

Deadlocked doors could be a deadly risk

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Firefighters in Albanvale, in Melbourne's north-west, have had to break down the door of an elderly couple after the pair couldn't get out and desperate neighbours trying to help couldn't get in.

Their front door was deadlocked.

Luckily the couple escaped with smoke inhalation but their house was lost.

Lessons to learn

The lesson to be learnt, according to Fire Brigades NSW, if you have to deadlock your door make sure you leave the key in the lock so that you can get to it when you need to in a hurry.

If you can't find the key when trying to leave in a hurry, the next best option is to head for the nearest window and break it to get out. If you live in a unit block, head as further away from the fire as you can and wait for the Fire Brigade.

Safety expert Matt Shuter from AE&D Consulting tells Sunrise that according to the Building Code of Australia deadlocks are not compulsory in residential units. "It is assumed in units that residents will have easy access to their keys - so they are not bound to by the usual requirements, (to be able to open a door at any time without a key)."

"All deadlocks that are included nowadays on fire doors must be self-latching."

But the choice of which lock to buy for your home can be complicated. And the traditional bolt locks are no longer considered safe.

"Deadlocks are available now which allow key operation from the outside but are still able to be opened from the inside without a key."

More info

[AED Consulting](#)

[NSW Fire Brigades](#)

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