

How to Put a Fire Out Safely

When it comes to fire extinguishers, more isn't always more. If the extinguisher is too heavy to maneuver, it's not going to be much help if there's a fire. So, it's important to choose a fire extinguisher that is appropriate for the environment where it is to be used. Keep in mind these tips when equipping your home with a fire extinguisher.

The first and most important tip, from the National Fire Protection Association, (www.nfpa.org) is to have an extinguisher for each floor.

Every household extinguisher is labeled A, B, or C, to inform you about the types of fires the extinguisher is effective fighting. "A" is ordinary combustibles like wood, paper, and cloth, "B" is flammable liquids, such as gasoline or cooking oil; and "C" is live electricity.

In the fine print on the label, these letters are preceded by numbers that tell the extinguisher's relative effectiveness against each type of fire, regardless of its weight or the chemical it uses. The higher the number, the greater the effectiveness (and likely the higher the price).

Pick the Size That is Right for Your Space

10-pound

Best for: Garage or home workshop, where a fire might grow in size before being noticed.

Look for: Rechargeable model with hose for ease of use.

5-pound

Best for: Quick grab in the kitchen or laundry room.

Look for: Rechargeable model with hose for ease of use.

2-pound

Best for: Car.

Look for: Disposable model with mounting hardware to keep it from rolling around in the trunk.

Stove-top

Best for: Mounting on range hood over stove. (Do not use over deep fryers; released chemical can splash grease and spread flames.)

Look for: Magnetic pressurized cans designed to pop open from the heat of flames, spraying sodium bicarbonate (baking soda).

Fire safety experts advise you to learn how to use an extinguisher before an emergency arises. Check with your fire department to see if they offer homeowner training. Keep extinguishers where you can see and reach them easily, near the room's exit. That way you can fight the fire with your back to the door and make a quick escape if flames get out of control.

For details on how to properly use a an extinguisher, visit

<https://www.firstalert.com/community/safety-corner/p-a-s-s-the-fire-extinguisher/>