

10 Fire Safety Tips

1. Install and Maintain Smoke Detectors

Smoke detectors warn you of fire in time to let you escape. Install them on each level of your home and outside of each sleeping area. Follow the manufacturer's directions, and test once a week. Replace batteries twice a year, or when the detector chirps to signal that the battery is dead. Don't ever take the battery out for other uses!

2. Storage Flammables Outside

Store flammable liquids such as gasoline, kerosene, paint, and other flammables outside and away from the house. Storing these items in, around or under your home increases the chance of fire in your home. Develop a storage area such as a shed or building and keep it locked.

3. Space Heaters Need Space

Keep portable space heaters at least 3 feet (1 meter) from paper, curtains, furniture, clothing, bedding, or anything else that can burn. Never leave heaters on when you leave home or go to bed, and keep children and pets well away from them.

4. Be Careful Cooking

Keep cooking areas clear of combustibles, and don't leave cooking unattended. Keep your pot's handles turned inward so children won't knock or pull them over the edge of the stove. If grease catches fire, carefully slide a lid over the pan to smother the flames, then turn off the burner.

5. A Match is a Tool for Adults

In the hands of a child, matches or lighters are extremely dangerous. Store them up high where kids can't reach them, preferably in a locked cabinet. And teach your children from the start that matches and lighters are tools for adults, not toys for kids. If children find matches, they should tell an adult immediately.

6. Use Electricity Safely

If an appliance smokes or begins to smell unusual, unplug it immediately and have it repaired. Check all your electrical cords, and replace any that are cracked or frayed. If you use extension cords, replace any that are cracked or frayed; and don't overload them or run them under rugs. Remember that fuses and circuit breakers protect you from fire: don't tamper with the fuse box or use fuses of an improper size.

7. Cool a Burn

If someone gets burned, immediately place the wound in cool water for 10 to 15 minutes to ease the pain. Do not use butter on a burn, as this could prolong the heat and further damage the skin. If burn blisters or chars, see a doctor immediately.

8. STOP, DROP, AND ROLL

Everyone should know this rule: if your clothes catch fire, don't run! Stop where you are, drop to the ground, and roll over and over to smother the flames. Cover your face with your hands to protect your face and lungs.

9. Crawl Low Under Smoke

If you encounter smoke using your primary exit, use your alternate route instead. If you must exit through smoke, clean air will be several inches off the floor. Get down on your hands and knees, and crawl to the nearest safe exit.

10. Plan & Practice Your Escape

If fire breaks out in your home, you must get out fast. With your family, plan two ways out of every room. Fire escape routes must not include elevators, which might take you right to the fire! Choose a meeting place outside where everyone should gather. Once you are out, stay out! Have the whole family practice the escape plan at least twice a year.