



You know what it's like when you're trying to get a meal ready.

You've left it a bit late and you're in a rush. The kids are being a pain. You're trying to get the washing done at the same time. Or maybe you've been out for the night and you've had a few drinks.

If you're not concentrating, cooking the simplest meal can cause a fire. Did you know that cooking is the single biggest cause of house fires in Scotland?

It's a fact. Accidents while people are cooking cause around 1 in every 4 house fires.

Recipe for safe cooking?

Make your kitchen as safe as houses

Fires start when your attention stops. Never walk away while you're cooking.



Visit www.dontgivefireahome.com for practical fire safety advice. Or talk to your local firefighters. You'll find contact details on the website, in your local library and in the phone book.

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In some parts of Scotland, 1 house in every 10 will have a kitchen fire in the next 10 years. And deep frying – using fat or oil – is the biggest risk, causing around 9,500 fires a year in the UK. But that doesn't have to happen.

If you must use a deep frying pan:

- turn the pan handle to the side so the fat or oil doesn't get spilled by accident
- never fill the pan more than one-third full of fat or oil
- make sure chips are dry before putting them into hot fat or oil
- never walk away – not even for a few seconds – when the pan's on the heat
- never – ever – deep fry with fat or oil when you've been drinking alcohol.

But the best way to avoid having a fire is to use a thermostat-controlled, electric deep-fat fryer

- they're not that expensive – especially when you count the cost of a fire
- they look smart and they're smaller than you think
- they're much, much safer to use – the safety cut-out (the thermostat) controls the temperature of the fat or oil.

If you must use a deep frying pan and it catches fire:



- never try to move the pan
- never throw water over the pan
- if you can, turn off the heat
- then put a damp towel over the pan to smother the flames
- then wait 30 minutes to let the pan cool down
- phone the fire brigade, even if you think you've put the fire out.

But if you can't put out the fire right away:

- get out of the kitchen
- close the door
- phone the fire brigade.

And it's not just deep frying pans that are a risk when you're busy cooking:

- never walk away from the grill pan when it's under the heat
- always clean grill pans when you've been cooking fatty food
- turn all pan handles to the side so they're not spilled by accident
- never dry tea towels or cloths on – or above – the cooker
- never trail electrical flexes near cookers
- never put any metal objects inside microwave ovens
- switch off electrical appliances like washing machines and dishwashers at the mains.

