

Fire Extinguishers

Portable Fire Extinguishers

A portable fire extinguisher can be a very effective tool in saving lives and property. Use portable fire extinguishers to extinguish small, contained fires. Portable fire extinguishers have limitations however; they are not designed to fight large fires or those that may spread quickly. Portable fire extinguishers are appropriate for fighting fires such as those on the stovetop, in the oven or in a wastepaper basket. Use an extinguisher only if the fire is in its early stages.

Before you attempt to fight a fire make sure that:

- If the building has an alarm, it has been sounded. If not, alert the occupants.
- Everyone has left or is in the process of leaving the building.
- The fire department has been called.
- The fire is small and contained.
- You have a clear escape route that will not be blocked by fire.
- You choose the right type of extinguisher for the fire.
- You have read the instructions and know how to use the extinguisher.

Remember; do not fight a fire under any other circumstances! Instead, leave the building, close the doors behind you and immediately call the fire department.

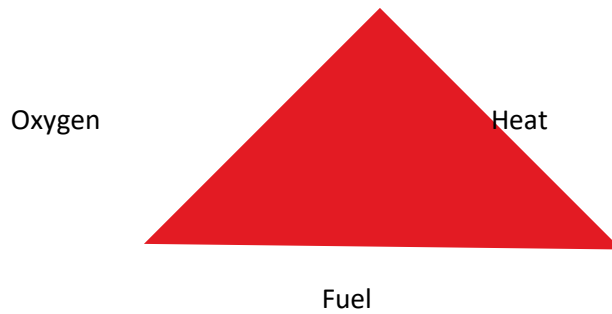
Choosing a Fire Extinguisher

Only choose extinguishers that have been tested by an approved testing laboratory and labeled for their intended use. The extinguisher must be appropriate for the type and size of fire being fought. It is important to select the appropriate extinguisher for the correct fire classification. Using the wrong type of extinguisher can make the fire worse and is dangerous to the operator.

What is fire?







Fire is a combination of oxygen, fuel and heat. This is called the fire triangle. Remove any one side of the triangle and the fire will go out.





The Fire Triangle



Classes of Fire

The three most common classes of fire are A, B, and C. The fourth class is D.

Fire class	Geometric symbol	Pictogram	Intended use	Mnemonic
<p>A – This symbol indicates an extinguisher that may be used on ordinary combustibles such as wood, paper, plastic or cloth. This symbol may be found on water, foam or multipurpose extinguishers.</p>				
A			Ordinary solid combustibles	A for "Ash"
<p>B - This symbol indicates an extinguisher that is appropriate for use on flammable or combustible liquids. The symbol may be found on carbon dioxide, multi-purpose dry chemical, and dry chemical extinguishers.</p>				
B			Flammable liquids and gases	B for "Barrel"
<p>C - This symbol indicates an extinguisher that may be used on fires involving energized electrical equipment. The symbol may be found on carbon dioxide, multi-purpose dry chemical, and dry chemical extinguishers.</p>				
C			Energized electrical equipment	C for "Current"
<p>D - This symbol indicates an extinguisher that may be used on some types of combustible metals including combustible magnesium, sodium and potassium. This symbol may be found on dry chemical extinguishers. You will rarely encounter a class 'D' fire in the home or office.</p>				

D			Combustible metals	D for "Dynamite"
<p>K – This symbol indicates an extinguisher that is used for fires most often occur where cooking media (fats, greases, and oils) are used. These are most often found in commercial cooking operations.</p>				
K			Oils and fats	K for "Kitchen"