SECURITY EVENTS · PREPAREDNESS

Earthquake Preparedness Checklist

Before · During · After — a printable companion to the Earthquake Preparedness Guide

Local authorities' instructions always come first. This checklist is general guidance based on Ready.gov/FEMA, USGS, the American Red Cross, CDC, the U.S. National Weather Service and the European Commission.

PART 1 Before an earthquake

Secure your home

- ☐ Tall furniture (bookcases, wardrobes, cabinets) anchored to wall studs
- ☐ Water heater strapped to the wall
- ☐ TVs, computers and wall-mounted items secured
- ☐ Heavy and breakable items moved to low shelves
- ☐ Latches fitted on kitchen and bathroom cabinets
- ☐ No mirrors, frames or shelves above beds, sofas or cribs
- ☐ Chimney and roof checked for loose bricks or tiles
- ☐ Safe spots chosen in every room (under a sturdy table, or by an interior wall away from windows)

Know your utilities

- ☐ Main **gas valve** location: _____
- ☐ Main **water valve** location: _____
- ☐ **Electrical panel** location: _____
- ☐ Wrench or shut-off tool kept next to the gas valve
- ☐ All adults in the household know how to shut each one off

Practise

- ☐ Drop, Cover, and Hold On practised with everyone in the household
- ☐ Practised from bed, from the kitchen and from the living room
- ☐ Next practice date: _____

Family plan

- ☐ Meeting point near home: _____
- ☐ Meeting point outside the neighbourhood: _____
- ☐ Out-of-area contact: _____ Phone: _____
- ☐ Key phone numbers written on paper (not only in your phone)
- ☐ School or daycare emergency plan checked
- ☐ Plan for pets (carrier or leash, food, water, medication)
- ☐ Emergency alerts turned on in your phone (and an early warning app, if your region has one)
- ☐ Coast: tsunami zone checked for home, work and school
- ☐ Coast: tsunami evacuation route walked at least once

PART 2 Emergency supplies

Target: at least **72 hours** (EU minimum) → **several days** (Ready.gov) → **two weeks** at home (FEMA / Red Cross) if you can.

Water

- ☐ **1 gallon (≈ 3.8 L) per person per day**
  People _____ × days _____ = _____ gal / L
- ☐ Extra water for a hot climate, children, nursing mothers or people who are ill
- ☐ Extra water for pets
- ☐ Containers are food-grade, sealed, labelled and kept in a cool, dark place
- ☐ Next rotation date (about every 6 months):
  _____
- ☐ Water filter or purification tablets

Food

- ☐ Non-perishable food your household already eats
- ☐ Not too salty (salty food increases thirst)
- ☐ Manual can opener
- ☐ Baby food or special-diet items, if needed
- ☐ Pet food
- ☐ Expiry dates checked on: _____

Basic kit

- ☐ Flashlight or headlamp, plus spare batteries
- ☐ Battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Prescription medicines and copies of prescriptions
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Dust masks
- ☐ Sturdy shoes and work gloves
- ☐ Phone charger and a charged power bank
- ☐ Cash in small notes
- ☐ Copies of ID, insurance and other important documents (in a waterproof bag or stored securely online)
- ☐ Blanket or sleeping bag for each person
- ☐ Multi-tool or basic tools
- ☐ Hygiene items, wet wipes and rubbish bags

Kits in other places

- ☐ **Work:** enough to shelter there for 24 hours, plus comfortable walking shoes
- ☐ **Car:** water, snacks, flashlight, first aid kit, blanket
- ☐ **Travel daypack:** water, snacks, power bank, medication, a copy of your passport, local cash

PART 3 During the shaking — quick reference

Where you are	What to do
Indoors	**DROP** to your hands and knees · **COVER** your head and neck, under a sturdy table if one is close · **HOLD ON** until the shaking stops
In bed	Stay in bed, face down, and cover your head and neck with a pillow
Wheelchair or walker	**LOCK** your wheels, bend forward and cover your head and neck
Outdoors	Move away from buildings, streetlights and power lines, then drop and cover
Driving	Pull over away from bridges, trees and power lines, set the parking brake and stay inside
Near the coast	Protect yourself first, then **go to high ground or inland as soon as the shaking stops**

DON'T: × run outside while it's shaking · × stand in a doorway · × use the lift

PART 4 Emergency contacts

	Name	Phone
Local emergency number		
Out-of-area contact		
Family member 1		
Family member 2		
Doctor or clinic		
Gas company		
Electricity company		
Water company		
Insurance (policy no.)		
Embassy or consulate (travellers)		

PART 5 After the earthquake

First minutes

- [ ] Check yourself and others for injuries, and give first aid
- [ ] Put on sturdy shoes
- [ ] Be ready for aftershocks (Drop, Cover, and Hold On again each time)
- [ ] If the building is damaged, **get out and stay out**
- [ ] Use the stairs, not the lift
- [ ] **Coast:** strong or long shaking, the sea suddenly rising or falling, or a roar from the ocean → go to **high ground or inland on foot, now**

Gas, power and water

- [ ] Smell gas or hear hissing? → **leave**, then call the gas company or fire department from outside
- [ ] Shut off the gas **only if you suspect a leak** (a professional usually has to turn it back on)
- [ ] Use flashlights only: no candles, matches or open flames
- [ ] Sparks, a burning smell or damaged wiring? → turn off the main electrical panel
- [ ] Broken pipes? → turn off the main water valve
- [ ] Don't flush toilets until you know the sewer lines are intact
- [ ] Stay away from downed power lines and report them

If you're trapped

- [ ] Cover your mouth and nose with cloth
- [ ] Tap on a pipe or wall, or use your whistle
- [ ] Shout only as a last resort

Communication

- [ ] Send texts instead of making calls
- [ ] Tell your out-of-area contact that you're safe
- [ ] Follow official channels (local authorities, civil protection, emergency radio)
- [ ] Check on neighbours, especially older people and people living alone

Home check

- [ ] Open cupboards and closets slowly
- [ ] Clean up spilled medicines, chemicals and anything flammable
- [ ] Check walls, chimney and foundations for cracks
- [ ] Photograph all damage for insurance before you start repairs
- [ ] If you're unsure the building is safe, don't stay in it: ask for a professional inspection

Water and food safety

- [ ] Use your stored water first
- [ ] Hidden water at home: the water heater tank, the water in your pipes, ice cubes, the toilet **tank** (never the bowl)
- [ ] Never drink floodwater, and treat any water from outside sources
- [ ] Don't ration water; food can be rationed for healthy adults

Look after yourself

- [ ] Rest, eat and drink regularly
- [ ] Keep routines where you can, especially for children
- [ ] Talk to someone if you're struggling. Stress after a strong quake is normal.

Sources: Ready.gov (FEMA/DHS) · USGS · American Red Cross · FEMA & American Red Cross, "Food and Water in an Emergency" · CDC · U.S. National Weather Service · European Commission (Preparedness).

Track earthquakes live: security-events.com · **Full guide:** security-events.com/blog/earthquake-preparedness-guide