

Home Safety

More than 1/3 of all accidents to adults take place in the home, the largest single cause of accidents in the UK and each year over 1 million children under the age of 15 require hospital attention and around 1,500 people over the age of 65 fall victim to fatal accidents in the home. With these statistics in mind, home really is where the harm is. Falls, accidental poisoning, fires, DIY projects, choking, packaging accidents, burns and scalds, garden accidents, drowning, carbon monoxide poisoning and even electric blankets are the cause of many accidents, even death. To reduce the risk of such accidents, follow our simple guide lines.

Fire Safety

- Ensure you have a British Standard 5446 Part 1 certified fire alarm fitted in your home. If you own a large property, make sure you have more than one and test them regularly.
- Never cover heaters with flammable materials
- Never leave burning candles unattended
- Never leave matches where children can reach them
- Always put cigarettes out properly
- Don't smoke in bed
- Don't empty hot ashtrays into bins, if in doubt wet them first.
- Plan an escape route in case of a fire. Bear in mind that stairwells and doorways may be blocked. Make sure all members of the household are aware of it.
- Make sure that any doors that are kept locked, that the key is close to hand

Incase of a Fire

- Get everyone out! Once out, stay out
- Dial 999 immediately
- Close all doors behind you if possible to slow down the spread of the fire
- Stay as low to the ground as possible to reduce smoke inhalation and cover your nose and mouth
- If you need to break a window to escape, break it in the corner where the glass is less resistant. Then cover any sharp edges and if possible throw blankets and bedding to the ground to cushion your fall

Electricity

- Unplug any appliances that are not in use
- Never overload adaptors with plugs
- Ensure electrical appliances have the BSI approval stamp or are tested by an approved electrical contractor
- If an appliance looks unsafe, do not use it
- Do not run cable under carpets and rugs
- Do not keep extension cables coiled as they may overheat
- Do not exceed the recommended bulb wattage for light fittings
- Do not use fuses in plugs that are higher than the stated ampere

Keeping Children Safe

- Fit socket covers to electrical points that are within a child's reach
- Keep saucepan handles over the worktop, never hanging over the edge of the cooker
- Keep kettle and iron cables tucked up out of reach, especially if in use
- Never leave a child unattended, especially in a room with a hot iron, hot oven or cooker or a bath filled with any amount of water. If the doorbell goes or the phone rings, take the child with you, it's easier than trying to take the cooker.
- Fit child locks to upstairs windows
- Fit cupboard guards to stop little fingers getting shut in cupboards
- Keep medicines and cleaning fluids locked away
- Keep knives, razor blades and DIY tools locked away
- Keep curtain and blind cords out of reach
- Fit stair gates
- Install circuit breakers
- Teach your child their address and telephone number
- Teach them to call 999 but only in emergencies, explain to them the consequences of their actions if a call is not necessary. Make sure they know the meaning of emergency

Water Safety (at home and at sea)

Safety at Home

10% of deaths by drowning occur in the home, young children and the elderly are most vulnerable. Accidents can occur wherever water is including in the bath, garden ponds, water filled garden containers and swimming or paddling pools.

Baths

- Use non slip bath mats or adhesive non slip surfaces in the bath or shower
- Fit rails or special seats for the elderly or disabled
- If you suffer from a medical condition (heart condition or prone to fitting) try to make sure someone is always at home while you bathe

Garden Ponds

- Guard little ones by fencing off the pond area and fit a gate with a child lock
- Cover the pond with wire meshing or some kind of grid (make sure it doesn't sag in the middle)
- Always attend children when in the garden or by a paddling or swimming pool

Safety at Sea

- **SPOT THE DANGERS** – water may look safe but it can be dangerous. Learn to spot and keep away from dangers. You may swim well in a warm indoor pool but it is not so easy in cold ocean water.
- **TAKE SAFETY ADVICE** – Take notice of warning signs. Know what they mean and if not, ask someone who does.
- **GO TOGETHER** – Children should always go with an adult who can point out dangers and are there in case someone gets into trouble.
- **LEARN HOW TO HELP** – You may be able to help yourself and others if you know what to do in an emergency.
- **LEARN TO SWIM** – Living by the sea means constant contact with the sea. Even in the safety of a boat, accidents can happen. You may need to help someone in trouble.

If going out to sea on a boat, take note of the following points:-

- Be aware of the weather conditions and take into account how long your trip will take
- Be aware of the tide conditions and where you are going. Plot your route and be aware of rocks and sandbars
- Make sure your vessel is prepared and well stocked. Make sure the radio is working and keep a fire extinguisher and first aid kit on board. Keep other emergency equipment on board if your planning a long trip and tell someone at either end of your journey your travel plans.
- Know your boat and it's equipment. Know the sea and the traffic rules, the MCA provide many training courses. Be responsible to yourself and other sea-goers.