



COMMUNITY OUTREACH DIVISION

Installing a Smoke Alarm

When deciding on smoke alarm placement, be sure to have enough smoke alarms to provide your home complete coverage. Your chances for survival increase with each working alarm that you have properly installed.

How many smoke alarms do I need?

You should have a smoke alarm

- in each bedroom,
- in the hallway close to each sleeping area and
- in heavily occupied areas like the living room.
- **One on each level of your house is the absolute minimum.**

The best scenario for a safe escape would be an alarm in every bedroom and everyone sleeping with their doors closed.

Where should I install my smoke alarm?

Smoke alarms should be placed on or near the ceiling where smoke tends to accumulate.

- When installing smoke alarms, be sure to follow the manufacturer's installation instructions.
- When installing on ceilings, mount the device away from corners and walls, which will have dead air space nearby. About eight to 10 inches is the recommended distance.
- When installing on walls, install the alarms high, because smoke rises, and place them eight to 10 inches away from corners and ceilings.
- Install smoke alarms at least three feet from vents, which might re-circulate the smoke.
- Never place smoke alarms on un-insulated walls or ceilings. Extreme temperatures can ruin batteries and prevent smoke from reaching the alarms.
- Smoke alarms should not be placed directly over stoves, ovens, or fireplaces.



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How do I keep my smoke alarm functioning properly?

Maintenance Checklist:

- Test your smoke alarm at least once a month by pressing the test button.
- Replace weak or worn-out batteries at once.
- Never borrow smoke alarm batteries for other uses.
- Keep extra batteries on hand.
- Change batteries at least once a year.
- Dust and vacuum smoke alarms at least once a year.
- Replace smoke alarms every 10 years.
- Make sure smoke alarms are working when you return home after an extended absence.