

# Sabrina Cohen-Hatton



## Sabrina Cohen-Hatton's Childhood

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton was born in Newport in South Wales in 1983. Her life was hard when she was a teenager. She became homeless when she was 15 years old and she did not have any family to support her. She sold magazines to help her to make money to buy food and to rent a flat.



## Sabrina Cohen-Hatton's Career



Sabrina Cohen-Hatton applied to join the fire service when she was 18 years old. She was the first female firefighter to work at her station.



Sabrina Cohen-Hatton now works as the Chief Fire Officer of the West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service. This means that she has to make sure that all of the firefighters who work with her stay safe and that they help as many people as they can in the best way possible. Cohen-Hatton loves her job and she wants to do the best that she can every day. She has written a book all about her job and what it is like to be a firefighter.



## Sabrina Cohen-Hatton's Studies

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton started to go to university at the same time as she was working as a firefighter. She would fight fires in the daytime and read books at night.

Cohen-Hatton was interested in how firefighters make important choices in difficult situations and she wanted to learn more about how she could help her fellow firefighters to make fewer mistakes when fighting fires.

She attached cameras to the helmets of commanders who were attending fires and then she watched the videos that had been recorded so that she could try to understand how they make choices.

After doing this, Cohen-Hatton came up with three important questions that all firefighter commanders now ask themselves when they are making difficult choices:

1. What is the goal?
2. What do I expect to happen?
3. Are there more good things that will happen if I act or more bad things?

This is called the 'decision control process'.

Cohen-Hatton has won many awards for her research and she has worked with fire services around the world.



Disclaimer: We hope you find the information and resources on our website useful. Please be aware that aspects of an individual's life may be controversial to some. Due to this, we highly recommend that you carefully research the individual before teaching about them to children. If your children do independent research about an individual, we advise using only pre-selected, child-appropriate sources of information and websites appropriate to their age. All facts and statistics correct as of April 2024.

# Questions

1. Which of these statements is true? Tick one.

- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton's first role in the fire service was as a Chief Fire Officer.
- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton went to university before becoming a firefighter.
- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton has written a magazine about her life as a teenager.
- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton was the first female firefighter to work at her station.

2. Number the events from 1–4 to show the order in which they happened.

- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton began to study how firefighters make important choices.
- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton came up with three important questions.
- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton watched the videos that had been recorded.
- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton attached cameras to the helmets of commanders.

3. How old was Sabrina Cohen-Hatton when she joined the fire service? Tick one.

- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18

4. Draw **three** lines and match each sub-heading to one fact from that section.

**Sabrina Cohen-Hatton's  
Childhood**

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton now works as the  
Chief Fire Officer of the West Sussex Fire  
and Rescue Service.

**Sabrina Cohen-Hatton's  
Career**

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton attached cameras  
to the helmets of commanders who were  
attending fires.

**Sabrina Cohen-Hatton's  
Studies**

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton was born in  
Newport in South Wales in 1983.

5. Fill in the missing words.

She would fight \_\_\_\_\_ in the daytime and read \_\_\_\_\_ at night.

6. What is the third of the three important questions that Sabrina Cohen-Hatton came up with?

---

7. Write an adjective that you would use to describe Sabrina Cohen-Hatton and use evidence from the text to explain your answer.

---

---

---

# Answers

1. Which of these statements is true? Tick one.

- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton's first role in the fire service was as a Chief Fire Officer.
- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton went to university before becoming a firefighter.
- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton has written a magazine about her life as a teenager.
- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton was the first female firefighter to work at her station.**

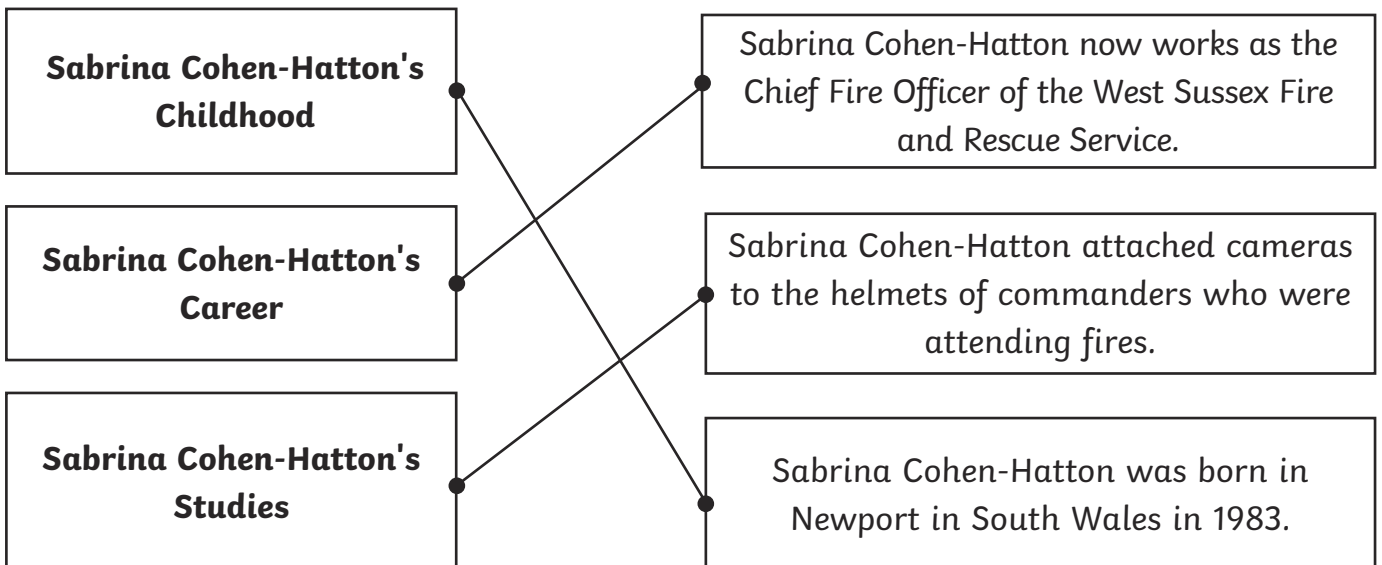
2. Number the events from 1–4 to show the order in which they happened.

- 1** Sabrina Cohen-Hatton began to study how firefighters make important choices.
- 4** Sabrina Cohen-Hatton came up with three important questions.
- 3** Sabrina Cohen-Hatton watched the videos that had been recorded.
- 2** Sabrina Cohen-Hatton attached cameras to the helmets of commanders.

3. How old was Sabrina when she joined the fire service? Tick one.

- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18**

4. Draw **three** lines and match each sub-heading to one fact from that section.



5. Fill in the missing words.

She would fight **fires** in the daytime and read **books** at night.

6. What is the third of the three important questions that Sabrina Cohen-Hatton came up with?

**The third of the three important questions that Sabrina Cohen-Hatton came up with is 'Are there more good things that will happen if I act or more bad things?'**

7. Write an adjective that you would use to describe Sabrina Cohen-Hatton and use evidence from the text to explain your answer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I would use the adjective 'hard-working' to describe Sabrina Cohen-Hatton because because the text says that she went to university at the same time as she was working as a firefighter and that must not have been easy to do.**

# Sabrina Cohen-Hatton



## Childhood

Sabrina Rachel Cohen-Hatton was born in 1983 in Newport, South Wales. Her life was difficult during her teenage years. She was made homeless at the age of 15 and she had no family to support her. She slept on the streets and in abandoned buildings. She sold magazines outside for up to 12 hours per day so that she could begin to save money towards renting a flat. Despite this, Sabrina Cohen-Hatton still attended school and she achieved excellent grades in her exams.

## Becoming a Firefighter

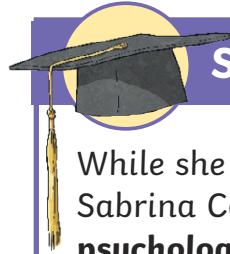


Sabrina Cohen-Hatton applied to join the fire service when she was 18 years old and she became the first female firefighter at her local station. However, she remembers that it was not easy and that she experienced a lot of **discrimination** because of her gender.



Cohen-Hatton now works as a Chief Fire Officer. This means that she is responsible for being in charge at serious incidents and she makes the choices that keep many other people safe. As part of her work, she tries to inspire other girls to become firefighters.

## Sabrina's Studies



While she was working as a firefighter, Sabrina Cohen-Hatton started to study **psychology** in her spare time. She was so interested in the subject that she completed a PhD at Cardiff University.

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton learnt a lot about how firefighters make urgent and important choices in difficult situations. She attached cameras to the helmets of commanders who were attending fires and she watched the videos that had been recorded so that she could try to understand how they make choices.

Cohen-Hatton used the information that she learnt to set up a new way of working called the 'decision control process'. When it was put in place, the system that she created made commanders up to five times more aware of what they were dealing with at the scene of the fire. This hugely reduced the number of errors that commanders made and Cohen-Hatton has won many awards for her research.

## Decision Control Process

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton came up with three important questions that all firefighter commanders now ask themselves when they are making difficult choices. She called this the 'decision control process'. The questions are:

1. What is the goal?
2. What do I expect to happen?
3. Are the benefits of my action greater than the risks?

## Glossary

**discrimination:** The unjust or unfair treatment of people usually because of their ethnicity, age, sex, gender or disability.

**psychology:** The study of the human mind and how people think and behave.



Disclaimer: We hope you find the information and resources on our website useful. Please be aware that aspects of an individual's life may be controversial to some. Due to this, we highly recommend that you carefully research the individual before teaching about them to children. If your children do independent research about an individual, we advise using only pre-selected, child-appropriate sources of information and websites appropriate to their age. All facts and statistics correct as of April 2024.

# Questions

1. **As part of her work, she tries to inspire other girls to become firefighters.**

Why do you think that Sabrina Cohen-Hatton does this? Tick one.

- because there are too many female firefighters
- because there are too few female firefighters in the service
- because girls are not allowed to become firefighters
- because Sabrina Cohen-Hatton wants to teach them all herself

2. Draw **four** lines and match each sub-heading to the section synopsis.

**Childhood**

This section is about how Sabrina Cohen-Hatton started to work in the fire service.

**Becoming a Firefighter**

This section is about what Sabrina Cohen-Hatton has learnt by studying psychology.

**Sabrina  
Cohen-Hatton's Studies**

This section is about what life was like for Sabrina Cohen-Hatton when she was growing up.

**Decision Control Process**

This section is about the questions that Sabrina Cohen-Hatton came up with.

3. **She attached cameras to the helmets of commanders who were attending fires...**

Why do you think that this was a helpful thing for Sabrina Cohen-Hatton to do? Tick one.

- because she liked watching videos about firefighting
- because it helped her to see what was really happening
- because the videos were too scary for people to see
- because the commanders took too many photographs

4. What is the '**decision control process**'? Tick one.

- a set of questions for commanders to ask themselves
- a way of watching videos collected by commanders
- a foolproof way of putting out all fires
- a way of studying psychology at university

5. Look at the section called **Decision Control Process**.  
Find and copy one word that means the same as 'advantages'.

---

6. Why did Sabrina Cohen-Hatton sell magazines?

---

7. Summarise why it was not easy for Sabrina Cohen-Hatton to become the first female firefighter at her local station.

---

---

---

8. If you could ask Sabrina Cohen-Hatton one question, what would you ask her and why?

---

---

---

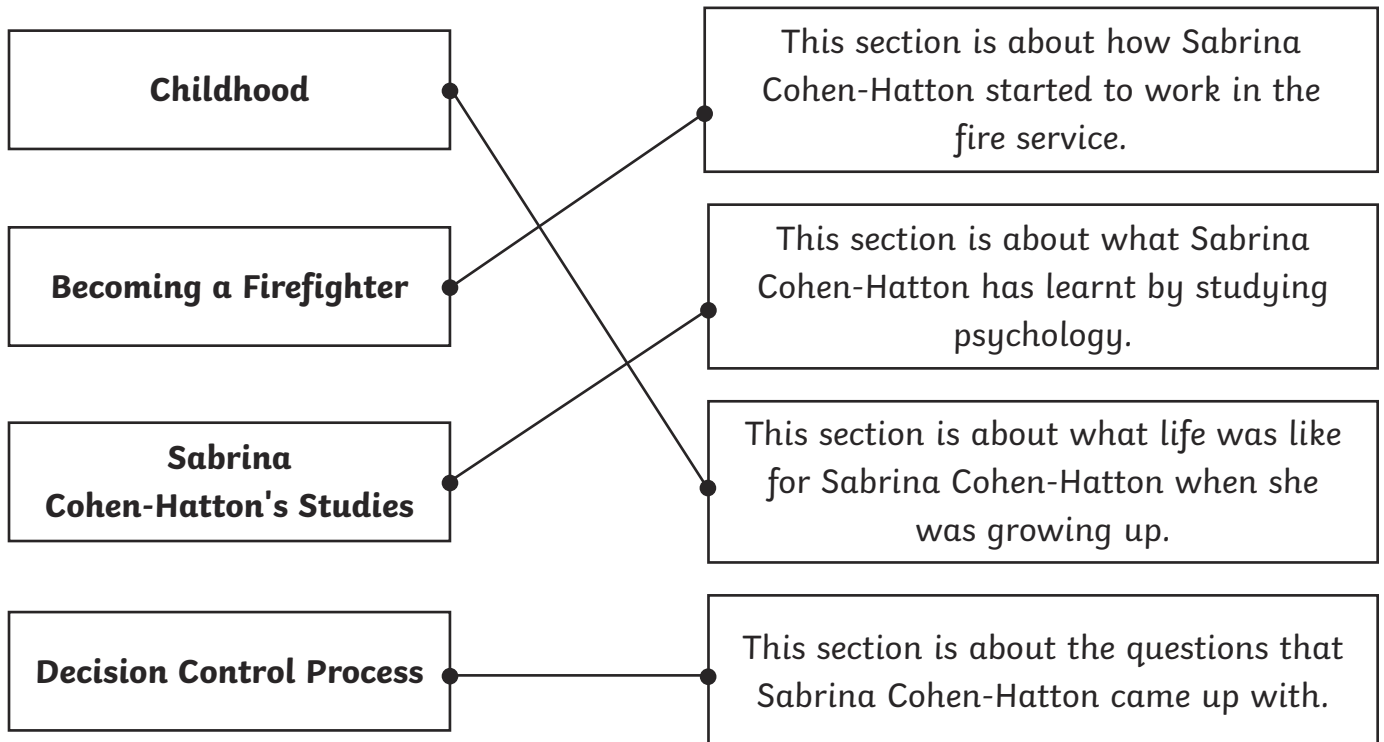
# Answers

1. **As part of her work, Sabrina Cohen-Hatton tries to inspire other girls to become firefighters.**

Why do you think that Sabrina Cohen-Hatton does this? Tick one.

- because there are too many female firefighters  
 **because there are too few female firefighters in the service**  
 because girls are not allowed to become firefighters  
 because Sabrina Cohen-Hatton wants to teach them all herself

2. Draw **four** lines and match each sub-heading to the section synopsis.



3. **She attached cameras to the helmets of commanders who were attending fires...**

Why do you think that this was a helpful thing for Sabrina Cohen-Hatton to do? Tick one.

- because she liked watching videos about firefighting  
 **because it helped her to see what was really happening**  
 because the videos were too scary for people to see  
 because the commanders took too many photographs

4. What is the '**decision control process**'? Tick one.

- a set of questions for commanders to ask themselves**  
 a way of watching videos collected by commanders  
 a foolproof way of putting out all fires  
 a way of studying psychology at university

5. Look at the section called **Decision Control Process**.

Find and copy one word that means the same as 'advantages'.

**benefits**

6. Why did Sabrina Cohen-Hatton sell magazines?

**Sabrina Cohen-Hatton sold magazines outside for up to 12 hours per day so that she could begin to save money towards renting a flat.**

7. Summarise why it was not easy for Sabrina Cohen-Hatton to become the first female firefighter at her local station.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: It was not easy for Sabrina Cohen-Hatton to become the first female firefighter at her local station because she experienced discrimination because of her gender.**

8. If you could ask Sabrina Cohen-Hatton one question, what would you ask her and why?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I would ask Sabrina Cohen-Hatton 'How did you manage to study psychology at the same time as working as a firefighter?' because that seems like a lot to fit in at once and I'd like to see if she has any tips for doing lots of things at the same time.**

# Sabrina Cohen-Hatton



## Early Life

Sabrina Rachel Cohen-Hatton was born in 1983 in Newport, South Wales. She experienced very unsettled teenage years. She was made homeless at the age of 15 and she had no family to support her. She slept either on the streets or in abandoned buildings and she sold magazines outside for up to 12 hours per day so that she could begin to save money towards renting a flat. Despite this, she still attended school and she achieved excellent grades in her GCSEs.

## Becoming a Firefighter



Sabrina Cohen-Hatton applied to join the fire service when she was 18 years old and she became the first female firefighter at her local station. However, she reports that it was not easy being the first female to hold the position. She remembers experiencing a lot of discrimination because of her gender.



Cohen-Hatton has now worked her way through every **rank** in the fire service. She currently works as a Chief Fire Officer, which means that she is responsible for managing serious incidents and she makes the decisions that keep many other people safe. As part of her work, she tries to inspire other girls to become firefighters.



## Lifelong Learning

While she was working as a firefighter, Sabrina Cohen-Hatton completed a bachelor's degree in **psychology** in her spare time. She was so interested in the subject that she continued her studies by completing a PhD at Cardiff University.

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton was fascinated by how firefighters make urgent and important decisions in difficult circumstances. She conducted a study in which she attached cameras to the helmets of commanders who were attending fires. She watched the videos that had been recorded so that she could try to understand how they make choices.

By doing this, she found out that the **guidance** that firefighters were working with was not suitable for the way that they actually make decisions. She used this information to set up a new way of working called the 'decision control process'. When it was put in place, the system that Cohen-Hatton created made commanders up to five times more aware of what they were dealing with at the scene of the fire. This hugely reduced the number of errors that commanders made and she has won many awards for her research.

## Decision Control Process

The decision control process that Sabrina Cohen-Hatton created is based on three important questions:

1. What is my goal?
2. What do I expect to happen?
3. Are the benefits of my action greater than the risks?

In 2015, the decision control process was included in national guidelines for the United Kingdom. Since then, Cohen-Hatton has worked with fire commanders around the world to reduce human error and increase firefighter safety.

## Glossary

**guidance:** Advice or information given to someone, usually to help them to solve a problem.

**psychology:** The study of the human mind and how people think and behave.

**rank:** A position within an organisation that holds a certain level of responsibility or status.



Disclaimer: We hope you find the information and resources on our website useful. Please be aware that aspects of an individual's life may be controversial to some. Due to this, we highly recommend that you carefully research the individual before teaching about them to children. If your children do independent research about an individual, we advise using only pre-selected, child-appropriate sources of information and websites appropriate to their age. All facts and statistics correct as of April 2024.

# Questions

1. **However, she reports that it was not easy being the first female to hold the position.**

How else could the author have written this sentence? Tick one.

- It was untrue that Sabrina Cohen-Hatton was the first female firefighter.
- It was likely that Sabrina Cohen-Hatton found the job easy.
- It was difficult for Sabrina Cohen-Hatton to be the first female firefighter.
- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton had to hold many objects while at work.

2. Number the achievements from 1–4 in the order that they happened in Sabrina Cohen-Hatton's life.

- She achieved excellent grades in her GCSEs.
- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton has worked with fire commanders around the world.
- She conducted a study in which she attached cameras to the helmets of commanders.
- She became the first female firefighter at her local station.

3. Fill in the missing words.

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton has now worked her way through every \_\_\_\_\_ in the fire \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Look at the section **Early Life**.

Find and copy one word that means the same as 'deserted'.

---

5. In which section can the reader find information about the beginning of Sabrina Cohen-Hatton's career?

---

6. Predict what you think Sabrina Cohen-Hatton will do over the next 10 years.

---

---

---

7. Using the information in the section **Becoming a Firefighter**, comment on how Sabrina Cohen-Hatton was different from the firefighters who had worked at her local station before her.

---

---

---

8. Do you have to read this text in the order that it is written in? Explain your answer.

---

---

---

# Answers

1. **However, she reports that it was not easy being the first female to hold the position.**

How else could the author have written this sentence? Tick one.

- It was untrue that Sabrina Cohen-Hatton was the first female firefighter.
- It was likely that Sabrina Cohen-Hatton found the job easy.
- It was difficult for Sabrina Cohen-Hatton to be the first female firefighter.**
- Sabrina Cohen-Hatton had to hold many objects while at work.

2. Number the achievements from 1–4 in the order that they happened in Sabrina Cohen-Hatton's life.

- 1** She achieved excellent grades in her GCSEs.
- 4** Sabrina Cohen-Hatton has worked with fire commanders around the world.
- 3** She conducted a study in which she attached cameras to the helmets of commanders.
- 2** She became the first female firefighter at her local station.

3. Fill in the missing words.

Sabrina Cohen-Hatton has now worked her way through every **rank** in the fire **service**.

4. Look at the section **Early Life**.

Find and copy one word that means the same as 'deserted'.

**abandoned**

5. In which section can the reader find information about the beginning of Sabrina Cohen-Hatton's career?

**The reader can find information about the beginning of Sabrina Cohen-Hatton's career in the section called Becoming a Firefighter.**

6. Predict what you think Sabrina Cohen-Hatton will do over the next 10 years.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I predict that Sabrina Cohen-Hatton will study more about how firefighters think and use what she has learnt to do more work on improving firefighter safety.**

7. Using the information in the section **Becoming a Firefighter**, comment on how Sabrina Cohen-Hatton was different from the firefighters who had worked at her local station before her.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Sabrina Cohen-Hatton was different from the firefighters who had worked at her local station before her because she was the first female firefighter to work there and she faced a lot of discrimination because of this.**

8. Do you have to read this text in the order that it is written in? Explain your answer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: No, you do not have to read the text in the order that it is written because the sub-headings help you to find the information that you want to read and you do not have to start from the beginning.**