

# Edith: Exit Drills in the Home

E is for exit; D is for Drills; I is for in; T is for the; H is for Home.

## Have a Home Escape Plan

Family members should discuss what to do in case of a fire. An organized step-by-step plan is essential to ensure a safe escape.

## Know Two Ways Out

Discuss and diagram two ways out of every room, especially bedrooms. Doors are the primary and windows are the secondary ways of exit. Make sure everyone knows how to unlock all locks, and quickly open all windows and doors. Include all hallways and stairs in the escape plan.

## Choose a Meeting Place

Have a place outdoors for everyone to meet for roll call. Make sure someone is assigned to call 9-1-1 from a neighbor's house or a pay phone.

## Get Out Fast

Exit as quickly as possible. If it's smoky, get down low, and stay low. Crawl as quickly as possible. Once outside, go to the family meeting place.

## If Trapped

Put closed doors between people and smoke. Stuff cracks and cover vents to keep smoke out. Wait at the window and signal with a flashlight or a sheet.

If a dwelling has more than one level above ground, we recommend the use of a portable escape ladder in an emergency evacuation. If a portable ladder is not available, hang a pillowcase, sheet, or shirt out of the window to flag the rescuers. Do not jump unless there is immediate danger of being burned or overcome by smoke, and no rescuer is in sight. Make special arrangements for small children and people with disabilities.

## Do Not Go Back Inside!!!

Make sure everyone in the family understands the importance of not going back inside a burning building for any reason. Someone who goes back in may not come back out.

## Practice the Plan

Practice E.D.I.T.H. (Exit Drills In The Home) in the home or ask the management to schedule one in an apartment building twice a year.

Appoint someone to sound the alarm and time the drill, making sure everyone uses the second escape route and gets low, and goes.

Most fatal fires occur at night when everyone is asleep, so everyone should start the drill in his/her bedroom. Close the door and wait for the monitor to sound the alarm.

Practice crawling fast and staying low to escape smoke. Smoke rises while clean air stays low near the floor, so get down on your knees and crawl, maintaining contact with the walls while heading to the nearest exit.

Test the door using the back of your hands. In a real fire, if hot, take your second way out. If the second exit is not an option, brace a shoulder against the door and open it carefully, being ready to close it quickly if heat or smoke rush in.

Get out fast and go to the meeting place, where the monitor will then take a head count and review the drill, discussing any problems with escape routes.

## Play it Safe: Install a Smoke Alarm

The early warning of a working smoke alarm provides crucial seconds that can save lives!

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