

All About Fire Escape Plans

Mapping & Independent Living

How To:

Did you know that if a fire starts in your home, you'll have just two minutes to escape? Because you have just two short minutes, it is important to plan ahead by creating an escape plan and practice it at least two times a year. Watch the 2:31 minute closed caption video from American Red Cross called [How to Prevent a Home Fire](#), which discusses prevention and response tips to a fire. Then use the directions below to make your own fire escape plan to practice.

O&M Skill Areas Addressed:

- Attending to environmental sounds
- Following conditional commands: "If you hear the smoke alarm, go to the outside meeting location."
- Route travel and use of landmarks
- Travel to a familiar outdoor location using a learned route
- Travel with sufficient balance on stairs, curbs, and uneven surfaces
- Use of mobility tool and/or techniques (ex. hand trailing, human guide, protective techniques, and cane skills)

Make Your Own:

1. Draw a map of your home showing all the doors and windows. One picture per floor.
2. Visit the rooms in your house and locate two exits.
3. Practice opening all windows, screens on windows, and doors. They should be easy to open so they can be used to get outside in an emergency. **If the second exit to your bedroom is a window without safe passage to the ground, locate 2 options of white material, like a t-shirt or a pillowcase, that could be hung out to alert the fire department to your location.**

Please note: These Web links are being offered only as informational resources.
It is not our intention to endorse or recommend the sites.

Fire Escape Plans (continued)

Make Your Own: (continued)

4. Locate all of the smoke alarms in your home and add them to your map.
5. Take turns pressing each smoke alarm testing button to ensure the alarm works.
6. Pick a meeting location outside. It should be in front of your home at a specific easy to find landmark. Add it to your map!
7. Talk about your plan with everyone in your home and answer questions. Post the map where everyone can access it, like on the fridge.
8. Practice the fire escape plan by pushing the smoke alarm testing button, calling out "Fire!" and traveling to the meeting location. Someone should time the practice and work towards a two minute exit!

Modification Suggestions:

- Make the drawing 3D! Try using items like:
 - [Wiki Stix](#): Available on Amazon for \$8.27. This product could you used to mark the perimeter of the house on the map or used to show the walking route from inside the house to the meeting location. (Product not available through the American Printing House for the Blind, or APH.)
 - [Feel n 'Peel Sheets, Carousel of Textures](#): colorful, tactile sheets can be used to represent different rooms of the house and the meeting location. (This product can be ordered through APH Quota Funds. [For information about Quota Funds and to contact someone to register.](#))
 - [Mixed Bump Dots](#) available through MaxiAids for \$8.95. The multi-pack provides different colors, sizes, shapes and a total of 80 bump dots per package. Dots can be used to identify the smoke alarms throughout the house and a different one to mark the meeting location. (Product not available through the American Printing House for the Blind, or APH.)
- Use specific language and hand under hand demonstrations as needed when practicing to opening doors, windows, and the screens of the windows.
- Sound of the smoke alarm: The sound can be sharp and startling. You can record the sound so individuals can listen to it at a softer level before hearing it at full volume.

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Fire Escape Plans (continued)

Considerations:

- Explain and practice the fire escape plan each time a new person moves in or starts working at the house in addition to the regularly scheduled twice a year.
- If a person in your home is unavailable to independently evacuate the home, make a plan with your local fire department.
- How can the members of the household actively participate in fire safety? Who can test the smoke alarms every month? Who can “take attendance” at the meeting location?

Links and Resources:

- How to Prevent a Home Fire, American Red Cross video on YouTube: <https://tinyurl.com/PreventaHomeFirevideo>
- Wiki Stix: <https://tinyurl.com/WikiStix>
- Feel n’ Peel Sheets, Carousel of Textures from APH Quota Fund: <https://www.aph.org/product/feel-n-peel-sheets-carousel-of-textures/>
- Information about APH Quota Funds: <https://www.focusvisionandvisionloss.org/aph-federal-quota-account.html>
- Mixed Bump Dots from MaxiAids: <https://tinyurl.com/MixedBumpDots>

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Please also see MCB/DDS Partnership “Focus” resources:

<https://www.focusonvisionandvisionloss.org/recreation.html>

<https://www.focusonvisionandvisionloss.org/orientation--mobility.html>

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