



Important fire safety advice

This leaflet gives you advice on how to reduce the chances of a fire starting in your home and how to keep yourself, your family and your property safe from fire. Don't forget, if there is a fire in your home – get out, stay out and **call 999** – don't try to tackle the fire yourself. Being aware of the risks and following the steps outlined below will reduce the chances of fire in your home.

Did you know...?

- **You're four times more likely to die in a fire if you don't have a smoke alarm that works.**
- **Careless disposal of cigarettes is the single biggest killer in house fires.**
- **Around half of home fires are caused by cooking accidents.**

Please follow this advice:

1. **Smoke alarms** and heat detectors should be kept free from dust and **tested once a week**.
2. Know the main escape routes from your home and make sure that everyone in your home knows **how to escape if there is a fire**.
3. **Keep the exits** from your home **clear** so that people can get out easily.
4. Make sure that everyone in your home can easily find the **keys to doors and windows**.
5. **Take extra care in the kitchen** – never leave young children alone in the kitchen. Be very careful **when cooking with hot oil**. Consider buying a deep-fat fryer which is controlled by a thermostat.
7. **Never leave lit candles alone** or in rooms where children are on their own. Make sure candles are in secure holders on a surface that does not burn and are away from any materials that could burn.
8. Make sure **cigarettes are out properly** and are disposed of carefully, make sure your ashtray can't tip over and is made of a material that won't burn. Never smoke in bed and take extra care if you smoke when you're tired, taking prescription drugs, or if you've been drinking. Do not smoke in enclosed communal areas.
9. Get into the habit of **closing doors at night**. If you want to keep a child's bedroom door open, you should still close the doors to the lounge and kitchen. **Never prop open fire doors** - they are designed to self-close for a reason.
10. Remember **one plug for one socket** – don't overload electrical sockets.
11. **Keep matches and lighters where children can't see or reach them.**



12. **TVs or other electrical appliances should not be left on standby** as this could cause a fire – always switch off and unplug when not in use.
13. **Do not use ethanol fires/fireplaces** – they are highly combustible.
14. For electrical appliances including fridges, consider registering the details on <https://www.registermyappliance.org.uk/about-us/> This website has details if a manufacturer identifies problems with an appliance even once the product has been in use for some time. They can then contact you to get the fault corrected as quickly as possible.

What if you have disabilities?

If you or a member of your household has any difficulty seeing, hearing or moving about the home, you will need to take extra care to deal with the risk of a fire. You can contact our staff or Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service who will be able to provide advice.

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.
- Do not use lifts.
- Don't waste time investigating what's happened or rescuing pets or 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.

If you have any concerns or require further information please contact our Relationship Advisors.

Specific advice if you live in a flat:

We carry out regular inspections and Fire Risk Assessments, and an independent Fire Risk Assessor regularly inspects our flats and sheltered schemes to ensure our blocks meet the highest possible fire standards.

Please make sure all communal corridors, landings and doorways are kept clear – even plants, bins or coffee tables can be a hazard if you are trying to escape when there's smoke in the building. Storing flammable items, such as newspapers or clothes in communal areas, is a risk for you and others.

If you live in a block of flats or a sheltered housing scheme you need to understand what to do in the event of a fire. **Fire management plans** are specific to each building, please see fire signage in the communal hallway for details. Some buildings require that residents need to leave a building in the event of a fire. Other buildings are designed so that fires are containable in a specific area, and for more details on 'Safe to Stay' see overleaf.



Signage that explains what fire management plan applies to your building will be in the main entrance lobby – see example below. Make sure you read and understand it!

Fire action



If fire breaks out in your flat

- ▶ **leave the room where the fire is straight away, then close the door**
- ▶ tell everyone in your flat and get them to leave. **Close the flat entrance door behind you**
- ▶ **do not** stay behind to put the fire out
- ▶ if there is a lift - **do not use**
- ▶ **wait outside away from the building**
- ▶ call the Fire Service dial 999 or 112

If you see or hear of a fire in another part of the building

- ▶ the building is designed to contain a fire in the flat where it starts. This means it will usually be safe for you to **stay in your own flat if the fire is elsewhere**
- ▶ you must also leave **immediately** if smoke or heat affects your home, or if you are told to leave by the Fire Service
- ▶ if there is a lift - **do not use**
- ▶ if you are in doubt - **get out**

To call the Fire Service

- ▶ dial 999 or 112
- ▶ when the operator answers, give your telephone number and ask for fire
- ▶ when the Fire Service reply give the address where the fire is
- ▶ do not end the call until the Fire Service has repeated the address correctly

If you require this document in another format, for example Braille, large type or audio tape/CD please call the number below. If English is not your first language we can arrange for an interpreter to explain this information to you.

اگر انگلش آپ کی مادری زبان نہیں ہے تو ہم ان معلومات کی وضاحت کیلئے ایک ترجمہ کار بندہ دست کر سکتے ہیں

Dla osób nie władających językiem angielskim możliwe będzie zorganizowanie tłumacza celem wyjaśnienia tych informacji.

01494 476100

What is a 'Stay to Stay' policy?

The construction of our blocks means some individual flats are compartmented (individually boxed in), which protects residents in the event of a fire. Walls, ceilings and doors will hold back flames and smoke, so if there's a fire somewhere else in the building, you're usually safest in your home unless you're affected by heat or smoke.

To further improve safety, every flat in blocks where we have a 'Stay to Stay' policy has its own smoke alarm which is hard-wired (so there isn't a battery that needs changing). But you must leave immediately if smoke or heat affects your home, or if you are told to by the fire service. **If you are in any doubt, get out.**

So if the fire is inside your flat, get out quickly, close the door to prevent the fire spreading into the corridor, and raise the alarm by calling the Fire Brigade.