

# **FIRE SAFETY**

## **IN SHARED OR RENTED ACCOMMODATION**



**FIRE  
KILLS**

**YOU CAN  
PREVENT IT**

## Did you know?

- People living in rented or shared accommodation are seven times more likely to have a fire.
- About 400 people a year die in accidental house fires.
- Not having a working smoke alarm doubles your risk of death.
- Faulty electrics cause around 7,000 house fires a year.
- Candles cause more than 5 fires a day.

This leaflet has been put together for people in shared or rented homes who are at greater risk from fire. The advice and tips provided here supplement our main *Fire Safety in the Home* leaflet.

## Landlords' obligations to keep your home safe from fire

- If you live in privately rented accommodation, your landlord has to meet certain safety obligations under the law. This includes making sure all gas and electric appliances are safe and in good working order.
  - Gas appliances must be checked by a Gas Safe registered gas fitter every year
  - Electrical appliances must carry the British Safety Standard sign.
  - Your landlord must also ensure furnishings are fire resistant and meet safety regulations.
  - Your landlord must show you safety certificates so you can see when gas and electrical appliances were last checked.
- Your landlord should supply a carbon monoxide detector and test it regularly. You can't see, feel or smell carbon monoxide, but it can be fatal if you breathe it in. A detector will let you know if any carbon monoxide is present in your home.

If you are worried your landlord isn't doing enough to ensure your safety contact the environmental health officer at your local council for advice. You can find their contact details at [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

Make sure you recognise these symbols – they show your appliances and furnishings are safe



Electrical items



Gas fitting and repair



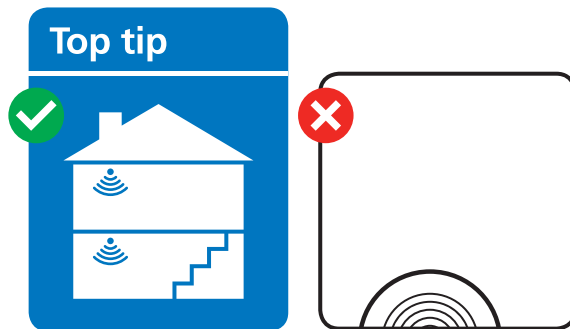
Soft furnishings

## Smoke alarms save lives

You are personally responsible for making sure that the smoke alarm fitted in your rented property is working.

Test batteries every week. Never cover, remove, or disable a smoke detector. NEVER remove the batteries. Tell your landlord as soon as the smoke alarm stops working.

Your local fire and rescue service will be able to check your home for fire risks, and may install a smoke alarm for you. You'll be able to find the number of your nearest fire station in the local phone book.



Fit smoke alarms

## Be extra careful with electrics

Avoid overloading sockets. Keep to one plug per socket.

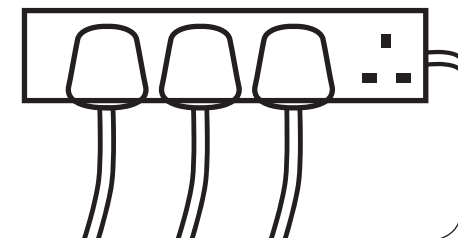
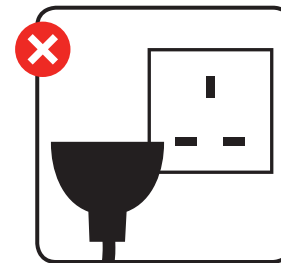
- Use a proper adaptor when using a non UK electrical appliance. Never put two prong plugs into three prong sockets.
- Don't use heaters for drying clothes and keep them a safe distance away to avoid them catching fire.
- Inform your landlord immediately if you are concerned about the electrics in your property. If you notice burn marks around plugs or cables for example.
- Don't fix faulty electrics yourself. Inform your landlord or call a qualified electrician.

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 fire.

Appliances use different amounts of power – a television may use a 3 amp plug and vacuum cleaner a 5 amp plug for example.

Know the limit!

**5 + 5 + 3 = 13**  
AMP AMP AMP AMP



## Stay safe with candles and cigarettes

**Make sure cigarettes are put out properly after you have finished with them.**

- Be extra careful if you have been drinking alcohol or taking medication which may make you drowsy.
- Be careful with candles and tea lights. Avoid placing them on or near materials that could burn or catch fire – like curtains.



**Put them out.  
Right out!**

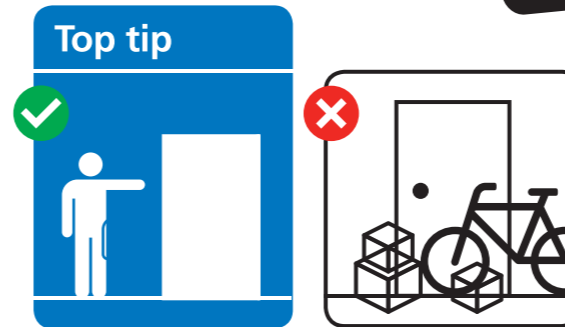
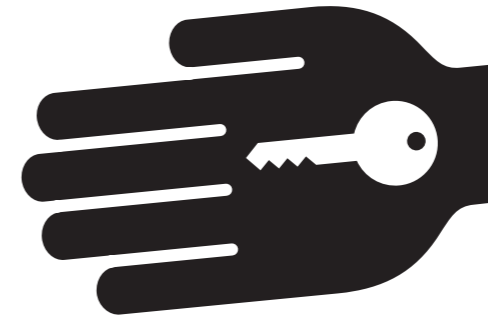
## Plan an escape route

**Plan an escape route and make sure everyone knows how to escape. It could save your life.**

- Establish where the fire exits and alarms are if you live in a large or high level building.
- Count how many doors you might need to go through to escape. It can be hard to see in smoke and you might become confused about where you are.

- Keep all exits clear, even communal areas.
- Keep fire doors closed. They help to slow down the spread of fire and will give you extra time to get out.

**Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them**



**Plan an  
escape route**

**Remember these general tips from our *Fire Safety in the Home* leaflet to stay safe from fire.**

Fit smoke alarms on every level of your home.

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

Avoid leaving children in the kitchen alone when cooking is on. Keep matches and saucepan handles out of children's reach.

Take care when cooking with hot oil – it sets alight easily.

Extension leads and adaptors have a limit to how many amps they can take. Be careful not to overload them.

Dispose of cigarettes carefully. Put them out. Right out.

Make sure candles are always secure and away from materials that may catch fire – like curtains.

Plan an escape route and make sure everyone knows it.

If there's a fire, get out, stay out and call 999.

Close inside doors at night to stop fire from spreading.

[www.direct.gov.uk/firekills](http://www.direct.gov.uk/firekills)

# FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST

These general tips are taken from our *Fire Safety in the Home* leaflet. For a copy, visit [www.direct.gov.uk/firekills](http://www.direct.gov.uk/firekills) or contact your local fire and rescue service.



**SMOKE ALARMS  
SAVE  
LIVES**

For more information on general fire safety visit [www.direct.gov.uk/firekills](http://www.direct.gov.uk/firekills)

FS073 ©Crown Copyright 2008.  
Published by Communities and Local Government, May 2008.  
Printed on paper comprising no less than 75% post-consumer waste.  
ISBN 978-1-4098-0037-8