

# Air-Raid Shelters

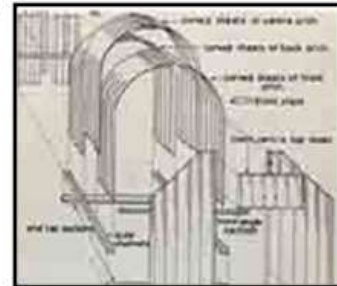


## Anderson Shelters – A First-Hand Account.

This account comes from an eye witness

"During the war air-raid shelters were issued by the Government to each family. They were to be used when air-raids were on and were called "Anderson Shelters."

They were made from corrugated iron and consisted of six half arch-shapes which were then fixed together with three on each side to form a tunnel. It then had a back and front attached. The front had a door in it."



"They were put in the garden so a large hole had to be dug. The sides stood with about half of it below ground level and the rest sticking up above the surface. There were steps inside which led down to the bottom. Sandbags were placed all around the outside."



Earth was heaped on top to protect them from bomb blasts.

By September 1939 one and a half million Anderson shelters had been put up in gardens.

People tried to make the shelters as cosy as possible. There were wooden benches to sleep on and they had a light, cushions, blankets, food, books and mats. Some even had a small cooking stove.



Anderson shelters were given free to poor people. Men who earned more than £5 a week could buy one for £7.



This shape was safer than if it had a flat roof because it could not collapse in the same way.

The eye witness also described all about other forms of shelters.

"A cellar under a house was also a safe place to shelter because it was below ground. In those days most houses had a cellar. It was reached by going into the pantry and down about ten steps.

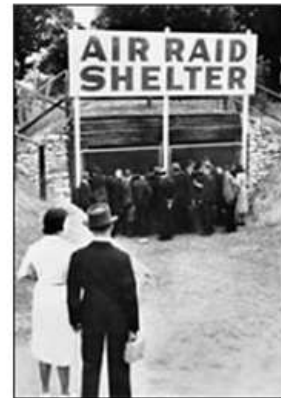
Cellars were cold and damp. They were used to keep food cool. Coal was also stored there. It was tipped into the cellar down a chute.

You were safe down a cellar if a house was demolished in a bomb blast because you could be dug out."



"At schools, factories and offices, the basements were turned into shelters." Caves were used in many parts of Britain.

"In towns and cities large brick built shelters were built. They were surrounded by sand bags. If you were in town when an air-raid sounded you had to go there. "



"In London, underground stations and tunnels were used by thousands who slept there whenever London was being bombed. These were ideal because they were deep underground."

On the busiest night in 1940, 177,000 people slept on platforms. Many bought sandwiches, thermos flasks, pillows and blankets.





## Morrison Shelters



The Morrison shelter was introduced in March 1941, for people without gardens. The shelter, made from heavy steel, could also be used as a table. People sheltered underneath it during a raid. The Morrison shelter was named after the Minister for Home Security, Mr. Herbert Morrison.

Could you make your own shelter in your house? What would you use? Where would it be?