



Your Home fire safety guide

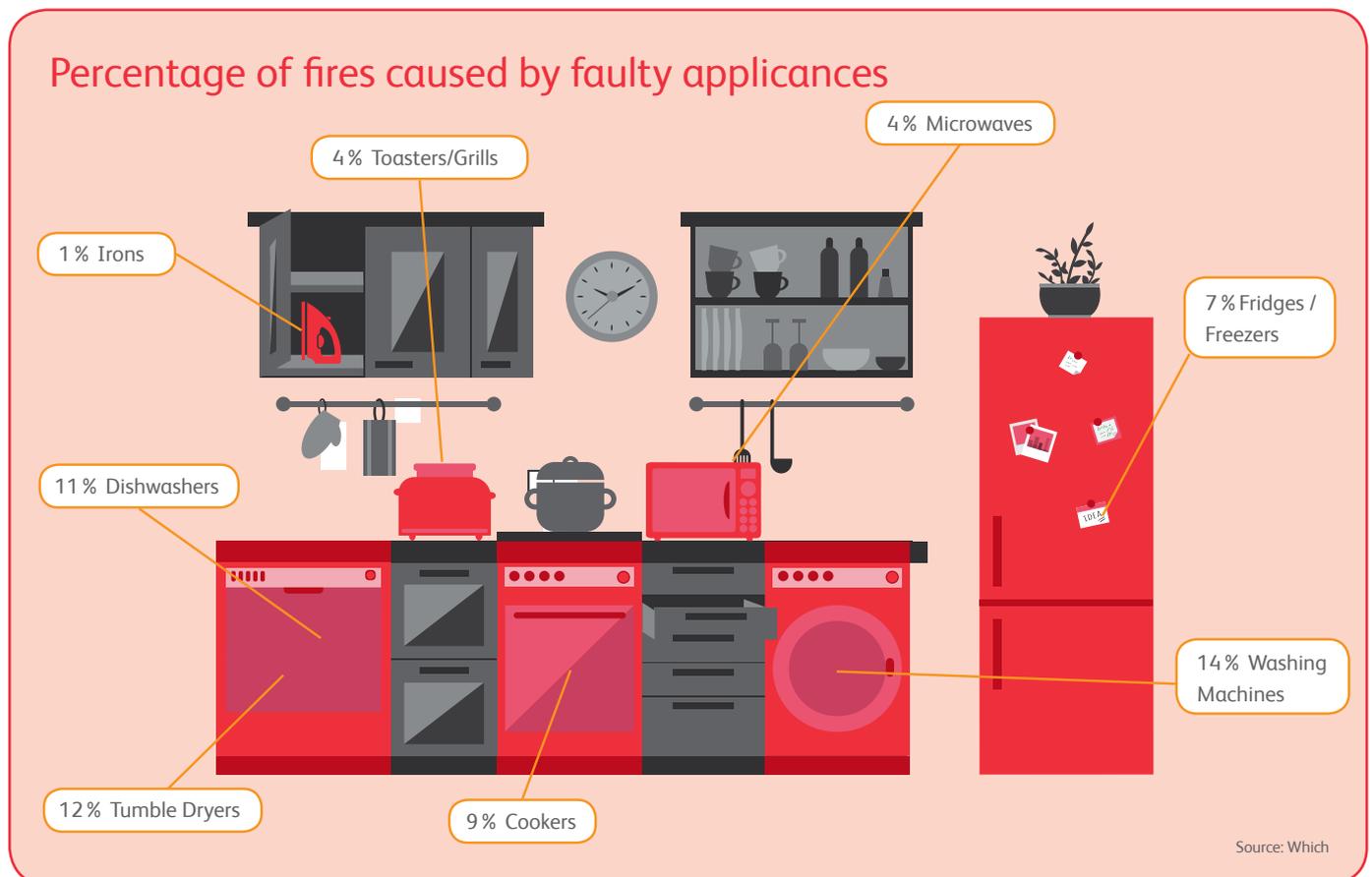
The costs of a fire can be enormous - in extreme circumstances, a total loss to property or, worse, loss of life. Our fire guide will highlight some key facts and provide simple tips to keep you safe at home.

What are the biggest causes of domestic fires?

The biggest contributors to domestic fires have proven to be electrical and cooking accidents. Each year around 70 people are killed and 350,000 seriously injured due to these types of accidents in the home*1.

Research shows that almost 12,000 household fires, over a period of 3 years were as a result of home appliances. These appliances were either faulty, not properly maintained or installed incorrectly.

With mobile phones, tablets, laptops, electronic cigarettes and even cars now requiring charging, the pressure on the electrical circuit in the average person's home is burdened far more than 30 years ago. Some homes can also have faulty and /or ageing wiring, which can be another major cause of electrical fires in the home.



*1 <http://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/guides-and-advice/around-the-home/how-safe-is-your-home/>

Tips to help prevent these types of fires in your home

Plugs

- ✓ Regularly check the plugs on appliances to ensure they are not cracked or damaged
- ✓ Always unplug and switch off your electrical items when they are not in use



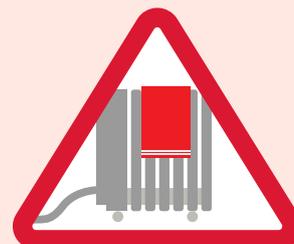
Sockets

- ✓ Check that sockets are not damaged i.e. cracked or scorched
- ✗ Avoid overloading sockets – do not plug an extension lead into another extension lead



Appliances

- ✓ Register appliances with the manufacturer once purchased so you can be alerted to any recall. If the appliance has been recalled then take action – product recalls can be checked via the following link: <http://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/product-recalls/>
- ✓ If kitchen appliances are to be fitted under worktop etc. then make sure that the plug is easily accessible
- ✗ Electrical appliances, such as heaters, have ventilation slots to prevent overheating. Don't cover up the appliance, otherwise it could overheat and catch fire
- ✗ Don't use the top of the microwave for extra storage
- ✗ If cooking on the hob or using a fryer don't leave unsupervised



Leads and cables

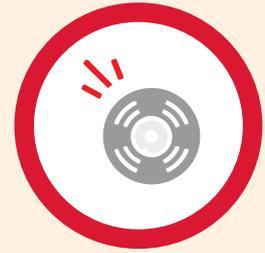
- ✓ Carry out visual checks to ensure cables and leads are in good condition for all electrical appliances
- ✓ Always uncoil extension leads so that the wire does not overheat
- ✗ Never trail cables under carpets or rugs as this can cause overheating



What more can you do to keep your home safe?

Smoke alarms

- Smoke alarms alert you to the early signs of a fire giving you time to escape. They're a cheap and easy way to protect yourself and your family
- Have one smoke alarm on each floor of your home
- Fitting interlinked alarms will give everyone in your home the earliest warning of a fire
- Test your smoke alarm monthly
- Make sure your smoke alarms are approved and safe
- Ask your local fire service for help with installation if you have trouble doing so yourself
- Smoke alarms should be fitted on the ceiling, in the middle of a room. Ideally in the hallway or landing so they can be heard in other rooms
- Don't install smoke alarms in kitchens or bathrooms where cooking fumes and steam can set them off



Fire extinguishers

- Don't attempt to tackle a fire unless safe to do so
- There are different types of extinguishers for different types of fire: Water, Foam, Dry powder, Carbon monoxide and Dry water mist. Make sure you understand what type of extinguisher you have and how to use it
- Keep extinguishers located where they can be accessed, like a hallway
- When using the extinguisher keep yourself on the escape route side of the fire



Fire escape routes and procedures

- Be prepared by making a plan of escape and make sure everyone knows it. The best route is the normal way in and out of your home
- Make sure exits are kept clear
- Think of a second escape route in case the first one is blocked
- Take a few minutes to practise your escape plan
- Review your plan if the layout of your home changes



Fire blankets

- These are used to smother fires by not allowing any oxygen to fuel the fire, they are best kept in the kitchen
- Fire blankets can also be used to wrap around a person whose clothing has caught alight



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