

We would like to share an important reminder about the risks associated with batteries in the home, including **lithium-ion batteries** used in e bikes, e scooters, drones and everyday devices such as phones, toys and laptops, as well as **button batteries** found in many small household items.

Key Risks

- Lithium-ion batteries can overheat, catch fire or explode if damaged, tampered with or used incorrectly
- Fires can develop very quickly, sometimes within seconds
- Button batteries can cause serious and potentially life-threatening internal burns if swallowed

Not all batteries present the same risks:

Lithium batteries carry the highest **fire** risk, whereas **button** batteries present a significant ingestion **hazard**, particularly for younger children.

E Bikes & E Scooters – Key Safety Steps

Fires involving e-bikes and e-scooters are one of the fastest growing risks, most commonly occurring during charging.

- Only purchase from reputable retailers and check for UKCA/CE marking
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions at all times
- Only use the recommended battery and charger
- Do not use aftermarket conversion kits or unofficial modifications, as these significantly increase fire risk

○ Button Batteries (High Risk)

- Small and easily swallowed by children
- Can become stuck and react with saliva, creating a small electrical current that causes a chemical burn
- This can lead to serious internal injury in as little as 2 hours, even without obvious symptoms
- Injuries can be life-changing or fatal

Important Safety Reminder: Battery Risks

To reduce the risk:

- Store batteries out of sight and reach (ideally locked away)
- Ensure battery compartments are securely closed
- Dispose of used batteries promptly and safely
- Supervise young children around battery-operated items

In Emergency: If a battery is swallowed or suspected, go straight to A&E immediately — do not wait for symptoms

Charging Safety (All Rechargeable Devices)

- Do not charge on soft furnishings
- Do not cover chargers or batteries
- Avoid leaving devices charging unattended
- Keep away from flammable materials
- Avoid overloading sockets
- Ensure smoke alarms are fitted and tested regularly
- Charge on a hard, flat surface (not beds or sofas)
- Do not store or charge near escape routes (e.g. hallways or doorways), as this can block exit in a fire
- Avoid charging in bedrooms
- Do not charge overnight or when unattended
- Unplug once fully charged
- Do not use damaged charging cables or plugs
- Do not attempt DIY repairs or use makeshift charging setups

NEVER

- Modify, tamper with or attempt to repair batteries yourself
- Use damaged or incompatible batteries or chargers

Warning Signs – Act Immediately

Stop using the device straight away if you notice:

- The battery becoming very hot
- Swelling, leaking or visible damage
- Hissing, popping or unusual smells
- Charging issues or smoke/vapour

General Battery Safety

- Store all batteries safely and out of reach of children
- Do not use damaged, leaking or counterfeit batteries/chargers
- Do not allow children to tamper with devices or open battery compartments (e.g. toys, drones or remote controls)
- Store loose batteries safely (not freely in drawers or bags)
- Dispose of batteries at approved recycling points
- Regularly check devices and toys for damage or loose battery compartments
- Do not mix old and new batteries or different battery types in the same device

Key Message

All batteries can present a serious risk if not used, stored and disposed of safely. Simple precautions and awareness can significantly reduce the risk of harm.

Further Information and Guidance

- GOV.UK – E-bike and e-scooter fire safety: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/buy-safe-be-safe-avoid-e-bike-and-e-scooter-fires>
- Fire Kills Campaign – Battery safety advice: <https://firekills.campaign.gov.uk/e-bikes-and-e-scooters/>
- London Fire Brigade – ChargeSafe guidance: <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/e-bikes-and-e-scooters/>
- Child Accident Prevention Trust – Button battery safety: <https://capt.org.uk/button-battery-safety/>
- Great Ormond Street Hospital – Button battery advice: <https://www.gosh.nhs.uk/conditions-and-treatments/conditions-we-treat/button-batteries-using-them-safely/>

Battery Safety for Kids



⚠️ Batteries are NOT toys!

- Never play with batteries
- Don't open devices
- Tell an adult if broken

🔥 They can be dangerous

- Can get VERY hot
- Can start fires
- Can hurt your body



🔴 Button batteries

- Small + shiny = NOT safe
- Never put in your mouth
- Tell an adult if you find one

😊 Remember

- Only adults handle batteries
- Stay safe and ask for help!

