

FIRE SAFETY

**FOR PEOPLE WITH SIGHT,
HEARING OR MOBILITY
DIFFICULTIES**



**FIRE
KILLS**

**YOU CAN
PREVENT IT**

This leaflet has been developed for people with sight, hearing and mobility difficulties and those who care for them. It provides practical advice and tips that will help protect you from the risk of fire.

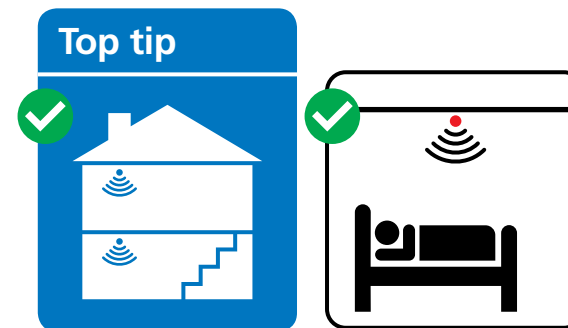
PROTECT YOUR HOME WITH SMOKE ALARMS



Smoke alarms save lives

Fit smoke alarms on every level of your home.

- Test the batteries every week. Never disconnect or take them out if the alarm goes off by mistake.
- If you can't fit the alarm yourself, contact your local Fire Service who may be able to fit it for you.
- Most house fires happen at night, so make sure your alarm is in a position that will wake you up, such as in your bedroom.



Fit smoke alarms

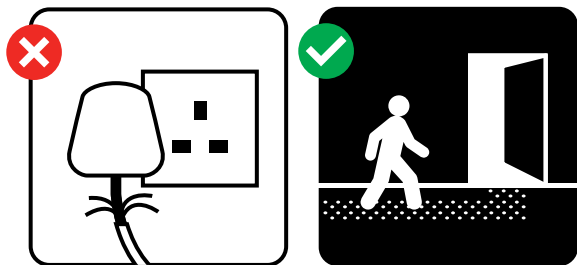
Tips if you have hearing, sight or mobility difficulties

Hearing difficulties

- If you have a hearing difficulty you can get a smoke alarm which uses a strobe light and vibrating pads. Alternatively consider linking the alarm system, which can alert you of any danger.
- In the event of a fire, if it is difficult for you to call 999 yourself, ask a neighbour to do it for you.
- If you have specialist equipment, such as a text phone or minicom, you can contact the emergency services on 18000.

Sight difficulties

- Put a coloured sticker on your smoke alarm if you have trouble seeing it to test it, or ask your local Fire Service if they can provide a coloured cover.
- Consider fitting bump-ons (also known as plastic blisters) to appliances as a way of making sure they are switched off properly.
- Check electrical leads regularly by touch. If they are frayed or faulty don't plug them in or switch them on. If electricians are giving off a burning smell turn them off and unplug them immediately.
- You may also want to consider placing a tactile indicator along your escape route to make it easier to find the exit.



Mobility difficulties

- If it is difficult to test your alarm ask somebody to do it for you. You can also get easy access alarms, which can be tested from the wall rather than the ceiling. The Disabled Living Foundation can provide more information on these products.
- If you have trouble moving around, consider fitting an intercom which will allow you to alert someone else in the house in the event of an emergency.
- Make sure you have easy access to any mobility aids you may need, such as a walking stick.



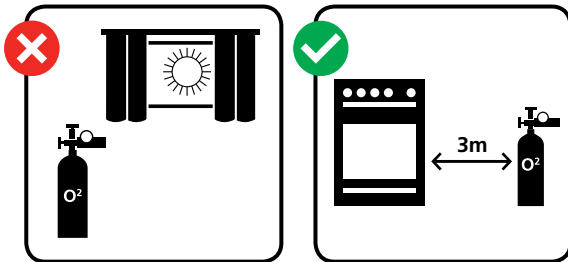
Further information and contact details for specialist support available can be found at the back of this leaflet.



If you use oxygen

- Make sure your oxygen equipment is stored safely out of direct sunlight, well ventilated, always dry and away from heat sources.
- Don't use oxygen near naked flames, including gas and electric cookers – 3 metres is a safe distance.
- For further information, contact your oxygen supplier.

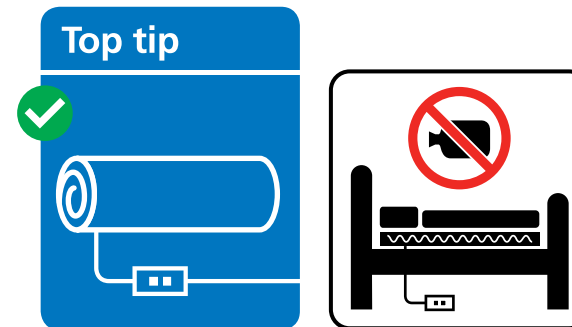
Never smoke or use electrical appliances, such as hairdryers, whilst using oxygen.



If you use an electric blanket

Store electric blankets flat or rolled up. Folding them can cause damage and increase the risk of fire.

- Water and electricity don't mix, so avoid getting an electric blanket wet. If you do, wait until it is completely dry before using it again.
- Never use a hot water bottle and an electric blanket together.
- Test electric blankets every three years. Your local Fire Service or Age Concern may do this for you for free.



Store electric blankets flat or rolled up

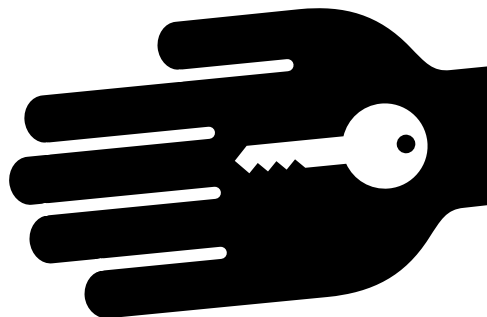
Plan an escape route

Think about all possible escape routes in case there's a fire.

- It is a good idea to practise an escape so that you feel confident you could do it day or night.
- Keep a phone in your bedroom in case you need to make an emergency call. If it's a mobile, keep it charged.

- Make sure exits are kept clear and well lit.
- Make sure you know how your house or personal alarm works, including any passwords or codes.

Keep keys where you can find them in case you need them in a hurry.



Plan an escape route



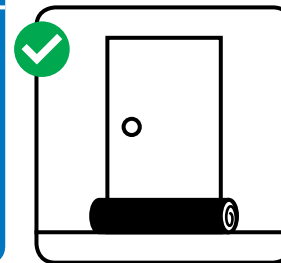
In the event of a fire

Don't tackle fires yourself. If you can, get out, stay out and call 999.

- If you can't dial 999 yourself get a neighbour to do it for you.
- If you can't get out stay in a room with a shut door, window and phone, ideally at the front of the house.
- Put bedding round the bottom of the door to block out the smoke, then open the window and call "HELP FIRE". Keep a whistle handy if it's hard to shout.
- If you can, close inside doors at night. This will help prevent a fire from spreading.



Get out, stay out and call 999

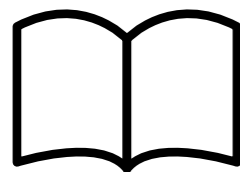


Support tailored to your needs

The numbers for your local Fire Service or Social Services can be found in the phone book, via directory enquiries or online at www.direct.gov.uk

- Register with your local Fire Service if you have a sight, hearing, mobility difficulties or if you use oxygen. This will mean a fire crew is made aware of your circumstances in the event of an emergency.
- Contact your local Fire Service or Social Services if you need practical help tailored to meet your needs. They may be able to fit a smoke alarm for you or provide other safety equipment.
- See the Fire Safety in the Home leaflet for further advice and top tips.
- 999 should only be used for real emergencies.

Contact via...



Phone book



Directory enquiries



Online

More information and support

Electric blanket testing or access to handymen

Age Concern
Freephone 0800 00 99 66
www.ageconcern.org.uk

Help the Aged
020 7278 1114
www.helptheaged.org

Free, impartial advice on disability and mobility products

Disabled Living Foundation
0845 130 9177
www.dlf.org.uk

Specialist equipment and advice for blind and partially sighted people

RNIB
0845 766 9999
www.rnib.org.uk

Specialist equipment and advice for deaf and hard of hearing people

RNID
0808 808 0123
Textphone: 0808 808 9000
www.rnid.org.uk

Support for people who are deafblind

Sense
0845 127 0060
Textphone: 0845 127 0062
www.sense.org.uk

Information and support for people who are disabled, especially for those with cerebral palsy

Scope
0808 800 3333
www.scope.org.uk

A national network of disability organisations and disabled people

Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR)
0207 250 3222
www.radar.org.uk

Advice on fire prevention, including downloadable leaflets

Fire Kills
www.directgov.uk/firekills

Remember these general tips from our *Fire Safety in the Home* leaflet to stay safe from fire.

Fit smoke alarms on every level of your home. ✓

Test your smoke alarm batteries every week. Change them every year. Never remove them. ✓

Avoid leaving children in the kitchen alone when cooking is on. Keep matches and saucepan handles out of children's reach. ✓

Take care when cooking with hot oil – it sets alight easily. ✓

Extension leads and adaptors have a limit to how many amps they can take. Be careful not to overload them. ✓

Dispose of cigarettes carefully. Put them out. Right out. ✓

Make sure candles are always secure and away from materials that may catch fire – like curtains. ✓

Plan an escape route and make sure everyone knows it. ✓

If there's a fire, get out, stay out and call 999. ✓

Close inside doors at night to stop fire from spreading. ✓

www.direct.gov.uk/firekills

FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST

These general tips are taken from our *Fire Safety in the Home* leaflet. For a copy, visit www.direct.gov.uk/firekills or contact your local fire and rescue service.



**SMOKE ALARMS
SAVE
LIVES**

For more information on general fire safety visit www.direct.gov.uk/firekills

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