

## Challenge 3

People Who Help Us...

# What Does a Firefighter Do?

Firefighters are extraordinary people, who are incredibly brave and strong. Firefighting is a dangerous and demanding job that calls for total teamwork: it can take several people just to hold a powerful fire hose working at full pressure.

### Vehicles used by the fire service:

The fire service use several different vehicles to respond to emergency calls. The fire engines are most commonly seen in emergencies. The engine can hold 1800 litres of water and carries rescue equipment to help those in trouble. Other vehicles include a motorbike that can easily reach emergencies quickly and a water response unit, which is a boat that can be deployed to reach people trapped in flooding. These amazing vehicles support the firefighters when carrying out their important jobs.



### What roles and responsibilities do firefighters have?

The main duties of a full-time firefighter are to help protect the public in emergency situations. They respond to a wide variety of calls, such as car accidents, chemical spills, flooding, water rescues and general rescues as well as fires.

### Where do they work?

Firefighters are based at a fire station. At the moment there are around 63 fire stations around the U.K. In-between alarms, firefighters must clean and repair their equipment. They practise firefighting skills, and they may perform fire inspections. Firefighting is a strenuous job, so they must exercise to keep fit. Firefighters need to be

able to lift people from a building if they are in danger.

### **What do firefighters wear?**

Firefighting is dangerous work. During a fire, floors can cave in and walls can topple. Flames and smoke can burn or seriously injure people. Firefighters may come in to contact with poisonous gases or other hazardous materials. To protect themselves, firefighters wear protective clothes that can be heavy and hot. The clothes are non-flammable, which means that they are fire-resistant. Firefighters wear a hard helmet which protects their head from falling objects and steel-reinforced boots so that their feet are safe from injury.

### **How do you become a firefighter?**

The Fire and Rescue Service requires hardworking and determined individuals. To become a firefighter, you need to pass strict medical and physical tests. You also need to take a written theory test. New firefighters are also encouraged to volunteer at their local fire station in order to gain some experience in the profession. Even when you are fully qualified, firefighters are always being trained in new firefighting techniques to ensure that they are ready for anything.



# What Does a Firefighter Do? **Questions**

Answer the questions below in full sentences.

1. How much water does a fire engine hold?

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2. Name two vehicles that the fire service use?

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3. How many fire brigades are there in the U.K?

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4. Name three different emergencies that the fire service may be called to.

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5. What do firefighters do whilst they are waiting for an emergency?

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6. Name two things that might be uncomfortable about their uniform.

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7. What does the word 'non-flammable' mean?

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8. What would be the hardest part of being a firefighter?  
Explain your answer.

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