

Do you have a Home Fire Escape Plan?

There certainly is no time for mistakes when a fire strikes. It can take less than two minutes for smoke fumes to overcome a child or an adult. Please read these instructions to create a Home Fire Escape Plan for your family. Learning what to avoid and what to do can save your life in the event of a fire or other disaster.

You can survive a fire in your home, if you know what to do, which is why every family should make and practice a fire escape plan:

1. Draw a floor plan of your home and mark two ways out of every room, including windows. For children, place a photo of the child on the floor plan so they can easily tell where their room is. Children can be easily confused by floor plans. On your plan, show two exits from every room.
2. Have the whole family agree on an outside meeting place, well away from any burning building and any trees that may burn. Pick a spot in front of your home, preferably across the street, where everyone will meet after they've escaped. Draw this location on your escape plan.
3. After you have drawn your escape plan and marked where everyone's room is, make sure everyone has a copy of the escape plan. Do what hotels do and mount a copy of your escape plan on the back of each bedroom door.
4. Physically practice your escape plan at least twice a year. Practice getting out quickly and carefully. At least one of your practice sessions should take place at night or while blindfolded, without any lights on. Distances are judged differently in the dark.
5. Make your escape plan realistic by pretending that some exits are blocked by fire and practice using alternative escape routes.
6. Be sure everyone in the family knows how to unlock and open every door and window in the house. Teach everyone to test doors with the back of their hand before opening them. If the door feels warm, DO NOT OPEN IT, use alternate escape route.
7. If you live in an apartment building ask your landlord to provide regularly scheduled fire drills. Know your building's evacuation plan and never use the elevator during a fire. Go over the evacuation plan with your children.
8. If you live in a two-story house, purchase a fire escape ladder, which will provide a safe way to reach the ground from a second story window.
9. If you have pets, make them part of your evacuation plan. Decide who will be responsible for what pet. Include in your plan all caged pets, such as pet snakes, turtles, gerbils as they can die from smoke inhalation as quickly as people.

Part of any home security regimen should be a fire escape plan. Fires unfortunately do occur frequently. It is imperative that you have planned and practiced an escape plan with your entire family. Make sure your kids know what to do, should a fire break out in your home.



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