

# Firefighters from the past.



# History

Today, we are lucky to have a fire service as part of our emergency services.

If there is a fire, we can call 999 and the fire service will come to put it out. Sometimes, they help rescue animals or people stuck in cars.



We are very lucky to have our fire service but we didn't always have these everyday heroes. A long time ago, there were no firefighters.

# The Great Fire of London

Over 350 years ago, there was a fire in London. It started in a baker's shop on Pudding Lane on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1666.

All of the houses and shops were made from wood and they were built very close together. This meant that the fire spread quickly.



You will learn more about the Great Fire of London in Year 2



Paintings showing the great fire of London.



# The Great Fire of London

There was no fire service so lots of people tried to put the fire out.

They only had leather buckets, which they filled with water, axes, fire hooks and squirters.

Leather buckets had to be passed from person to person in a long chain to get the water from the river to the burning buildings.



# Uniforms and Equipment

## 1666 – The Great Fire of London

### Uniform

- no uniform
- no fire service

### Equipment

- leather buckets
- axes
- squirters
- fire hooks



# The Earliest Fire Service

After the Great Fire of London, people wanted to make sure that there would never be a fire like this again. New buildings were made from bricks so they wouldn't burn so quickly and the streets were widened.

One year after the Great Fire of London, the first fire service was set up. They would go to a fire and put it out if people needed them. This fire service didn't put every fire out, though. Instead, they only went to the homes of people who had paid them money to look after (insure) their house. The fire brigades put a 'fire mark' on each house that had paid to be looked after (insured).



# Uniforms and Equipment

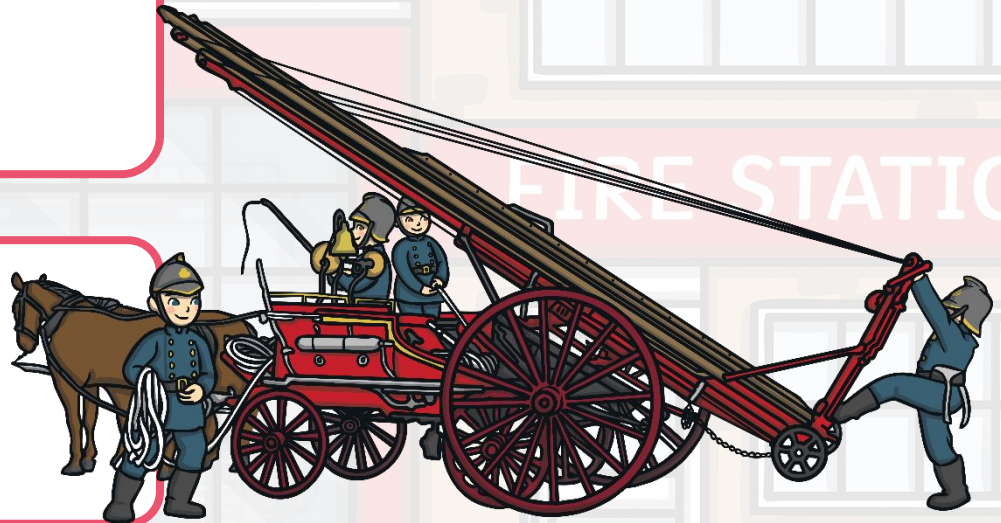
1866

## Uniform

- blue double-breasted tunic, made from wool
- woollen trousers
- brass helmets

## Equipment

- an axe and a hose spanner
- fire trailers that were pulled by horses



# Uniforms and Equipment

1974

## Uniform

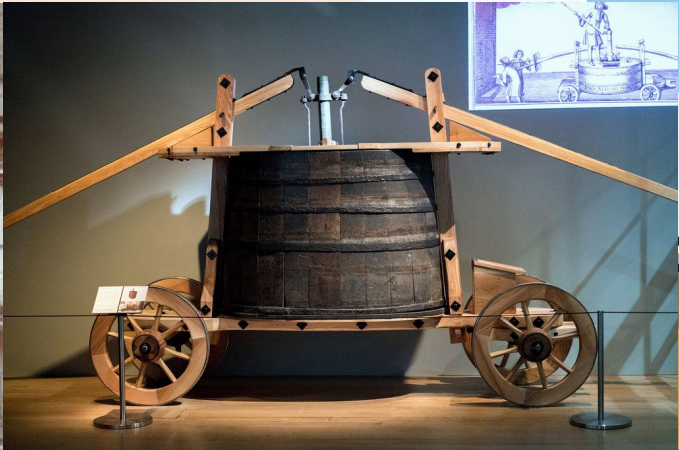
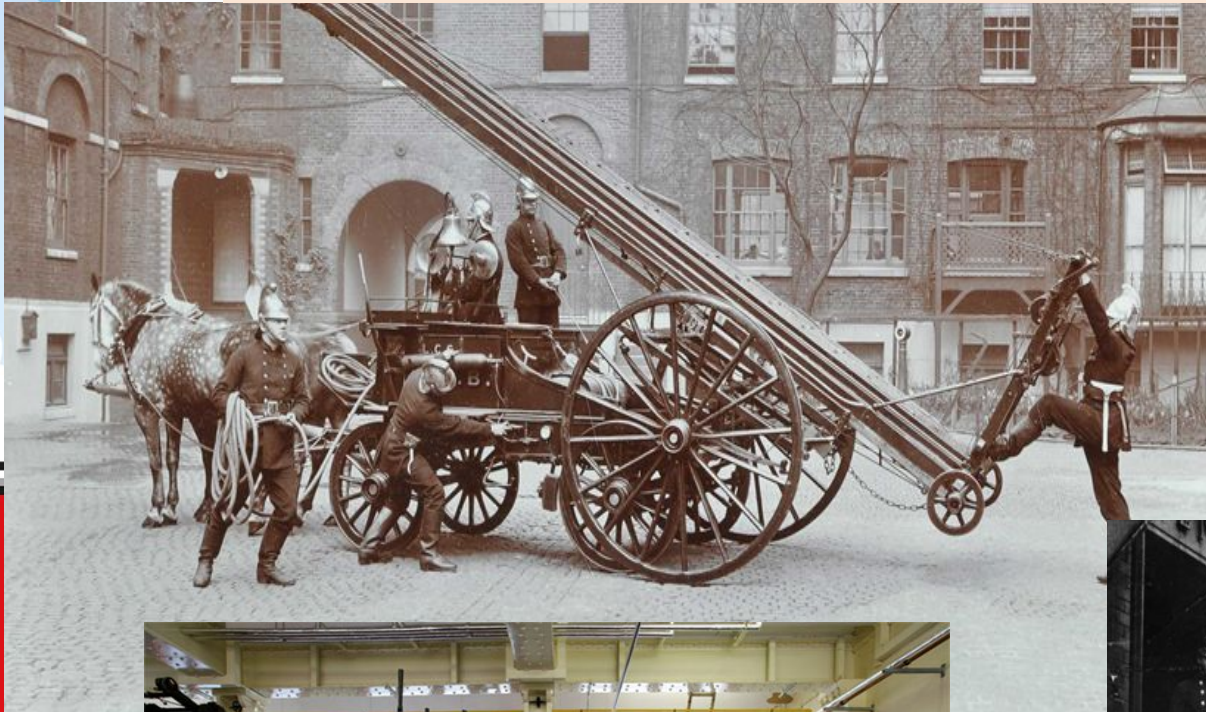
- woollen tunic
- yellow rubber leggings, keeping firefighters safer and making them visible

## Equipment

- trailer pumps towed by taxis



The fire engines and the equipment that the firefighters used in the past were very different to the equipment we use today.



# Female Firefighter



In 1939, the UK was involved in the Second World War. Many young men had joined the British army to fight in the war. This meant that there were not enough men to join the fire service.

During the Second World War, women were allowed to join. They were only allowed to be fire watchers (people who look out for fires), drivers and to manage the communication systems.

Women were finally allowed to join the fire service around 40 years ago. The first woman to join the fire service was called Josephine Reynolds and she joined in 1982.

