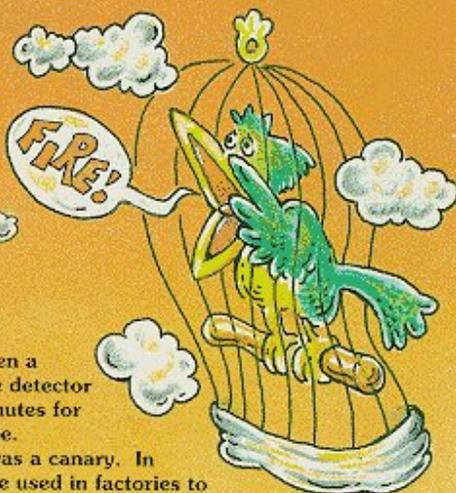


SMOKE DETECTORS



Smoke detectors help save lives because they sound when a fire starts. A working smoke detector can provide almost three minutes for you and your family to escape. The first "smoke detector" was a canary. In the late 1800s, canaries were used in factories to trigger an alarm when they smelled smoke. This alarm alerted workers to get out fast.



The next smoke detector, invented in the 1920s by a merchant marine, pumped air from below the ship's deck into a glass box. The captain knew there was a fire if the smoke turned dark. Later, an alarm bell was added so the crew could be alerted.

Then, in the late 1930s, a doctor from Switzerland discovered electricity couldn't pass through smoky air. So, he invented a system that set off an alarm when the air in a special chamber became smoky.

Eventually, scientists invented smoke detectors to use at home. They combined the idea of seeing the smoke with the idea that electricity could not pass through smoky air. The result is the modern-day smoke detector.

FIRE FACT

The first smoke detectors for homes cost more than \$100. Today, a smoke detector costs between \$6 and \$25.

ACTIVITY

Count the number of smoke detectors in your home. Be sure they are placed on every level and in each sleeping area.

