

Create Your Family Fire Escape Plan

Use these questions to help your child build and practice your family's home fire escape plan. Use the floor plans below to draw or color the plan.

1. "What will you do if the smoke alarm sounds?"

Talk about the importance of responding right away and getting outside.

2. "Can you show me your bedroom on our map?"

Have your child find their bedroom and help identify the doors and windows.

3. "What are two ways you can get out of your room?"

Help your child identify two possible ways out whenever possible.

4. "What if your first way out is blocked?"

Talk about using the second way out and having another option if the first route is not safe.

5. "What will you do after you get outside?"

Teach your child to **get out, stay out** and go directly to the family's outside meeting place.

6. "Where will we meet?"

Choose a permanent meeting place a safe distance from the home where firefighters can find your family.

7. "What if I can't help you?"

Talk about why children need to know how to escape on their own in case an adult cannot reach them.

8. "Can you show me your escape plan?"

Walk through the map together. Have your child point out their room, the two ways out and the family meeting place.

9. "Ready to practice?"

Practice the plan with everyone in the household, including visitors and overnight guests. Practice at different times of day and at least twice a year.

10. "What should we change?"

After practicing, ask your child what worked and what could be improved. Update the plan when something in your home changes.

DON'T GET TRAPPED.

HAVE IT MAPPED.

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- DRAW A MAP OF YOUR HOUSE OR APARTMENT
- MARK 2 WAYS OUT, SHOW ALL DOORS & WINDOWS
- MARK ALL SMOKE ALARMS & CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS
- PICK A FAMILY MEETING PLACE OUTSIDE THE HOUSE
- PRACTICE YOUR PLAN AT LEAST TWICE A YEAR



WINDOW DOOR

ALARMS MEETING PLACE



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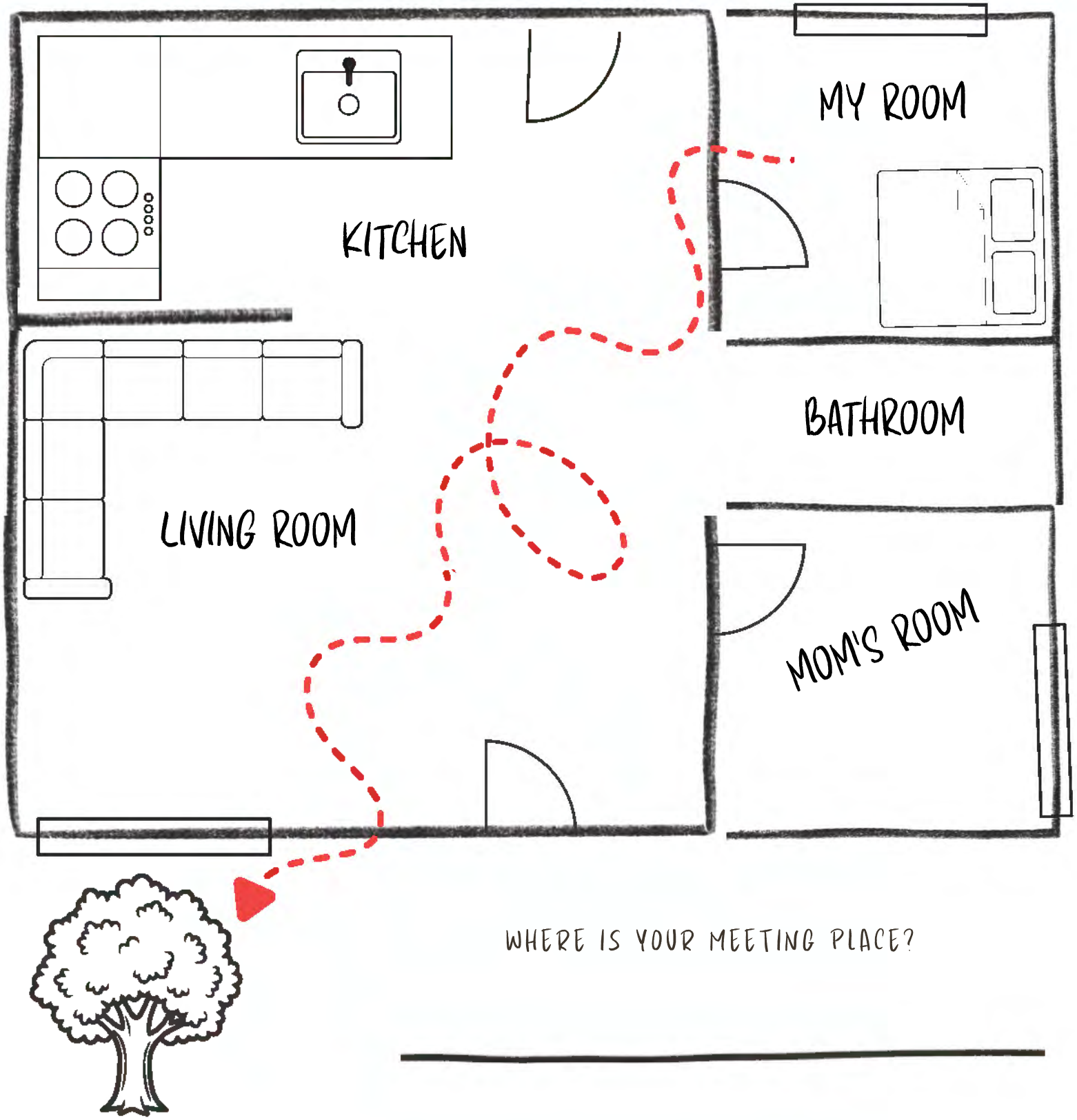

WHERE IS YOUR MEETING PLACE?

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Home Fire Escape

Planning

- Install smoke alarms in every room where someone sleeps, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement. Larger homes may require additional smoke alarms to provide a minimum level of protection. Make sure everyone in your home knows the sound and understands the warning of the smoke alarm and knows how to respond.
- Make a home escape plan. Draw a map of each level of the home. Show all doors and windows. Go to each room and identify two ways out. Practice the plan with everyone in your household, including visitors.
- Children, older adults, and people with disabilities may need assistance to wake up and get out. Make sure that someone will help them.
- Teach your children how to escape on their own in case you cannot help them. Make sure they can open windows, remove screens, and unlock doors.
- Have a plan for everyone in your home who has a disability.
- Practice your home fire escape drill with overnight guests.
- Know at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Make sure all doors and windows that lead outside open. Keep hallways, exits, and stairs clear.
- If a room has a window air conditioner, make sure there is still a second way out of the room.
- If allowed by your community and approved by code, windows with security bars, grills, or safety guards should have easy-to-use quick-release devices that are accessible from inside the home.
- A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire.
- Install smoke alarms in any room where someone sleeps, outside sleeping areas, and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- If you sleep with the bedroom door closed, install smoke alarms inside and outside the bedroom. For the best protection, make sure all smoke alarms are interconnected. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.
- Make sure everyone in your home knows how to call 9-1-1 from a mobile phone or a trusted neighbor's phone.
- Have an outside meeting place (something permanent like a tree, light pole, or mailbox) a safe distance in front of the home where firefighters will easily find you.
- Make sure your house number can be seen from the street both day and night.

Practicing the Home Fire Escape Drill

- Push the smoke alarm button to start the drill.
- Practice what to do in case there is smoke. Get low and go. Get out fast.
- Practice using different ways out.
- Close doors behind you as you leave.
- Get out and stay out. Never go back inside for people, pets, or things.

Source: NFPA EMAC Desk Reference, 2026 Edition
https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/home-fire-safety/educational-messaging

- Go to your outside meeting place.
- Practice your home fire escape drill at least twice a year with everyone in your home. Practice at night and during the daytime.
- After you have practiced your home fire escape drill, evaluate it and discuss what worked and what needs to be improved. Improve it and practice again.

If There Is a Fire

- When the smoke alarm sounds, get out and stay out. Go to the outside meeting place. Call 9-1-1 or the fire department.
- If there is smoke blocking the door or first way out, use your second way out.
- Smoke is poisonous. If you must escape through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to your way out.
- Before opening a door, feel the doorknob and then the space around the door. If you feel any heat, leave the door closed and use your second way out.
- If there is smoke coming in from around the door, leave the door closed and use your second way out.
- If you open a door, open it in a slow manner. Be ready to shut it if heavy smoke or fire is present.
- If you cannot get out, close the door and stuff towels or bedding in the cracks around the doors and vents to help keep smoke out. Call 9-1-1 and tell the emergency operator where you are. Then signal for help at the window with a flashlight or a lightcolored cloth.
- If you cannot get to someone needing assistance, leave the home and call 9-1-1. Tell the emergency operator where the person is located.
- If pets are trapped inside your home, tell firefighters right away. Never re-enter a burning building.

Source: NFPA EMAC Desk Reference, 2026 Edition
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