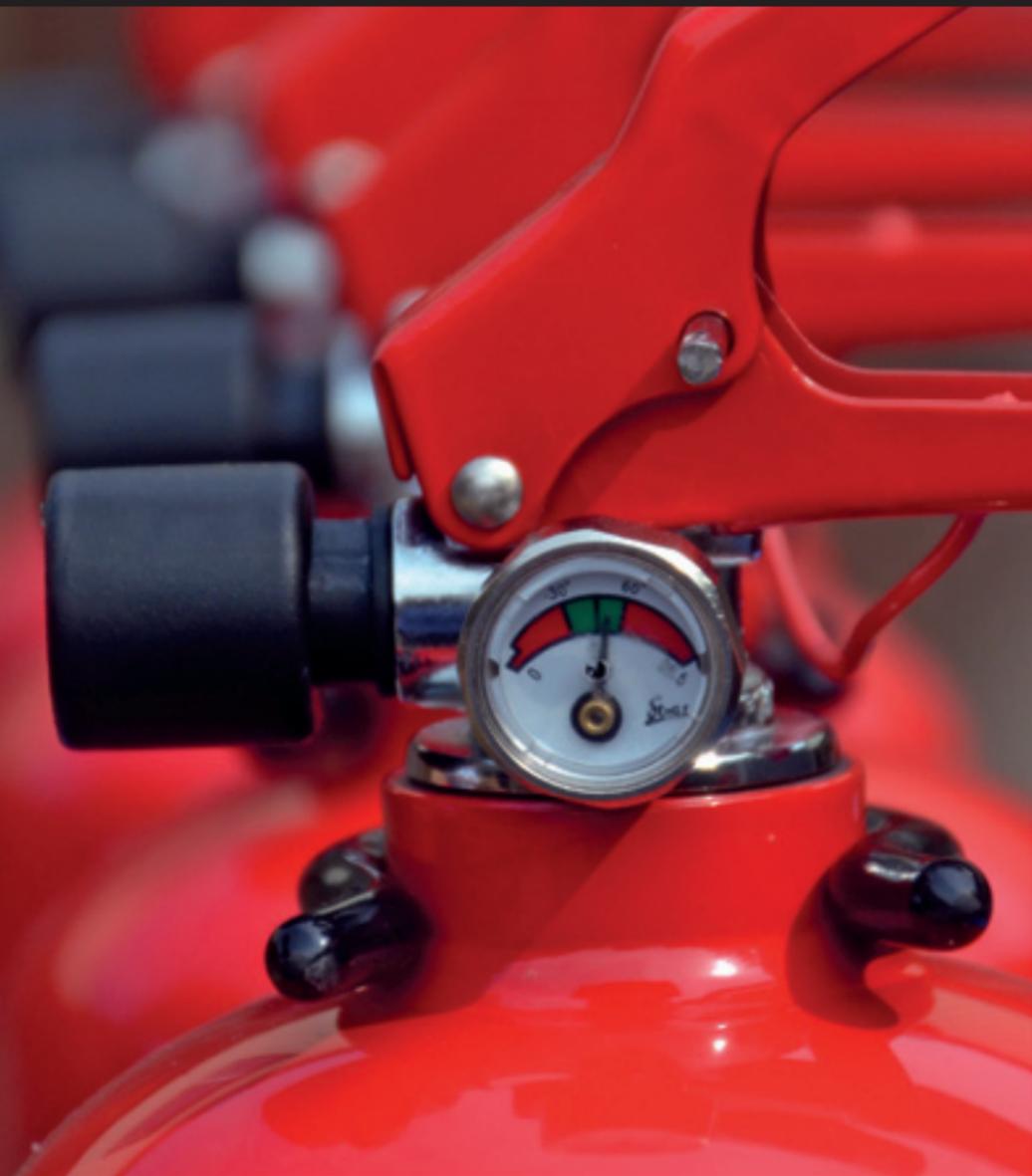




Wight Fire & Security

for all your safety needs



A practical guide to  
buying and using the right  
**fire extinguisher**

# WHICH EXTINGUISHER TO USE

A survey showed that over 80% of fires were extinguished successfully by a portable fire extinguisher without the intervention of the Fire and Rescue Service.

	Freely burning materials <b>A</b>	Flammable liquids <b>B</b>	Flammable gases <b>C</b>	Flammable metals <b>D</b>	Electrical equipment	Cooking oils and fats <b>F</b>
Water	●					
Foam	●	●				
Dry powder (ABC)	●	●	●		●	
Special powder				●		
Carbon dioxide		●			●	
Wet chemical	●					●

## Purchasing and Installation



In the guidance documents provided for the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 by the Government, the recommendation is the installation of independently tested and certified extinguishers as part of an employers' measures for protecting their staff and others from fire.

Both the DLCG and the Fire Brigades recommend extinguishers approved to the European Standard BS EN3 and compliant with the BS 7863 colour coding specification. BAFE registered companies provide extinguishers to these standards and install to BS5306-8 and commission to BS5306-3.

**Most workplaces will require the provision of a minimum of two water based extinguishers as primary protection.**

In addition all other classes of risks such as electrical equipment and flammable liquids need to be separately assessed and the relevant extinguishers provided.

## Siting of Extinguishers

Extinguishers should be located in conspicuous positions, available at all times for immediate use and fitted on brackets or stands where they will be readily seen by persons following an escape route.



Fire extinguishers should be securely hung on wall brackets.

Where this is impractical extinguishers should be located on suitable stands (not on the floor). In schools and similar locations it is preferable to use recessed housing or suitable cabinets.

If wall mounted the carrying handle of larger heavier extinguishers should be 1 metre from the floor but smaller extinguishers should be mounted so the carrying handle is 1.5 metres from the floor.

Extinguishers should be sited in such a way that it is not necessary to travel more than 30 metres from the site of a fire to reach an extinguisher.

To avoid confusion, all extinguishers installed in any one building or single occupancy should have the same method of operation and if intended for the same function should be similar in shape, appearance and colour.

Wherever possible, portable extinguishers should be grouped to form a fire point.

## Maintenance

Extinguishers should be regularly and routinely inspected by the user, preferably at monthly intervals to make sure that appliances are in their proper position and have not been discharged or lost pressure.

The user should replace extinguishers that are no longer useable with serviceable extinguishers. Annual inspection, installation, commissioning, servicing and test discharging should be carried out by a competent person.

The UK servicing standard BS 5306 Part 3 puts the onus on the user (i.e. the Company) to use a competent person and that extinguishers should be installed, commissioned and serviced to that standard and the manufacturer's recommended procedure.

**The right extinguisher from the right supplier**  
**Make sure you buy from a BAFE member**

## Training

All people regularly employed in a workplace should be aware of the risk of fire.

### They need to know...

- How to summon the Fire and Rescue Service.
- How to warn others of the fire including the operation of the fire-warning apparatus.
- The location and use of escape routes.
- The procedure for assisting visitors or members of the public from the workplace.
- The location of the fire assembly point.
- How to use the fire equipment provided.

## How to use a fire extinguisher

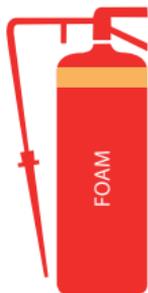
### Water



**Suitable for most fires except those involving flammable liquids or live electrical apparatus.**

- 1 Direct the jet at the base of the flame and keep it moving across the area of the fire.
- 2 Seek out any hot spots after the main fire is extinguished.
- 3 A fire spreading vertically should be attacked at its lowest point and followed upwards.

### Foam



**Suitable for most fires involving flammable liquids apart from cooking oil fires.**

- 1 Where the liquid on fire is in a container, direct the spray at the back edge of the container, or at an adjoining vertical surface above the level of the burning liquid. This allows the foam to build up and flow across the surface of the liquid to smother the fire.
- 2 Where this is not possible stand well back, direct the spray with a gentle sweeping movement, allow the foam to drop down and lie on the surface of the liquid.
- 3 Do not aim the spray directly into the liquid as this will drive the foam beneath the surface and render it ineffective. In addition, it may splash the fire onto the surroundings.

## Dry Powder



**Suitable for fires involving flammable liquids or electrical apparatus.**

- 1 On fires involving either liquids in containers or spilled liquids, direct the nozzle towards the near edge of the fire. With a rapid sweeping motion drive the fire towards the far edge until all the flames are extinguished.
- 2 On fires involving flowing liquids, direct the nozzle at the base of the flames and sweep upwards.
- 3 On fires in electrical equipment, switch off the current if safe to do so and then direct the nozzle straight at the fire.
- 4 Where the equipment is enclosed, direct the nozzle into any opening with the object of penetrating the interior.
- 5 When the fire appears to be extinguished shut off the discharge and wait until the atmosphere clears. If any flame is then still visible, discharge again.
- 6 Do not use dry powder on straw or animal bedding.

## Carbon Dioxide



**Suitable for fires involving flammable liquids or electrical apparatus. Method and operating instructions as for dry powder.**

- 1 Carbon Dioxide extinguishers should NOT be used in confined spaces where there is a danger that fumes may be inhaled.
- 2 DO NOT HOLD THE HORN SINCE IT BECOMES EXTREMELY COLD DURING USE.

## Wet Chemical



**Specifically for use on fires in deep fat fryers. DO NOT USE on fires involving live electrical equipment.**

- 1 Turn off the source of heat if safe to do so.
- 2 Hold the lance at arms length, well above the fire with its nozzle at least 1 metre away from the fire.
- 3 Holding the lance still, discharge so that the spraying wet chemical falls gently onto the surface of the fire.
- 4 Even if the fire appears to go out quickly, discharge the entire contents of the extinguisher.



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