7 tips for candle safety.



Sugared snickerdoodle. Sage and citrus. Salted butterscotch. Sicilian lemon. If you're a candle lover, you probably have all of the above in your collection, and we can't blame you. However, it's important to remember that candles are an open flame, and you need to take caution. The National Fire Protection Association claims there are an average of 21 home fires caused by candles every day, and another expert estimates that 85% could have been avoided.

How can you practice candle safety? Whether you burn every day or just occasionally, here's how to "candle" with care:

1. **Trim the wick.** Before lighting a candle, trim the wick to be approximately ¼ inch. This will keep the flame from becoming too large, which can ultimately help prevent a home fire.

2. **To light it, use a long match or long lighter.** Those who play with fire often get burned. Literally. To keep your hand from getting too close to the flame, always use a long match or long lighter.

3. **Then, dispose of the match properly.** Even if there's no flame, there's still heat. So, believe it or not, you can actually start a fire just by throwing a match in the trash. Especially if it's surrounded by flammable materials like tissues and paper. That's why we recommend running used matches under water (to cool them down) before tossing them out. However, you can also let them come to room temperature on a flame-resistant dish.

4. **Keep the candle in your sight.** When there's a lit candle in the room, you should be there, too. After all, keeping it close by is just one of the ways to keep damage from happening. For example, let's say you lit a candle in the kitchen and then wandered away. If your candle accidentally caught something on fire, you might not know until it's too late. Staying within the line of sight will help you see if it needs immediate attention.

5. **Pick the perfect spot to enjoy the scent.** The best place to burn a candle is on a stable, heat-resistant surface. So, in addition to keeping your candle in sight, you should find an area away from children, pets, windows or drafts and flammable materials (like furniture, curtains, carpeting, paper, etc.). This will help reduce the risk of candle catastrophes. (Wondering why you should be worried about windows? Here are the facts: A draft from a window or thinly insulated area can actually carry a flame, causing surrounding items to catch fire.)

   > *40% of candle fires start when flammable items are too close to the candle. – National Fire Protection Association*

6. **Don't burn for more than four hours.** When your candle is burning, carbon collects on the wick. Letting it go for too long can cause the wick to become unstable and the flame to get too large.

7. **Extinguish appropriately.** Suffocate the flame, and prevent hot wax splatters in the process. By using a "snuffer" or simply putting the lid on a lit candle, the flames will effortlessly (and safely) die down.

Now that you know how to practice candle safety, learn even more about fireproofing. You can also prevent home fires by familiarizing yourself with other fire hazards in your home.