

Smoke detector placement and safety

You're going to need more than one and there are different types, so read this.



Installing smoke detectors makes you feel safe from a possible fire. Staying aware of their correct placement and maintenance will ensure that no smoke goes undetected in your home.

Where to Place the Smoke Detector: Most fatal fires occur late at night or early morning, while you're asleep. For this reason, the [National Fire Protection Association](#) recommends placing smoke detectors in every occupied bedroom, as well as on every floor, including the basement.

In the kitchen, place the smoke detector away from the stove to prevent false alarms. If someone in your home is deaf or hard of hearing, consider a detector that also combines flashing lights with its alarm sound. If you are installing your detector on a wall and not the ceiling, remember to place it 4-12 inches from the ceiling.

Means of Detection: There are three kinds of smoke detectors: photoelectric, ionization, and a combination of the two, called a dual sensor. Photoelectric ones are

better at picking up slow-building, smoldering fires, like one resulting from a lit cigarette. Ionization detectors quickly note sudden combustible fires with high flames, like a grease fire.

For the best protection and safety, go with the dual sensor. Since you don't know what sort of fire may spark, having either type of detector still allows you the early-warning time to react and take action.

Maintenance and Chirps: Because a smoke detector constantly filters the air in your home 24 hours a day, seven days a week, maintenance is crucial. Most smoke detectors come equipped with a "chirping" alert to let you know their battery is low, but stick to a rule of changing out the batteries annually, even if it's quiet all year.

Being vigilant every second of the day will eventually take its toll, so it is recommended that you replace old detectors every ten years.