

A few facts about fires that may save your life

You have seconds not minutes to make the right decisions

Fire is FAST! In less than 30 seconds a small flame can turn into a major fire. In two minutes, a fire can become life-threatening. In five minutes, a building can be engulfed in flames.



Fire is HOT! Heat is more threatening than flames. Room temperatures in a fire can be 100°C at floor level and rise to 600 °C at eye level. Inhaling this super-hot air will scorch your lungs and melt clothes to your skin.

Fire is DARK! Fire starts bright, but quickly produces black smoke and complete darkness.

Fire is DEADLY! Smoke and toxic gases kill more people than flames do. Fire produces poisonous gases that make you disoriented and drowsy. Asphyxiation is the leading cause of fire deaths, exceeding burns by a three-to-one ratio.

Before a Fire

Create and practise a Fire Emergency and Escape Plan wherever you are working.

Remember every second counts ... So you might save your life or that of a colleague if you spend a few moments thinking through what you would do when actually faced with a real-life fire at work (or for that matter at home ... or the next time you stay in a hotel).

Find two ways to get out of each room in the event the primary way is blocked by fire or smoke. You will be surprised how often there is only one way out ...which only serves to highlight any indecision on your part when faced with a real life-threatening emergency that could kill you ... or someone close to you.

During a Fire

Crawl low under any smoke to your exit ... Heavy smoke and poisonous gases collect first along the ceiling.

Before opening a door, **feel the doorknob and door**. If either is hot, or if there is smoke coming around the door, leave the door closed and use your second way out.

If you open a door, open it slowly. Shut it quickly if heavy smoke or fire is present. Introducing new air creates infernos.



If you can't get to someone needing assistance, leave the building and call 999. Tell the emergency operator where the person is located so the attending fire-crew can prioritise a rescue plan for when they arrive.

It is a sad fact that 90% of people who re-enter a burning building ... don't leave it alive. **Don't go back in!**

If you can't get out, close the door and cover vents and cracks around doors with cloth or tape to keep smoke out. Call 999 to say where you are and signal for help at the window with a light-coloured cloth or a flashlight.

If your clothes catch fire, stop, drop, and roll – **stop** immediately, **drop** to the ground, and cover your face with your hands. **Roll** over and over or back and forth until the fire is out. If you or someone else cannot stop, drop, and roll, smother the flames with a blanket or towel. Follow standard First Aid procedures ... make sure you and the casualty are safe, arrange to call the emergency services and only then start administering first aid to the casualty. Use cool water to treat the burn immediately if available. Cover with a clean, dry cloth or cling-film.