

# ARP Wardens

## The Second World War started in 1939 and ended in 1945.

Everyone had to do their bit to help the country during wartime and there were lots of different ways to do that.

One way was to join the Air Raid Precautions (ARP) as a warden. An ARP Warden's main task was to try and protect people during air raids, when enemy planes dropped bombs, especially on cities. They would hand out gas masks and guide people to shelters. After an air raid wardens might have to give First Aid assistance or help to put out fires. ARPs would also patrol towns and make sure that people blocked the light coming from their homes during the blackout.

Keep reading to find out more about the duties of an ARP Warden and discover if you have the skills needed to be a wartime warden in your area

## Additional resources

Watch our **ARP Warden** video on the Royal Armouries YouTube channel.

You can also watch another video about how people contributed to the war effort during the Second World War. Would you have been brave enough to join the **Special Operations Executive (SOE)**?



# Fascinating Facts

## The Heinkel

This picture shows a German aeroplane, a Heinkel, just like the ones that would fly over Britain dropping bombs during an air raid. This one has a bumper device to stop it from becoming tangled in the metal cables that tethered the barrage balloons to the ground. These huge balloons were raised high into the sky to try and stop enemy planes getting close to their bombing targets.

To stop planes like this spotting where British cities were at night, all homes were ordered to comply with the 'blackout'. No beams from things like car headlights, street lamps and windows could be allowed to escape and attract the bombers. To stop the light leaking from their homes people became very creative in covering their windows and used everything from heavy curtains, planks of wood to black paint.



## After the air raid

The ARP warden would often be the first person out and about after an air raid, checking that everyone was safe. However if a bomb had exploded in the area the ARPs would be there to help get trapped people out of the rubble of buildings, give First Aid assistance to the injured, and fight fires using both water and sand

## Air Raid Shelters



During an air raid, everyone was told to get to a shelter for protection. There were lots of different types of shelters, including Morrison shelters, which looked like a large metal cage and were used inside homes. The image shows a Morrison shelter with a dummy inside to show how big they were, but it would still be very cramped if your entire family were squashed inside.

People also built Anderson shelters, which were like little metal sheds, half buried in the ground in the garden.

Lots of people used public shelters, which were deeper underground for more protection, like the London Underground stations.

# Activities page

## Put that light out!

**Have a go at getting your house ready for a blackout. You could use curtains, blinds, blankets or cardboard.**

Did you manage to stop the light escaping? Imagine having to do this every single evening throughout the war, with the added worry that if you did not do it right the German bombers might find your home.

## Stock your shelter

**Imagine you have an Anderson shelter in your garden.**

If there is an air raid you might need to spend the whole night in the shelter. There would be no warning, so you would need to be prepared and have it stocked with supplies at all times. Write a list of things you would keep inside the shelter in case of emergency.



## Trust me I'm ARP

Write a set of instructions for your family to follow in case of an air raid.

Think about what your family might need to take with them. Where is the shelter? How will they get there? What should they do there?

### In the event of an air raid you must...

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## Keep in touch

We would love to read your list of supplies for your Anderson shelter.  
Please email them to [educate.leeds@armouries.org.uk](mailto:educate.leeds@armouries.org.uk)