

Using the bottle

- Do NOT place in direct contact with your skin. Use a hot water bottle cover at all times to prevent direct contact with your skin (a cover will also keep your hot water bottle warm for longer.)
- Do NOT leave hot water bottles with unsupervised children.
- Do NOT put pressure or weight on the bottle, it's not designed for you to sit or lie on it.
- Do NOT use a hot water bottle in a bed when using an electric blanket.

Storing the bottle

- Empty the bottle and hang it upside-down to drain. Make sure it's totally dry before storing it.
- Store the bottle with the stopper removed.
- Store it in a cool, dry, dark place.
- Either hang it upside down or lie it flat to store it.
- Do NOT place anything on top of the bottle while it's being stored.



For more seasonal information on staying safe and well, see our leaflet

Stay Safe and Well this Winter



www.strettonclimatecare.org.uk

info@strettonclimatecare.org.uk



Hot Water Bottle Safety

When winter comes it's time for your hot water bottle to do what it does best: keep you warm and cosy. The following information is copied and adapted from



<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/hot-water-bottle/> and

<https://www.keepwarmandcosy.com/post/are-hot-water-bottles-safe>

How long should a hot water bottle last?

Most hot water bottles are made out of rubber (some are made from polyvinyl chloride, commonly called PVC), and rubber does degrade over time and with usage. The recommended longevity of hot water bottles isn't explicitly outlined in the British Standard (BS1970:2012) that manufacturers must meet to legally sell hot water bottles in the UK. The manufacturers recommendation, for safety reasons, is to replace your hot water bottle every two to three years. However, it's likely that manufacturers are erring on the side of caution in calling for an early replacement in order to minimise the chances of someone using a potentially dangerous bottle and it causing burns.

(According to an Australian study on hot water bottle safety, out of over 100 hospital admissions where burns from a hot water bottle were listed as the cause, over 80% were because the bottle had burst, split, or leaked.) That's not to say a bottle less than two years old has no chance of splitting or leaking, or that any bottle more than two years old will definitely be dangerous. Older hot water bottles may continue to be safely used - much depends on how often you use it, and how you store it. It's important to check your hot water bottle is safe (see over).



Every hot water bottle sold in the UK should have a 'flower wheel' on or near the funnel which shows the date it was made...

The number in the centre of the wheel shows you what year it was made. For example, if it says 18, it was made in 2018.

There are also 12 segments around the centre of the wheel. Usually, the number of these segments that have dots in show you what month it was made. So, if there are dots in six sections, the bottle was made in June.

There may be others with dots just in one segment. For example, if there are dots in the third segment from the top, going clockwise, it was made in March.

The number of dots in the final (or only) filled section shows which week of that month the bottle was made. So, three dots means the third week of the month.

Filling the bottle

- Check for leaks. It is recommended that you always check your hot water bottle is in good condition before use. Perform a test by filling your hot water bottle with cold water above your sink. Gently squeeze it to check for potential leaks or cracks, and also when emptying there are no signs of bits in the water which may indicate the rubber is disintegrating.
- NEVER fill with boiling water. Using boiling water can cause damage and lead to the bottle bursting.
- Do NOT use the microwave or oven to heat the hot water bottle.
- Don't fill more than two-thirds full.
- Fill the bottle over the sink - Pour water into the bottle carefully to avoid spills.
- Squeeze as much air as you can out of the bottle before stoppering it, BUT take great care to avoid hot water spurting out. If there's air left in the bottle, the water can heat the air, meaning it expands, which may burst the bottle.
- Screw in the stopper firmly. Hang your hot water bottle upside down above your sink after filling it to check no water is coming out.

Essential tips for safe use

