



# FIRE SAFETY FOR PEOPLE WITH A HEARING IMPAIRMENT, SIGHT OR MOBILITY DIFFICULTY

**South Wales**  
Fire and Rescue Service



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
**De Cymru**



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
Fire and Rescue Service

**WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER WALES**

**PROTECT YOUR  
HOME WITH  
SMOKE  
ALARMS**



## Working smoke alarms save lives

This leaflet has been developed for people with sight, hearing and mobility difficulties and those who care for them. It provides practical advice and tips that will help protect you from the risk of fire.

### Fit smoke alarms on each level of your home.

- Test the alarms every week. Never disconnect or take the battery out.
- If you can't fit the alarm yourself, contact your local Fire and Rescue Service who may be able to fit it for you.
- Most house fires happen at night, so make sure your alarm is in a position that will wake you up, such as near your bedroom.

#### Top tip



**Fit smoke  
alarms**

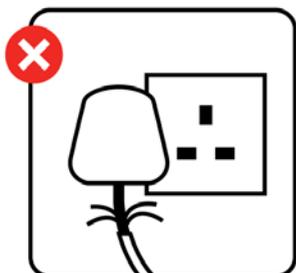
## Tips if you have hearing impairment, sight or mobility difficulties

### Hearing impairment

- If you have a hearing difficulty you can get a smoke alarm which uses a strobe light and vibrating pads.
- In the event of a fire, if it is difficult for you to call 999 yourself, ask a neighbour to do it for you.
- If you have specialist equipment, such as a Minicom text-phone or, you can contact the emergency services on 18000.

### Sight difficulties

- Put a coloured sticker on your smoke alarm if you have trouble seeing it to test it, or ask your local Fire and Rescue Service if they can provide a coloured cover.
- Consider fitting bump-ons (also known as plastic blisters) to appliances as a way of making sure they are switched off properly.
- Check electrical leads regularly by touch when they are unplugged. If they are frayed or faulty don't plug them in or switch them on. If electrics are giving off a burning smell turn them off and unplug them immediately.
- You may also want to consider placing a tactile indicator along your escape route to make it easier to find the exit.



## Mobility difficulties

- If it is difficult to test your alarm ask somebody to do it for you. You can also get easy access alarms, which can be tested from the wall rather than the ceiling. The Disabled Living Foundation can provide more information on these products.
- If you have trouble moving around, consider fitting an intercom which will allow you to alert someone else in the house in the event of an emergency.
- Make sure you have easy access to any mobility aids you may need, such as a walking stick.



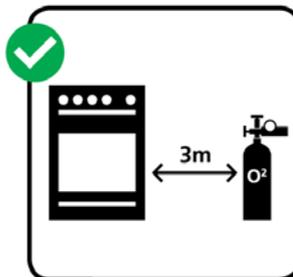
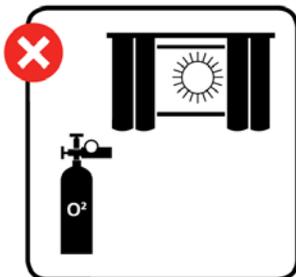
**Further information and contact details for specialist support available can be found at the back of this leaflet.**



## If you use oxygen

- Make sure your oxygen equipment is stored safely: out of direct sunlight, well ventilated, always dry and away from heat sources.
- Don't use oxygen near naked flames including gas or electric cookers – 3 metres is a safe distance.
- For further information, contact your oxygen supplier.

**Never smoke or use electrical appliances, such as hairdryers, whilst using oxygen.**



## If you use an electric blanket

**Store electric blankets flat or rolled up. Folding them can cause damage and increase the risk of fire.**

- Water and electricity don't mix, so avoid getting an electric blanket wet. If you do, wait until it is completely dry before using it again.
- Never use a hot water bottle and an electric blanket together.
- Test electric blankets every three years. Your local Fire and Rescue Service or Age UK may do this for you for free.

### Top tip



**Store electric blankets flat or rolled up**



## Plan an escape route

Think about all possible escape routes in case there's a fire.

- It is a good idea to practise an escape so that you feel confident you could do it day or night.
- Keep a phone in your bedroom in case you need to make an emergency call. If it's a mobile, keep it charged.



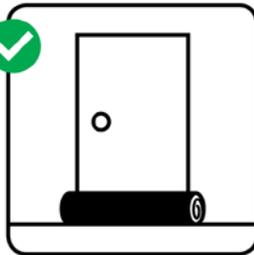
Plan an escape route

## Fire blankets and extinguishers

**Don't tackle fires yourself. If you can, get out, stay out and call 999.**

- If you can't dial 999 yourself get a neighbour to do it for you.
- If you can't get out, get to a room at the front of the house with a phone and shut the door. Stay near a window.
- Put bedding at the bottom of the door to block out the smoke, then open the window and call "HELP FIRE". Keep a whistle handy if it's hard to shout.
- Keep internal doors shut at night. This will help prevent a fire from spreading.

### Top tip



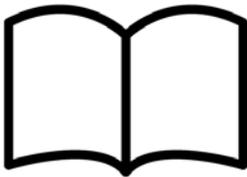
**Get out, stay out and call 999**

## Support tailored to your needs

The numbers for your local Fire and Rescue Service or Social Services can be found in the phone book, via directory enquiries or online at [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

- Register with your local Fire and Rescue Service if you have a sight, hearing, mobility difficulties or if you use oxygen. This will mean a fire crew is made aware of your circumstances in the event of an emergency.
- Contact your local Fire and Rescue Service or Social Services if you need practical help tailored to meet your needs. They may be able to fit a smoke alarm for you or provide other safety equipment.
- See the Stay Safe in the Home leaflet for further advice and top tips.
- 999 should only be used for real emergencies.

### Contact via...



Phone book



Directory enquiries



Online

## More information and support

### **Free, impartial advice on disability and mobility products**

Disabled Living Foundation  
0845 130 9177  
[www.dlf.org.uk](http://www.dlf.org.uk)

Specialist equipment and advice for blind and partially sighted people

RNIB  
0303 123 9999  
[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

### **Specialist equipment and advice for deaf and hard of hearing people**

Action on Hearing Loss  
0808 808 0123  
Textphone: 0808 808 9000  
SMS: 0780 0000360  
[www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk](http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk)

### **Support for people who are deafblind**

Sense  
0845 127 060  
Textphone: 0845 127 0062  
[www.sense.org.uk](http://www.sense.org.uk)

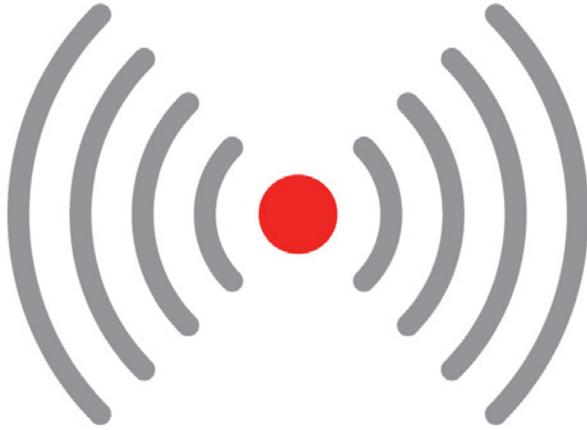
### **Information and support for people who are disabled, especially for those with cerebral palsy**

Scope  
0808 800 3333  
[www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)

### **A national network of disability organisations and disabled people**

Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation

(RADAR)  
0207 250 3222  
[www.radar.org.uk](http://www.radar.org.uk)



**SMOKE ALARMS**

**SAVE**

**LIVES**

# FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST

Remember these top tips from our Stay Safe in the Home leaflet to stay safe from fire.



## Don't forget

Keep this handy reminder of our top tips.

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 the cooker is on. Keep matches and sauce pan 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 secured in a proper holder 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 internal doors at night to stop fire from spreading.

