



## **SURVIVE A FIRE IN YOUR HOME...PLAN YOUR ESCAPE TODAY**

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Anyone who has lived through a fire will tell you what a terrifying experience it is. Unfortunately, many people who experience fire never get a chance to tell their story - to warn others of the dangers of fire.

Your fire department wants you to be prepared if a fire strikes your home. Please take a few minutes with your family to make a fire escape plan by following the nine simple instructions listed below. Every household must have a fire escape plan and a working smoke alarm to help ensure survival in a fire. Begin your plan by checking your smoke alarm to make sure that it is working. The smoke alarm will wake you up if a fire occurs while you are asleep.

#### **1. Draw a floor plan of your home**

Use a grid to draw a floor plan of your home, following the example provided as a guide. You should draw a floor plan for each floor of your home.

#### **2. Include all possible emergency exits**

Draw in all walls, doors, windows and stairs. This will show you and your family all possible escape routes at a glance.

#### **3. Include any important features that could help with your escape**

Doors and windows are escape exits from your home. Are there any other features that could help you get out safely? Can you climb out a window onto the roof of a porch or garage? Is there a tree or television antenna tower that can be safely reached from a window? These features can be extremely useful in an emergency, however you must make sure that all escape routes are practical and usable.

#### **4. Mark two escape routes from each room**

There is a main exit from every room. This will be the exit to use if there is no apparent danger. If you are unable to use the main exit because of smoke or fire, you must have an alternate exit. The second exit is usually the window. Special consideration should be given to planning escape routes from the bedrooms as most fires occur at night when everyone is sleeping. This second exit must be practical and easy to use. Make sure that the occupant of that bedroom is able to use the second exit.



## **5. Remember - some people may need help to escape**

Decide in advance who will assist the very young, elderly or physically challenged members of your household. A few minutes of planning will save valuable seconds in a real emergency.

## **6. Choose a place outside where everyone will meet**

Choose a meeting place that everyone will remember. It is a good idea to choose a spot at the front of your home or close to your neighbour's house. Everyone must know to go directly to this meeting place so they can be accounted for. No one should go back into a burning building for any reason.

## **7. Call the fire department from a neighbour's home**

Once at the meeting place, someone can be sent to the neighbour's home to call the fire department. Include the neighbour's name and the fire department phone number on your plan. Mark the street address of your home on your fire escape plan, always keep the Fire Departments number by your own phone in case a neighbour needs to call.

## **8. Make sure everyone is familiar with the home escape plan**

Go over the entire plan with everyone. Discuss primary and secondary escape routes from each bedroom. Ensure that all children know the plan. Walk through the escape routes for each room with the entire family. Use this walk-through exercise to check your escape routes, making sure all exits are practical and easy to use.

It is important that all windows will open and that no heavy furniture blocks any escape route. If escape ladders or ropes are to be used, make sure that they are accessible and that the appropriate individual is capable of using them.

## **9. Practice your escape plan**

After reviewing the floor plan with the members of your household, have an actual practice to ensure that everyone knows what to do. Practice your escape plan every six months. In a real fire, you must react without hesitation as your escape routes may be quickly blocked by smoke or flames. Your practice drills will ensure that everyone knows what to do when fire strikes.