



Kitchen Fire Safety Guide



Cooking is such a routine activity that it is easy to forget that cooking can be dangerous. The U.S. Fire Administration estimates that about 164,500 residential cooking fires occur in the United States annually.

In fact, cooking is the leading cause of fires and injuries that occur in the home.

- Almost half (44%) of reported home fires started in the kitchen.
- Two-thirds (66%) of home cooking fires start with the ignition of food or other cooking materials.

However, that doesn't mean you need to be afraid to cook. You can prevent kitchen fires by taking safety precautions.



Never leave cooking food unattended. Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling or broiling. If you have to leave, even for a short time, turn off the stove. Unattended cooking is by far the leading factor in cooking fires and cooking fire casualties.



If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.



Starting at age 65, people are twice as likely to be killed or injured by fires. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, cooking fires are the leading cause of fire-related injury to the older adult (over 65).

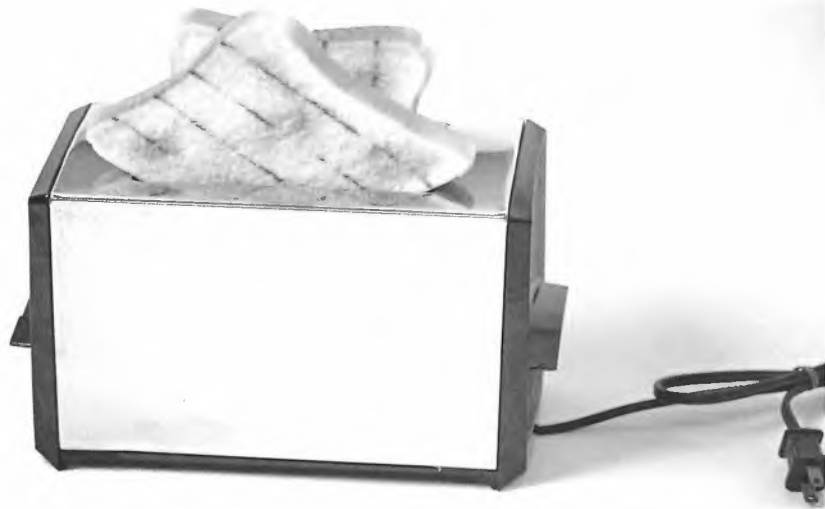
Often, these cooking-related fires are due to the accidental igniting of loose-fitting sleeves or of clothes that are quite flammable, forgetting to turn a burner off, or leaving food on the stove.

Disabilities in the elderly such as vision and hearing loss and mobility impairments, exacerbate the fire risk. Someone with a hearing loss should consider getting a notification device that produces low-frequency audible signals when the smoke alarm sounds.



Have a “kid-free zone” of at least 3 feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried including your outdoor grill. Children are unlikely to understand fully the fire danger in a kitchen. Take proper precautions and routinely educate children on kitchen safety.

- Store snacks or anything else a child may be attracted to far away from stovetop or oven.
- Always turn panhandles so they don't hang off the counter or stovetop. This helps prevent a child from accidentally bumping or pulling down a pan.
- Teach children which appliances get hot and why they should never touch them.
- Remind children that if a fire breaks out in the kitchen they should get an adult or call 911 and never attempt to put the fire out with water.



Clean cooking equipment after each use. Crumbs in a toaster or grease on the stove can catch on fire.



Always keep an oven mitt and pan lid nearby when you're cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan to smother the flame. Turn off the burner, and leave the pan covered until it is completely cool.

If you have a fire in your oven, turn it off. Let the contents cool before cleaning. If you have a fire in your oven and the flames escape it, leave your home and call 911.



The National Fire Protection Association notes that when you are impaired and inattentive, accidents can happen.

Therefore:

- Avoid using the stove if you are exceedingly sleepy. Cooking while fatigued is dangerous because your cognitive abilities are hampered, and you may forget to turn off the stove or oven.
- Don't cook on the stove if you've been consuming alcohol. Drinking impairs your attention, motor coordination, memory, cognition and judgement.
- Don't cook under the influence of drugs or mind-altering medications.



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