



## Firework Safety

If you are going to be holding a Fireworks Party at home, whether for Bonfires night, or to celebrate a wedding, Diwali or New Year, take a few minutes to read through the guidelines. Fireworks are explosives and burn at high temperatures, so they need careful handling and storage.

### 1. Store your fireworks safely -

in a closed metal box, somewhere cool and dry, out of reach of children and animals, until the time they are needed. Don't keep the box under the stairs or in a passageway and, on the night, only take them out one at a time.

### 2. Pets hate bangs and flashes -

and get very frightened on fireworks night. So keep all your pets indoors and close all the curtains to make things calmer. Remember it's not just your own fireworks that cause distress, so you may need to have your pets indoors on several nights when other displays are taking place.

### 3. Think ahead and be prepared

Before you start, make sure you'll be giving yourself enough room in a safe place to get to and from your box of fireworks whilst the display is going on. Have a full bucket of water handy for any emergency, and for putting used sparklers into. If you have the chance to get together with some other families, try to go to the home with the biggest garden and the safest surroundings.

### 4. Do you really need a bonfire?

It's much safer to manage without one. But, if you must, make sure it is away from your house and any trees, hedges, fences or sheds.

Preferably light the bonfire after the fireworks have been let off, if not, make sure that they are lit well away from the bonfire to prevent any sparks setting light to them.

Check that there are no animals hidden inside the bonfire.

If you are having difficulty lighting the bonfire, only use domestic firefighters to help. Do not use a flammable liquid such as petrol or paraffin.

### 5. Watch what you wear

Loose clothing (like shell suits) can very easily catch alight and should never be worn near any fire. Long dangly scarves can be risky too. If anyone's clothing does catch fire, follow the rule...

**STOP don't run - DROP to the ground ROLL OVER to put out the flame**



### 6. One at a time

You (or another adult that you choose) must be the only person letting off fireworks.

- Don't allow anyone else – especially children – to do so whilst your display is going on. Let the fireworks off one at a time (not lots at once) and don't rush.
- Light the tip of each firework at arm's length, using a safety firework lighter or fuse wick.
- If one doesn't go off, DON'T GO BACK TO IT – it could still be live, and could go off unexpectedly in your face. Right at the end of your fireworks night, douse the 'dud' with lots of water, then completely bury it in the ground and cover it well. Alternatively, keep it soaking in a bucket of water and ask your Fire Brigade for advice as soon as possible.

**NEVER THROW A FIREWORK ONTO A BONFIRE**

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### 7. Different fireworks mean different hazards

Read the instructions on each one carefully (by torchlight, never with any sort of naked flame) and follow them properly. Rockets, for instance, should be launched from a rocket launcher, not from a bottle.

Sparklers need careful handling – light them one at a time at arm's length; don't give one to any child under 5; make sure that anyone holding a sparkler wears gloves; and put each spent one into a bucket of water as soon as it's gone out.

### 8. Don't fool around

Putting a firework in a pocket is stupid and dangerous. Throwing a firework is stupid and dangerous and illegal: it's a criminal offence to do so in a street or other public place, with a maximum penalty of a £5000 fine.

### 9. Bonfires and booze don't mix

Drinking alcohol presents an added danger when there are fireworks and bonfires around. So keep strict control of your guests' drinking during the display. You could consider not having any alcoholic drink available until after your fireworks have been let off.

### 10. Watch that child

Keep children well away from fireworks, and never let a child handle or light one. Even sparklers can be dangerous if unsupervised! Make sure that children are aware of the dangers.

### 11. First aid

Know how to deal with a burn beforehand. Follow these guidelines and hopefully you won't need too.

### 12. Firework safety and the law

For more information about firework safety, standards and licensed sellers, check out the governments guidelines at Direct Gov:

[http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/InYourHome/FireSafety/DG\\_064665](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/InYourHome/FireSafety/DG_064665)

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#### Note:

Whilst this fact sheet gives general guidance on the law relating to this topic at the time of drafting, it is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to this area of law. You are advised to seek specific advice in relation to any particular issues that need to be addressed in relation to this topic by a competent person.

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