

My smoke detector keeps chirping and beeping. Why does my smoke alarm chirp intermittently?

It is likely that the reason your smoke detector keeps chirping and beeping is that the battery is low. Whenever your smoke detector keeps chirping, replace the battery immediately.

A different device or appliance such as a security system, monitor, carbon monoxide alarm, or other device which has a similar low battery or alert signal.

Some of the same factors that cause unwanted alarms can cause intermittent alarms: dust and insects in the detector or power interruptions in hard wired detectors.

Improper wiring on AC or AC/DC smoke alarms. AC alarms will chirp every 5 seconds if the interconnect wire is grounded. The orange interconnect wire should NEVER be grounded; it should only be used to interconnect other smoke alarms or compatible devices.

I get a false alarm from my smoke detector. Why does my smoke alarm sound when I can't see smoke?

Any of the following situations can cause a false alarm from your smoke detector:

The cover or sensor chamber may be covered by dust or dirt. Alarms may look clean, but dust can accumulate inside the cover, even in newly built homes. Gently vacuum your smoke alarm regularly using the soft brush attachment.

Insects may have clogged the sensor chamber. Clean the smoke detector with the soft brush attachment on your vacuum. To prevent repeat problems, clean and treat the surrounding area with insect repellent (DO NOT SPRAY THE SMOKE DETECTOR ITSELF).

You may have experienced a power interruption. Hardwired smoke detectors may sound briefly when power is interrupted then restored.

If you have hard wired smoke detectors, you may have a loose electrical connection on your AC or AC/DC smoke alarm. In AC or AC/DC smoke alarms, loose connections can intermittently disconnect power to the smoke alarm. The effect is the same as a power failure. When power is restored, the units may sound briefly.

Why does my smoke detector go off when I install a battery or turn on the AC power?

It is normal for the smoke alarms to go off and sound briefly (up to 5-10 seconds) when you install a new battery or they are powered up. If the alarm continues to go off and no smoke is present, the cause may be:

There may be insufficient battery power. Try another battery.

Problems with voltage or insufficient electrical power (brown out) may cause a continuous weak sounding alarm. For AC or AC/DC models, temporarily disconnect power at the service panel until the brown out is over. If you do not restore the AC power, your smoke alarms cannot warn you of a fire.

Incompatible warning device. If an incompatible alarm or auxiliary device is linked into a series of AC or AC/DC smoke alarms it may cause the system inadvertently go off.

My smoke alarm keeps chirping, even with a new battery. What is causing this?

There are a number of possible causes for your smoke alarm to keep chirping even with a new battery.

It is possible that your smoke detector "silence" button was pushed by mistake. The alarm will now "chirp" once a minute for up to 15 minutes before resetting.

Are you sure it's the smoke alarm funny to ask, but other devices have similar low battery chirps or warning tones.

Even "new" batteries may not be fresh. If batteries are stored, especially in cold areas like refrigerators, they lose their charge more quickly. Always check the freshness date on the package when buying new batteries. Keep plenty of replacement batteries on hand so that you are sure to always be protected by your smoke alarms.

When I am testing my smoke detector, why doesn't my smoke alarm sound when I push the test button ?

It is important that you frequently test your smoke detectors. When you are testing your smoke detector, there are a number of reasons why the alarm might not sound.

You may not be holding the test button down long enough. Try holding it down for up to 10 seconds (20 seconds on photoelectric models.)

Your battery may not be installed properly or snapped all the way in place. Even if the alarm sounded briefly when the battery touched the terminals, you still need to make sure it is snapped securely in place. If the battery is loose, it cannot power the smoke alarm properly. After installing new batteries, be sure to test your smoke detector.

Your AC power may not be on. AC and AC/DC units will have a power indicator light (red or green) that shines continuously when they are receiving electrical power.

If you have a 10-Year model, the smoke alarm may not have been properly activated. If the tab broke away before the alarm was activated, you can use a toothpick to move the switch over to test the alarm.

I'm ready to change my smoke detector battery - what replacement batteries can I use?

Check your User's Manual or the nameplate on the back of the alarm. Different smoke detectors use different kinds of batteries - 9v, AA, AAA - it all depends on the particular model you have. Use quality batteries like lithium smoke detector batteries - having plenty of power is worth any extra cost. Never use rechargeable batteries because they may not always provide a consistent charge.

It is recommended that alarms are replaced after 10 years. Why does the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommend that home smoke alarms be replaced after 10 years?

Smoke alarms have a limited life. Although each smoke alarm and all of its parts have passed many stringent tests and are designed to be as reliable as possible, any of these parts could fail over time. Therefore, you must test the devices weekly. The unit should be replaced immediately if it is not operating properly. The performance of smoke detectors older than 10 years is simply not reliable. To ensure your family's safety, all carbon monoxide and smoke/CO combination alarms need to be replaced every 5 years. All smoke alarms need to be replaced every 10 year.

I have a "remote control smoke detector" - a smoke alarm that states that you can use your TV remote control to silence or test this alarm - that will not operate. What should I do?

If a "remote control smoke detector" does not respond to your remote control, there may be an obstruction between you and the detector. You may be standing too far away, or your remote control may not be compatible. Also, the batteries in your remote control may be drained. Try a different angle or replace the batteries in your remote

How long will the smoke detector battery last in my smoke alarm?

Actual battery service life depends on the particular design of your smoke or carbon monoxide detector and the environment in which it is installed. All kinds of detector batteries specified in the users manual are acceptable replacement batteries. Regardless of the manufacturer's suggested battery life, you **MUST** replace the batteries immediately once the unit starts "chirping" (the "low battery warning").

What is the proper placement of smoke detectors?

It is important that you have the proper placement for your smoke detectors. Install your alarms at least 20 feet from appliances like furnaces and ovens, which produce combustion particles. Alarms should be at least 10 feet from high humidity areas like showers and laundry rooms, and at least 3 feet from heat/AC vents. Be sure to install a smoke detector in each bedroom, and one at the top of each stairwell.

Ionization smoke detectors vs. Photoelectric type smoke detectors - what is the difference?

There are generally two types of smoke detectors - ionization smoke detectors and photoelectric type smoke detectors. Smoke particles of a varying number and size are produced in all fires. Ionization technology smoke detectors are generally more sensitive than photoelectric technology smoke detectors at sensing small particles, which tend to be produced in greater amounts by hot, flaming fires, that are consuming combustible materials rapidly and may spread quickly. Sources of these fires may include paper burning in a wastebasket, or a grease fire in the kitchen. Photoelectric smoke detector technology is generally more sensitive than ionization smoke detector technology at sensing large smoke particles, which tend to be produced in greater amounts by smoldering fires, which may smolder for hours before bursting into flame. Sources of these fires may include cigarettes burning in couches or bedding. For maximum protection, use both types of technology on each level and in every bedroom of your home.