

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

How to Select and Use a Fire Extinguisher

We all have fire extinguishers in our homes or businesses. But how many people know how to use them? Extinguishers can often stop a waste paper basket fire or cooking fire, while it is still small. It is important to know what type of extinguisher to have and how to use it.





Choosing a fire extinguisher

For home or office a 5 lb Class ABC class extinguisher is recommended. This type of fire extinguisher will be effective on all types of fires that you are likely to encounter, with the exception of combustible metal fires, such as magnesium. These extinguishers are available from most hardware stores.

Classes of fires:

Fires are broken down into four classes as shown below. It is important that you select an extinguisher that is appropriate for the class of fire that you may encounter. The label (shown below) on the fire extinguisher will have either a letter rating or a picture denoting which class it is good for. Most extinguishers will work for more than one class of fire.

The common 5 lb ABC extinguisher will handle most fires that you may encounter in your home. Pressurized water extinguishers are only good for Class A fires. Carbon dioxide fire extinguishers, which have a characteristic heavy body shell and a plastic horn, are only good for Class B & C fires.

Extinguisher Classes		
	Class A	Class A extinguishers put out ordinary combustible fires, such as furniture, waste paper baskets, fireplaces, etc.
	Class B	Class B extinguishers put out flammable liquid fires, such as grease on a stovetop, gasoline, etc.
	Class C	Class C extinguishers put out fires involving energized electrical equipment. The extinguisher is designed to prevent an electrical current from travelling from the fire to the user.
	Class D	Class D extinguishers put out fires involving combustible metals, such as magnesium. A Class D extinguisher can only be used on metal fires.

Where to locate your extinguisher?

Extinguishers should be located in plain sight in areas that have potential for fires, such as kitchens workshops and garages. Make sure that they are not too close to the potential fire hazard and that they are located between the fire hazard and an escape route.

How to use your extinguisher

Remember the acronym "PASS" when you use an extinguisher:

P Pull the pin



A Aim at the base of the fire



S Squeeze the handle



S Sweep the base of the flames

