

Fireworks over Christmas & New Year's Eve

Fireworks safety

Fireworks are great fun but it is important to remember that they can also cause distress and injuries if not handled properly. If you are using fireworks at home simply follow these guidelines to ensure you have a safe but fun experience:

- Only buy fireworks from a legitimate retailer.
- It is illegal to supply fireworks to persons under the age of 18.
- Shops are not allowed to sell fireworks louder than 120 decibels.
- It is an offence for under 18s to have fireworks in a public place.
- You should never throw or set off a firework in the street, onto a road or in a public place.
- You're not allowed to set off fireworks between 11pm and 7am except on Bonfire night whereby the curfew is midnight to 7am. For New Year's Eve, Diwali and Chinese New Year the curfew is 1am.
- Anyone caught causing a nuisance with fireworks will receive an instant fine of £80 and any fireworks found on a person under 18 will be confiscated.
- Always inform your neighbours if you are using fireworks and be considerate.
- Ensure your fireworks comply with British Standard 7114 or the European equivalents.
- Remember, if you break the law on fireworks you could be sent to prison for up to six months or a child's parents or carers could receive a fine.

Fireworks Code

Before they explode read the code!

- 1 Light sparklers one at a time and wear gloves
- 2 Never give sparklers to a child under 5
- 3 Buy fireworks marked BS 7114
- 4 Keep fireworks in a closed box
- 5 Follow the instructions on each firework
- 6 Light them at arm's length using a taper
- 7 Stand well back
- 8 Never go back to a lit firework
- 9 Never put fireworks in your pocket
- 10 Never throw fireworks
- 11 Keep pets indoors

Take Care With Sparklers

They are great fun and very pretty, especially when you try writing your name with them before it burns out. But they do reach a temperature of up to 2,000°C, and I'm sure you'll agree that's quite hot.

So, when handling them, always wear gloves. And when you've finished, have a bucket of water which people can plunge them in. If you're giving them to children, then make sure they're observed at all times.

Children under five should never hold a sparkler. Instead, you can give them a glow stick so they don't feel left out, and it will last a lot longer than a sparkler.

Have Someone In Charge

You need to delegate one person to be in charge of the display. Give them a hi-vis vest so everyone can easily identify and find them. They should abstain from drinking, at least until after the display.

Doing otherwise increases the risk of injury, and means they're less able to supervise properly. Equip them with a torch to see what they're doing and a hat, gloves and goggles to keep them protected.

Buying Your Fireworks

Always buy fireworks from a reputable shop. Don't cut corners trying to save a few quid and don't buy from places you're unsure about. All fireworks that conform to British Standards should have BS 7114 written on the packaging.

Also, make sure you buy fireworks which are appropriate. Most fireworks in Categories 1 to 3 will be okay for a garden display. All Category 4 fireworks are only for professional displays.

Setting Off The Fireworks

Long before you set them off, you should have read the instructions and prepared in the daylight. Let your neighbours know and remember it's better to be over cautious. Make sure the area is clear of animals and people, and that all your guests are stood well back. Only light one firework at a time and never return to a firework after you've lighted it.

Once lit, run to safety and watch the beautiful fireworks light up the sky.

And Just In Case

Unfortunately, things can go wrong from time to time. If someone does get burnt, then remain calm. Cool the burn with cold water, then cover and go to a hospital if it's serious. Maybe have a small first aid kit to hand for such accidents.

Should someone's clothes catch alight, then get them to perform the stop, drop and roll. Have a fire blanket which you can also wrap around someone will put out the flames. And having a 2kg powder fire extinguisher means you can act quickly and prevent a small fire escalating.