



BRITISH BURN ASSOCIATION

BBA Position Statement on Bonfires and Fireworks

Fireworks are explosive devices and this must be recognised when they are being used. If they explode incorrectly they can cause severe injury, including loss of fingers, loss of sight, and permanent disfigurement.

They should only ever be used in a supervised environment, please be sensible - stay safe.

Injuries that require specialist burn care occur each year as a result of firework injuries in England and Wales. Fireworks are enjoyed at various times throughout the year and the safest place to enjoy fireworks is at a large public display. Despite calls for tighter restrictions on the sale of fireworks to the general public they remain accessible for domestic use.

The BBA would always discourage setting light to any fires or letting off fireworks in gardens but if you are determined to do this, despite our concerns, then you need to ensure you do it safely.

1. Bonfires: Build them in a safe location, and with appropriate permissions. They should be an appropriate size and located well away from people, trees, property and other fireworks. Never light bonfires using accelerants (e.g. petrol). It is safest to attend an organised event.
2. Sparklers: Wear gloves and hold away from your body and face and those of others. When expired, discard safely such as in a bucket or sturdy empty bottle containing a little cold water.
3. Fireworks: Only buy fireworks from licensed retailers and use according to instructions. Use at the stated distance away from bystanders, buildings, trees or where they may distract drivers. Never relight or approach used, previously lit or expired fireworks. Ensure launch tubes are adequately secured to avoid tipping over. Throwing fireworks is a criminal offence.

If an accident does occur remember:

STOP, DROP and ROLL – if clothing is on fire

First aid: stop the burning process and apply cold running water for 20 minutes then seek medical assistance – see the detailed BBA first aid advice

<https://www.britishburnassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/BBA-First-Aid-Guideline-24.9.18.pdf>

You can find further advice on firework safety at:

ROSPA - <https://www.rospa.com/Home-Safety/Advice/Fireworks-Safety>

And the Fire service <https://www.fireservice.co.uk/safety/firework-safety/>

You can also read the Government's Briefing Paper "Regulation of Fireworks" Number 05704, 16 November 2020 <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN05704/SN05704.pdf>

www.britishburnassociation.org