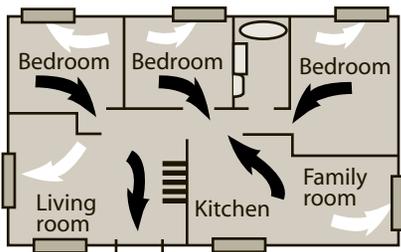


## WHAT CAN I DO?

Plan and practice a home escape plan with your family and consider the sleeping habits of those in your home.

### Plan

When a fire occurs, do not waste any time saving property. Take the safest exit route, but if you must escape through smoke, remember to crawl low, under the smoke and keep your mouth closed. The smoke contains toxic gases which can disorient you eventually overcoming you.



Your plan should include two ways to get out of each room. If the primary way is blocked by fire or smoke, you will need a second way out. A secondary route might be a window onto the ground or using an Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) approved collapsible ladder for escape from upper story windows. Make sure that windows are not stuck, and screens can be removed easily. Also, try practicing by feeling your way out of the house in the dark or with your eyes closed.

Designate a meeting place away from the home, a safe place away from the home. For example, meet under a specific tree or at the end of the driveway or front sidewalk to make sure everyone is out safely and no one will be hurt looking for someone who is already safe. Designate one person to go to a neighbor's home to phone the fire department.



### Practice

A good way to practice the effectiveness of a home fire escape plan is to position each family member in his or her bed, turn all the lights off, and activate the smoke alarm by pressing the test button. Each family member should help "awaken" the others by yelling the alert. Family members should exit their rooms according to the plan, crawl low under smoke, practice feeling doors for heat, and meet in the designated meeting place outside the home.

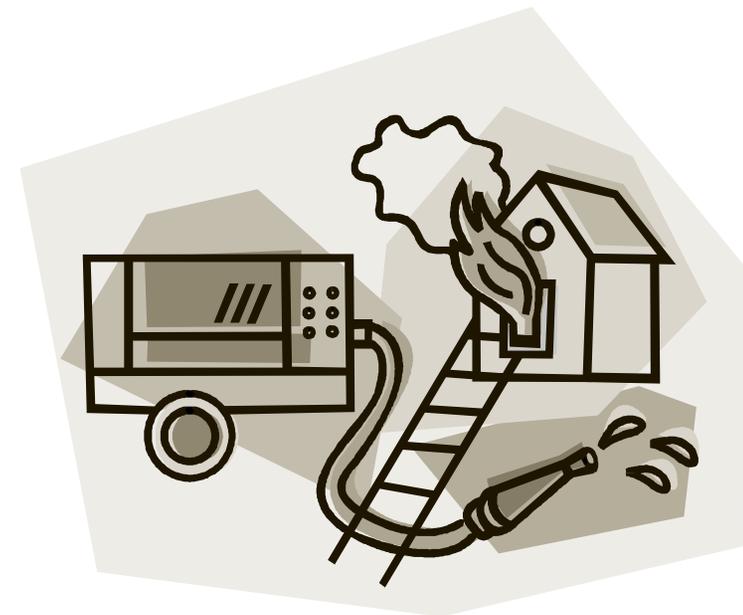
Adjust the plan to meet the needs of apartments and other types of buildings. Most high-rise or multi-story apartment complexes and hotels post fire escape plans for all residents to see and follow. However, these plans seldom include escape routes for each room.

Family members must develop and practice an escape plan for anywhere they sleep. Take a moment for discussing escape plans while traveling.

### People

Special provisions may be required for infants, young children, disabled or the elderly who may need additional help when escaping. Only through practice do you learn if your family members will wake up in a crisis. These provisions should be included in the home fire escape plan and discussed with family members.

When afraid, children commonly seek sheltered places such as a closet or under the bed. Encourage them to exit outside. Do not allow them to hide. Make sure children can operate the windows, descend a ladder, or lower themselves to the ground through a window if necessary. Teach them to slide out on the stomach, feet first. Hang on with both hands. Bend at the knees and lower themselves slowly.





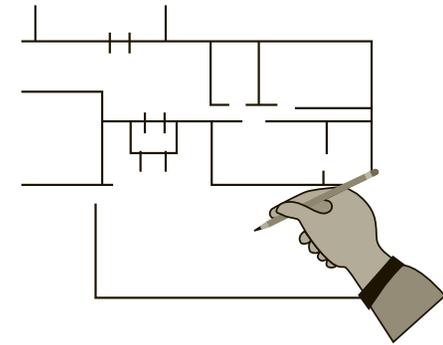
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# Home Escape Planning



**Check it out!**

[www.checkitout.state.mn.us](http://www.checkitout.state.mn.us)

An average of 800 fires strike residential buildings each day in the United States. More than 6,500 persons die each year from fire - more than half of them children and senior citizens. The majority of these deaths are in residential fires.

In Minnesota there were 4,858 residential structure fires in 2003. A fire was reported every 26 minutes, resulting in 46 civilian deaths and one firefighter died in the line of duty. Also, 160 civilians suffered injuries, and 317 firefighters were injured.

Each family member must know what to do in the event of a fire in their home. A home escape plan must be created and practiced so that each person knows exactly what to do.

It has been proven that home escape plan drills reduce panic and injury in fires and that trained and informed people have a much better chance to survive fires in their home.

Check it out!

Home Escape Planning