

Make a Fire Escape Plan



Having an escape plan will help you act, not just react if a house fire occurs. Every second counts! According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), families have, on average, less than three minutes from the time the first smoke alarm sounds to escape a fire. **Get out first. Then call 911!**

The escape plan should include:

1. A map of the floors and rooms in your house and the yard outside of the house. Include where the doors and windows are.
Note: You can get a blank grid from www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/escape_grid.pdf. Or you can use a piece of graph paper or blank paper.
2. Two ways that each family member can get out of each room in the house. If you have a two story house, get UL-certified rescue ladders that collapse and keep them near windows on the secnd floor.

3. Names of household members who will get each young child out of the house. This lessens confusion and makes every second count.
4. A meeting spot outside of your house that is safe and easy to remember. Examples are on the sidewalk of a certain neighbor's house or near your curb-side mailbox. Include your outside meeting place on your written plan.
5. Post the plan on the refrigerator or place it where all people living in the house can see it.

Practice Your Escape Plan

1. Do this twice a year with everyone who lives in the house, including children and adults who will need help to get out.
2. Gather everyone and discuss the escape plan. Tell school-age children that this is like a fire drill at school, but for your house.
3. Have a smoke alarm go off so everyone knows what it sounds like.
4. Have each person practice getting out of the house according to the plan. Practice both exit plans.
5. Have children practice how to get out on their own in case you cannot help them. Show them how to get low to the floor and crawl along the perimeter of the room to the exit and how to keep their mouths covered.
6. Tell your child to feel a closed door with the back of his or her hand before opening it. If the door is hot, tell your child to use the second way out if there is one.
7. If you have a rescue ladder, learn how to use it and practice once to make sure it works well. Hold the child in front of you as you back out of the window onto the ladder. Hold the child one rung above you. Keep the child between the ladder and your body as you climb down together.
8. Go to your meeting place and **call 911!**
9. Never go back into a house that is on fire. Tell firefighters if anyone or any pets have not yet gotten out.
10. Remember to practice your fire escape plan every 6 months. Practice once during the day and another time at night.

