



FIND A SAFE PLACE

Determining your family's "safe places" could be the key to saving your lives during an emergency. This must be done ahead of time, with input from all family members. Practice getting to these designated places quickly.

Tornado:

- At home: go to the lowest level and away from windows, in a small room (bathroom or closet) in the center of the house (closet walls help provide more roof support, and each wall between you and the outside will provide further protection). Get under something sturdy to help protect your head and neck from flying or falling objects.
- If you have a basement, make that your safe place.
- In a mobile home: go to a sturdy building nearby. If your mobile home park has a designated shelter, use it. Mobile homes are not safe in a tornado; in fact, before 1994, most manufactured homes were not designed to withstand even moderate winds.
- In the car: drive to a nearby sturdy building if possible, go to the lowest level without windows. If you can't find a building, get out of the vehicle, lie down in a low spot on the ground not subject to flooding and protect your head and neck.

Fire:

- Being safe when there is a fire is about getting away from the fire. Fire spreads quickly; there is no time to gather valuables or make a phone call. In just two minutes, a fire can become life-threatening. In five, your house can be engulfed in flames.
- At home: "Find. Review. Practice." This must become your family's mantra. Find two ways out of each room. Review each room's escape route with your family. Practice escaping from each room, using an escape ladder from each second-story room.
- Teach family members to stay low to the floor (where the air is safer) when escaping from a fire.
- Make sure windows are not painted shut and can open easily, and that security bars can be removed from the inside.

Fire, continued:

- Once outside at the **safe place**, send someone to call 9-1-1. If anyone is missing, give that information to the fire department immediately and tell them where the probable location of the missing person could be. Under no circumstances should anyone re-enter the burning building.

Earthquake:

- If the ground begins to shake, your **safe place** is inside, under a sturdy piece of furniture. Minimize your movements to a few steps to a nearby safe place and stay indoors until the shaking has stopped and you know you are safe.
- If you're inside: "DROP, COVER and HOLD!" Drop to the ground and take cover under a sturdy piece of furniture, like a table. Hold on until the shaking stops.
- If there isn't any protection, cover your face and head with your arms and crouch in an inside corner of the building.
- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls, and anything that could fall.
- Stay in bed if you are already there, unless you are under a heavy light fixture that could fall. Protect your head with a pillow and hold on.
- Do not use the elevators if you are in an office or other public building.
- Stay inside until shaking stops. Research shows that most injuries occur when people inside buildings attempt to move to a different location inside or try to get outside.
- If you're outside: Move away from buildings, streetlights and utility wires and stay where you are safest. Ground movement during an earthquake is seldom the direct cause of injury or death. Most casualties result from collapsing walls, flying glass and falling objects.
- If you're in a vehicle: Stop as quickly as safety permits and stay in the vehicle. Try not to stop near or under trees, overpasses, buildings and utility wires.



How to Prepare Your Home

During an emergency, ordinary objects around your home can become hazardous. Take a few minutes to look around each room with a new view and identify potential hazards—bookshelves that could tip over in an earthquake and block exits, or heavy objects that could fall and hurt you. And make sure you have the basics in your home to keep your family safe and protected should you find your neighborhood without outside help for the first 72 hours.

FOLLOW THESE PREPAREDNESS TIPS.

Five simple steps:

- Look all around your house with a new perspective—a “disaster eye.”
- Move boxes and other items or furniture away from doors, windows and in hallways.
- Put smoke detectors on each level of your home and make it a habit to change the batteries whenever the time changes.
- Know how and when to switch off your utilities.
- Keep an ABC-type (for paper, electrical and grease) fire extinguisher on each level and know how and when to use them.
- Make sure your home address number is visible from the street so emergency vehicles can find you.

Other steps:

- Put together an emergency kit, first-aid kit and a go-bag to grab in case of emergency and keep these in a common, easily accessible place, like a hall closet or pantry.
- Make sure everyone in your family—live-in parents to younger children—knows about the emergency kits.
- During an emergency, you might not have access to food, water and electricity for days, or even weeks. Store enough emergency food and water to provide for your family for at least three days. This is part of your emergency kit.

- Move mirrors and heavy pictures away from beds, couches or places where people sit or sleep.
- Store heavy items on low shelves.
- Strap down your water heater and fit all gas appliances with a flexible gas supply line.
- Store flammable or highly reactive chemicals (such as bleach, ammonia, paint thinners) securely and separate from each other.
- Secure pictures and wall hangings and use restraints to secure heavy items such as bookcases and file cabinets.
- Move beds away from windows.
- Ensure that all window safety bars have emergency releases.

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