

UK Fire Safety Checklist for Home Preparedness

Ensuring your home is prepared for potential fires is crucial for the safety of you and your loved ones. This checklist provides essential steps and considerations for maintaining fire safety in your home.

Smoke Alarms

- **Install smoke alarms** on every level of your home, especially in the hallway adjacent to sleeping areas.
- **Test alarms monthly** to ensure they are working properly and vacuum the face to remove dust, cobwebs etc.
- **Change batteries annually** or when the low-battery warning sounds.
- **Replace alarms every 10 years** to maintain effectiveness.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- **Install CO alarms** on every level of your home, especially in the hallway adjacent to sleeping areas and close to Central heating boilers and fireplaces.
- **Test alarms monthly** to ensure they are working properly and vacuum the face to remove dust, cobwebs etc.
- **Change batteries annually** or when the low-battery warning sounds.
- **Replace alarms every 10 years** to maintain effectiveness.

Fire Extinguishers

- **Keep a fire extinguisher** in easily accessible areas such as the kitchen and garage.
- **Choose the right type:** Ensure you have the correct extinguisher for potential fire types, such as a Class A, B, or C extinguishers.
- **Know how to use it:** Familiarise yourself with the PASS technique (Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep).
- **Inspect regularly:** Check pressure gauges monthly and have extinguishers serviced annually.

If you have to use an extinguisher in anger then after pulling the pin give it a quick test fire. Better to know it works than to carry it to the danger area only to find out its dud!

Escape Plan

- **Develop a fire escape plan** with at least two exit routes from every room.
- **Conduct fire drills** twice a year to practice the escape plan.
- **Designate a safe meeting point** outside the home where everyone can gather after escaping.
- **Ensure windows and doors open easily** and are free from obstruction.

Electrical Safety

- **Avoid overloading sockets** and use extension leads sparingly.
- **Check wiring regularly** for frays or damage and replace them if needed. This includes USB charging leads.
- **Unplug appliances** when they are not in use, especially if they generate heat.
- **Use the correct wattage bulbs** in light fixtures to prevent overheating.
- **When charging batteries** or electronic devices (phones, tablets etc). Touch the case of the charger. It is normal for it to be warm, but if it feels HOT – switch it off. DO NOT leave batteries on charge overnight or when you leave home.

Kitchen Safety

- **Never leave cooking unattended**, especially when using oil or high heat.
- **Keep flammable objects away** from the stove, such as towels and curtains.
- **Fit a fire blanket** in the kitchen and know how to use it.

Heating Safety

- **Keep heaters at least one metre away** from flammable materials.
- **Install and maintain carbon monoxide detectors** near heaters and fireplaces.
- **Have chimneys and flues inspected and cleaned annually** for safe operation.

General Preparedness

- **Educate all household members** about fire safety and emergency procedures.
- **Keep emergency numbers clearly posted** near telephones and saved in mobile phones.
- **Review and update your home insurance policy** to ensure adequate coverage in the event of a fire.

By following this comprehensive fire safety checklist, you can significantly reduce the risk of fire in your home and be prepared to respond effectively should an emergency occur. Stay vigilant and prioritise the safety of your household. Never place yourself at unnecessary risk.