



How To Test Your Smoke Detector

Smoke detectors require little maintenance, but that maintenance could be life-saving. Although there are several makes and models that you might have, you can test their effectiveness in one of two ways.

Method 1

Most smoke alarms will have a test button that can be employed here.

Carefully stand on a stepladder, reach up and push it using a broom handle if necessary. The alarm should go off. If you don't hear anything, it means the battery is dead.

Method 2

Light a couple of matches and then blow out the flame so that the smoke drifts up towards the smoke alarm. If the detector is working, the alarm will go off.

With both methods, if you don't hear anything, change the battery and then test the alarm again. If you still don't hear anything, this probably means that the alarm is broken and should be replaced as soon as possible.

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How often should I test a smoke alarm?

Some people recommend testing it once a month; some recommend testing it when the clocks change. It's up to you - test your alarms as often as you feel comfortable doing so.

General smoke alarm maintenance

- Clean dust away wherever necessary
- Never remove the battery to use in something else because you may forget to replace it
- Replace the battery on an annual basis even if it is still working
- Replace the alarm every ten years or so