

For fire safety, it's always vital to have a fire extinguisher on hand at a moment's notice. There are a variety of fire extinguisher colours and fire extinguisher types, but which one is which, and what do these different types of fire extinguishers do?

Each fire extinguisher works to tackle different fires in its own unique way – and each one is identified by its colour-coded label. Let's run through all of the fire extinguisher colours together and help you become more familiar with these potentially life-saving pieces of equipment.

The different types of fire

There are six types of fire classed A-F and five main types of fire extinguishers. Let's go through each class below.

Class A: Combustible and carbonaceous materials including wood, paper, and textiles

Class B: Flammable liquids such as petrol and spirits

Class C: Flammable gases like propane and butane

Class D: Burning metals

Class E: Electrical (when a live current may still be present)

Class F: Cooking oils and fats

The different types of fire extinguisher

With there being five main types of fire extinguishers, each one utilises a different substance for one or more of the classes of fire listed above. These fire extinguisher types are:

Water

Foam

Powder

CO₂

Wet chemical

Knowing which fire extinguisher type works for what type of fire is vital as using the wrong type of fire extinguisher can result in the fire becoming larger and more deadly. To help aid each fire extinguisher type's recognition, each one uses a different colour to be understandable at a glance, should you need to grab one in a hurry. Let's go through all of the fire extinguisher colours below.

Water fire extinguishers

Water fire extinguishers use a red label and are only suitable for Class A fires (those caused by combustible materials).

Foam fire extinguishers

Foam fire extinguishers have a cream coloured label and are commonly used on Class B fires (those caused by flammable liquids). However, as they're water-based, they'll also work on Class A fires.

Powder fire extinguishers

Dry powder fire extinguishers have a blue label and are known as ABC fire extinguishers due to their versatility in tackling Class A (combustible materials), Class B (flammable liquids), and Class C (flammable gases) fires. However, powder fire extinguishers can be dangerous when used in enclosed spaces, the contents can be inhaled and harm the user.

CO2 extinguishers

CO2 fire extinguishers use a black fire extinguisher label and are used on electrical and Class B fires (from flammable liquids). CO2 fire extinguishers also feature a horn-like nozzle for extra identification.

Wet chemical fire extinguishers

Wet chemical fire extinguishers display a yellow fire extinguisher label and are specifically designed for use on Class F fires (caused by cooking oils and fats).

Conclusion

Choosing the correct fire extinguisher is a complex process. E-Fire Prevention offers expert guidance for the installation and use of portable fire extinguishers in any given situation.

Each and every model in our extinguisher range fully complies with the standards and recommendations set out by the HSE, in addition to all UK fire brigades and insurance companies. On top of this, each extinguisher is fully refillable so you will be making an ongoing investment into your safety, not simply a one-off or one-use purchase.

With fire safety being so imperative in every business setting, you can have complete confidence in the quality and reliability of the Fire Extinguishers we install, supply, service, and repair.

Our expert team is on hand to provide advice and assistance as to the best Fire Extinguisher solutions for you.

Important Information

The content of this blog is for general information purposes only. While we make every effort to ensure accuracy at the time of publication, under no circumstances should it be considered professional advice. Any reliance you place on the information is at your own risk. Always seek the advice of a fire professional for your particular circumstances and requirements.