

Anderson Shelter

What is an Anderson Shelter?

The Anderson shelter was an air raid shelter designed to accommodate up to six people. It was designed in 1938 by William Paterson and Oscar Carl (Karl) Kerrison in response to a request from the Home Office.

The Anderson shelter was named after Sir John Anderson, who was Lord Privy Seal with the responsibility of preparing air-raid precautions immediately prior to the outbreak of World War II.

Interesting Facts About Anderson Shelter:

Below are some interesting facts and information on this very important air raid shelter.

- ~ In 1938 the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain placed Sir John Anderson in charge of air raid precautions. Anderson worked with an engineer called William Patterson to design and build a small, inexpensive air raid shelter that people could build in their garden.
 - ~ The first Anderson shelter was built in 1939. It was built in a garden in Islington, London on February 25, 1939.
 - ~ Over 1.5 million Anderson shelters were given out before the start of WW2. They were distributed between February 1939 and the start of the Second World War that September. The shelters were given to people in areas that were at risk of being bombed by the Germans.
 - ~ Over the course of World War 2, another 2.1 million Anderson shelters were built in gardens around the country. Anderson shelters were free for people who earned less than £250 per year. For those with a higher income, they could be bought for £7.
 - ~ The shelters were very easy to build. Anderson shelters were made from six corrugated steel panels that were curved and bolted together at the top.
 - ~ The Anderson shelters were buried up to a meter in the ground. They would also have a thick layer of soil and turf on top to keep them secure.
 - ~ Shelters could hold up to six people and were incredibly strong. The corrugated sheets made them extra strong against compressive force and was perfect for protecting from nearby bomb explosions.
 - ~ You had to assemble your own shelter. Families who received an Anderson shelter got the materials and an instruction guide to put it together themselves.
 - ~ Many Anderson shelters are still in use today. A lot of people dug up the old shelters when the war ended to use them as garden sheds.
 - ~ A lot of Anderson shelters were decorated by their owners. This could include growing flowers or vegetables on the roof.
- UK bombings on German cities killed about 500,000 people but because of Anderson shelters German bombs killed 90% less — around 50,000. This shows just how effective the Anderson shelters were.
- ~ Only 27% of people in London used Anderson shelters according to a 1940 survey. 9% slept in public shelters and 4% slept in underground railway stations. 60% of people were on duty at night or just slept in their own homes.



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