

Sheltering

If you must remain in your room (or return to it), there is no need to panic. Many people have defended themselves against fire quite successfully in their room. Keep the door closed and take the following steps:

- Work quickly to prevent the entry of smoke. Use duck tape to seal around the door, windows, vents and receptacles. Dampen towels and sheets in the tub and stuff them into spaces if tape is unavailable.
- If the phone is working, call the fire department to give them your room number. Or, use your cell phone.
- Fill the tub with water. Turn on the bathroom vent fan to clear any smoke.
- Open the window to let out any smoke and then close it. Break the window only if the room has been heavily invaded by smoke and you must get air to survive. Cover your head and face with a damp cloth to aid breathing.
- If doors and walls feel warm, using your wastebasket, bail water from the tub to keep them, and anything flammable, wet and cool.
- Signal to the fire fighters that your room is occupied. Stay calm! Await rescue.

Don't Give Up...

Persistence can save your life. Use your head. If you can get out safely, do it. If you must shelter in your room, be resourceful. Smoke and fire are your enemies. Heat, drafts and strong wind currents can help them spread. Anything you can do to seal off drafts, prevent entry of smoke, and wet down fire-threatened objects will increase your chances of surviving.

Protect your loved ones from fire and burns. Share this information with friends and family.



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Burn Prevention Foundation



Surviving A Hotel Fire

Americans are very mobile people. Many travel for vacation and/or business and stay in hotels or motels while on the road.

While no one can anticipate a fire, being prepared and knowing what to do can greatly increase your chance of survival.



Planning and Preparation

Good decision-making under frightening circumstances could be life-saving. Proper planning and preparation every time you check into a hotel is important. To protect yourself and your loved ones, take these precautions:

- When you make a reservation, ask if the hotel has smoke detectors and automatic sprinklers.
- Make a travel fire-safety kit to take with you. Include duck tape, a flashlight, a center punch, portable smoke detector and fresh batteries.
- Once you have checked into your room, determine how far you are from the ground floor. Do windows open? (Many newer and high-rise hotels have shatter-proof windows that would require a center punch to break the glass). Can you safely exit from your window to a ledge, balcony or lower rooftop if necessary? Safety experts suggest that if you are higher than three floors you may not survive if you jump.
- Locate at least two exits from your floor. **Count the number of doors between your room and each exit.** If you must crawl under smoke, it may be difficult to see. You can feel the doors and count the doorways to the exit.

- Note the location of fire alarms, extinguishers or other emergency equipment and familiarize yourself with their operation.
- Decide who will be responsible for infants, toddlers and/or the elderly.
- Always place your room key, flashlight, cell phone and a roll of duck tape on the bedside table so you will know where they are in an emergency. **Don't leave your room without the key even in case of fire.** You may need it to return if escape becomes impossible.



Attempt Escape, Don't Investigate!

When you hear the fire alarm, hear sirens outside the hotel or smell smoke in your room, prepare to escape.

- Grab your room key, flashlight, cell phone and tape, and head for the door.
- Feel the inside of the door, if it is NOT warm to the touch, open it slowly and peek into the hall. If there is no dense smoke or flames, close your door and head for the nearest exit. If there is some smoke, crawl to the exit, counting doorways to confirm its location.
- Never use an elevator!

- If the exit door is going to automatically lock behind you, tape open the latch to permit your re-entry if necessary.
- If you encounter heavy smoke at any point in your escape route, you may need to return to your room.
- Stairwell doors should close to prevent the spread of fire and smoke but should be kept from locking. Some hotels use electrically operated security release latches—some don't. Keep your options open!
- Walk down the stairs, firmly holding the handrail for guidance and protection against being knocked down by a panicking hotel guest.
- If the stairs are blocked by fire or dense smoke, don't try to run through it. Retreat or change direction. *Most people who die in fires are the victims of smoke and gasses.*
- Try to find a clear hallway behind an exit door. Cross through the hotel and attempt to go down the stairwell on the opposite side of the hotel. If this passage is also blocked with smoke, you must use your judgment. Either return to your room or someone else's. Or, prepare to defend yourself in the hallway, using your tape to block spaces under and around doorways where smoke could enter. Use your cell phone to report your location.