



Fire Safety in the Home

This guidance document will assist staff and students with fire safety advice and practical measures that can be used and applied to keep the risk from uncontrolled fire in your home as low as possible.

We can do this by considering the following fire safety measures:

- Installing, testing and maintaining fire detectors
- Identifying and reducing fire risks to prevent fires starting
- Preparing a night time routine
- Preparing and practising a home fire escape plan

“Every hour of every day there is a house fire in Scotland.”

- **Scottish Fire & Rescue Service**

Alarms in Scottish Homes

Following a review of fire safety in buildings by the Scottish Government in 2019, legislation will be introduced in February 2021 requiring that all homes, regardless of tenure, have interlinked alarms installed in the following locations:

- One smoke alarm installed in the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes
- One smoke alarm in every circulation space on each storey, such as hallways and landings
- One heat alarm installed in every kitchen
- To ensure these will operate in the event of a fire it is recommended that these devices are tested weekly



“Many fire deaths occur where there are either no working smoke alarms or there are not enough alarms.”

- **Scottish Fire & Rescue Service**

Additional information on fire and smoke alarms is available online at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fire-and-smoke-alarms-in-scottish-homes/>

Fire Prevention in Homes

Play an active role in keeping your home safe from fire. It's important to identify and reduce fire risks by following the advice below to prevent fires starting:

Cooking:

- If you've been drinking alcohol or taking drugs, don't cook
- Never leave pans of food alone fires can start very quickly
- Take care when cooking with hot oil and think about using thermostatically controlled deep fat fryers

Additional information on electrical safety is available online at <https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/332084/recipesafecookingleafletv2.1201509.pdf>

Smoking

- Always provide and use ashtrays
- Always wet cigarette ends before putting them in a bin
- Do not smoke in bed
- Keep matches and lighters away from children

Additional information on electrical safety is available online at https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/332088/smoking_alcohol.pdf



Candles and tea lights

- Always use candle / tea light holders
- Keep away from flammable materials for example curtains
- Do not leave unattended

Additional information on candles and tea lights is available online at

https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/1399478/your_guide_to_fire_safety.pdf

Electricity

- Do not overload extension leads (maximum 13amps)
- Keep portable heaters away from flammable materials like furnishings
- Do not dry clothes on portable heaters
- Keep cables from appliances safely managed where they will not get damaged
- Do not leave electrical devices unattended when charging

Additional information on electrical safety is available online at:

https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/332076/electrical_safety.pdf

<https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/guidance/advice-for-you/covid-19/>

Night- time routine

- Close doors this can prevent fire from spreading
- Unplug electrical appliance not designed to be left on over night
- Have house keys and a phone available to get out or call for help

Safe Home Working

When setting up a temporary office in your home there is an increased risk of fire from the introduction of additional electrical appliances such as computers and peripheral support devices.

Additional safety checks to consider when setting up a home office include:

- Ensuring that electrical sockets are not overloaded by the use of extension leads. Do not exceed 13amps through extension leads
- Do not add extension leads together (daisy chaining) to reach a socket. Move your desk or workstation closer to a suitable socket
- Electrical extension cable reels should be fully unwound to ensure they do not overheat and catch fire
- Cable management is important to avoid damage and the overheating of cables. Do not run cables underneath carpets or rugs and ensure protection from pets and animals
- When using charging devices only use the charger supplied for the device. charging devices are specific to an appliance and should not be used to charge other items as they may overheat. Always unplug chargers when not in use
- Do not charge items on soft furnishing like a bed or a settee. If the appliance cooling vents are obstructed or the appliance cannot dissipate heat it may catch fire
- Avoid liquids near to your electrical equipment as spillages could damage and render computers and other electrical equipment unsafe



- Using your home as an office may involve the use of portable heaters to stay warm. Remember do not place heaters in close proximity to furnishings or other flammable materials as they may catch fire
- If children are present when working from home be aware not to become distracted when cooking and remember never to leave cooking unattended
- Consideration should be given to purchasing a fire blanket (Kitemarked to BS EN 1869:1997) for the kitchen and / or a general purpose fire extinguisher (Kitemarked (BS EN3-7) and CE marked) for the home
- Remember to test your smoke alarms once a week
- Prepare a Home Fire Escape Plan as described below and remember in the event of a fire in your home always follow the advice of the Fire and Rescue Service:

GET OUT – STAY OUT – CALL THE FIRE SERVICE OUT - 999

Home Fire Escape Plan

It's important that you and your family know how to escape if there's a fire in your home. Special consideration should be given to children the elderly and anyone with a disability.

The first choice route of escape is always through the main door. Make sure you close it once everyone is out. If it's not safe to leave by the main door, how else could you escape?

- Is there another door you could use or a fire escape?
- Could you climb out of a ground floor window?
- Could you climb out of a first floor window onto a garage roof or extension and get down safely?

Additional information on making a Fire Escape Plan is available at <https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/for-householders/escape-plans.aspx>

