

# Stay safe and well

SAFETY  
LEAFLET

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## Reducing fire risk in your home

[www.kent.fire-uk.org/homesafety](http://www.kent.fire-uk.org/homesafety)



**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

**This advice will help you make your home a safer place, but if you need more information, please get in touch – we'll be happy to help.**

## Smoke alarms

Smoke alarms are your best chance of survival if a fire breaks out in your home. Every home should have at least one smoke alarm on each floor, and they should be tested every week.



## In the kitchen

- Greasy grill pans and ovens can be a cause of fires – when fat deposits heat up, they become fuel which can cause a small fire to grow quickly.
- When frying with cooking oil, filling the pan more than a third of the way up can be very risky.
- Leaving cooking unattended causes a lot of kitchen fires. Try setting a timer as a reminder.
- If you take medicine that affects your sleep patterns, makes you unsteady on your feet, or you've had an alcoholic drink, it's much safer to have a cold snack ready or get a takeaway.



## Electrical goods

- Always read the instructions that come with the product – there will be useful tips about safety and what to do if something goes wrong.
- Look after your appliances – for example, clean out fluff filters in tumble dryers regularly.
- Overloaded sockets cause fires – one plug per socket is the best option. Four-socket extensions are much safer than the older style block extensions.
- Only use the supplied adapters for mobile phones, e-cigarettes, laptops, tablets and other gadgets to avoid overcharging.
- USB chargers are not always suitable for use on more than one device, even if the plug fits the socket.
- Watch out for danger signs like flickering lights or overheating – if you see scorch marks or signs of burning on a device or socket, stop using it right away.



## Heaters and fires

- Drying clothes or bedding on portable heaters or in front of an open fire can cause a fire.
- If you have an open fire or wood burner, use a fire guard to prevent sparks and ashes setting light to carpets or furniture.
- Have your chimney swept regularly, but remember chimney sweeps are busiest in the autumn and winter, so it's best to book early. Sign up for an email reminder at [www.kent.fire-uk.org/cleansweepalert](http://www.kent.fire-uk.org/cleansweepalert)
- Stand portable heaters on a flat and stable surface.



## Candles and tea lights

- Put candles or tea lights out before you go to bed or leave the room.
- Keep lit candles well away from curtains, particularly near open windows where a breeze could start a fire.
- Use a proper holder for tea lights as well as the supplied metal one.
- Watch out for curious children or pets - cats, dogs or young family members can easily knock over a lit candle by accident when they brush past.



## Smoking

- If you leave your cigarette or cigar unattended, make sure you stub it out, particularly before bed. Leave ashtrays outside if you're unsure.
- Use a proper ashtray that won't tip over.
- Smoking in bed is a very dangerous thing to do – if you fall asleep with a lit cigarette, you could be badly burnt or even killed.
- Always keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children.



## Before you go to bed

- Unplug all electrical items that do not need to be left on overnight.
- Close the doors to all rooms. This should slow the spread of smoke and flames if a fire does break out.

# What's your escape plan?

**Just three breaths of fire smoke could be enough to knock you unconscious. Could you and your family find your way out if your home was full of smoke?**

That's why it's essential that everyone you live with knows what to do if a fire breaks out – you all need to get out of the house as quickly and safely as possible. Once you are safely out call 999 and we will get there as quickly as we can. Do not risk going back into the house while you are waiting.

- Plan your escape route with your family so everyone knows what to do.
- Think through alternative routes in case a passage is blocked by the fire.
- Make sure everyone knows where the keys to doors and windows are kept.
- The smoke from even a small fire can mean that you won't be able to see far in front of you. Making a mental map of your route could save your life.
- Staying down low will help you avoid breathing in the smoke.

# Are you at risk?

When a fire breaks out, every second is critical to your survival. If you have a disability, a serious illness or you're just a lot slower than you were when you were younger then the risk is a bit higher, but the good news is that there's a lot we can do to help.

If you're concerned about whether your home is safe from fire, contact us now for free home safety services, all tailored to the needs of individual households.

Call us on **0800 923 7000** or visit **[www.kent.fire-uk.org/homesafety](http://www.kent.fire-uk.org/homesafety)**

If you would like this information in another format or language, please call our **Home Safety Advice team on 0800 923 7000** or email **[home@kent.fire-uk.org](mailto:home@kent.fire-uk.org)**