

FIRE SAFETY **IN THE** **HOME**



**In case
of fire
call
190**



**GIBRALTAR
GOVERNMENT**

Issued by the City Fire Brigade on
behalf of the Gibraltar Government
Civil Contingencies Committee

Did you know...?

You are twice as likely to die in a fire if you don't have a smoke alarm that works.

Main causes of Fire in Homes in Gibraltar over a five year period.

Cooking pot, frying pan etc left unattended.	30	20	16	18	13
Careless disposal of smokers materials.	24	18	15	23	11
Defective electrical appliances or installation.	22	16	27	24	14
Children playing with fire.	11	10	15	7	15
Total number for all fires over a five year period	200	152	156	161	141

For free advice contact the Fire Safety Department, City Fire Brigade, Gibraltar on Tel. 20072936 or Email. firesafety@gibfire.gi or to download a copy of this guide go to www.gibfire.gi

PROTECT YOUR HOME WITH SMOKE ALARMS



The easiest way to protect your home and family from fire is with a smoke alarm.

Buy it.
Install it.
Check it.
It could save your life.

Install a smoke alarm

Fires occur when you least expect them, often during the night when people are asleep. But the real killer is smoke. If you have a smoke alarm installed it will wake you up giving you time to get out.

Choosing your smoke alarm

Fit smoke alarms on every level of your home. Smoke alarms are cheap and easy to install.

They are available from DIY shops, electrical shops and most supermarkets.

There are a variety of different models to choose from.

The Fire Safety Department will be happy to give you advice on which one is best suited for you.

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



How to make sure your smoke alarm works

Test the batteries in your smoke alarm every week. Change them every year. Never remove them.

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.

A lot of people forget to check the batteries, so longer life batteries are better.

An alarm with a ten-year battery is the best option.

Mains-powered alarms are powered by your home power supply. Generally they don't need replaceable batteries, but need to be installed by a qualified electrician.

Alarms that plug into a light socket use a rechargeable battery, which is charged when the light is on.

You can 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.



Fitting your smoke alarm

Don't place alarms in or near kitchens or bathrooms where smoke can set them off by accident.

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



Looking after your smoke alarm

Make checking your smoke alarm part of your regular household routine.

Test by pressing the button until the alarm sounds. If it doesn't sound, you need to replace the batteries.

If your smoke alarm starts to beep on a regular basis, you need to replace the batteries immediately.

If it is a ten year alarm, you will need to replace the whole alarm every ten years.

Other equipment you should 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 shoot out a jet to help control a fire. They are quick and simple to use, but always read the instructions first.

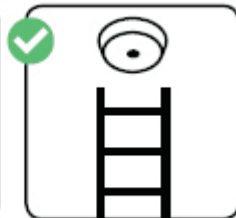
Fire blankets and extinguishers should only be used by adults who are absolutely sure they know when and how to use them. You should only attempt to put out a fire if it is safe to do so.



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 to take precautions with electrics, candles and cigarettes.

In the kitchen

How to cook safely

Avoid leaving children in the kitchen alone when cooking on the hob. Keep matches and saucepan handles out of their reach.

Take extra care if you need to leave the kitchen whilst cooking, take pans off the heat or turn them down to avoid risk.

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 - they can easily catch fire.

Keep tea towels and cloths

away from the cooker and hob.

Double check that the cooker is off when you've finished cooking.

Take care with electrics

Keep electric leads and appliances away from water.

Check toasters are clean and placed away from curtains and kitchen rolls.

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

Don't put anything made of metal in the microwave



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 unless it is safe to do so.

**GET OUT
STAY OUT
AND CALL
190**





Electrics

How to avoid electrical fires

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 to keep to one plug per socket.

Know the limit!

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.

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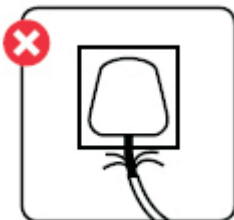
Keep electrical appliances clean and in good working order to prevent them triggering a fire.

Watch out for signs of dangerous or loose wiring such as scorch marks, hot plugs and sockets, fuses that blow or 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.



Furniture

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

Using an electric blanket

Don't leave electric blankets folded as this damages the internal wiring. Store them flat or rolled.

Unplug blankets before you go to bed, unless they have a thermostat control for safe all-night use.

Try not to buy second hand blankets and check regularly for wear and tear.

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.

Cigarettes

Never smoke in bed.

Use a proper ashtray - never a wastepaper 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.

Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach.

Consider buying child resistant lighters and match boxes.

Stub cigarettes out properly and dispose of them carefully. Put them out. Right out!

Matchboxes now carry this warning label:

**"DANGER !
fire kills children"**



**Put them out.
Right out!**



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.

Always place candles on a heat resistant surface. Night lights and tea lights can melt plastic surfaces such as the top of a TV set.

Use a snuffer or a spoon to put out candles. It's safer than blowing them out when sparks can fly.

Children shouldn't be left alone with lit candles.





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

Plan an escape route and make sure everyone is familiar with it.

Make sure exits are kept clear.

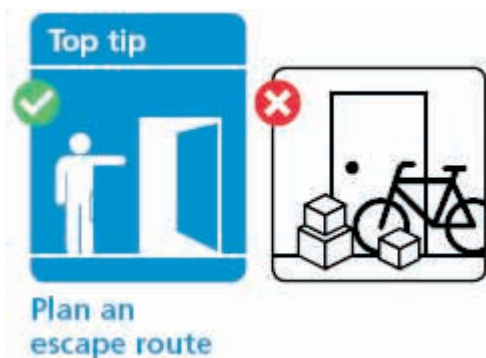
The best route is the normal way in and out of your home.

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.

Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them



**Don't tackle fires yourself.
Leave it to the professionals**

What to do if there is a fire

Keep calm and act quickly, get everyone out as soon as possible.

Don't waste time investigating what's happening or rescuing 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 190 as soon as you're clear of the building. You can also call 190 and 112 from a mobile phone even if you have no credit.



190 and 112 calls are free

What to do if your clothes catch fire

Don't run around, you'll
make the flames worse.

Lie down and roll around.
It makes it harder for the
fire to spread.

Smother the flames with a
heavy material, like a coat
or blanket.

Remember, Stop, Drop,
and Roll!



STOP !



DROP !



ROLL !

What to do if your escape is blocked

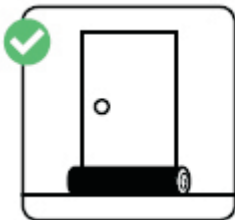
If you can't get out, get everyone into one room, ideally with a window and a phone.

Put bedding around the bottom of the door to block out the smoke, 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 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.



How to escape from a high level building

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.

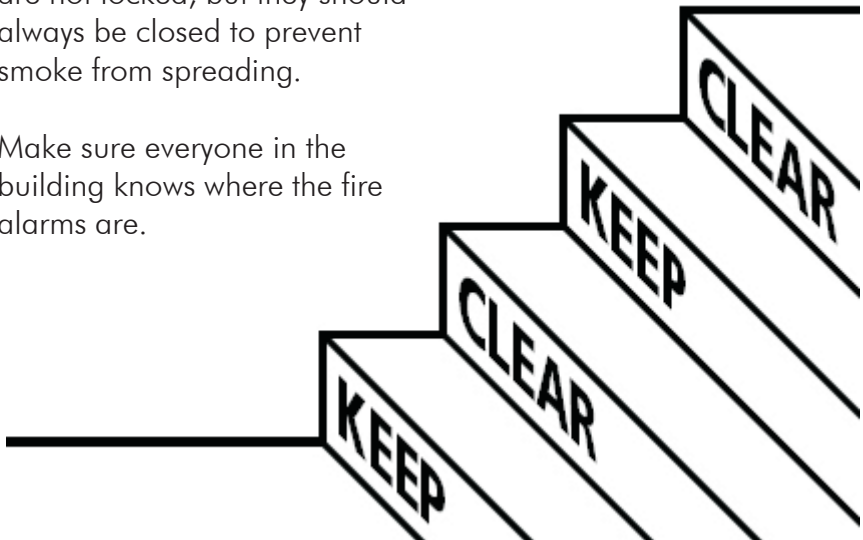
Make sure doors to stairways are not locked, but they should always be closed to prevent smoke from spreading.

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.


Flats are built to be fire proof, so if there is a fire somewhere else in the building it is safer to stay in your flat. You should only evacuate if instructed by the fire service or you are affected by heat or smoke.




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.

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Close inside doors at night to stop a fire from spreading.
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Turn off and unplug electrical appliances unless they are designed to be left on - like your freezer.
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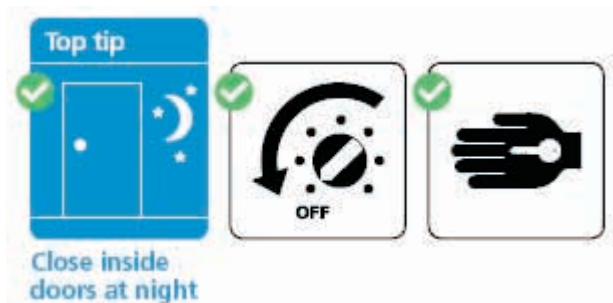
Check your cooker is turned off.
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Don't leave the washing machine on.
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Turn heaters off and put up fireguards.
 - Put candles and cigarettes out properly.
 - Make sure exits are kept clear.
 - Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them.

10 Top Tips to protect your home

1. Fit smoke alarms and test them regularly.
2. Devise a fire action plan.
3. Keep exits clear and accessible.
4. Take extra care in the kitchen.
5. Never leave candles in rooms where children are on their own.
6. Make sure cigarettes are stubbed out properly, never smoke in bed.
7. Close doors at night especially those to kitchen and lounge.
8. Do not overload electrical sockets.
9. Keep lighters and matches away from the reach of children.
10. Take special care when you are tired or have been drinking.



INSIDE REAR COVER
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SMOKE ALARMS

SAVE

LIVES

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the Fire Safety Department,
City Fire Brigade, Gibraltar
on Tel. 20072936 Email. firesafety@gibfire.gi
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