

5 Key Fire Safety Tips for Your Family

1. **Install Working Smoke Alarms:** Start by [installing smoke alarms](#) in every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of your home, including the basement. Ensure these alarms are in good working condition and everyone in your household can recognize the sound and understand its meaning. Test your smoke alarms every month and replace batteries every year. Consider interconnected alarms for optimal protection. Remember, smoke alarms only have a 10-year lifespan.
2. **Create a Home Escape Plan:** Develop a home [escape plan](#) that includes a map of each level of your home, showing all doors and windows. Identify two ways out of every room. Discuss and practice the escape plan with all household members, including overnight guests. Ensure that children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities have the assistance they may need during an emergency.
3. **Teach Children How to Escape:** It's crucial to educate your children on how to escape on their own in case you cannot help them. Ensure they can open windows, remove screens, and unlock doors. Practice these escape routes regularly so that they become familiar with the process.
4. **Close Before You Doze:** In the event of a fire, a closed door can be a lifesaver. A closed door can slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire, giving you more time to escape safely. Ensure that doors leading outside can be easily opened, and if you have windows with security bars, make sure they have quick release devices accessible from inside the home.

- 5. Once Outside, Stay Outside:** Do not re-enter for any reason after successfully escaping your home. Stay outside at your designated meeting place, which should be a permanent and easily identifiable location, such as a tree, light pole, or mailbox. From there, call 9–1–1 or your local emergency number to report the fire and the location of anyone who may be missing.

Conclusion: Fire safety is a shared responsibility that requires thorough preparation and regular practice. By installing working smoke alarms, creating and practicing a home escape plan, teaching your children how to escape, closing doors behind you, and staying outside once you're out, you can significantly increase your family's chances of surviving a home fire. Make fire safety a top priority, and take the necessary steps to protect your loved ones and your home from this potentially life-threatening event.