



WORKPLACE FIRE SAFETY AWARENESS

- Learn how fires can start and spread
- Learn the appropriate type of extinguisher for different types of fires
- Learn effective measures to prevent fires from occurring

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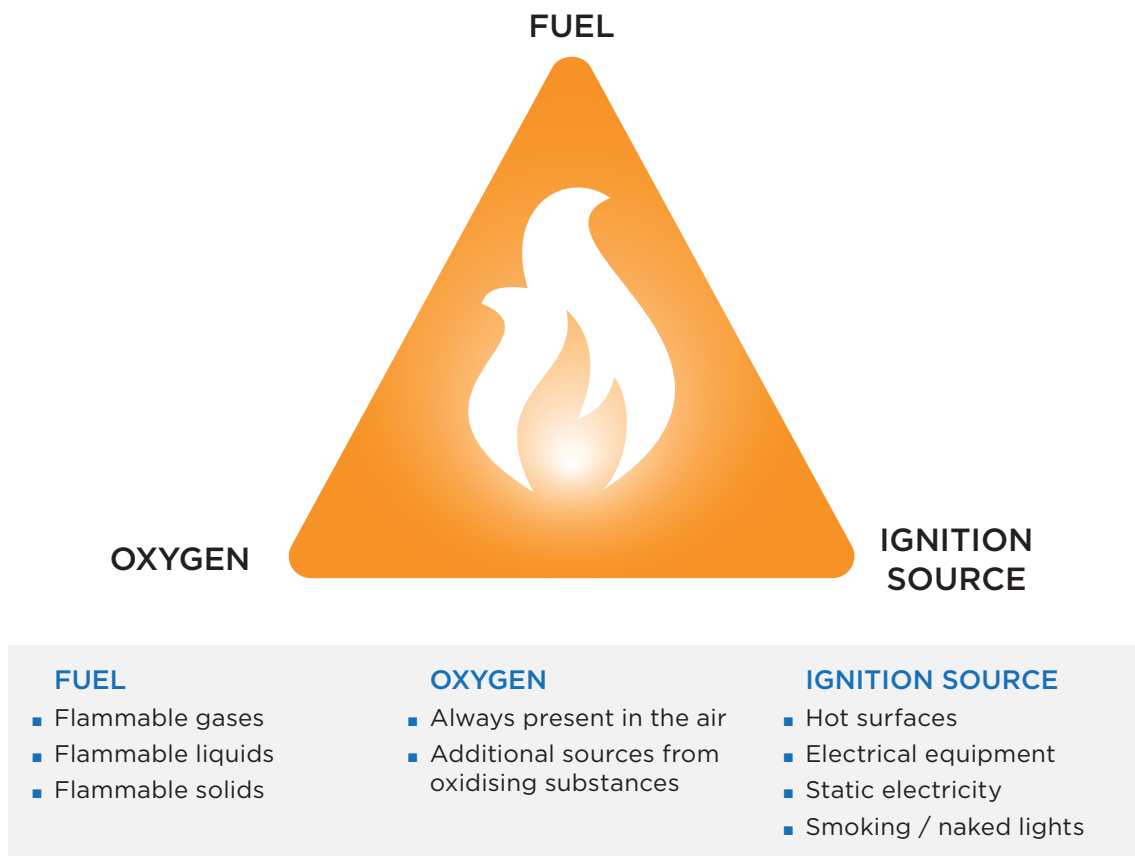
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The Fire Triangle

What is Fire? For a fire to begin, three elements must be present:

- A source of heat or ignition
- Fuel
- and Oxygen

Without all three, a fire cannot start. Fire prevention therefore relies on keeping these elements apart and reducing the chance of them combining.



FUNDAMENTALS OF FIRE CHEMISTRY

The fire triangle, sometimes called the combustion triangle, provides a simple way to understand the chemical reaction required for fire. Commonly introduced in schools, it shows that fuel, heat and oxygen must all be present before a fire can start.

The model also explains the relationship between these three elements.

Each one plays a part in creating and sustaining fire, which means that removing any single element can either stop a fire from starting or bring an existing fire under control.

Because it explains the basic behaviour of fire, the fire triangle is widely used in fire safety training. A clearer understanding of this principle makes it easier to recognise why basic fire safety regulations matter and how they help reduce risk.

FUEL

A fire cannot begin without something combustible to act as its fuel. This can be any material capable of burning, including paper, oils, wood, gases, fabrics, liquids, plastics and rubber.

How readily that fuel burns, and the temperature at which it does so, will usually depend on factors such as its moisture content, size, shape and quantity.

EXAMPLES OF COMMON FIRE FUELS



Paper



Wood



Fabric



Flammable liquids



Plastics



Rubber

HEAT/IGNITION

Ignition also depends on sufficient heat being present alongside a suitable fuel source. Flammable liquids can produce vapours that ignite when enough heat is applied, while solid fuels can release combustible gases as they are heated and begin to decompose.

Heat also allows a fire to continue and spread by drying nearby fuel, warming the surrounding area and pre-heating combustible material in its path, making further fire development easier.

OXYGEN

A continuing fire also requires oxygen as well as fuel and heat. The surrounding air, which contains approximately 21% oxygen, normally provides the oxygen needed for combustion.

The amount of oxygen required to sustain burning varies according to the fuel and the conditions. During combustion, the fuel reacts with oxygen and releases heat.

EXTINCTION OF THE FIRE

Putting out a fire relies on removing at least one of the three elements that make up the fire triangle.

If the available fuel is removed or exhausted, the fire will go out; cooling the fire removes the heat it needs to continue; and restricting its oxygen supply can extinguish it. These same principles underpin both firefighting and fire prevention.

REMOVING AN ELEMENT CAN EXTINGUISH A FIRE



For example, a fire blanket works by restricting the supply of oxygen to the fire and suppressing it. Fire extinguishers similarly work by acting on one or more of the elements needed to sustain combustion. A water fire extinguisher, for instance, cools the burning material and removes heat.

Fire prevention measures are also based on controlling the conditions necessary for a fire to occur.

Precautions include storing flammable liquids safely and ensuring that accumulations of paper or fabric are kept away from potential sources of heat.

Using this basic understanding of how fires start and continue to burn can significantly reduce both the likelihood of fire and the damage it may cause.

WHAT IS FIRE SAFETY?

Fire safety covers the measures used to reduce the likelihood of a fire occurring and to minimise the damage a fire may cause. This includes precautions designed to prevent an uncontrolled fire from starting, as well as measures intended to restrict its spread and effects once a fire has begun.

These measures may be incorporated into a building when it is constructed or introduced into an existing property. Fire safety also includes the information and instruction provided to people who occupy the building.

Anything that increases the likelihood of a fire, or makes it more difficult for people to escape safely if one occurs, can be described as a fire hazard. Fire safety therefore forms an important part of wider building safety.

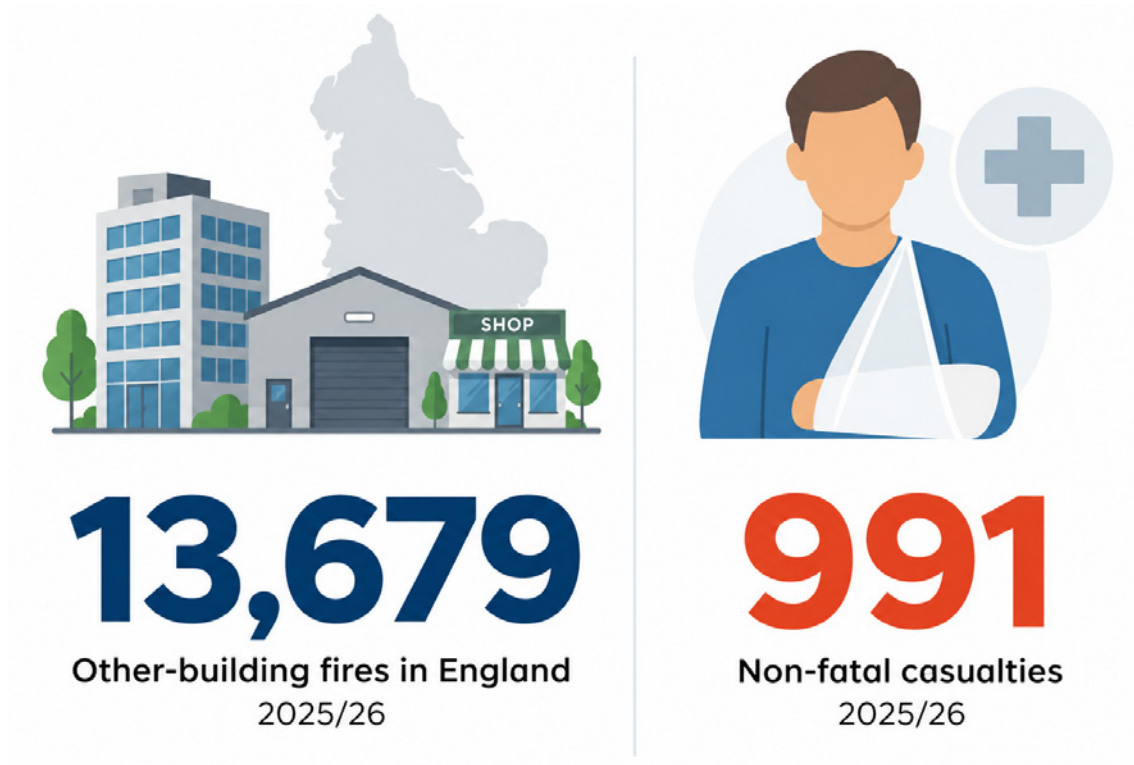
Fire and rescue authorities inspect premises for compliance with fire safety law and may also provide fire safety education in schools.

WHY FIRE SAFETY IS IMPORTANT

Fires continue to cause serious damage to workplaces and other buildings every year. In England alone, fire and rescue services attended 13,679 fires in buildings other than dwellings during 2025/26.

These fires also resulted in 991 non-fatal casualties during the same period.

The consequences of a fire can extend far beyond damage to property, serious injury or loss of life. A business may also face significant losses in time, customer goodwill and essential resources.



TIME

Recovering from a fire can involve lengthy periods of disruption while repairs are completed, insurance matters are dealt with and paperwork is processed. Staff time may also need to be redirected towards sourcing replacement stock and managing the consequences of the incident.

CUSTOMER GOODWILL

Customers may be sympathetic following a fire, but they will still expect orders and services to be delivered. Delays and disruption can damage customer relationships and may be difficult to recover from.

RESOURCES

Fires can destroy stock, equipment, records, data and many of the other resources a business relies on to operate. In some cases, these losses cannot be replaced.

For some businesses, the effects of a serious fire can be so severe that they never fully recover.

TYPICAL FIRE RISKS



- Cooking fires caused by frying, boiling or simmering food being left unattended.
- Overloaded electrical systems that can cause wiring or connections to overheat, or components to fail.
- Combustible materials stored in areas without adequate protection.
- Combustible materials positioned close to equipment that produces heat, flames or sparks.
- Candles and other naked flames.
- Smoking materials, including cigarettes, cigars, pipes and lighters.
- Heat-producing equipment that uses combustible materials.
- Flammable liquids and aerosols.
- Flammable solvents and solvent-soaked rags placed in enclosed waste bins.
- Fireplace chimneys that are not cleaned properly or regularly.
- Cooking appliances such as ovens and stoves.
- Heating appliances including fireplaces, wood-burning stoves, furnaces, boilers and portable heaters.
- Household appliances such as tumble dryers, curling irons, hair dryers, refrigerators and freezers.
- Chimneys containing a build-up of creosote.
- Faulty electrical wiring.
- Damaged, faulty, overheating or incorrectly charged batteries, particularly lithium-ion batteries such as those used in mobile phones, laptops, tablets and e-bikes.
- Matches, lighters and other personal sources of ignition.
- Electrical and electronic equipment.
- Barbecues and other outdoor cooking equipment.

THE TYPES OF FIRES

Not all fires behave in the same way. The material that is burning affects how a fire develops and, importantly, the method that should be used to tackle it. Understanding the different fire classifications helps identify the safest and most appropriate response.

For this course, we will look at the five recognised fire classes, together with fires involving electrical equipment:

- **Class A** – Fires involving solid combustible materials, such as wood, paper and textiles.
- **Class B** – Fires involving flammable liquids or liquefiable solids.
- **Class C** – Fires involving flammable gases.
- **Class D** – Fires involving combustible metals.
- **Class F** – Fires involving cooking oils and fats.
- **Electrical fires** – Fires involving live electrical equipment.



CLASS A FIRES

Class A fires involve common **solid combustible materials** and are among the most frequently encountered types of fire. Typical fuels include:

- **Wood** – including structural timber and other wooden materials.
- **Paper and cardboard** – such as stationery and other office materials.
- **Fabrics** – including cotton, polyester and materials used in curtains, carpets, clothing and furniture coverings.
- **Plastics and Coal**



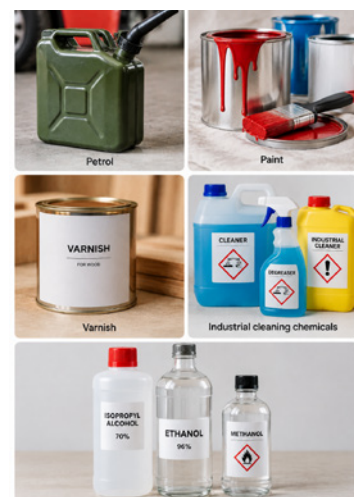
CLASS B FIRES

Class B fires involve **flammable liquids or liquefiable solids**. Examples include petrol, diesel and oils.

Other materials that may present a Class B fire risk include:

- Industrial cleaning chemicals
- Paints and Varnishes
- Petroleum products
- Alcohol

Many flammable liquids can release vapours that may ignite if they come into contact with a suitable ignition source. The risk depends on factors including the liquid's temperature, volatility and flashpoint.



CLASS C FIRES

Class C fires involve **flammable gases**. Because escaping gas can ignite rapidly and may create an explosion risk, these fires can be particularly dangerous.

Common examples of flammable gases include:

- Propane
- Butane
- Hydrogen
- Methane
- Flammable gases used as propellants in some aerosol products

If a gas fire occurs, stopping the supply of gas is the most effective way to remove the fuel source, **but only if this can be done easily and safely.**

If the gas supply cannot be isolated safely, evacuate the area and call the fire and rescue service rather than attempting to extinguish the fire yourself.

London Fire Brigade also advises that personal safety takes priority and that firefighting should only be attempted by trained people when it is safe to do so.

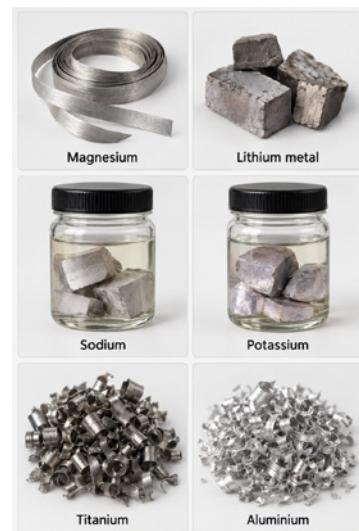


CLASS D FIRES

Class D fires involve **combustible metals**. These fires are less common than Classes A, B or C, but they can be extremely hazardous because some burning metals react violently with water.

Examples of metals that can present a Class D fire risk include:

- Magnesium
- Lithium metal
- Sodium
- Potassium
- Titanium
- Aluminium



It is important to identify exactly which metal is involved before attempting to tackle the fire. Some metals, including lithium metal, sodium and potassium, can react dangerously with water.

Class D fires therefore require **specialist extinguishing media**, such as appropriate metal-fire powder extinguishers.

The exact extinguisher or method used must be suitable for the specific metal involved.

London Fire Brigade guidance identifies specialist powder extinguishers or dry sand as appropriate options for Class D risks.

ELECTRICAL FIRES

Electrical fires involve **electrical equipment or installations that are faulty, damaged, overloaded or being used incorrectly**.

Although they are often referred to as electrical fires, they are not a separate fire class in the UK.

Common causes include:

- Overloaded plugs and extension leads
- Short circuits that produce sparks
- Faulty, overheating, incorrectly installed or misused equipment
- Damaged, worn or ageing wiring and cables
- Electrical equipment that has not been properly maintained or repaired



Overloaded sockets and faulty electrical equipment are recognised fire risks, particularly where components or cables begin to overheat.

Where it is safe to do so, the electrical supply should be isolated before dealing with an electrical fire.

This helps remove the continuing source of ignition and reduces the risk of the fire starting again.

In a workplace, procedures for shutting down equipment and isolating power supplies should form part of fire safety training where relevant.

CLASS F FIRES

Class F fires involve cooking oils and fats, most commonly in kitchens and catering environments. They can reach very high temperatures and require the correct firefighting equipment.

Common examples include:

- Lard
- Butter
- Vegetable oils
- Sunflower oil
- Maize oil
- Other cooking oils and fats



Water must never be used on a Class F fire.

Adding water to burning oil or fat can cause the hot liquid to spread violently, making the fire much worse.

Class F fires should be tackled only with equipment specifically suitable for cooking oils and fats. In commercial kitchens, this will typically include a **Class F-rated wet chemical extinguisher** and a **suitable fire blanket**.

RESPONSIBLE PERSONS



Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, fire safety in workplaces and other non-domestic premises in England and Wales is the responsibility of the **Responsible Person**.

Depending on the premises, the Responsible Person may be the:

- **Employer**
- **Owner or landlord**
- **Occupier**
- **Manager or another person with control of the premises**

In some premises there may be more than one Responsible Person.

Where this happens, they must work together and coordinate their fire safety arrangements.

The Responsible Person must take appropriate steps to protect employees and other people who may be on the premises, including customers, visitors and guests. This includes ensuring that suitable fire safety precautions and evacuation arrangements are in place.

WHERE RESPONSIBLE PERSON DUTIES APPLY

Fire safety duties apply across a wide range of **non-domestic premises** and workplaces. **Examples include:**

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| ■ Offices | ■ Community centres |
| ■ Shops | ■ Sports facilities |
| ■ Factories | ■ Shared accommodation and communal residential areas |
| ■ Warehouses | ■ Hostels and hotels |
| ■ Hospitals | ■ Tents, marquees and other temporary structures |
| ■ Schools | ■ Properties used to provide paying accommodation |
| ■ Pubs and bars | |
| ■ Cafés and restaurants | |
| ■ Places of worship | |

Different premises may present different risks. A warehouse, for example, may require additional precautions depending on the materials or products stored there. The Fire Safety Order generally applies to **non-domestic premises**, along with the common areas of buildings containing two or more domestic premises. It also applies where accommodation is provided to paying guests, such as hotels, guesthouses and self-catering properties.

FIRE WARDENS



The Responsible Person must ensure there are enough **competent people** to help put the organisation's fire safety procedures into practice. In many workplaces, particularly larger premises, these people are appointed as **Fire Wardens or Fire Marshals**.

Their role typically covers both **fire prevention** and **what to do if a fire occurs**. Depending on the workplace, responsibilities may include:

- **Identifying hazards**
spotting potential fire risks and reporting anything that needs attention.
- **Keeping escape routes clear**
checking that fire exits and escape routes remain unobstructed, clearly marked and ready to use.
- **Helping people evacuate**
directing occupants towards the appropriate escape routes and checking designated areas have been cleared.
- **Understanding fire safety equipment**
knowing where alarms and firefighting equipment are located and how workplace emergency systems operate.
- **Supporting emergency procedures**
helping implement the organisation's fire evacuation plan and liaising with the fire and rescue service where required.
- **Keeping procedures up to date**
recognising when changes to the building, workforce or working practices may mean existing arrangements need to be reviewed.

Fire Wardens should receive suitable training for the responsibilities they are expected to carry out. Government guidance notes that their role may include helping people leave, checking areas have been evacuated, using firefighting equipment if it is safe to do so, and taking a supervisory role during an emergency.

RESPONSIBLE PERSON DUTIES



The **Responsible Person** has overall responsibility for ensuring appropriate fire safety arrangements are in place and maintained.

Their main duties include:

- Keeping fire safety equipment, including alarms, emergency lighting and firefighting equipment, in good working order.
- Preparing an emergency fire plan and suitable evacuation procedures.
- Providing employees with appropriate fire safety information, instruction and training.
- Making staff aware of fire risks identified within the workplace.
- Carrying out a suitable fire risk assessment and reviewing it regularly.
- Recording the fire risk assessment and the fire safety arrangements for the premises.

Since **1 October 2023**, Responsible Persons must record their fire risk assessment in full, along with their fire safety arrangements, regardless of how many people the organisation employs.

This means the source material's old rule stating that written records were only required where there were five or more employees, a licence or an alterations notice should no longer be included.

That restriction was removed by changes introduced under Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022.

FIRE WARDEN DUTIES



Fire Wardens support the Responsible Person by helping to maintain fire safety arrangements and by taking an active role if an emergency occurs.

Their duties will vary depending on the workplace, but may include:

- Reviewing and helping to improve fire evacuation procedures and emergency plans.
- Checking that fire safety equipment is available, maintained and operating correctly.
- Helping to organise fire drills and reviewing the results afterwards.
- Monitoring the workplace for potential fire hazards.
- Helping people to evacuate safely during a fire.
- Using firefighting equipment **only where they have been trained to do so and it is safe to attempt it.**
- Reporting problems with escape routes, fire doors, alarms or other fire safety measures.

Government guidance confirms that Fire Wardens may also check designated areas have been cleared, liaise with the fire and rescue service and, where appropriate, shut down dangerous equipment.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees also have an important part to play in workplace fire safety.

They should:

- Familiarise themselves with fire exits and escape routes.
- Follow the instructions of Fire Wardens during an emergency.
- Take fire drills seriously and participate fully.
- Report anything that could make it difficult for them, or someone else, to evacuate safely.
- Attend fire safety training and refresher training when required.

SUMMARY

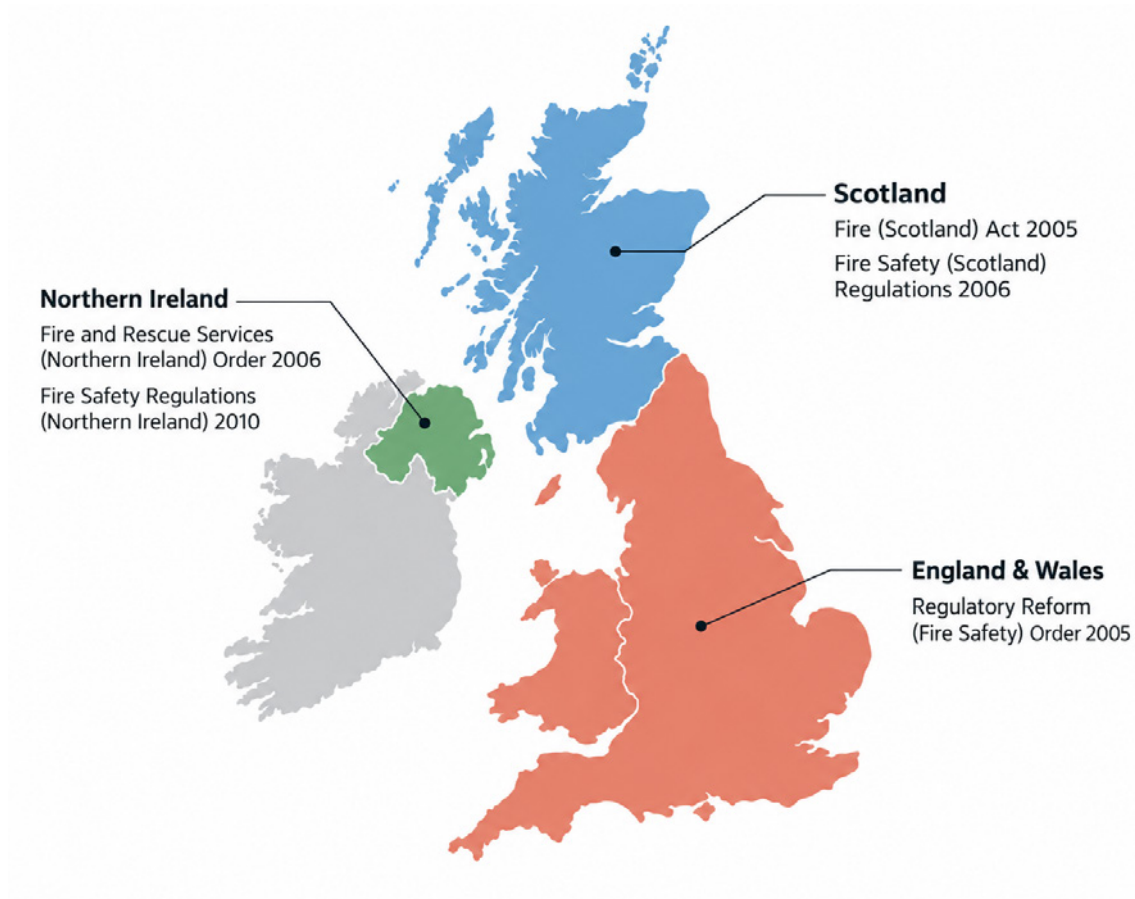
In this section, we have covered the foundations of workplace fire safety and why effective precautions are so important.

Key points to remember include:

- Fires can cause serious injury, loss of life and significant damage to businesses and property.
- **Fuel, oxygen and a source of ignition** must all be present for a fire to start and continue burning.
- Fires are classified according to the type of material involved, and different types of fire may require different methods of control.
- Premises covered by fire safety law must have a Responsible Person who ensures appropriate fire safety measures and procedures are in place.
- Fire Wardens can support these arrangements by identifying hazards, helping maintain escape routes and assisting during an evacuation.
- Everyone in the workplace has a role to play by understanding the procedures, attending training and reporting potential fire safety problems.

The next section moves on to Fire Safety Law.

FIRE SAFETY LAW



Fire safety law places duties on those responsible for workplaces and other non-domestic premises to reduce the risk of fire and protect people if a fire does occur.

In practice, this means taking reasonable steps to prevent fires and having suitable procedures and precautions in place should one break out.

The main legislation differs across the UK:

- **England and Wales**
Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- **Scotland**
Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006
- **Northern Ireland**
Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010
- **Great Britain**
Dangerous Substances & Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR), covering workplace risks from dangerous substances that could cause fire or explosion

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order remains the principal legislation for non-domestic premises in England and Wales, while Scotland and Northern Ireland operate under their own fire safety legislation.

FIRE SAFETY LAW – DSEAR

The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR) require employers and the self-employed to manage safety risks caused by dangerous substances in the workplace.

These include risks from fire, explosion and substances that can corrode metals.

Dangerous substances covered by DSEAR can include:

- Flammable substances
- Explosive substances or materials
- Oxidising substances
- Flammable gases, vapours and dusts

Employers must identify dangerous substances in the workplace, assess the risks they create and put suitable measures in place to remove or control those risks.

They must also have appropriate emergency procedures and ensure employees receive the information, instruction and training they need to work safely.

EXPLOSIVE ATMOSPHERE WARNING SIGN

Areas where an explosive atmosphere may occur can be identified by a **yellow triangular warning sign with a black border and the letters “EX” in black.**



FIRE ACTION IF YOU DISCOVER A FIRE



If you discover a fire, act quickly and follow your workplace's emergency procedures. The immediate priority is to raise the alarm and get people to safety.

- **Raise the alarm** using the nearest fire alarm call point.
- **Leave the building** by the nearest safe exit.
- **Call 999** and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service, in line with your workplace procedure.
- **Go directly to the designated assembly point.**
- **Do not stop to collect personal belongings.**
- **Do not re-enter the building** until you have been told it is safe to do so.

London Fire Brigade guidance also stresses that you should not assume somebody else has called 999. Once outside, stay outside and follow the instructions of the Fire and Rescue Service.

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

A fire risk assessment is used to identify potential fire hazards, consider who may be at risk and decide what action is needed to keep people safe.

As part of the fire safety arrangements for a workplace, the assessment should consider both how a fire could start and whether people would be able to escape safely if one occurred.

A fire risk assessment should consider:

- Existing fire hazards and the level of risk they present.
- Anything that could obstruct or interfere with an escape route.
- Whether suitable fire detection, warning and firefighting equipment is provided.
- Whether the precautions already in place are effective.

THE FIVE STEPS OF A FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

The standard process can be divided into five main steps:



- 1. Identify fire hazards** – look for possible sources of ignition, fuel and oxygen.
- 2. Identify people at risk** – consider everyone who may be on or around the premises, including anyone who may be particularly vulnerable.
- 3. Evaluate, remove or reduce the risks** – assess the likelihood and potential consequences of fire, then remove hazards where possible or reduce the risks they create.
- 4. Record, plan and train** – record the assessment, put an emergency plan in place and ensure people receive appropriate information and training.
- 5. Review and update** – keep the assessment under regular review and revise it when circumstances change.

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS KEY CONSIDERATIONS

A good fire risk assessment needs to be practical, appropriate to the premises and capable of being updated as circumstances change. When preparing or reviewing an assessment, the following points should be considered:



- **Reasonably practicable –**
The precautions identified should be realistic and achievable, taking account of the risks involved and what can reasonably be done to control them.
- **Suitable and specific –**
Every workplace is different. A fire risk assessment should reflect the particular layout, activities, people and hazards of the premises rather than simply copying an assessment from somewhere else.
- **Adaptable –**
Workplaces change over time, so fire safety arrangements need to be capable of changing with them. This might include changes in staff numbers, visitor levels, working practices or the materials stored on site.
- **Competence –**
Anyone carrying out or assisting with a fire risk assessment should have sufficient knowledge, experience and understanding for the complexity of the premises and the risks involved. Where specialist knowledge is needed, appropriate professional assistance should be sought.

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

STEP ONE: IDENTIFY FIRE HAZARDS



The first step is to examine the workplace carefully and identify anything that could contribute to a fire or make it harder for people to escape safely. This should include both obvious hazards and less noticeable problems that could become dangerous during an emergency.

Useful ways to identify hazards include:

- **Walk through the premises** – inspect different areas and use different routes rather than only following the paths you normally take.
- **Check escape routes** – look for obstructions such as boxes, stored materials or trailing cables that could slow down an evacuation.
- **Check fire doors** – make sure they are not routinely wedged open and that they close correctly.
- **Look for overloaded electrical sockets** and signs of unsafe electrical use.
- **Check how flammable materials are stored**, particularly where they are close to electrical equipment or other potential ignition sources.
- **Ask staff and visitors for feedback** – other people may notice hazards that have been overlooked.
- **Read manufacturers' instructions and safety information** for equipment and substances used in the workplace.
- **Inspect fire safety equipment** – alarms, extinguishers, emergency lighting and fire doors should be checked and maintained appropriately.
- **Review previous incidents and accident records** for anything that may indicate an existing fire safety problem.

When looking for fire hazards, use the fire triangle as a guide:

1. **Sources of ignition** – such as electrical equipment, cooking appliances, naked flames or anything capable of producing heat or sparks.
2. **Sources of fuel** – paper, cardboard, wood, cooking oils, etc.
3. **Additional sources of oxygen** – such as oxidising substances or oxygen supplies that could allow a fire to burn more intensely.

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

STEP TWO: IDENTIFY PEOPLE AT RISK



Once the fire hazards have been identified, the next step is to consider who could be harmed if a fire occurred and why they may be at risk.

This should include everyone who may be in or around the premises, not just permanent employees.

People to consider include:

- **Employees** – particularly those working close to identified sources of ignition, fuel or oxidising substances.
- **Customers** – who may be unfamiliar with the building and its emergency procedures.
- **Visitors and contractors** – especially those entering areas where fire hazards are present.
- **Members of the public nearby** – where a fire or evacuation could affect people outside the premises.

Particular attention should also be given to people who may need additional help to recognise an emergency or evacuate safely, including:

- **Young or inexperienced workers**
- **Pregnant employees**
- **Part-time, temporary or contract staff**
- **People with disabilities**, including mobility, hearing or visual impairments
- **People unfamiliar with the premises**, such as visitors and customers
- **Lone, isolated or night workers**
- **People who may need additional support to understand or follow evacuation procedures**

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

STEP THREE: EVALUATE, REMOVE OR REDUCE THE RISKS



Once the hazards and people at risk have been identified, the next step is to decide how those risks can be removed or reduced.

Wherever possible, the hazard should be eliminated completely.

Where this is not practical, suitable measures should be introduced to reduce the likelihood of a fire and protect people if one occurs.

Possible actions include:

- Moving sources of fuel away from potential sources of ignition.
- Removing unnecessary combustible materials from the workplace.
- Installing additional fire detection or warning systems where required.
- Improving or providing additional escape routes where necessary.
- Restricting access to areas containing particularly hazardous or flammable materials.
- Preparing Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans for people who may need additional assistance.
- Repairing, replacing or regularly maintaining equipment that could create a fire risk.
- Providing staff with appropriate fire safety training, including evacuation procedures and the safe use of firefighting equipment where relevant.

Any measures introduced should reduce the overall level of risk without creating new hazards elsewhere.

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

STEP FOUR: RECORD YOUR FINDINGS AND PUT MEASURES IN PLACE



Once the risks have been assessed and suitable precautions identified, the findings of the fire risk assessment must be recorded.

The record should clearly show the hazards identified, who may be at risk and the measures that are already in place or need to be introduced.

Records should be clear, dated, kept up to date and stored somewhere they can be easily accessed when required.

They provide evidence of how fire risks have been assessed and managed, as well as a useful reference when similar issues arise in the future.

The fire risk assessment should demonstrate:

- That the premises have been properly assessed for fire hazards.
- Which people or groups may be particularly at risk.
- The significant hazards that have been identified.
- What measures have been taken, or will be taken, to remove or reduce those risks.
- That fire risks have been reduced as far as is reasonably practicable.
- That employees or their representatives have been involved where appropriate.
- The findings should then be used to put the necessary fire safety measures into practice and to develop or update the workplace emergency plan.

Once these arrangements are in place, a fire drill provides an opportunity to test how well the evacuation procedures work in practice and identify any areas that need improvement.

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

STEP FIVE: REVIEW AND UPDATE THE ASSESSMENT



A fire risk assessment is **not a one-off exercise**. Workplaces change over time, so the assessment must be reviewed regularly to make sure the risks identified and the precautions in place remain accurate and effective.

A review may be needed when:

- **New equipment or working practices** are introduced.
- **Changes are made to the building or its layout.**
- **Staff numbers or the number of visitors** increase significantly.
- **The type or quantity of materials being stored** changes.
- **New hazardous or flammable substances** are introduced.
- **Fire safety equipment or precautions fail** or are found to be inadequate.
- **A fire or near miss occurs.**
- **New information** suggests that an existing risk has changed.
- **The needs of people using the premises** change.

A review does not necessarily mean starting the entire assessment again. Where appropriate, it may simply involve checking that previous actions have been completed, existing precautions are still effective and no significant new hazards have been introduced.

Any changes that affect fire safety should be considered **before they are introduced wherever possible**, allowing risks to be controlled from the outset.

The assessment should be kept under regular review and updated whenever there is reason to believe it is no longer valid or when a significant change affects the premises, its activities or the people using it.

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS DAILY AND WEEKLY CHECKS



Formal fire risk assessments are important, but fire **safety also needs to be monitored on an ongoing basis**.

Conditions within a workplace can change from day to day, and new hazards can appear between formal assessments.

Throughout the working day, keep watch for **new or changing fire hazards** and take action when problems are identified.

This may include ensuring escape routes remain clear and checking that fire safety equipment has not been obstructed, damaged or interfered with.

Fire detection and warning systems should be tested weekly, following the manufacturer's or installer's instructions.

For systems with manual call points, a different call point should normally be tested each week so that the whole system is checked over time.

Any faults or problems identified during routine checks should be **recorded and dealt with promptly**.

FIRE SAFETY ENFORCEMENT



Fire safety law is enforced by designated **enforcing authorities**. For most workplaces and other non-domestic premises, this will be the local **Fire and Rescue Authority** rather than the local council.

Fire safety officers may inspect premises, review fire safety records and check that appropriate precautions are in place.

Where problems are identified, the enforcing authority can provide advice or take formal action.

Formal action may include:

- **Alterations Notice** – may be issued where premises present, or could present, a high fire safety risk. It can require the Responsible Person to notify the enforcing authority before making specified changes.
- **Enforcement Notice** – issued where serious fire safety failings are identified. It explains what improvements are required and when they must be completed.
- **Prohibition Notice** – used where the fire risk is so serious that use of all or part of the premises needs to be prohibited or restricted. A prohibition notice can take effect immediately.

Failure to comply with fire safety law or a formal notice can lead to **prosecution, significant fines and, for serious offences, imprisonment**.

The maximum penalty for serious offences under the Fire Safety Order can include an **unlimited fine** and, following conviction in the Crown Court, **up to two years' imprisonment**.

HOUSEKEEPING



Good housekeeping is a **fundamental part of everyday fire prevention**.

Keeping the workplace clean, tidy and well organised helps reduce potential sources of fuel and ensures that escape routes remain clear if an evacuation is needed.

Everyone has a part to play in maintaining good standards of housekeeping. Regular precautions should include:

- **Remove combustible waste promptly**, including unwanted cardboard, paper and other flammable materials.
- **Keep corridors, fire exits and escape routes clear** and never use them for storing waste or other materials.
- **Clean up spillages quickly and safely**, particularly cooking oils, cleaning chemicals, industrial fluids and lubricants. As well as increasing fire risk, spillages may create a slip hazard during an evacuation.
- **Store flammable and hazardous materials safely**, away from possible sources of ignition when they are not being used.
- **Remove faulty or damaged equipment from use** and arrange repair or replacement as soon as practical.
- **Dispose of smoking materials safely** and ensure smoking only takes place in designated areas.
- **Monitor electrical sockets and equipment** for signs of damage, overheating or unsafe use.
- **Avoid overloading sockets** and keep the use of extension leads to a minimum wherever possible.

Maintaining these standards helps prevent fires from starting while also making it easier for people to **leave the premises quickly and safely** during an emergency.

FIRE DETECTION AND WARNING SYSTEMS



Every workplace needs a suitable way to **detect a fire and warn people quickly enough to escape safely**. The type and complexity of the system required will depend on the size, layout, use and fire risks of the premises.

In some small and simple workplaces, a fire may be noticed immediately and a basic warning may be sufficient. Larger or more complex premises will usually require an **electrical fire detection and warning system**, which may include manual call points, alarm sounders, a control panel and automatic detectors.

Different types of automatic detection may be appropriate for different environments, including:

- **Aspirating Smoke Detectors (ASD)** – continually draw samples of air through a network of small pipes to detect very small amounts of smoke. They can be particularly useful in large, high-ceilinged or sensitive environments.
- **Optical Beam Smoke Detectors** – monitor a beam of light across a large area and detect changes caused by smoke passing through it. They are often suited to large open spaces or high ceilings.
- **Ionisation Smoke Detectors** – detect very small particles produced by combustion and can respond quickly to fast-flaming fires.
- **Video Smoke Detection (VSD)** – uses cameras and image analysis to identify signs of smoke or flame and can be useful in large or open environments where conventional detection may be difficult.

The detection and warning system should be **appropriate to the premises and its evacuation procedures**, and should be designed, installed, tested and maintained by competent people where necessary.

Fire Wardens should understand how the systems within their workplace operate and know how to report any faults. Problems identified during routine checks or fire risk assessments should be **reported promptly and arrangements made for repair**.

FIRE WARNING SYSTEMS - ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS



A fire warning system must be capable of **alerting everyone who may be on the premises**. Relying on a single type of warning may not be suitable in every workplace.

For example:

- People who are **deaf or hard of hearing** may not hear an audible alarm.
- People with **visual impairments** may not be able to rely on flashing warning lights alone.
- Staff wearing **hearing protection or noise-cancelling headphones** may be less likely to hear an alarm.
- In particularly **noisy working environments**, an audible alarm may be difficult to distinguish from background noise.

Where necessary, additional warning methods can be introduced, including:

- **Flashing visual alarm beacons**
- **Vibrating pagers or personal alert devices**
- A combination of **audible and visual alarms**
- A **buddy system**, where a designated person helps ensure someone receives the warning and can evacuate safely

Fire alarms may be activated **manually** using a fire alarm call point or **automatically** by fire detection systems.

Everyone who regularly uses the premises should know **how to raise the alarm manually** and understand what to do when the fire alarm sounds.

TESTING AND MAINTAINING FIRE WARNING SYSTEMS



Fire detection and warning systems must be **kept in effective working order** so they can be relied upon in an emergency. The Responsible Person must ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for regular testing, servicing and maintenance.

Staff should also receive appropriate information and training so they understand **how the alarm system works, how to raise the alarm and what to do when it sounds**.

Fire alarm systems should normally be **tested once a week**. For electrical systems, this usually involves activating a manual call point, using a different call point for successive tests so that the system is checked progressively over time.

Where appropriate, the alarm should be tested at a **consistent time each week** so staff recognise that a routine test is taking place. Additional arrangements may be needed for people who work outside normal hours.

Fire detection and warning systems should also receive **regular servicing and preventative maintenance by a competent person**. Tests, faults, false alarms, servicing and repairs should be recorded so there is a clear history of the system's condition and maintenance.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS



Fire extinguishers are an important part of workplace fire safety, but **different extinguishers are designed for different types of fire**. Using the wrong extinguisher can be ineffective and, in some situations, may make the fire more dangerous.

The five main types covered in this course are:

- **Water**
- **Foam**
- **Powder**
- **Carbon Dioxide (CO₂)**
- **Wet Chemical**

Modern portable fire extinguishers generally have a **red body**, with a coloured area used to identify the extinguishing agent inside.

The label on the extinguisher also provides information about the types of fire it is suitable for and instructions for its use.

Most portable extinguishers are positioned on suitable stands or secure brackets where they can be easily accessed.

Larger-capacity extinguishers may be mounted on **wheeled units** so they can be moved when required.

It is important to be able to recognise the different extinguisher types and understand **which fires they can, and cannot, be used on**.

WATER EXTINGUISHERS

Water extinguishers are designed primarily for **Class A fires involving solid combustible materials**, such as:

- **Wood**
- **Paper and cardboard**
- **Textiles and fabrics**
- **Other similar solid materials**

They work mainly by **cooling the burning material**, removing the heat needed for the fire to continue.

There are different types of water-based extinguisher, including:

- **Standard water extinguishers** – discharge water directly onto the burning material to cool it.
- **Water extinguishers with additives** – contain additives that can make the water more effective and allow it to penetrate some materials more efficiently.



Some water extinguishers with additives may also be suitable for **certain Class B fires**, but only where this is clearly shown on the extinguisher label.

Water extinguishers should **not be used on live electrical equipment** and must not be used on cooking oil or fat fires.

Modern water extinguishers have a predominantly **red body**, with their contents and fire rating clearly identified on the label.

POWDER EXTINGUISHERS

Powder extinguishers use a **dry chemical powder** to interrupt the combustion process and can provide a rapid knock-down of flames.

The most common type is an **ABC dry powder extinguisher**, which is suitable for:

- **Class A fires** – solid combustible materials such as wood, paper and textiles.
- **Class B fires** – flammable liquids such as petrol, diesel and oils.
- **Class C fires** – flammable gases.

Dry powder can also be used where **electrical equipment is involved**, although the powder may cause significant damage to the equipment.

Because powder does not provide much cooling, there is a **risk that the fire may re-ignite** after the flames have been extinguished.

Powder extinguishers can also produce a large cloud that **reduces visibility and may affect breathing**. For this reason, they are generally unsuitable for use in small or enclosed indoor spaces.



SPECIALIST METAL FIRE POWDERS

Class D fires involving combustible metals require **specialist powder extinguishers** designed for the particular metal involved.

Examples include **L2 and M28 powder extinguishers**. These discharge their contents gently to avoid scattering burning metal particles or swarf, which could spread the fire.

The correct specialist extinguisher must always be selected for the metal involved.

For example, **L2 powder is suitable for lithium metal fires**, while M28 powder is not.

Standard powder extinguishers are identified by a **blue colour-coded area on the red extinguisher body**.



FOAM EXTINGUISHERS

Foam extinguishers can be used on **Class A and Class B fires** and are particularly useful for fires involving flammable liquids such as petrol and diesel.

They work by helping to **cool the burning material** while forming a layer over the fuel that helps prevent flammable vapours from reaching the flames.

Foam extinguishers are suitable for:

- **Class A fires** – solid combustible materials such as wood, paper and textiles.
- **Class B fires** – flammable liquids such as petrol, diesel and oils.

They should **not be used on live electrical equipment, combustible metal fires or cooking oil and fat fires**.

Extra care is also required with **free-flowing flammable liquids**. Directing an extinguisher at the liquid incorrectly can spread the burning fuel, so these fires should only be tackled by someone who has received suitable training.

Modern foam extinguishers have a predominantly **red body with a cream colour-coded area** identifying the extinguishing agent.



CARBON DIOXIDE (CO₂) EXTINGUISHERS

Carbon dioxide, or **CO₂, extinguishers** are particularly suitable for fires involving live electrical equipment and can also be used on **Class B fires involving flammable liquids**.

They work by releasing carbon dioxide around the fire, reducing the oxygen available to support combustion. Because CO₂ is a gas, it leaves **no powder, foam or liquid residue** behind, making these extinguishers particularly useful around electrical and electronic equipment.

When dealing with a fire involving electrical equipment, the **power supply should be isolated first where it is safe to do so**. If the electricity remains connected, there is a risk that the equipment could continue to provide a source of ignition.

CO₂ extinguishers should be used with care in **small, enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces**. High concentrations of carbon dioxide can reduce the amount of oxygen available to breathe and create a risk of asphyxiation.

They should **not be used on Class D metal fires**, as the force of the gas could scatter burning metal particles and spread the fire. They are also unsuitable for **Class F cooking oil and fat fires**, where the discharge could spread burning oil.

CO₂ extinguishers are identified by a predominantly **red body with a black colour-coded area**.



WET CHEMICAL EXTINGUISHERS

Wet chemical extinguishers are designed primarily for **Class F fires involving cooking oils and fats**, making them particularly suitable for commercial kitchens and areas containing deep-fat fryers.

The extinguishing agent is applied **gently and at low pressure** to reduce the risk of splashing or spreading the burning oil. It works by cooling the fire and forming a soapy layer over the surface of the oil or fat, helping to smother the flames and prevent re-ignition.

When using a wet chemical extinguisher, the contents should be applied carefully across the surface of the burning oil or fat, following the **instructions provided on the extinguisher and any training received**.

Wet chemical extinguishers are specifically intended for **Class F risks**. Always check the fire rating shown on the individual extinguisher before using it on any other type of fire.

Wet chemical extinguishers are identified by a predominantly **red body with a yellow colour-coded area**.



FIRE EXTINGUISHER SUMMARY

The type of extinguisher used must always be suitable for the **class of fire involved**. The main points covered so far include:

- **Water and water-based extinguishers** – primarily used on **Class A fires** involving materials such as wood, paper and textiles. Standard water extinguishers are identified by their **red body**.
- **ABC powder extinguishers** – suitable for **Class A, B and C fires**. They are identified by a blue colour-coded area on the extinguisher.
- **L2 and M28 specialist powder extinguishers** – designed for **Class D metal fires**. Both use blue identification markings, but the correct powder must be selected for the metal involved. **L2 powder can be used on lithium metal fires, while M28 cannot.**

Always check the **fire rating and instructions shown on the extinguisher** before use.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS – PLACEMENT, MAINTENANCE AND USE

Fire extinguishers need to be **correctly selected, positioned and maintained** so they are available and safe to use when needed.

The number and type of extinguishers required will depend on the **size, layout and fire risks of the premises**. In larger workplaces, extinguishers should be positioned in suitable locations, commonly on escape routes and at each floor level.

As a general guide, people should not normally have to travel more than **30 metres to reach a suitable fire extinguisher**.

Other important considerations include:

- **Accessibility** – Extinguishers should be easy to see and reach, and should not be obstructed by furniture, stock or equipment.
- **Maintenance** – Fire extinguishers must be kept in good working order and should receive regular inspection and servicing by a competent person.
- **Correct use** – Extinguishers are intended primarily for tackling small fires in their early stages. Personal safety and evacuation must always take priority.
- **Training** – People expected to use extinguishers should receive appropriate training. Staff who have not been trained should not be expected to fight a fire.
- **Instructions** – Always check the extinguisher label and follow the operating instructions provided.
- **Correct extinguisher type** – The extinguisher selected must be suitable for the class of fire involved.



If a fire cannot be tackled **quickly and safely**, evacuate the area and leave firefighting to the Fire and Rescue Service.

FIRE ESCAPE ROUTES



Fire escape routes must allow people to **leave the premises quickly and safely** if a fire occurs.

They should lead as directly as possible to a place of safety and remain available whenever the building is occupied.

Effective escape routes should be:

- **Protected from fire and smoke** where necessary by suitable fire-resistant construction.
- **Clearly illuminated**, including by emergency lighting where normal lighting could fail.
- **Clearly identified on plans and diagrams** where these are provided.
- **Clearly signposted**, particularly at changes of direction and where the correct route may not be obvious.
- **Kept unobstructed at all times**, with corridors, stairways and final exits free from stored materials or other hazards.
- **Positioned away from significant fire hazards** wherever possible.
- **Suitable for everyone who may need to use them**, including people who may require additional assistance during an evacuation.

The number, width and arrangement of escape routes will depend on factors such as the **size and layout of the premises, the number of people present and the nature of the fire risks**.

Where people may need assistance to evacuate, suitable arrangements should form part of the emergency plan. These may include **ramps, refuges, evacuation lifts, evacuation chairs or assistance from trained staff**, depending on the building and the needs of the people involved.

Ordinary passenger lifts should **not normally be used during a fire unless they have been specifically assessed and designated for evacuation purposes**.

FIRE DOORS AND SMOKE CONTROL



Fire doors are designed to **slow the spread of fire and smoke**, helping to protect escape routes and give people more time to leave the building safely.

For a fire door to work effectively, the complete doorset must be suitable for its intended purpose and kept in good condition. Important features include:

- **The door itself** – it must provide the required level of fire resistance. Any glazing must also be suitable for use in a fire-resisting door.
- **The frame** – the door and frame must fit together correctly, without excessive gaps that could allow fire or smoke to pass through.
- **Intumescent strips and smoke seals** – where fitted, these help seal gaps around the door during a fire and restrict the spread of smoke.
- **Hinges** – fire doors normally require at least **three suitable hinges**, although the manufacturer's specification should always be followed.
- **Self-closing devices** – most fire doors should close fully and securely without needing to be pushed shut by hand.
- **Latches and other fittings** – these must allow the door to close correctly and must not prevent it from performing as designed.
- **Signs** – where required, clear signs such as **“Fire Door Keep Shut”** should explain how the door must be used.

Fire doors should **not be wedged or propped open** unless an approved automatic hold-open device is installed that releases the door when the fire alarm or detection system operates.

Some buildings also use **smoke control or ventilation systems** to help manage smoke during a fire.

These systems form part of the building's overall fire strategy and must be maintained and operated as designed.

FIRE SAFETY SIGNS

Fire safety signs are used to **help people find escape routes, locate firefighting equipment and understand what action to take during an emergency.**

Signs should be **clear, visible and easy to understand**. Where escape routes are not obvious, signs should guide people along the correct route and be positioned so that the next sign can be seen as they move through the building.

Important points include:

- **Escape route signs** should be provided where necessary to clearly identify the way out.
- **Directional arrows** should be used where needed to show which way an escape route continues.
- Signs should be positioned at **changes of direction** where the correct route might otherwise be unclear.
- **Fire exit signs must remain clearly visible** whenever the premises are occupied.
- Doors that could be mistaken for an emergency exit should be clearly identified where necessary.
- Signs identifying **firefighting equipment** should be provided where the equipment is not immediately obvious or clearly visible.
- Fire safety signs should be **adequately illuminated**, including by emergency lighting where required.



Fire safety signs must use **recognised pictograms rather than text alone.**

Text may be added where it helps make the meaning clearer.

Common examples include:

- **Fire extinguisher**
- **Fire alarm call point**
- **Fire hose reel**
- **Fire blanket**
- **Do not use lift in case of fire**
- **Fire door keep shut**
- **Fire exit and escape direction**
- **Fire assembly point**
- **Use stairs in case of fire**

Signs and notices should be checked regularly to make sure they remain **correct, visible, legible and appropriate for the premises.**

EMERGENCY LIGHTING



Emergency lighting helps ensure that **escape routes remain visible and usable if the normal power supply fails**, allowing people to leave the premises safely during a fire or other emergency.

Emergency escape lighting should provide enough illumination for people to identify the route out and safely reach a place of safety.

It will normally be required in key locations including:

- **At exit doors**
- **Along escape routes and corridors**
- **At corridor intersections**
- **At changes of direction**
- **At stairways and changes in floor level**
- **Outside final exit doors and along external escape routes**
- **Near fire alarm call points**
- **Near firefighting equipment**
- **Around emergency exit and escape route signs**

The exact amount and positioning of emergency lighting will depend on the **layout, size and use of the premises**. It is not necessary to provide an individual emergency light for every item listed, provided there is sufficient illumination for people to see and use them safely.

Emergency lighting systems must be **regularly tested and maintained**. A short functional test should normally be carried out **monthly**, with more detailed periodic testing and maintenance undertaken in accordance with the system requirements.

SUMMARY



In this section, we have looked at the practical measures that help **prevent fires, detect them quickly and support a safe evacuation.**

Key points to remember include:

- **Good housekeeping** is an important part of fire prevention. Waste, combustible materials and smoking arrangements should all be managed carefully.
- **Fire detection and warning systems** must be suitable for the premises, kept in working order and tested regularly.
- **Fire alarms should normally be tested weekly**, with faults reported and dealt with promptly.
- **Fire extinguishers must be suitable for the risks present**, correctly positioned and properly maintained.
- **Escape routes must remain clear, clearly marked and safe to use** at all times.
- **Fire doors must be kept effective** and should not be wedged open unless an approved automatic hold-open device is fitted.
- **Fire safety signs must be clear, visible and accurate.**
- **Emergency lighting should be provided where necessary** to keep escape routes visible if the normal lighting fails.

FIRE EMERGENCY – EVACUATION PROCEDURES



Every workplace needs a **clear evacuation strategy** that reflects the layout of the building, the people using it and the fire risks identified in the fire risk assessment.

Common evacuation approaches include:

- **Simultaneous evacuation** – everyone leaves the building at the same time when the alarm is raised. This is the most common approach in straightforward workplaces such as offices, shops and similar premises.
- **Phased evacuation** – people in the area at greatest risk are evacuated first, with other areas following in a planned sequence. This approach may be used in larger or more complex multi-storey buildings where evacuating everyone at once would not be appropriate.
- **Progressive horizontal evacuation** – people are moved away from the affected area into a separate fire-protected area on the **same floor**. This is commonly used in hospitals and care settings where some occupants may need assistance and immediate full evacuation could be difficult.

Whichever strategy is used, everyone should understand **what the fire alarm means, which escape routes to use and where to assemble once outside**.

The evacuation strategy must be suitable for the particular premises and should form part of the workplace's documented emergency arrangements.

ADDITIONAL FIRE EVACUATION STRATEGIES



Some premises require a more specialised evacuation strategy because of their **size, layout, number of occupants or the needs of the people using the building**.

Staff Alarm Evacuation (Silent Alarm) – In some busy public premises, such as cinemas, theatres or shopping centres, staff may receive a discreet warning before a general evacuation alarm is sounded.

This gives trained staff time to put the planned evacuation procedure into action and prepare members of the public to leave safely.

The staff warning might be given through **personal pagers, discreet sounders, a coded message or another dedicated communication system**. A general alarm can then be given and the appropriate simultaneous or phased evacuation started.

Defend in Place – In certain specialised environments, particularly healthcare premises, moving some occupants immediately may create greater risk than allowing them to remain temporarily in a suitably protected area.

A defend-in-place strategy relies on **effective fire-resistant compartmentation and other appropriate fire protection measures** to keep occupants protected while the fire is controlled.

It may be appropriate, for example, where patients cannot easily be moved because of their treatment or dependence on medical equipment.

These are **specialist, pre-planned strategies** and should only be used where they form part of the building's established fire safety arrangements.

They should never be improvised during an emergency.

PERSONAL EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLANS (PEEPS)



A **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)** is an individual plan designed for someone who may need assistance or different arrangements to evacuate safely during an emergency.

A PEEP should take account of the **person's individual needs, the building they use and the evacuation procedures already in place**. It may identify additional equipment, assistance or communication methods needed to help them reach a place of safety.

The **Responsible Person** is responsible for ensuring suitable evacuation arrangements are in place.

Fire Wardens and other competent members of staff may assist in developing and carrying out individual plans where appropriate.

PEEPs should be developed **in consultation with the person concerned** wherever possible. This helps ensure that the arrangements are practical, appropriate and understood by everyone involved.

The plan should also be **reviewed whenever circumstances change**, such as changes to the individual's needs, workplace layout or normal evacuation arrangements.

WHO MAY NEED A PEEP?



A PEEP may be needed by anyone who would **have difficulty using the normal evacuation arrangements independently or safely.**

The need should be considered on an individual basis rather than assumed simply because someone belongs to a particular group.

People who may benefit from a PEEP include:

- **People with mobility impairments**, including wheelchair users or people who have difficulty using stairs.
- **People with hearing impairments** who may not hear the standard fire alarm.
- People with **visual impairments** who may need assistance following an unfamiliar escape route.
- People with **cognitive or communication needs** that could affect how they understand or respond to an emergency.
- People with a **temporary injury or medical condition**, such as a broken leg or recovery from surgery.
- **Pregnant employees** where pregnancy affects their ability to evacuate safely.
- People working in **isolated or particularly noisy areas** where the normal alarm may not be easily noticed.
- People who may need **additional help understanding fire safety information or instructions.**

A PEEP may also be appropriate for **regular visitors** who need assistance when using the premises.

The important question is not whether someone fits a particular category, but whether they can **recognise the alarm, follow the escape route and reach a place of safety without additional assistance.**

WHAT A PEEP MAY INCLUDE



A PEEP should set out the **specific arrangements needed to help an individual recognise an emergency and evacuate safely**.

Depending on the person and the workplace, this may include:

- **Visual alarm beacons** for someone who may not hear the standard fire alarm.
- **Vibrating pagers or personal alert devices** for people who are deaf, hard of hearing or working in isolated areas.
- **Accessible fire safety information**, such as Braille, large print, audio information or tactile maps.
- A **buddy system**, where a designated person is responsible for providing agreed assistance during an evacuation.
- **Suitable evacuation equipment**, such as an evacuation chair, where this has been assessed as appropriate and trained staff are available to use it.
- Use of an **evacuation lift or other suitable evacuation arrangements** where these form part of the building's fire strategy.
- A planned **meeting or refuge point** where assistance can be provided as part of the evacuation procedure.

The arrangements chosen should be **practical, properly planned and understood by everyone involved**.

Any specialist equipment must be maintained and staff expected to use it should receive appropriate training.

Most importantly, the PEEP should be **developed and communicated directly with the person it is intended to support**.

FIRE EVACUATION



A successful evacuation depends on people **acting quickly, following the agreed procedure and avoiding unnecessary delay.**

If the fire alarm sounds:

- **Follow the instructions of Fire Wardens or other designated staff.**
- **Leave personal belongings behind** and do not return to collect them.
- **Use the nearest safe escape route** and leave the building without unnecessary delay.
- **Go directly to the designated assembly point** once outside.
- **Report any problems or obstructions** encountered during the evacuation to the appropriate person.
- **Assist visitors or other people where this forms part of your role or the emergency plan.**
- Once outside, **follow the instructions of the Fire and Rescue Service** and those managing the assembly point.
- **Do not re-enter the building** until you have been told that it is safe to do so.

Where a roll call or other checking procedure is used, remain at the assembly point so that everyone can be **accounted for accurately.**

The exact procedure may vary between workplaces, so everyone should be familiar with the **specific evacuation arrangements for the premises they use.**

FIRE DRILLS



Fire drills give everyone an opportunity to **practise the workplace evacuation procedure in a controlled situation**.

They should be taken seriously and carried out as though a genuine emergency has occurred.

A fire drill can help determine whether:

- **People recognise the alarm** and respond appropriately.
- **Escape routes and exits can be used safely and without delay.**
- Employees understand **where they need to go and what they need to do.**
- Fire Wardens and other designated staff understand their responsibilities.
- Arrangements for people who may need **additional assistance** work effectively.
- Everyone can be **accounted for at the assembly point.**
- Any problems with the evacuation procedure need to be corrected.

Following a drill, the results should be **reviewed and recorded**.

Staff should cooperate with Fire Wardens or others responsible for the exercise by reporting any difficulties, delays or problems they noticed.

Any weaknesses identified should be used to **improve the evacuation procedure**, and further training or another drill arranged where necessary.

SUMMARY



In this section, we have looked at the different ways workplaces can **plan for and manage a safe evacuation**.

Key points to remember include:

- **Evacuation strategies must suit the premises and the people using them.** These may include simultaneous evacuation, phased evacuation, progressive horizontal evacuation, staff alarm procedures or, in specialist settings, defend-in-place arrangements.
- **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)** may be needed for people who require assistance or different arrangements to evacuate safely.
- PEEPs should be **developed with the person concerned** and reviewed when their needs or the workplace arrangements change.
- During an evacuation, people should **leave promptly, follow the designated escape route and go directly to the assembly point**.
- Personal belongings should be left behind and **no one should re-enter the building** until told it is safe.
- **Fire drills should be taken seriously**, with the results recorded and used to identify improvements to the evacuation procedure.
- Everyone should be familiar with the **fire evacuation arrangements for the premises they use**.

WHAT NEXT?

You've now completed the Workplace Fire Safety Awareness course.

To complete the course, you will be assessed by answering the following short series of multiple-choice questions based on what you have learned.

Please head to: **jubileetalent.com/pantry/course-fire-safety/** to complete your assessment and finish the course.

Which three elements must be present for a fire to start?

- A. Fuel, water and oxygen
- B. Fuel, oxygen and a source of ignition
- C. Heat, smoke and carbon dioxide
- D. Oxygen, electricity and water

Which type of fire involves cooking oils and fats?

- A. Class A
- B. Class B
- C. Class D
- D. Class F

What should you do if you discover a fire?

- A. Collect your belongings before leaving
- B. Try to extinguish the fire before raising the alarm
- C. Raise the alarm and leave by the nearest safe exit
- D. Wait for a Fire Warden before taking any action

What is the first step in a fire risk assessment?

- A. Arrange a fire drill
- B. Purchase suitable fire extinguishers
- C. Identify everyone who works in the building
- D. Identify potential fire hazards

Which extinguisher is particularly suitable for live electrical equipment?

- A. Water
- B. Wet chemical
- C. Foam
- D. Carbon dioxide (CO₂)

What's the purpose of a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)?

- A. To record the location of all fire extinguishers
- B. To give Fire Wardens additional authority during an emergency
- C. To provide individual evacuation arrangements for someone who may need additional assistance
- D. To replace the main workplace evacuation procedure