

# Fire Extinguishers: They're Not All Alike

Fire extinguishers are an invaluable tool for putting out fires—but only if you use the right one. Because each fire is different, using the wrong type of extinguisher can make a fire worse. There are five types of fire extinguishers:



## Class A

(green label)—for fires involving:

- wood
- paper
- cloth
- rubbish



## Class B

(red label)—for fires involving:

- gasoline
- solvents
- vapors
- gas leaks



## Class C

(blue label)—for:

- electrical fires



## Class D

(yellow label)—for fires involving combustible metals such as:

- magnesium
- sodium
- potassium
- sodium potassium alloys

## Class ABC

—for

- combination fires

**Which fire extinguisher would you use for the following situations?**

1. a pile of oily rags that has spontaneously combusted
2. an electrical fire, caused by worn insulation, that has spread to papers on a shelf
3. solvent ignited by a hot surface
4. gasoline burning on a wooden floor
5. trash in a metal container

**Answers: 1. A; 2. ABC; 3. B; 4. B; 5. A**

**Be prepared. Don't wait for a fire to start before you find out:**

- 🔥 which types of fire extinguishers you have and where they are located.
- 🔥 which type of fire extinguisher is right for each material you work with.
- 🔥 how to use a fire extinguisher.

## USING A FIRE EXTINGUISHER

- 🔥 Pull the safety pin.
- 🔥 Stand about 8 feet from the fire.
- 🔥 Aim at the base of the fire.
- 🔥 Squeeze the trigger.
- 🔥 Use back and forth sweeping motions.
- 🔥 Aim accurately—fire extinguishers may only last from about three to 20 seconds.
- 🔥 Use a fire extinguisher only if the fire is small and easily contained.