended when cooking.

### If the pan does catch fire:

- Don't try to move it or throw water on to it – it will make it worse.
- Turn off the heat if you can do so safely. If in any doubt, leave the room, close the door, shout to warn others to get out and call 999.

## STAY SAFE WHEN YOU GO TO BED

- Close all the doors as this helps to prevent fire spreading.
- Switch off and unplug electrical appliances except those that are meant to stay on, like the fridge.
- Check your cooker and heaters are turned off.
- Keep door and window keys where everyone you live with can find them.

## KNOW WHAT TO DO IN A FIRE

### Plan your escape

Fires happen when you least expect them and you will only have a short time to take action.

- Think of how you would get out if your normal way out is blocked.
- Keep the escape routes clear of rubbish, or bulky items at all times.
- Tell everyone in the house where the door and window keys are kept.

## ESCAPING FROM FIRE IN YOUR HOME

- If your smoke alarm goes off when you are asleep, follow your escape plan and get out.
- Shout 'FIRE' to warn others and don't stop to pick up valuables.
- Check closed doors with the back of your hand. Do not open the door if it feels warm – the fire may be on the other side.
- Smoke can kill, get down as low as possible where the air will be clearer.
- If your escape is blocked by fire it may be safer to stay put until the fire brigade arrives. Close the door and use soft materials to block any gaps to stop the smoke. Go to a window, call for help, dial 999 and wait to be rescued.

**Follow this extra advice if you live in a purpose-built block of flats or maisonettes, of any height, with shared communal corridors, external walkways, staircases or entrances.**

**If your flat or maisonette, in a purpose-built block, is directly affected by fire or smoke and your escape route is clear:**

- Get everyone out, close the door and walk as calmly as possible out of the building.
- Do not use the lift.
- Call 999, give your address including the number of your flat and state which floor the fire is on.

**If there is a fire or smoke inside your flat or maisonette but your escape route is NOT clear:**

- It may be safer to stay in your flat or maisonette until the fire brigade arrives. Close the door and use soft materials to block any gaps to stop the smoke. Go to a window, call for help, call 999, give your address including the number of your flat and state which floor the fire is on.

**If there is a fire in another part of the building but not inside your flat or maisonette:**

- Purpose-built blocks of flats or maisonettes are built to give you some protection from fire. Walls, floors and doors will hold back flames and smoke for a minimum of 30 to 60 minutes.
- You are usually safer staying in your own flat unless heat or smoke is affecting you. If you are in your flat, stay put and call 999. Tell the fire brigade where you are and the best way to reach you.
- If you are within the common parts of the building, leave and call 999.



For further fire safety advice visit our website [london-fire.gov.uk](http://london-fire.gov.uk)