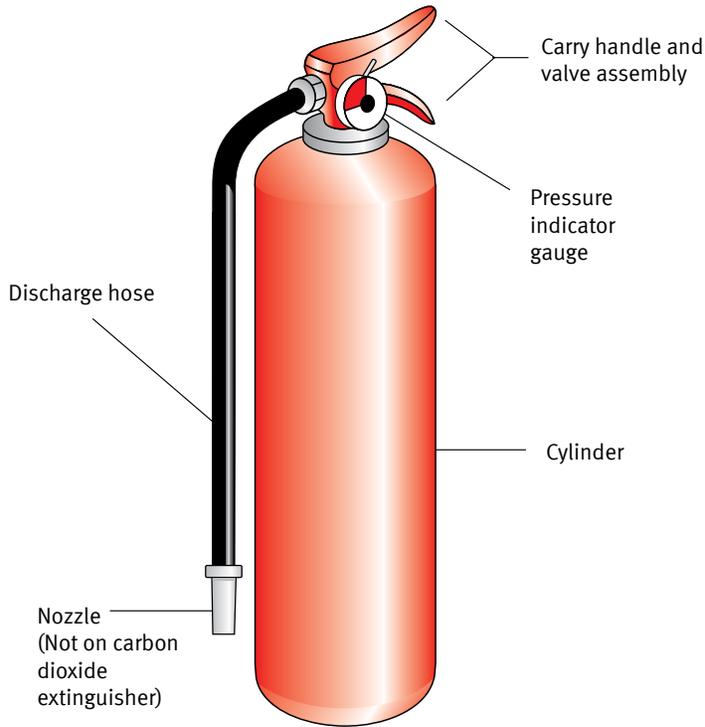


# FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

The purpose of this document is to provide information relating to fire extinguishers as a domestic fire safety measure.

## Parts of a fire extinguisher



## Use a fire extinguisher **ONLY** if:

- you know that the extinguisher is suitable for use on the flammable materials involved in the fire;
- you have considered whether electricity is possibly involved and, if so, that the available extinguishing agent is non-conducting;
- you can extinguish the fire quickly;
- you are not putting your safety at risk by staying in the vicinity of the fire; and
- all other persons have been evacuated from the area.

## Types

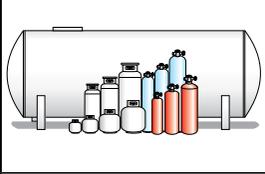
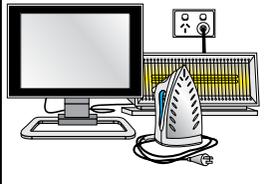
Fire extinguishers have a **coloured band** to denote their contents. They are:

- Red (water) (No band, all red)
- Blue (foam)
- White (powder)
- Black (carbon dioxide)
- Yellow (vaporising liquids)
- Oatmeal (wet chemical)

Type of Extinguisher	Colour of band	Suitable for (class of fire)	Comments
Water	All Red	A	Not safe on other classes of fire.
Foam	Blue	BA	Not safe on other classes of fire.
Powder	White	B, (E)	'AB(E)' type powder is also suitable on Class A fires.
Carbon dioxide	Black	(E), B	Beware of discharge pressure. Has a noisy and cold discharge.
Vaporising liquid	Yellow	(E), A, B	Older types (BCF) have been withdrawn from general use.
Wet chemical	Oatmeal	F, (A)	Older types (BCF) have been withdrawn from general use.

## Classes of fire

Fuels are divided into six classes. This method of categorising fuels into classes can help you with identification of the type of extinguishing medium required to extinguish a particular class of fire.

	<p><b>Class A fires</b> – are those which involve carbonaceous solids. A carbonaceous solid is one which contains the chemical element carbon as the basic fuel. This is probably the most common type of fire encountered by firefighters.</p> <p>Examples: Wood, paper, cloth, rubber, plastics, grass, coal.</p>
	<p><b>Class B fires</b> – involve flammable and combustible liquids.</p> <p>Examples: Petrol, kerosene, oil, tar, paint, wax.</p>
	<p><b>Class C fires</b> – involve combustible gases.</p> <p>Examples: LPG – liquefied petroleum gas, butane, propane; LNG – liquefied natural gas, acetylene.</p>
	<p><b>Class D fires</b> – involve combustible metals.</p> <p>Examples: Sodium, potassium, magnesium and aluminium shavings.</p>
	<p><b>Electrical Fires</b> – there is no 'official' Class E fire. Electricity is not a fuel; it does not burn like a fuel. However, it is a dangerous complication at a fire, because it is a source of heat and potential electric shock.</p>
	<p><b>Class F fires</b> – involve cooking oils and fats.</p> <p>Examples: Lard, vegetable oils</p>

## Which one should I buy for my home?

### Dry Chemical Powder (AB(E))

This type of extinguisher is suitable for most household fires due to its effectiveness against most types of fires.

A one kilogram Dry Chemical Fire Extinguisher will last approximately 10 to 12 seconds.

### Positioning

Fire extinguishers in the home should be stored so they are easy to get to but are away from areas likely to catch fire. For example, locate the fire extinguisher at the entrance to the kitchen, not inside the kitchen.

## Recommended Maintenance

- Choose a fire extinguisher approved by Australian Standards.
- Monitor the pressure gauge to ensure correct pressure.
- Shake it occasionally to prevent the powder from settling.
- Ensure you read and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Contact your local council for information on disposal options.

## How do I use a fire extinguisher?

The easiest way to remember how to use a fire extinguisher is PASS.

<p><b>P</b>ull the pin at the top of the extinguisher.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Hold the extinguisher by the bottom handle to allow easy removal of the pin.</p>	
<p><b>A</b>im the nozzle towards the base of the fire.</p>	
<p><b>S</b>queeze the handle to discharge the extinguisher.</p>	
<p><b>S</b>weep the nozzle from side to side aiming at the base of the fire</p>	

## Australian Standards

AS/NZS 1841.1:2007 - Portable fire extinguishers  
- General requirements

