

Advice Leaflet 24 Doors – Security Devices & Means of Escape

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West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
Fire Safety Group
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INTRODUCTION

This note applies to all premises and places other than domestic premises occupied as a single private dwelling.

The time taken to negotiate a closed door can be critical in escaping from fire. Doors on escape routes (both within and from a building) should therefore be readily open-able whenever they may need to be used for that purpose.

DOOR FASTENINGS

Doors on escape routes should only be fitted with a simple fastening, which can be readily operated from the side approached by persons escaping from fire. The operation of the fastening should be without the use of a key and without having to manipulate more than one mechanism, ie, 'single action'. The physical capabilities of the persons who may need to operate the fastening should be fully taken into account.

If mortise deadlocks are fitted to doors on escape routes, it is a management responsibility to ensure that all such doors are unlocked and made immediately available for use before the premises are occupied.

SPECIAL MECHANICAL FASTENINGS

Where a special form of mechanical fastening is used, a notice providing clear, simple instructions as to its use should be prominently displayed.

It will also be necessary for persons who may have to use the door to understand the method of operation. Normally this type of fastening is not suitable for areas used by members of the public.

ELECTRICALLY OPERATED FASTENINGS

Electrically operated fastenings should be readily operable at all material times and should fail safe in the open position.

Further advice should be sought from your local fire safety district office if you propose to fit such a mechanism.

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'PANIC' LATCHES AND BOLTS

Where a door:

(a) may be used at the time of a fire by more than 50 persons, or

(b) is an exit from an area in which fire may develop very rapidly,

and has to be kept fastened while persons are in the building, it should be fastened only by pressure release devices such as panic latches, panic bolts or pressure pads which ensure that the door can be easily and immediately opened by persons within. Panic bolts and panic latches should comply with British Standard EN 1125.

FURTHER ADVICE

Further advice is available from your local fire safety district office.

You should notify the Fire Authority in writing of any proposal to fit a locking device to a door, which is required for means of escape in case of fire.

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Local District Fire Safety Offices

District Manager - Bradford Fire Safety Office - 01274 385430
FAX: 01274 385469

Station Manager - Leeds Fire Safety Office - 0113 290 4800
FAX: 0113 290 4838

District Manager - Halifax Fire Safety Office - 01422 386830
FAX: 01422 386849

Station Manager - Huddersfield Fire Safety Office - 01484 551820
FAX: 01484 551835

Station Manager - Wakefield Fire Safety Office - 01924 334040
FAX: 01924 334069