

Holiday Safety Tips

Follow the tips below to ensure your holidays are both happy and safe.

Keep a Safe Kitchen

Tie long hair back, and don't wear anything flowy that could easily catch fire. If you are not confident that you can lift the 25-pound turkey out of the oven, get someone else to do it! If you're cooking the bird in a deep fryer, do it outdoors! If you peek into a hot pot, tilt it so that any steam is aimed away from you. Clean spills immediately.

Be Sharp About Knife Use

Keep knives sharpened. Sharp knives are less likely to slip and catch your fingers. Cut over a cutting board and always aim the knife away from your body. Never toss a knife into a sink full of dirty water where someone could reach in and get cut.

Practice Fire Safety

If you have a live Christmas tree, water it daily. Choose battery operated candles. Candles start nearly half of home decoration fires! If you do use real candles, blow them out before going to bed or leaving the house. Place flammable decorations at least three feet from heat sources. Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children. Purchase a fire extinguisher and make sure you have functioning smoke detectors at least 10 feet from your stove. **NEVER** pour water on a grease fire. If a grease fire starts, first cover the flames with a metal lid or cookie sheet. Turn off the heat source. If the fire is small, pour salt or baking soda on it. Use your fire extinguisher as a last resort.

Use a Ladder Safely

Whether you're putting lights on the roof or topping off your tree with a star, be especially mindful when using a ladder. Follow the 1 – 4 foot rule: for every four feet a ladder rises, move the base out one foot from the structure. Always keep three points of contact with the ladder, either two hands and one foot or two feet and one hand. **NEVER** use furniture as a ladder.

Gift With Caution

Before you purchase a toy or game, read the instructions and warning labels to make sure the toy is age appropriate and safe. If you are giving a bike, skateboard, or scooter, check to make sure your recipient has a helmet and gift one if needed.

Dodge Decorating Dangers

Inspect all your decorations for damage (loose wires, damaged sockets etc.). Do not overload sockets: plug only one high wattage appliance per outlet at a time. Turn off and unplug all decorations before going to bed or leaving home. Hang breakable ornaments high enough so little ones can't grab them. Make sure poisonous plants such as poinsettias are out of reach of children and pets.

Watch Your Back!

It's essential to protect your back during the holidays. We tend to move too fast during this busy time. Take breaks to stretch and sit down. Try to do some of your prep work in advance so you don't spend an entire day on your feet cooking. If you put up a tree, get help lifting and carrying it. Don't carry too many packages at once and try to distribute weight evenly on both sides of your body.

Drink Responsibly

It's easy to overindulge during the holidays, whether your weakness is stuffing, pie, or wine. However, drinking too much can have serious consequences. Alternate alcoholic drinks with water to slow down your alcohol consumption. And don't drink on an empty stomach. If you plan to attend a holiday get together, enlist the help of a designated driver or call a ride share service (Lyft/Uber) so everyone arrives home safely.