

The law provides some protection if you are worried about safety, however, there are also a number of practical steps you can take to stay safe in your home.

If you are unhappy with the safety in your home you can contact your local Environmental Health Department for more information.

Fit alarms

- Fit carbon monoxide detectors.
- Fit smoke alarms - bear in mind that you may need more than one in large properties.
- Make sure smoke alarms meet British Standard 5446, Part 1.
- Test them regularly to make sure the batteries are still working.

Check appliances

- Ensure all gas appliances have a valid gas safety certificate.
- Unplug appliances that aren't in use - especially heaters and irons.
- Never overload adaptors with too many plugs.
- Keep heaters at a safe distance from flammable materials.
- Get electrical appliances tested by an approved contractor.
- Never touch or use appliances that you think might be unsafe.
- Make sure cables don't run underneath carpets or rugs.
- Don't keep extension cables coiled as they may overheat.
- Don't exceed the recommended bulb wattage for light fittings or put too high a fuse in plugs.

Be careful

- Never cover heaters, for example by draping washing over them.
- Never leave burning candles unattended.
- Never leave matches where children might find them.
- Never empty hot ashtrays into bins - wet the contents or wait.
- Never smoke in bed.

Plan

- Plan an escape route - remember that you may not be able to use the stairs if the fire is nearby.
- Keep escape routes clear.
- If exits lock with a key, make sure the key is accessible.
- Make sure everyone in your home is familiar with the plan.

If fire breaks out

- Get everyone out - and stay out.
- Dial 999 immediately - it's free from any phone.
- If possible, close doors behind you as you leave the building to slow the spread of the fire.
- Check whether doors are hot - and don't open them if they are.
- Stay as low to the ground as you possibly can.
- Cover your nose and mouth.
- If you need to break a window and climb out to escape, cover sharp edges to avoid cutting yourself and throw soft things like bedding out to cushion your fall.