

Burning Up!

Fires can be caused by a range of things around the home and garden – but whatever the cause, the flames can spread quickly, burning everything in their path. With the flames comes smoke, which can also be devastating and deadly.

Types of fire

There are different types of fires and fire fighters usually class them as follows:

- Class A – fires from organic materials, like wood, coal or paper
- Class B – fires involving liquids or gas, like petrol
- Class C – fires started by electrical equipment
- Class D – fires involving by flammable metals
- Class E – fires involving cooking oil or fats

You need to know the type of fire to deal with it properly. For example, water can be used to put out a Class A fire, but is highly dangerous to use on a Class C or Class E fire.

Examples of risks:

Hot appliances left near flammable materials (e.g. hair straighteners left on the bed, clothing left on radiators, tea towels too close to the cooker), open flames left unattended (e.g. candles, cigarettes, barbecues, bonfires)

Key safety messages for the home and workplace:

- Anything in the home that gets hot can cause a fire, so keep an eye on it and keep it away from flammable materials (including hair and loose clothing).
- Keep cooking equipment clean and free of oil and fat. Only fill chip fryers a third full.
- Use electrical items as instructed. Keep them and their cables in good condition, and don't overload electrical sockets.
- Every level of the house should have a smoke alarm and these should be checked every week to make sure they're working.
- Check for possible fire hazards (like cookers left on) before going to sleep each night.
- Agree an escape route (in case of fire) with your family and practise it.
- If you smell smoke or see a fire, let an adult know immediately. Get out of the house and call 999 for the Fire Service.
- If your clothing catches alight, remember:
 - **Stop** - don't run about; stop where you are
 - **Drop** - drop to the ground
 - **Roll** - roll about to put out the flames.



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Burning Up! (cont'd)

Basic First Aid

- Only try to rescue someone if it doesn't put you in danger.
- Get the person outside in the fresh air if it's safe, and call for help.
- You may need to treat burns (see the fact sheet **The Heat is On**).
- Remember that smoke inhalation can kill just as easily as flames. Watch out for the signs: greyish-blue or reddish skin, coughing or wheezing, noisy or difficult breathing, lack of consciousness, headache, singed hair or eyebrows, confusion or smoke stains on the face.

More information about first aid can be found at the St. John Ambulance website: www.sja.org.uk

