

Stay safe in your home

The best way to protect yourself from fire is to prevent one starting

Cook safely

- Avoid cooking when under the influence of alcohol
- Avoid leaving children in the kitchen alone when cooking on the hob
- Keep matches and sauce pan handles out of their reach to keep them safe
- Make sure saucepan handles don't stick out – so they don't get knocked off the stove
- Take care if you're wearing loose clothing – they can easily catch fire
- Keep tea towels and cloths away from the cooker and hob
- Spark devices are safer than matches or lighters to light gas cookers, because they don't have a naked flame
- Double check the cooker is off when you've finished cooking
- Keep electrics (leads and appliances) away from water
- Check toasters are clean and placed away from curtains and kitchen rolls
- Keep the oven, hob and grill clean and in good working order (a build up of fat and grease can ignite a fire)
- Take care when cooking with hot oil – it sets alight easily
- Make sure food is dry before putting it in hot oil so it doesn't splash
- If the oil starts to smoke – it's too hot. Turn off the heat and leave it to cool
- Use a thermostat controlled electric deep fat fryer. They can't overheat

Take extra care if you need to leave the kitchen whilst cooking, take pans off the heat or turn them down to avoid risk

What to do if a pan catches fire

- Don't take any risks
- Turn off the heat if it's safe to do so
- Never throw water over it
- Don't tackle the fire yourself

Keep electrical appliances clean and in good working order to prevent them triggering a fire

Don't overload your sockets

Electrics

- 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
- Try and keep to one plug per socket
- When charging electrical goods, follow the manufacturer's instructions and look for the CE mark that indicates chargers comply with European safety standards
- Keep your eyes peeled for signs of dangerous or loose wiring such as scorch marks, hot plugs and sockets, fuses that blow or circuit-breakers that trip for no obvious reasons, or flickering lights
- Check and replace any old cables and leads, especially if they are hidden from view – behind furniture or under carpets and mats

- Unplugging appliances helps reduce the risk of fire. • Unplug appliances when you're not using them or when you go to bed.

Furniture

- Always ensure that your furniture has the fire-resistant permanent label

Portable heaters

- Try to secure heaters up against a wall to stop them falling over
- Keep them clear from curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes
- You are not allowed to use any paraffin or oil heater or stove or store any gas, petroleum or any explosive materials in your home (see section 3(10) of your tenancy agreement)

Using an electric blanket

- Store electric blankets flat, rolled up or loosely folded to prevent damaging the internal wiring
- Unplug blankets before you get into bed, unless it has a thermostat control for safe all-night use
- Try not to buy second hand blankets and check regularly for wear and tear
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions

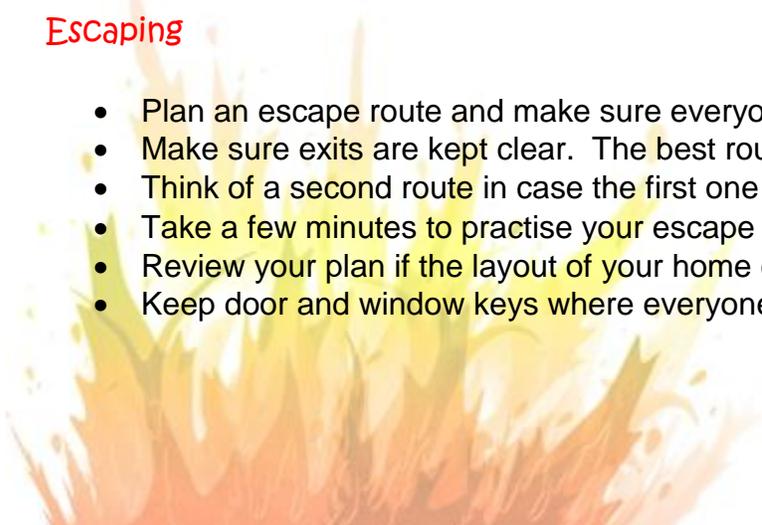
Cigarettes & Candles

- Never smoke in bed
- Use a proper ashtray – never a wastepaper basket
- Make sure your ashtray can't tip over and is made of a material that won't burn
- Don't leave a lit cigarette, cigar or pipe lying around. They can easily fall over and start a fire
- Take extra care if you smoke when you're tired, taking prescription drugs, or if you've been drinking. You might fall asleep and set your bed or sofa on fire
- Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach
- Consider buying child resistant lighters and match boxes
- Put candles out when you leave the room, and make sure they're put out completely at night
- Children shouldn't be left alone with lit candles
- Keep pets away from lit candles

**PUT THEM OUT
RIGHT OUT**

Escaping

- Plan an escape route and make sure everyone knows how to escape
- Make sure exits are kept clear. The best route is the normal way in and out of your home
- Think of a second route in case the first one is blocked
- Take a few minutes to practise your escape plan
- Review your plan if the layout of your home changes
- Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them



If the worst happens

- Keep calm and act quickly, get everyone out as soon as possible
- Don't waste time investigating what's happened or rescuing valuables
- 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. 999 calls are free

KEEP
CALM
↓
ACT
QUICKLY

What to do if your escape is blocked

- Put bedding around the bottom of the door to block out the smoke
- Call 999 then open the window and shout "HELP FIRE"
- 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
- If you can't open the window break the glass in the bottom corner. Make jagged edges safe with a towel or blanket

What to do if your clothes catch fire

- Don't run around, you'll make the flames worse
- Lie down and roll around. It makes it harder for the fire to spread
- Smother the flames with a heavy material, like a coat or blanket

STOP
DROP
ROLL

How to escape from a high level building

- As with all buildings, you should plan and practise an escape route
- Avoid using lifts and balconies if there is a fire
- It is easy to get confused in smoke, so count how many doors you need to go through to reach the stairs
- Check there is nothing in the corridors or stairways that could catch fire – like boxes or rubbish
- Make sure doors to stairways are not locked
- Make sure everyone in the building knows where the fire alarms are
- You should still get a smoke alarm for your own home, even if there is a warning system in the block

GET OUT
STAY OUT
CALL 999



Checklist

You are more at risk from a fire when asleep so it's a good idea to check your home before you go to bed

- Close inside doors at night to stop a fire from spreading
 - Turn off and unplug electrical appliances unless they are designed to be left on – like your freezer
 - Check your cooker is turned off
 - Don't leave the washing machine on
 - Turn heaters off and put up fireguards
 - Put candles and cigarettes out properly
 - Make sure exits are kept clear
 - Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them
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Further information

Further information, advice and guidance can be found online at www.dsfire.gov.uk or you can:

Telephone: 01392 872200

Email: comments@dsfire.gov.uk

Contents insurance

If the worst was to happen and your home is damaged by fire you will need to claim for all your personal belongings on your contents insurance. We urge all our tenants to obtain adequate household contents insurance and the National Housing Federation is just one of the many affordable options available.

You should make sure the following items are covered when you take out a contents insurance policy:

- Furniture and fittings and internal decorations, i.e. damage following burst pipes, flood, bursting of heating appliances, water storage tanks and cylinders
 - Damage arising from fire and other occurrences
 - Sanitary fittings i.e. accidental damage or misuse of WC pans and cisterns, washbasins and pedestals, baths and bath panels, sinks and draining boards
 - Glass and glazing to windows, doors and internal partitions
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