

# Fireworks for the 4th? Here's your safety checklist

July 3 2023, by Cara Murez

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It's been said many times, but it deserves repeating: Use caution when

handling fireworks.

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) is repeating the message to try to help people avoid injuries to the fingers, hands, arms and face.

"It may be a tradition to let children and teens oversee [fireworks](#), but parents should always be cautious. Fireworks-related injuries can have long-term and sometimes devastating effects," said orthopedic hand surgeon Dr. Tyler Steven Pidgeon, a spokesman for the AAOS.

"Common fireworks, such as bottle rockets and hand sparklers, may seem tame, but the high temperatures of these devices can result in third-degree burns down to the bone or even loss of limbs."

Fireworks injuries jumped 25% between 2006 and 2021, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Body parts most injured in 2021 were hands and fingers, at 31%, and head, face and ears, at 21%. About 32% of the fireworks-related injuries seen in emergency departments were burns.

To enjoy a safe Fourth, the AAOS recommends taking the following steps:

- Check with your local police department to learn what fireworks are legal in your area and to verify that there is not a burn ban in effect.
- Never buy or use illegal fireworks. Quality cannot be assured.
- Only adults should light fireworks. Do not allow [young children](#) to play with or go near fireworks, including sparklers, which can reach temperatures topping 1,000 degrees.
- Wear safety eyewear when using fireworks.
- Do not use fireworks while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

- Keep a hose or bucket of water close at [hand](#). Soak used fireworks in water before discarding.
- Never try to relight a firework.
- Get immediate medical help if you're injured while using fireworks.

**More information:** The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has [more](#) on fireworks injuries and deaths.

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