

BELVOIR!

Property is personal

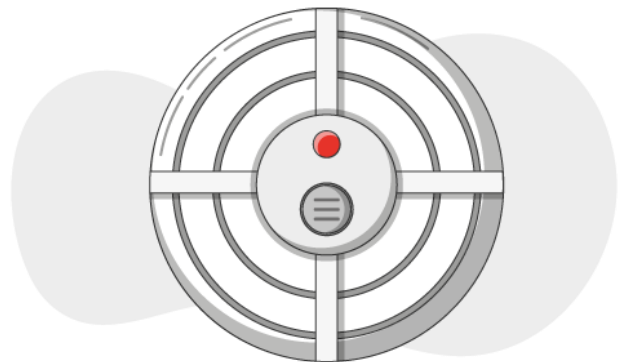
FIRE SAFETY IN THE HOME

Did you know?

- You're four times more likely to die in a fire if you don't have a working smoke alarm
- The biggest cause of smoke alarms not sounding during a fire was because the battery in was dead or missing at the time
- Around half of home fires are started in the kitchen by appliances or cooking accidents
- Up to three fires a day are started by candles
- Fires caused by smoking materials such as lighters/cigarettes have the highest fatality rate at 20%

How to test & maintain your smoke alarm

- Test the batteries in your smoke alarm every week and change them every year
- **Never** disconnect or take the batteries out of your alarm if it goes off by mistake
- A lot of people forget to test the batteries, so longer life batteries are better
- An alarm with a ten year life is the best option
- Mains powered alarms are powered by your home supply. Generally they don't need replaceable batteries, but need to be installed by a qualified electrician
- Alarms that plug into a light socket use a rechargeable battery, which is charged when the light is on
- Most smoke alarms will have a 'test' button that can be pushed to sound the alarm. If you don't hear anything, the battery is likely dead and needs replacing.
- If you are unable to reach the test button due to the height, light a couple of matches and blow them out, so that the smoke drifts up to the alarm. If it is working, it will begin to sound.
- If the battery starts chirping regularly, change the batteries.
- Clear the alarm of dust as required.



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HOW TO PREVENT COMMON FIRES

Cook safely

- Take care if you need to leave the kitchen whilst cooking, take pans off the heat or turn them down to reduce risk
- Make sure saucepan handles don't stick out where they could get knocked off the stove
- Take care if you are wearing loose clothing - it can easily catch fire
- Keep tea towels away from the cooker and hob
- Ensure all appliances are turned off when you've finished cooking
- Take extra care when cooking with hot oil as it sets alight easily, if it starts to smoke, its too hot
- If a pan catches fire, turn the heat off if safe to do so. **NEVER** throw water on it and do not move it in case you burn yourself. If the fire grows out of hand, quickly leave the room and call 999.

Take care with electrics

- Keep electrics (leads and appliances) away from any water
- Keep the oven, hob and grill clean and in good working order. A build up of fat and grease can ignite a fire.
- Unplug unused electrical appliances and ensure they are correctly maintained
- Never leave clothes/flammable material near a heater or light
- Always check that you use the right fuse to prevent overheating
- Make sure an electrical appliance has a British or European safety mark when you buy it
- Certain appliances, such as washing machines, should have a single plug to themselves, as they are high powered and not used with an extension lead
- An extension lead or adaptor will have a limit to how many amps it can take, so be careful not to overload them
- Keep your eyes peeled for signs of hazards such as scorch marks, hot plugs and sockets, fuses that blow or circuit breakers that trip for no obvious reasons, or flickering lights
- Always ensure that your furniture has the fire resistant label

Other

- Put candles out when you leave the room, and make sure they're put out completely at night, never leave them unattended and never near flammable materials
- Children shouldn't be left alone with candles and keep pets away from lit candles
- Extinguish cigarettes carefully and never smoke in bed

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PLAN AN ESCAPE ROUTE

Be prepared for a fire by making a plan of escape:

- Plan an escape route and make sure everyone in the household knows what this is and practise it
- The best route is the normal way in and out of your home, so make sure exits are always kept clear of obstructions
- Have a second route in case the first one is blocked
- Review your plan if the layout of your home changes
- Keep doors and window keys where everyone can find them

What to do if there is a fire

- DON'T tackle fires yourself. Leave it to the professionals
- Keep calm and act quickly, get everyone out as soon as possible
- If there's smoke, keep low where the air is clearer
- Before you open a door check if it's warm. If it is DON'T open it – fire is on the other side
- **CALL 999 as soon as you're clear of the building.**
- If you can't get out, get everyone into one room, ideally with a window and a phone
- Put bedding around the bottom of the door to block out the smoke, open the window and call for help
- If you're on the ground or first floor, you may be able to escape through a window
- Use bedding to cushion your fall and lower yourself down carefully - don't jump.