

10 Tips For Fire Safety

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Among the many measures that can be taken to reduce fire losses, perhaps none is more important than educating people about fire. Americans must be made aware of magnitude of fire's toll and its threat to them personally.

As one writer has summed up the problem, "A significant factor contributing to the cause and spread of fire is human failure -- failure to recognize hazards and take adequate preventive measure, failure to act intelligently at the outbreak of the fire, failure to take action which would limit damage." These failures cannot be legislated out of existence; they must be dealt with through education.

1. **Stop, Drop, And Roll** If your clothing catches fire, stop wherever you are, drop to the floor or ground, and roll over and over to smother the flames. Cover your face with your hands to protect your face.
2. **Install and Maintain Smoke Detectors** Install at least one smoke detector on every level of your home. There should be one outside each sleeping area. In apartment buildings, there should be smoke detectors in each apartment. Test smoke detectors once a month according to directions. Replace dead batteries immediately.; Clean away any dust or cobwebs from the face of the detector.
3. **Practice E.D.I.T.H. -- Exit Drills In The Home** Design an escape plan for the family. Make special provisions for infants, elderly, and handicapped persons. Have two ways out of every room in case flames or smoke block one way. Establish a place outside where everyone will gather. Don't go back into a building that's on fire. Practice the escape plan with an Exit Drill In The Home (E.D.I.T.H.). In an apartment building, use only the stairs as a fire exit, never an elevator.
4. **Crawl Low In Smoke** Crawl low in smoke, moving on hands and knees. Cleaner air is nearer the floor.
5. **Cool a Burn** If someone gets burned, put cool water on the burned skin immediately. Seek a doctor's help if a blister forms or if the burn is severe.
6. **Smokers Need Watchers** Make sure smokers extinguish cigarettes in large, deep ashtrays. Empty ashtrays into the toilet. Check under sofa and chair cushions for cigarette butts before going to bed. Never smoke in bed.
7. **Space Heaters Need Space** Keep portable heaters at least 36 inches away from things that burn -- papers, bedding, clothing, curtains. Keep small children away from heaters. Turn heaters off when going to bed or when leaving the home.
8. **Be Careful When Cooking** Pay complete attention when cooking at the stove. Keep young children out of the way. If grease catches fire, place a lid over the pan to smother the fire; turn off the burner. Never throw water on anything else onto a grease fire. Make sure pot handles are turned inward so that they can't be accidentally tipped over.
9. **Practice Safety With Electricity** If an appliance gives off smoke or a burning odor, unplug it immediately and have it checked for repair. Check cords on appliances; have cords replaced if they are frayed or broken. Do not place extension cords under rugs or in other places where they may be stepped on and broken. If you replace a blown fuse, make sure the new fuse is of the same amperage rating.
10. **A Match Is A Tool -- FOR ADULTS** Matches and lighters are tools for adults. Keep them where children cannot reach them. Teach children to give matches and lighters to adults.