

Top tips for keeping safe from fire in your home

Test your smoke alarm

- Make sure that you have a working smoke alarm and test it weekly. The majority of deaths from fire are caused by inhalation of smoke and fumes while asleep. If you believe that your smoke alarm isn't working, report it immediately.
- Never cover or remove a smoke detector.
- Change the battery in the alarm once a year, unless it is a 10-year alarm or connected to the mains.



Take care when cooking

- Be careful when cooking with hot oil think about buying a deep fat fryer which is controlled by a thermostat.
- If you are cooking using the hob or grill, never leave the kitchen. Hot fats and oils, as well as food, can easily overheat and catch on fire. And if you are using the oven, make sure you use a timer. Many kitchen fires start while cooking is left unattended.
- If you come across a fire in the kitchen, don't try to tackle it. Turn off the heat if it is safe to do so, close the door on the kitchen, leave the property and call 999.
- Don't leave children alone in the kitchen when the hob or oven is on.



Be electrically aware!

- Faults with electric appliances and installations are a common source of fire. Don't keep replacing blown fuses, but get the appliance checked out.
- Report signs of scorching or discolouration on electrical sockets immediately.
- Don't overload sockets with appliances.
- If you wish to make alterations to your fixed wiring circuit you will need our written consent before you do this. Any works must be carried out by a qualified electrician.

Plan an escape route

- Plan an escape route. If your home was engulfed by fire, how would you get out? Look at your options and make a plan so that everyone in your home knows how to escape if there is a fire.
- Keep the exits from your home clear so that people can escape, if there is a fire.
- Make sure the keys to doors and windows are easy to find.
- In the event of a fire, close off the room make sure everyone leaves the property safely, call 999 and give you exact address.

Make a bedtime check

- Get into the habit of closing doors at night. If you want to keep a child's bedroom door open, make sure you close the doors to the lounge and kitchen.
- Do not leave the TV or other electrical appliances on standby.
- Before you go to bed, check that cookers

and other appliances are turned off, cigarettes stubbed out and all naked flames extinguished.

Use candles carefully

- Never leave candles lit in rooms that no-one is in or rooms where children are on their own.
- Make sure candles are in secure holders and on a surface that does not burn.
- Tea lights should not be placed directly on tables, units or shelves as the metal holder can get very hot. Make sure you place on a saucer or candle holder.



Think about your furnishings

- Use fire-retardant curtain material.
- Check your furniture meets British Standards and has the kite mark on the furniture label. This means it contains fire-retardant filling and won't give off poisonous smoke in a fire.
- Make sure furnishings are away from heat sources such as fires and candles. When smoking at home, don't rest your ashtray on a sofa or chair and use a deep, heavy ashtray, made from a non-flammable material.

If you live in sheltered housing

- If you live in sheltered housing and there is a fire in your scheme, STAY PUT and wait for the fire service to rescue you.
- If the fire is in your property, close the door on the fire if it is safe to do so, leave the property, get outside and call 999.

Follow the STAY PUT policy

Due to the potential risks to residents during evacuation, all sheltered and Extra Care schemes operate a 'stay put' policy. This means that in the event of an alarm activation or fire, residents who are not in the near vicinity of the fire are advised to remain in their rooms/homes, unless they are instructed otherwise by local staff or the fire and rescue service.

Residents can choose to leave the building despite the 'stay put' policy if they wish, but any on-site staff will focus on dealing with residents in the near vicinity of the fire or smoke detector which has been activated.

Top tips for keeping safe from fire in communal areas

- Keep communal stairs and exit routes free from personal belongings. Not only can they fuel a fire, they can act as a serious obstruction at a time when you need to leave the building as quickly as possible. Please report any objects being stored in the communal areas straight away. Don't assume someone else will report it.
- Never leave combustible materials in the communal areas. Gas bottles, motorbikes, mopeds or machinery with fuel tanks, even cardboard boxes and furniture can all help to fuel a fire.
- Be fire aware!
Make sure that you report the following:
holes in ceilings and walls through which fire could spread, trip hazards which could slow your exit, and faulty alarms and fire equipment.
- Never prop open fire doors in communal areas. These doors are designed to slow down the spread of fire and must never be left wedged open. Note that fire doors in communal areas on some schemes may be held open by an electromagnetic lock to allow for easier access such locks are released automatically if the communal area fire alarm is activated and therefore the door will not close.
- Always respond promptly to fire alarms. Investigate the source of the fire, call 999 and leave the building as quickly as possible. Assist other residents if this does not put you at risk.