

# Candle Safety Tips

Statistics show that candle fires are one of the few types of home fires that have increased dramatically over the past decade, and four out of ten home candle fires start in bedrooms.

Candle fires are most common in December, perhaps because candles are frequently a part of holiday decorating and rituals.

Whether you use candles for celebration, atmosphere, or romantic dinners, remember you're dealing with an *open flame*. Treat it with respect.



- **Always keep a burning candle within sight.** Extinguish all candles when leaving a room or before going to sleep.
- Never burn a candle on or near anything that can catch fire. Keep burning candles away from clothing, furniture, drapes, bedding, carpets, books, paper, flammable decorations, etc. Never place lit candles in windows where they may ignite blinds or curtains.
- Keep candles out of the reach of children and pets. Do not place lighted candles where they can be knocked over by children, pets or anyone else.
- Read and carefully follow all manufacturer instructions.
- Trim candlewicks to 1/4 inch each time before burning. Long or crooked wicks cause uneven burning and dripping.
- Always use a candleholder specifically designed for candle use. The holder should be heat resistant, sturdy and large enough to contain any drips or melted wax. Be sure the candleholder is placed on a stable, heat-resistant surface.
- Keep burning candles away from drafts, vents and air currents. This will help prevent rapid, uneven burning, smoking and excessive dripping. Drafts can also blow lightweight curtains or papers into the flame where they could catch fire. Ceiling fans can cause drafts.
- Keep the wax pool free of wick trimmings, matches and debris at all times.
- Do not burn a candle for longer than the manufacturer recommends.
- Always burn candles in a well-ventilated room.
- Extinguish the flame if it comes too close to the holder or container. For a margin of safety, discontinue burning a candle when 2 inches of wax remains (1/2 inch if in a container). This will also help prevent possible heat damage to the counter/surface and prevent glass containers from cracking or breaking.
- Never touch or move a votive or container candle when the wax is liquid.
- Avoid candles with combustible materials embedded in them, or with holders or decorations that could ignite.
- Extinguish pillar candles if the wax pool approaches the outer edge.
- Candles should be placed at least three inches apart from one another. This is to be sure they don't melt one another, or create their own drafts that will cause the candles to burn improperly.
- One of the safest ways to extinguish a candle is to use a candlesnuffer, which helps prevent hot wax from spattering.
- Do not extinguish candles with water. The water can cause the hot wax to spatter and can cause glass containers to break.
- Flashlights and other battery-powered lights are much safer light sources than candles during a power failure.
- Never use a candle as light when you go into a closet to look for things.
- Never use a candle for light when fueling equipment such as a lantern or kerosene heater.