



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities



Home Office

Welcome Workshops

Cultural Orientation Programme

Fire Safety

With thanks to the London Fire Brigade

Learning objectives

1. To understand how to **report** a fire

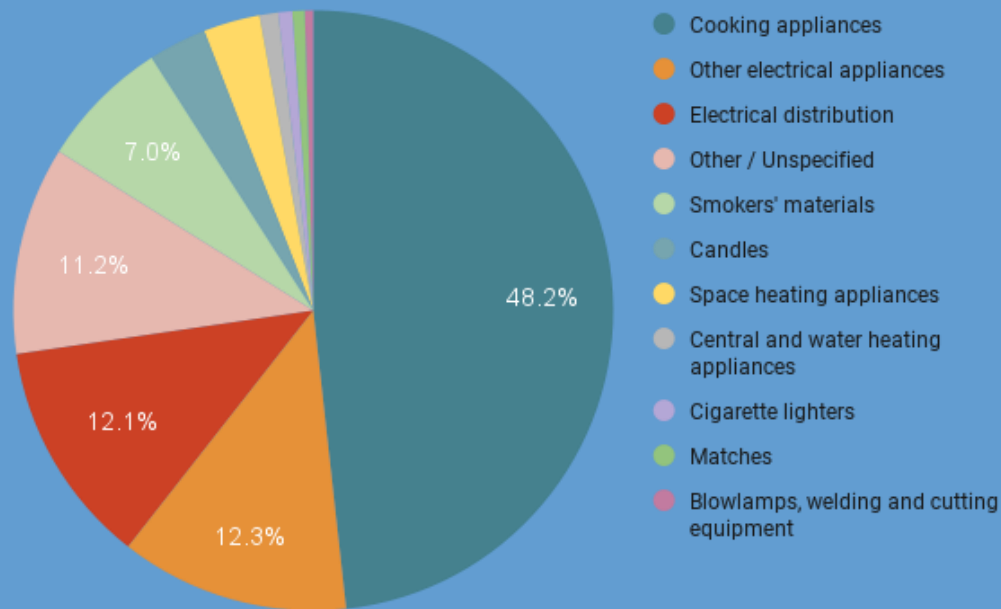
2. To understand how to **prevent** a fire occurring in your home

3. To understand how to **detect** a fire

4. To understand how to **escape** from fire

Fires in the home

- There are about 37,000 house fires every year in the UK – it is a serious issue
- There were 285 fire-related deaths in the UK in 2019/20
- Cooking appliances account for almost half (48%) of all accidental house fires





Section 1: how to **report a fire**

How to report a fire

- In an emergency you should always call **999** and ask for the fire service
- You will be asked questions, including the **postcode** where the fire is taking place (if you don't have the postcode, then use the **street name or a local landmark instead**)
- The nearest **fire engine** with the necessary equipment will be sent to the location
- **If you do not speak English**, say the language you speak and you will be provided with an **interpreter**
- Do not assume someone else has called 999 already. If you see an emergency, make the call
- Do not try to contact your local fire station or fire safety team in an emergency
- If you see someone set a fire on purpose, this is called **arson** and you should call 999





Section 2: how to **prevent** a fire occurring in your home

How to prevent a fire occurring in your home

1. Cooking safety



Do not leave pans **unattended** and if you need to leave the kitchen whilst cooking, always **take pans off the heat**

Make sure **saucepan handles** do not stick out - so they don't get knocked off the stove

Take care if you are wearing **loose clothing** - they can easily catch fire. Keep **tea towels and cloths** away from the cooker and hob

Double check the cooker is **off** when you have finished cooking

Avoid leaving **children** in the kitchen alone when cooking on the hob

Keep the oven, hob and grill **clean** and in good working order. A build up of fat and grease can start a fire

Keep your microwave clean and do not put metal in it

Turn off electrical appliances when they are not in use

You need to be especially careful when you are **cooking with oil** because hot oil can catch fire easily. Do not overfill a pan with oil (over one third) and **never throw water on an oil fire**

Cooking safety – if a pan catches fire



- Do not tackle the fire yourself and do not attempt to move the pan
- Turn off the heat if it is safe to do so
- Never throw water over a fire as it could create a fireball
- Leave the room, close the door, shout a warning to others and call the fire brigade by dialling 999

How to prevent a fire occurring in your home

2. Electrical safety

Prevent electrical fires



Light bulbs

Replace **halogen bulbs** with **LED bulbs** if possible.



Use bulbs that are the right size and wattage.



Make sure bulbs are fitted correctly – loose bulbs may get too hot.



Do not put anything over the bulb as it can get very hot and cause a fire.



Halogen bulbs and **LED bulbs** are two different types of light bulbs.



Halogen bulbs are much hotter than LED bulbs. They are more likely to cause a fire if things are placed too close to them.

Prevent electrical fires



Electric blankets

Do not use an electric blanket:

- on an airflow mattress
- if you use creams or lotions to help with severe skin conditions or to stop you getting sores.



Only buy an electric blanket from a well-known shop.



Store the blanket rolled up so that the wiring inside does not get damaged.



Regularly check that the blanket and wiring are not damaged.



Buy a new blanket every 10 years or earlier if it gets damaged.

Prevent electrical fires



Batteries and chargers

Many electrical devices have a battery inside.



You put electricity into the battery with a charger.



Only use the charger that came with the device. If you need a new one, get it from the maker of the device.



Unplug the charger once the battery is full.



Put your device on a hard surface like a table before you start to charge it up.



Never cover devices that are charging. They can get hot.

Prevent electrical fires



Faulty electric products

Electric appliances such as fridges, freezers, washing machines and dryers can cause fires if they have a fault.



If your electric product has a fault, you should stop using it and contact the retailer.



Check with the Government website to see if the product has been **recalled** by the maker:
www.gov.uk/government/news/product-recall



Take care when buying second-hand products. Make sure they have been checked for safety.

There is more information available on the Electrical Safety First website:
www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk



Recall is when the company that made something asks everyone to send it back because it may be dangerous.

How to prevent a fire occurring in your home

3. Candles and naked flames



ALWAYS FOLLOW THIS ADVICE

- Make sure you put out any candles, incense and oil burners when you leave the room and especially before bed.
- These items should always be held firmly in heat resistant holders and placed on a stable surface.
- Keep them away from materials that may catch fire such as curtains, furniture, clothes.
- Tea lights get very hot and without proper holders can melt through plastic surfaces like a TV or bath.
- To avoid accidents keep candles and other naked flames out of reach of children and pets.

CELEBRATE SAFELY

- Take extra care when celebrating events such as Halloween, Bonfire Night and Christmas. Fancy dress costumes and decorations can easily catch fire; make sure they are kept away from naked flames. Always check that costumes or face masks are fire retardant in accordance to European standard EN71-2.

How to prevent a fire occurring in your home

3. Smoking safety

Smoking



Smoking cigarettes

It is better not to smoke.



You can get information and support on quitting from:

- The NHS Smokefree helpline: **0300 123 1044**.
- Your local doctor (GP).



If you do smoke

Use a deep ashtray.
Cigarettes are less likely to fall or roll out.



While you are smoking

Always stay near the cigarette while it is burning.

Smoking



If you feel sleepy

Never smoke in an armchair if you think you may fall asleep.
Never smoke in bed.



When you have finished smoking

Put the cigarette out safely.
Put water in the ashtray before emptying it into the bin.



Matches and lighters

Keep matches and lighters out of the reach and sight of children.

At bedtime



Doors

Close all of the doors. This will prevent any fire from spreading.



Electric appliances

Switch off and unplug all appliances except the ones that should stay on like the fridge and freezer.



Don't use washing machines, dishwashers or tumble driers at night-time.

At bedtime



Tablets, mobile phones and e-cigarettes

Don't leave any devices on charge at night-time.



Make sure portable heaters are switched off.



Oil burners, candles and incense sticks

Always make sure these are put out before you go to bed.



Keys

Keep door and window keys where everyone you live with can find them.



Make sure that all cigarettes are properly put out and pour water in the ashtray.

Bedtime routine – it can help you prevent fires



Section 3: how to **detect** a fire

Free home fire safety visits

The fire service can provide personalised advice on:

- Cooking and smoking
- Heaters and heating
- Candles and fireplaces
- Detection systems (smoke and heat alarms)
- Bedtime checks
- What to do if there is a fire

Free smoke alarms

If you need them, they will provide and fit free smoke alarms in any room where a fire might start. This can be done on the day.

England

For London you can call 0800 028 4428. For other areas search on the internet in the area where you live and then look for 'free home fire safety' visits.

Wales

Call 0800 1691234 or text 07756847123

Scotland

Call 0800 0731 999 or
Text "FIRE" to 80800 from your mobile phone

Northern Ireland

Call 028 9266 4221

How to detect a fire - smoke alarms

Where can you get them?

- Hardware stores
- Supermarkets
- London Fire Brigade (free)

How often should you test your fire alarm?

Once a month

How many should you have?

Every room a fire can start – as a minimum the living room, hall and landing, and a heat alarm in the kitchen

How often should you change the battery?

You should either have a mains-wired alarm or one with a sealed battery that lasts as long as the unit (ten years)

Are there different types?

Yes – depending on your requirements - but you should have interlinked alarms (so that all alarms sound if there is a fire anywhere in the house)



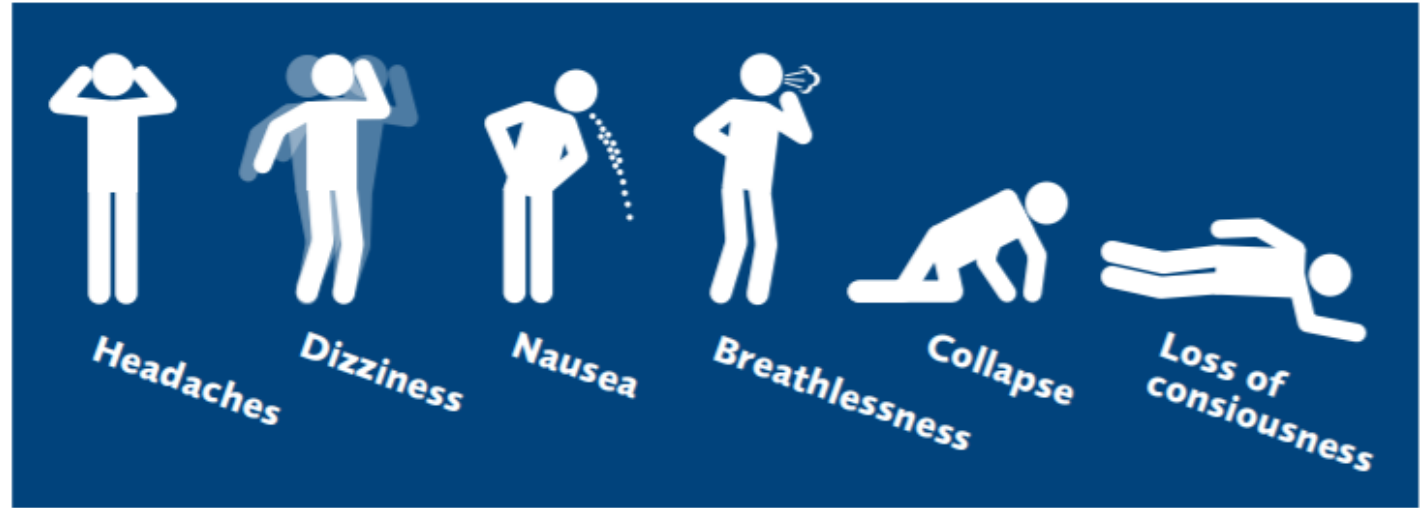
Carbon Monoxide

CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) POISONING SYMPTOMS

Poisoning from CO can happen in a matter of minutes or over an extended period of time depending on the amount of CO in

the air. You cannot taste, see or smell CO fumes but they are extremely dangerous.

Symptoms can include:



WARNING SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR

- Symptoms only occur when you are in your home and disappear or get better when you leave.
- Others in your home are experiencing similar symptoms (including your pets).
- Black, sooty marks on the front covers of gas fires.
- Sooty or yellow/brown stains on or around boilers, stoves or fires.
- If you get any symptoms when appliances are in use, eg; when the boiler is on.
- Increased condensation on the windows.
- Pilot lights frequently blowing out.
- Yellow instead of blue flames coming from gas appliances or flames are not fully formed (e.g. if flame isn't all the way round on a gas hob burner).

Carbon Monoxide

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

If you suspect CO poisoning or if your CO alarm sounds:

- Open doors and windows to ventilate (if possible).
- If you are able to do so safely, switch off the appliance.
- Get outside into the fresh air quickly.
- Seek immediate medical advice. See your doctor or go to hospital – let them know that you suspect CO poisoning, they can do a blood or breath test to check.

Before you return to your home it is very important to call the **gas emergency number on 0800 111 999** and tell them what has happened. You may need an engineer to inspect your appliances and flues to check if there is a dangerous problem.

For further information please visit:

The Health and Safety Executive website:
www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/

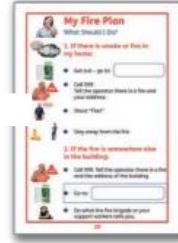




Section 3: how to **escape** from a fire

How to escape from a fire

Planning for an emergency



Make a fire plan

Make sure everyone in the home knows what to do if there's a fire.

Practice your fire plan.



How to get out fast

Keep hallways, landings and stairs clear of anything that might block or slow down your escape.



Door and window keys

Keep your door and window keys where everyone can find them in an emergency.



Mobility Aids

Keep all walking frames, crutches and walking sticks near to the person who uses them.

What to do if there is a fire in your home



If you hear the smoke alarm

Do not ignore it. Follow your escape plan and go outside.



Tell others

Shout 'Fire!'.



Check the doors to see if they are warm or hot

Use the back of your hand. Leave the door closed if it feels warm or hot.

How to escape from a fire

What to do if there is a fire in your home



If there is smoke

Smoke is poisonous.
Keep low so that you can breathe cleaner air.



Doors

Close all of the doors after you.
This will prevent the fire from spreading.

999



Call 999

As soon as you are safely outside,
use your mobile phone to dial 999.

- Ask for the fire brigade.
- Give them your address.
- Do not go back inside.

What to do if you can't get out



Go into a room with a window.



Block the bottom of the door
with bedding or a towel to
keep the smoke out.



Stay close to the open
window for fresh air.



If you have a phone, call 999 or
shout 'Fire!' from the window.

How to escape from a fire

If you live in a flat



If there is a fire or smoke in your flat:

Leave the flat and go outside.
Close all doors on your way out.



Do not use the lift.

999



Call 999

As soon as you are safely outside, use your mobile phone to dial 999.

- Ask for the fire brigade.
- Give them your address.
- Do not go back inside.

If you live in a flat



If there is a fire somewhere else in the building:

Keep the front door closed and use a towel or blanket to block any gap at the bottom.



The doors in blocks of flats will protect you from fire for at least 30 minutes.



Only leave the flat if told to do so by the building manager or a fire officer.

If your clothes are on fire



Stop.



Don't run around.



Drop to the floor.



Roll around to put the flames out.

If your clothes are on fire

Important to remember

STOP Fire

One of the easiest ways to prevent a fire is to follow our 'STOP Fire' message:

- **S** – make sure you have **s**moke alarms on every floor of your home.
- **T** – **t**est those smoke alarms weekly to make sure they're working.
- **O** – be aware of the **obvious dangers** in your home. You can find advice about these below.
- **P** – **plan** your escape route should a fire occur.



Links to the Scottish Government website on Fire Safety

For more info on the new smoke and heat alarm regulations: [Fire and smoke alarms: changes to the law - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#). This provides information on what type of alarms should be fitted, and in which rooms etc.

SFRS website for general home fire safety advice: [Scottish Fire & Rescue Service \(firescotland.gov.uk\)](#)

And for those who are providing housing/care for vulnerable people, our specialised housing guidance may be useful: [Practical fire safety for existing specialised housing and similar premises: guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Thank you

Any questions?