

## Fire Drills: The Great Escape

Would your family know how to escape if there was a fire in your home? A home escape plan is a plan to get out of your home safely in case of a fire. Every household member should know two ways out of each room in case one is blocked by fire or smoke.

Here are some easy steps to follow in helping your child with this plan.

1. Get your family together and use the blank Floor Plan Grid provided with this letter to draw a simple floor plan of each level of your home.
2. Plan two ways out of each room. The first way out should be a door and the second way out could be another door or window.
3. Make sure doors and windows can be opened easily. In a two-story building, plan your escape through a window onto a roof or porch. If you must use an escape ladder, be sure everyone knows where it is and how to use it.
4. Choose a special meeting place outside the home and mark it on the floor plan. A meeting place should be something that stays in the same place, such as a tree, telephone pole, or a neighbour's house.
5. Make sure everyone understands the planned escape routes.
6. Install smoke alarms on each level of your home and outside each sleeping area. Test them weekly and change the batteries once a year.
7. Have a home fire drill at least twice a year. Have family member practise using their second way out as well as their primary one.
8. If you live in an apartment, use the stairs. **Never use an elevator** in case of a fire. The elevator could take you to the floor where the fire is burning. If fire blocks your exit, close the apartment door and cover all cracks where smoke could enter. Telephone the fire department even if firefighters are already at the building. Tell them where you are. Wave a towel or sheet at the window to help the firefighters find you.
9. If you live in a mobile home, follow the same steps. Keep all exits clear and install smoke alarms on interior walls.