



AVON
FIRE & RESCUE

FIRE SAFETY IN THE HOME





Did you know...?

- Cooking appliances were the source of ignition in 48% of accidental dwelling fires but only 7% of fire-related fatalities were in fires ignited by cooking appliances
- Electrical distribution and home electrical appliances were the source of ignition in 37% of accidental dwelling fire-related fatalities
- Smokers' materials (such as lighters, cigarettes, cigars or pipe tobacco) ignited only 7% of accidental dwelling fires yet those fires led to 20% of fire-related fatalities.

Data comes from the English Housing Survey 2016 to 2017

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PROTECT YOUR HOME WITH SMOKE ALARMS



The easiest way to protect your home and family from fire is with working smoke alarms.

Get them. Install them. Test them. They could save your life.

Choosing your smoke alarm

1,450 fire deaths occur every year in homes with missing or non-functioning smoke alarms. More people die from smoke inhalation rather than the fire itself.

- Smoke alarms are cheap and easy to install
- They are available from DIY stores, electrical shops and most high street supermarkets
- There are a variety of different models to choose from. **Avon Fire & Rescue Service** can give you advice on which one is best suited for you
- Ten year sealed battery smoke alarms are the best option. They are slightly more expensive, but you save on the cost of replacing batteries

Look out for one of these symbols, which shows the alarm is approved and safe:



British Standard Kitemark



Make sure your smoke alarm works

Alarms that have 10 year batteries are the preferred option, however alarms which require the battery to be replaced regularly will still keep you safe if maintained.

- If any of your smoke alarms have a one year battery, make sure it is changed every year. You should only take the battery out when you need to replace it
- Never disconnect or take the batteries out of your alarm if it goes off by mistake
- Standard battery operated alarms are the cheapest option, but the batteries need to be replaced every year
- Mains-powered alarms are powered by your home power supply. They need to be installed by a qualified electrician, but like battery alarms, they still require testing
- Testing smoke alarms tests the smoke sensor as well as the power supply and/or battery
- You can even have linked alarms installed, so that when one alarm detects a fire they all go off together. This is useful if you live in a large house or over several levels



Test your smoke alarms at least monthly, and never disconnect or take the batteries out of your alarm if it goes off by mistake

Strobe light and vibrating-pad alarms are available for those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Contact: **Avon Fire & Rescue Service** for more advice.

Tel: 0117 926 2061

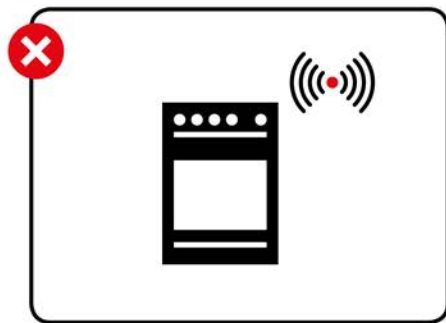
Fitting your smoke alarm

The ideal position is on the ceiling, in the middle of a room, and on the hallway and landing, so you can hear the alarm throughout your home.

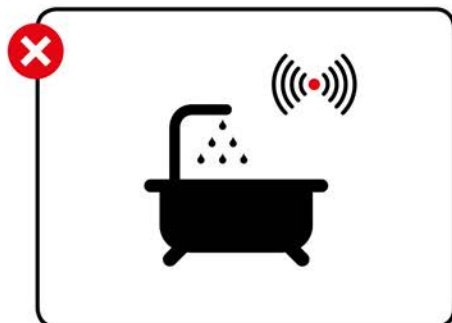
- Fit at least one smoke alarm on every level of your home
- Alarms should be fitted away from kitchens and bathrooms where smoke or steam can set them off by accident
- Follow the instructions supplied with the alarm and keep the manufacturer's instructions for future reference



Fit smoke alarms on every level of your home



Don't put alarms in kitchens



Don't put alarms near steam

Looking after your smoke alarm

Your smoke alarms needs regular maintenance, in order to function efficiently and keep you safe.

- Make testing your smoke alarm part of your regular household routine
- Test them by pressing the button until the alarm sounds. If it doesn't sound, you need to replace the battery
- If a smoke alarm starts to beep on a regular basis, you need to replace the battery immediately
- If it is a 10 year alarm, you will need to replace the whole alarm every 10 years

Other equipment you could consider:

- Fire blankets are used to put out a fire or wrap a person whose clothes are on fire. They are best kept in the kitchen
- Fire extinguishers are quick and simple to use, but always read the instructions first
- Heat alarms can detect fires in kitchens where smoke alarms should not be placed



TOP TIP



Test it

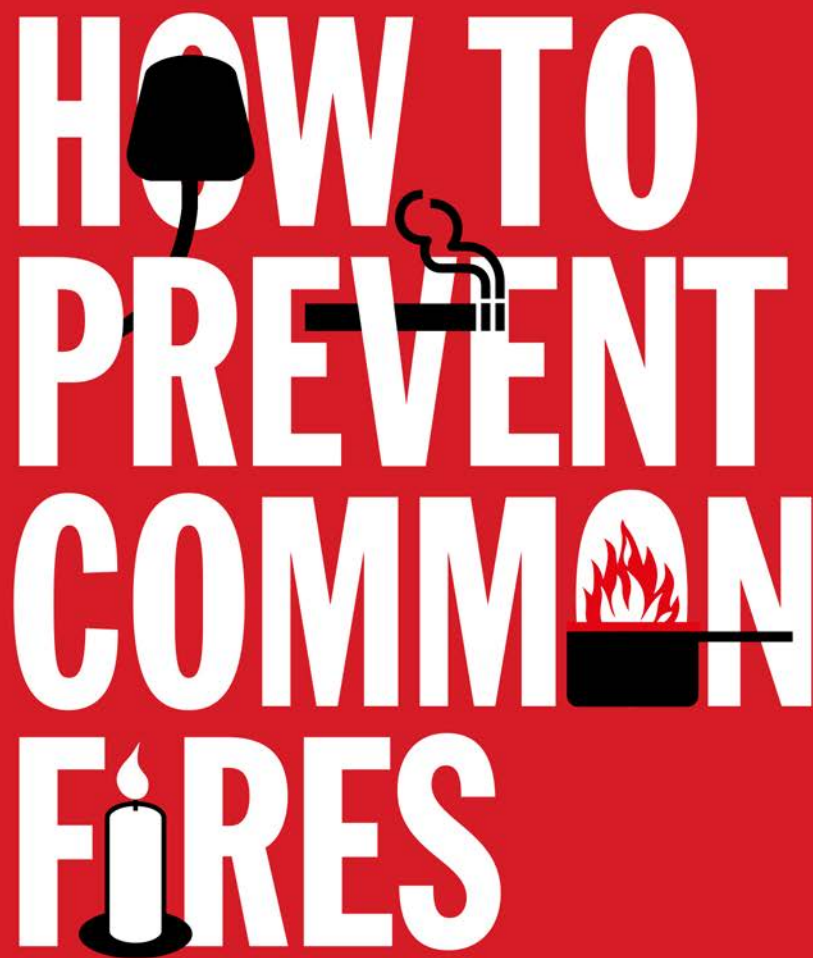


Change it



Replace it

HOW TO PREVENT COMMON FIRES



This section will tell you how you can avoid fires in your home, including how to cook safely and take care with electrics, candles and cigarettes.

In the kitchen

Over half of home fires are caused by cooking accidents. Take extra care if you need to leave the kitchen whilst cooking, take pans off the heat to avoid risk.

Cook safely

- Don't cook when under the influence of alcohol
- Don't leave children in the kitchen alone when cooking on the hob. Keep matches and saucepan 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 – it 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

Take care with electrics

- Keep electrics (leads and appliances) away from water
- Keep the oven, hob and grill clean and in good working order. A build up of fat and grease can ignite a fire
- Never put anything metal in a microwave



Keep electrics (leads and appliances) away from water



Don't put metal in a microwave



Don't leave children alone whilst cooking

Deep fat frying

- 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

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
- Call 999

Toasters

- Check toasters are clean and crumbs emptied out regularly
- Never put anything metal in a toaster
- Check toasters are placed away from curtains and kitchen rolls

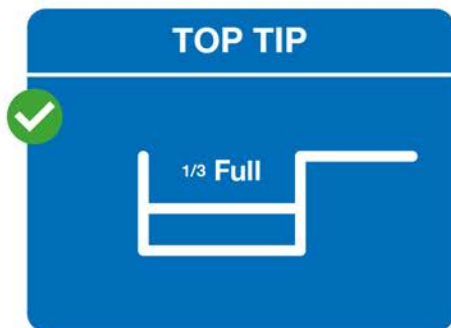
Wheat bags

Don't overheat the bag in the microwave. If you see signs of damage, such as burning or charring do not use

It can be dangerous to use your wheat bag as a bed warmer and is not advisable

Fire blankets

It's recommended that fire blankets are kept near or in the kitchen



Don't fill the pan more than a third full of oil



Never throw water over a pan

Electrics

Overloaded sockets cause around 7,000 house fires every year. By keeping electrical appliances clean and in good working order you may prevent them triggering a fire.

- 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
- Check regularly for signs of dangerous or loose wiring such as scorch marks, hot plugs and sockets, fuses that blow, 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

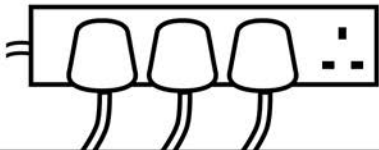
An extension lead or adaptor will have a limit to how many amps it can take, so be careful not to overload them to reduce the risk of a fire

Appliances use different amounts of power – e.g a television may use a 3 AMP plug and a vacuum cleaner a 5 AMP plug.

Know the limit!

$$5 + 5 + 3 = 13$$

AMP AMP AMP AMP



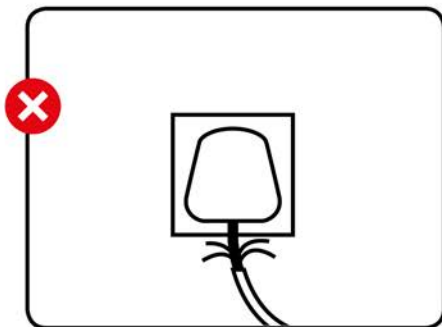


Furniture

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

Portable heaters

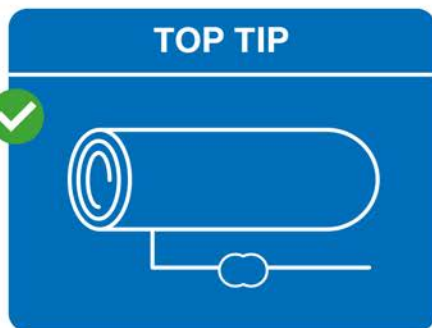
- Try to secure heaters up against a wall to stop them falling over
- Keep them clear from curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes



Check and replace any old cables and leads

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
- Don't buy second hand blankets and check regularly for wear and tear
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions
- If your blanket is more than 10 years old you should replace it



Roll rather than fold your electric blanket to prevent damaging the internal wiring

Open fires and carbon monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is the most common form of household poison, alarms are available from DIY and hardware stores to purchase for your home.

Open fires, wood-burners and multi-fuel stoves

- Always place a fireguard around the fire
- Do not over fill fire baskets
- Sweep chimneys regularly
- Never use petrol or paraffin to light your fire

Carbon monoxide

CO gas is produced by the incomplete burning of carbon-based fuels, including gas, oil wood and coal. Carbon based fuels are safe to use, it's only when the fuel does not burn properly that excess CO is produced, which is poisonous.

If you start feeling dizzy, tired and confused and start being sick, seek urgent medical advice from your doctor or your A&E department. Switch off all your gas appliances and call the Gas Emergency number for free.

If you smell gas call, **National Gas Emergency**, they are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Tel: 0800 111 999

Register your appliance. Make sure the manufacturers can contact you if a safety repair is needed.

www.registermyappliance.org.uk

Cigarettes

Cigarettes can burn at temperatures of 700 degrees centigrade. That's why it's important that they are stubbed out properly and dispose of them carefully. Put them out. Right out!

- Never smoke in bed
- Use a proper ashtray – never a waste paper 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
- Consider buying child resistant lighters and match boxes

e-cigarettes

Electronic cigarettes are an increasingly popular way for people to reduce the amount of tobacco they smoke, however e-cigarettes can pose a fire safety risk, due to battery-operated heating coil that gently heats nicotine liquid from a cartridge.

The heating coil is powered by a rechargeable lithium battery and these have been known to catch fire if they are overcharged, defective or damaged.

- Don't leave items on charge unattended for long periods if possible
- Ensure that you purchase them from a reputable source



Put them out.
Right out!



Don't leave your
cigarette unattended



Don't smoke in
your bed

Candles

More than 50 fires a day are started by candles.

Make sure candles are secured in a proper holder and away from materials that may catch fire – like curtains.

- 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 matches and lighters out of the reach of children
- Keep pets away from lit candles

Tea lights or night lights also present a high risk. The foil outer container is not a suitable holder, it can get extremely hot and melt surfaces on which the candle is placed making it a fire hazard.

- If using tea lights or candles it's recommended you use an appropriate candle or tea light holder.

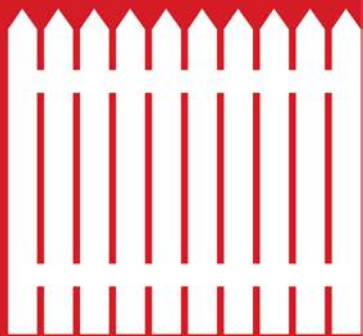
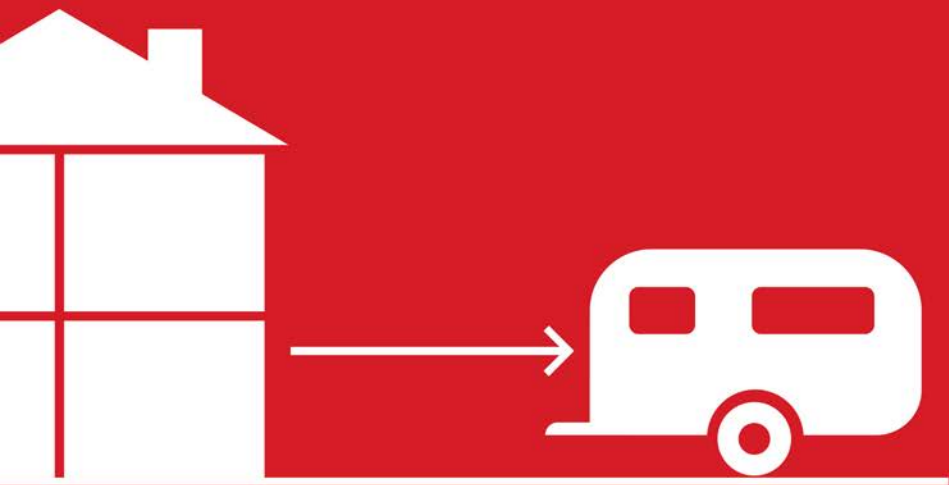


Never leave the room with
candles burning



Be careful with candles, don't put
them near curtains

REDUCING ARSON RISK



This section will tell you about the steps you can take to reduce the risk of arson outside your home.

Waste management

Rubbish and waste are often the target of deliberate fire starters. There are a few steps you can follow that will reduce opportunities for a fire to be started at your property.

- Any waste or household rubbish should be stored securely away from the property, in an area the public can't access
- If this is not possible, waste should be stored away from windows, escape routes and vehicles. You may not find a perfect solution so try to consider the best possible position
- Consideration can be given to wheelie bin locks and secure bin cupboards

Boundary fences

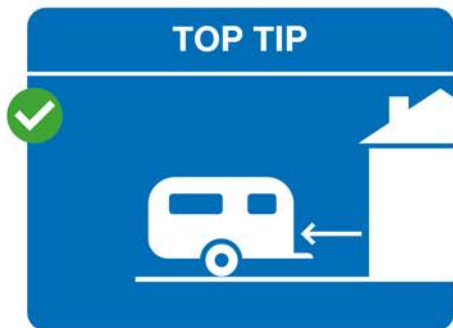
If possible all boundary fences, hedges and walls should be kept in good condition to help keep your property secure. This is particularly important if you live close to a public footpath.

Caravans

If you keep a caravan on your drive, it is a good idea to store it as far away from the property as possible. Gas bottles and batteries should be removed to secure storage.



Consider bin locks



Store caravan away from property

General housekeeping

Wherever possible, the exterior of the property should be kept tidy and free from rubbish and garden waste, these can be a potential target to arsonists.

Sometimes fires are started to cover up a burglary, therefore it's recommended that you ensure all property and outbuildings are locked and secure.

External security

Consider using additional devices such as security lights and CCTV which may reduce the risk of arson at your property.



Consider installing CCTV



Consider locks



**PLAN
A SAFE**

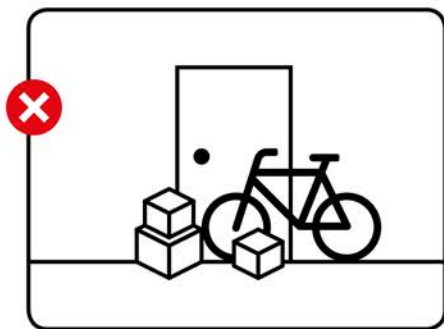
ESCAPE

Fitting a smoke alarm is the first crucial step to protecting yourself from fire. But what would you do if it went off during the night? This section will help you make a plan ready for an emergency.

Be prepared by making a plan of escape

Would you know what to do in the event of a fire at night? By keeping door and window keys where everyone can find them will help aid anyone trying to get out in an emergency.

- 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 practice your escape plan
- Review your plan if the layout of your home changes
- Make sure you have a cordless or mobile phone in your bedroom, this way you will always be able to call if a fire cuts off the power to your landline



Don't block your exits,
keep them clear



Plan your escape route

What to do if there is a fire

Don't tackle fires yourself. Leave it to us!

- Keep calm and act quickly to get everyone out as soon as possible
- Don't waste time investigating what's happened or trying to rescue valuables
- Keep low if there's smoke, where the air is clearer
- Before you open a door, check if it's warm. If it is, don't open it – there may be fire on the other side
- Call 999 as soon as you're clear of the building.

In the event of a fire call the emergency services (999) and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service.
999 calls are free of charge

Tel: 999

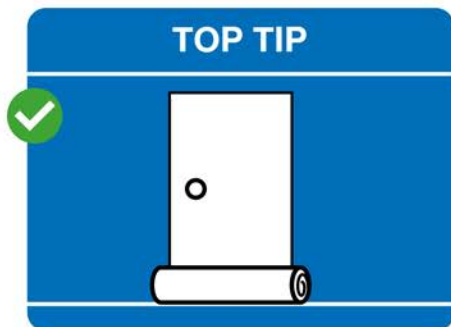


Get out, stay out and call 999

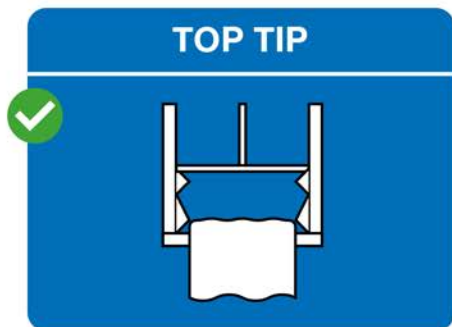
What to do if your escape is blocked

If you can't get out, get everyone into one room, ideally with a window and a phone.

- Put bedding, blankets or any soft furnishings around the bottom of the door to block out the smoke
- Call 999, then open the window and call "HELP FIRE"
- If you're on the ground or first floor, you may be able to escape through a window
- Use bedding, blankets or any soft furnishings 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



Block off smoke at the bottom of the door



Use bedding to cushion your fall if you can

What to do if your clothes catch fire

Here are a few things to remember if you find your clothes alight.

- Don't run around, you'll make the flames worse. It's best to lie down and roll around, this makes it harder for the fire to spread
- Smother the flames with a heavy material, like a coat or blanket
- The main thing to remember is, **Stop, Drop and Roll!**



STOP



DROP

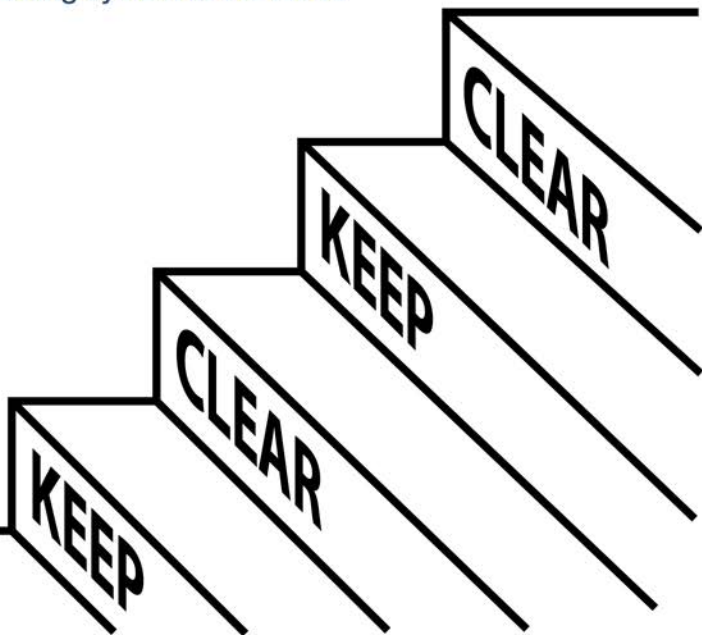


ROLL

How to escape from a high level building

If you can't get out, get everyone into one room, ideally with a window and a phone.

- As with all buildings, you should plan and practice 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



MAKE A BEDTIME CHECK

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.

REMEMBER

- 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
- Take a mobile phone to bed with you, a fire could cause your landline to stop working



Your fire safety checklist

Fire can break out for a number of reasons, but there are steps you can take to reduce the risk. Please work through this checklist to help keep you and your family safe.

Checklist	Done
Check you have a smoke alarm on the ceiling of every storey of your property.	
Think of a way to remind yourself to check your alarm every week.	
Make a fire escape plan and share it with everyone in your home.	
Identify an alternative escape route in case your normal route is blocked by smoke or fire.	
Check everyone in your property knows where door and window keys are kept at night. Ensure your door key is in a safe place along your escape route and near the door.	
Plan a bedtime routine that involves switching off all electrical appliances that don't need to be left on.	
Ensure all internal doors are closed at night. They can hold back heat and flames for approximately 20 minutes.	
Check sockets and gang plugs are not overloaded.	

Checklist	Done
Make sure extension leads are in good condition and are not damaged.	
Check there is nothing near the hob or cooker that could catch fire, such as tea towels or kitchen rolls.	
Ensure everyone in the house knows that most fires start in the kitchen, usually by cooking that has been left unattended.	
Check candles are placed in suitable holders and only used when there are people in the room.	
If there are smokers in the house check they properly extinguish cigarettes. More people die in fires started by cigarettes than any other type of fire.	
Ensure matches and lighters are out of reach and hidden from children.	
If possible make sure outside rubbish bins and recycling are stored securely away from windows, escape routes and vehicles.	
Check all boundary fences, hedges and walls are in good condition and your property is secure.	
Make sure you have a torch in your bedroom in case the electricity fails.	
Check your escape routes are clear from trip hazards.	

What we do with your information

Our Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) help reduce the risk of having a fire in your home by fitting smoke alarms and giving fire safety advice.

Under the Fire Services Act 2004, our obligations include reducing risk from fire, providing fire safety advice, safeguarding our community, and providing support to improve your health and well-being.

What information we will need from you

- Personal information (data) about the householder and family members (such as name, contact details, age group, lifestyle information)
- Special categories of personal information (including ethnicity and health information, such as the existence of a hearing loss, visual impairment, reduced mobility, cognitive issues, or oxygen cylinders)
- Information regarding the interventions we have carried out

Why we need this information

- To contact you to make arrangements for the visit
- To provide services to protect your safety or the safety of others
- To tell you about other services which may improve your safety and well-being
- To record and evaluate the activities we provide
- For statistical purposes, to analyse our activity and identify trends

Under data protection law, we must have a lawful basis to use your information. For HFSVs, it is necessary for the performance of our public task. Special categories of data (such as ethnicity and health data) are collected for reasons of substantial public interest for equality and opportunity of treatment and to exercise our function as a fire and rescue service.

Who we share this information with and why

We have a responsibility to promote social well-being, and to do this we work closely with partners. We may share your information with partners such as community and voluntary organisations, councils, health and social services or the police, to ensure you receive relevant services.

Our partners may also provide your details to us, if they think you might benefit from a visit.

We may share details with our control room to ensure a safe and effective response in the event of an emergency at your home.

Sharing information only takes place under strict data sharing protocols with tight security controls. Where possible, we will make you aware and, where required, ask for your consent.

Would you like to know more?

If you would like to know more about what we do with your data, including how you can request to exercise your data protection rights, please visit our website at www.avonfire.gov.uk/guide-to-published-information/data-protection/an-individual-s-rights-regarding-their-personal-information or contact us:

Data protection information:

www.avonfire.gov.uk/guide-to-published-information/data-protection

Our full Privacy Notices: www.avonfire.gov.uk/privacy

Write: Data Protection Officer, Avon Fire & Rescue Service, Police and Fire Headquarters, PO Box 37, Valley Road, Portishead, Bristol, BS20 8JJ

Call: 0117 926 2061 **Email:** FOI-DP@avonfire.gov.uk

Other useful contacts

Police (non emergency) - 101

NHS - 111

Avon Fire & Rescue Service - 0117 926 2061

Bristol City Council - 0117 922 2000

South Gloucestershire Council - 01454 868 009

North Somerset Council - 01934 888 888

Bath and North East Somerset Council - 01225 477 000

Citizens Advice Bureau - 03444 111 444



Home Fire Safety Visit

We provide a free 'Home Fire Safety Visit' for the most vulnerable in our community. During our visit we will advise how to reduce the risk of a fire, and what to do in an emergency. Free smoke alarms will be fitted if required.

For free home fire safety advice or to check if you, or somebody you know, are eligible for a Home Fire Safety Visit,

please see our website:

www.avonfire.gov.uk

Alternatively you can:

Call 0117 926 2061

during office hours, or leave a message and your phone number and we will call you back



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