

Home fire escape plan

STAYING SAFE IN YOUR HOME



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House fires spread quicker than ever due to the light weight and flammable materials everyday objects and furniture are made from. You might only have two minutes to get out of your house when a fire starts. Having a plan in place could save your life.

What to do if a fire starts in your home

Quickly get out of the building to a safe area outside. This is a lot easier if you have worked on a plan for how to safely get out of your house.

- Locate where you'll get out of the house, through a window or door.
- Don't stop to collect your belongings.
- Close the door to the room that's on fire if it is safe to do so.
- Tell others inside that there is a fire and get out.
- Get down low and crawl out of the house. The smoke won't be as bad down near the floor.
- Stay out. Never go back inside a burning building.
- Meet at an agreed meeting place at the front of the house, for example the letterbox.
- **Call Triple Zero (000)** from the nearest available phone, for example using the neighbour's house or mobile.
- Don't go back inside. If you can't find someone, tell the firefighters as soon as they arrive.

What to do if you can't get out

- **Call Triple Zero (000)** as soon as you can.
- Tell them you're trapped inside a burning house and stay on the phone.
- Get down as low to the ground, as you can to stay away from the smoke.
- If you can, close the door to the room you're in and block gaps under the door with towels or blankets to stop smoke getting in.
- Wait for help to arrive.

Never deadlock your doors when you're at home.

Deadlocks are not designed to stop people breaking into your home. They are there to stop people easily carrying your belongings out through your front door, if they break in while you're not at home. If they want to get in, they will. It is not recommended that you deadlock your doors while you're at home.

A deadlocked door will slow you down or stop you from getting out of your house during a fire or other emergency. If you must keep your doors deadlocked, then while you're at home, leave your keys in the inside lock, so you don't need to go find them in an emergency.



How to make an escape plan for your home

It's difficult to think clearly in an emergency, but if you have an escape plan, you are more likely to know what to do. Follow these steps to make a plan for your household.

- Draw a floor plan of your house. Include where windows and doors are in each room. Use the home fire escape plan template, available from the CFA website, to help you.
- Mark on your floor plan the two fastest ways out of every room. Use arrows to show how to get out of each room. Exits are usually doors, or a door and window.

- List all the ways you can get outside safely if you have a two storey home. If you can't use the stairs to get out, is there another way to get out of the house? For example, is there a window which opens onto a roof? If not, purchase emergency rope ladders to keep next to upper storey windows.

In newer homes, to prevent children from falling out, upper story windows cannot be opened fully. As part of your plan consider ways you can still use these windows to escape a fire.

- Choose a safe meeting place outside, away from the house to go to in an emergency.
- Think about how you will call Triple Zero (000) if you don't have your phone. For example, plan to knock on a neighbour's door and ask them to call for you. Write what you will do on your plan.
- Share the plan with everyone in your house. Go through with everyone in your home how to get out in an emergency and practise it together.

Safe meeting place checklist

A safe meeting place is somewhere outside, away from your house where you can go in an emergency. It should be:

- away from your building, safe from fire and explosions
- known by everyone in your home
- easy to get to
- a place where you can call Triple Zero 000.

Examples of a safe meeting place: your front gate, letterbox, a street sign, neighbour's driveway.

Practise your plan

The more you practise your escape plan, the more confident you'll be in an emergency. It's also a good way to see if there are any issues with your plan and make changes.

Turn practising your plan into a game. Time how long it takes your household to get out of the house. Remember, when evacuating it is not safe to run.

If you live in an apartment

Find out about how to make an apartment escape plan from the CFA website.

For more information on home fire safety visit www.cfa.vic.gov.au/homefire