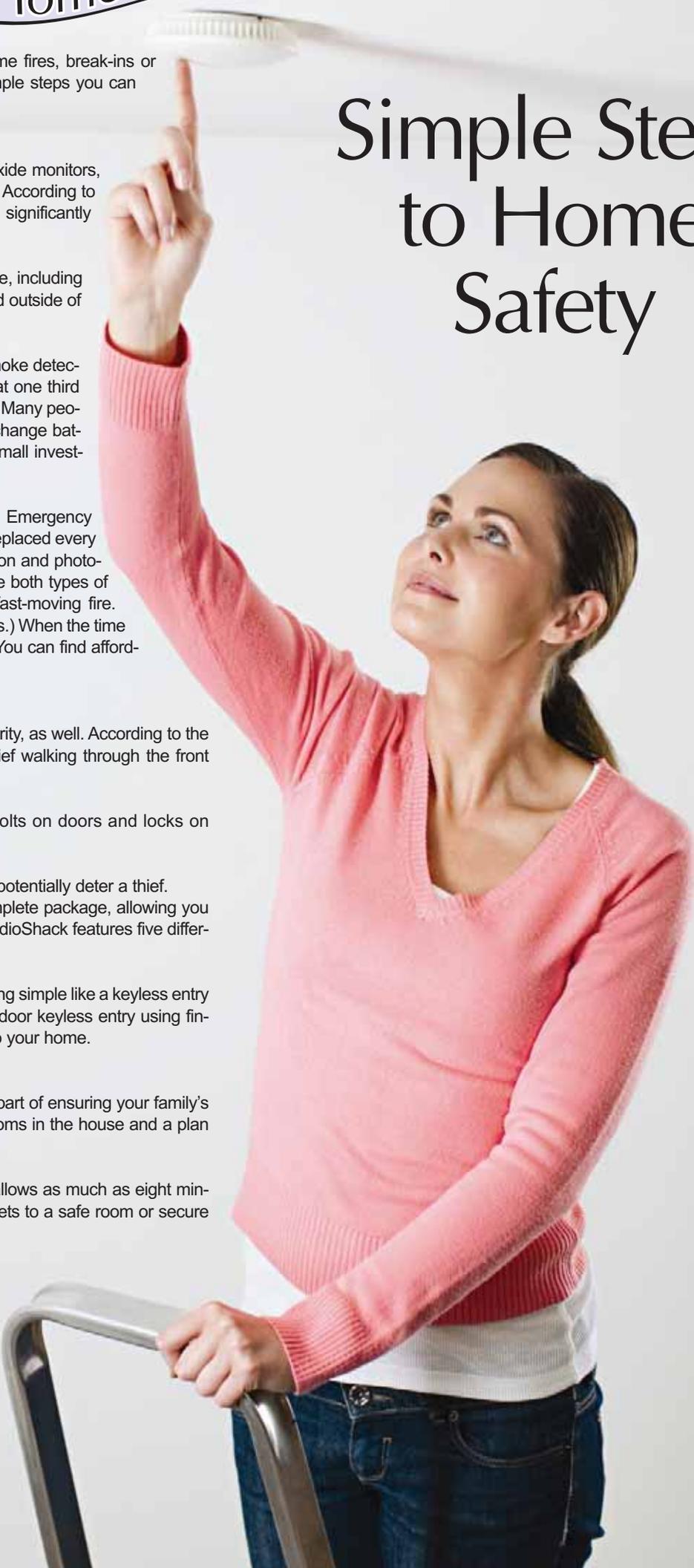


Simple Steps to Home Safety



Keeping your home and family safe is a high priority. If home fires, break-ins or weather-related disasters have you worried, here are some simple steps you can take to make your home a safer place.

Be Forewarned

Every home should have smoke detectors and carbon monoxide monitors, but they require some minor maintenance and don't last forever. According to the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), a working smoke alarm significantly increases your chances of surviving a home fire.

Smoke alarms should be installed on every level of your home, including the basement. The USFA recommends installing them inside and outside of sleeping areas.

Replace your batteries regularly. While having a working smoke detector more than doubles your chance of survival, it's estimated that one third of smoke alarms are not working, often due to worn out batteries. Many people use the time change each spring and fall as a reminder to change batteries. A two-pack of Energell 9V batteries at RadioShack is a small investment to keep your family safe.

Replace old smoke alarms. According to the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years. It is also recommended that homes have both ionization and photoelectric smoke alarms, or dual sensor smoke alarms which have both types of sensors. (Ionization alarms sound more quickly in a flaming, fast-moving fire. Photoelectric alarms are faster at sensing smoldering, smoky fires.) When the time comes to replace your detectors, consider a First Alert product. You can find affordable options with both types of sensors.

Seeking Security?

Taking precautions to protect your home extend to home security, as well. According to the Bureau of Justice, many home burglaries occur simply by a thief walking through the front door.

Protect yourself and your family through the use of deadbolts on doors and locks on windows.

Installing motion-sensor lights on walkways or driveways can potentially deter a thief.

Many home security kits are available in a "do it yourself" complete package, allowing you to customize sirens, entry points and more. A kit like this from RadioShack features five different door sensors and one wireless motion sensor.

If installing an entire security system seems too much, something simple like a keyless entry system provides peace of mind and easy installation. A garage door keyless entry using fingerprint identity ensures that only the right people gain access to your home.

Weather the Storm

Protecting your home from inclement weather is an essential part of ensuring your family's safety. The first step is having a family discussion about safe rooms in the house and a plan in case of dangerous weather.

According to FEMA, a weather radio with NOAA technology allows as much as eight minutes lead time before public alarms sound to move family and pets to a safe room or secure location.

Make sure you have a weather safety kit that contains a flashlight, portable power for your electronics, an emergency radio, walkie talkies, bottled water and dry goods. Let each child choose 1 to 2 items to put in the weather prep toolkit, such as a toy, game or personal item to help keep them occupied and calm in the case you have to take shelter for a long period of time. Additional alkaline batteries are always good to have on hand in case of emergency.

For more information on home safety products and other options to keep your family safe, visit www.radioshack.com.

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