

TAKE SHELTER AT HOME

Anderson shelters – named after Sir John Anderson – consisted of two curved corrugated sheets of steel, bolted together at the top and sunk three feet into the ground, then covered with eighteen inches of earth. If constructed correctly, they could withstand the effects of a hundred-pound bomb falling six feet away. However, many Anderson shelters leaked, were cold, dark and cramped and amplified the noise of falling bombs.



IF OUTSIDE, FIND A COMMUNAL SHELTER

The government initially tried to prevent London Underground stations being used as air raid shelters, fearing the development of a 'deep shelter mentality' and the potential disruption of the capital's transport network. However, Londoners persisted in using the Tube and eventually the government had to reconsider. Aldwych station was closed and converted into a permanent shelter. Improvements such as bunks, better lighting, washing and toilet facilities were made at other stations.

SHELTER AT HOME (EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE A GARDEN)

Morrison shelters – named after the Home Secretary Herbert Morrison – were produced from January 1941. They consisted of a rectangular steel and mesh cage which could accommodate two adults and two children. The Morrison was intended for use indoors so was suitable for those without gardens. Though more popular than Anderson shelters, they were less effective as they provided no lateral protection. They could also be used as a dining table during daytime.



BE PREPARED FOR A GAS ATTACK

Air raid wardens were equipped with gas rattles and whistles to alert the public to a gas attack. Post boxes and lamp posts were painted with a substance which would reveal the presence of gas and identification and decontamination squads were set up. The public could attend lectures on the different types of gases that might be used and were advised to fill gaps in their windows and doors to prevent gas seeping in.