72-hour emergency kit

A basic household kit lets your family cope for at least three days without power, water or shops. This page explains what to pack, where to keep it and how to keep it current.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Drinking water for every person for at least 3 days
- [ ] Non-perishable food and a manual tin opener
- [ ] Battery or wind-up radio
- [ ] Torch with spare batteries
- [ ] Power bank for phones
- [ ] First aid kit
- [ ] Prescription medicines
- [ ] Hand sanitiser and wet wipes
- [ ] Whistle to signal for help
- [ ] Some cash in small notes
- [ ] Copies of important documents and contact list
- [ ] Blanket or sleeping bag per person

PREPARE

- Plan to manage on your own supplies for at least 72 hours.
- Aim for a full week of supplies if you have space.
- Check your national civil protection guidance on 72-hour household self-sufficiency.
- Pack items in airtight bags inside one or two containers that are easy to carry.
- Include water, non-perishable food, a radio, torch, spare batteries and a first aid kit.
- Add a power bank, hand sanitiser, wet wipes and a manual tin opener.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- Keep the kit in one agreed spot that everyone in the home knows.
- Split a heavy kit into individual backpacks so each person can carry something.
- Use a torch rather than candles for light, as torches are safer.
- Grab the kit if told to leave, but take nothing if escaping a fire.

REVIEW

- Replace expired food, water and batteries at least once a year.
- Review the whole kit yearly and update it as family needs change.
- Restock anything you used as soon as shops reopen.
- Test your plan and kit with a practice scenario to find gaps.

IN THE UAE

In the UAE, keep the national emergency numbers in your kit list: 999 police, 998 ambulance, 997 civil defence.

MY NOTES

Sources: Ready.gov (FEMA), Build A Kit (https://www.ready.gov/kit); UK Government (Prepare), Get prepared for emergencies (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Basics of home preparedness (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/basics-of-home-emergency-preparedness/); European Commission (DG ECHO), Preparedness (https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/preparedness_en); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); Government of Canada, Emergency kits (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Storing drinking water

Safe water is the first thing to run short when supplies are cut. This page covers how much to store per person, which containers to use, and how to rotate and treat water.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Sealed bottled water, at least 3 days per person
- [ ] Small bottles you can carry if you must leave
- [ ] Food-grade water containers with tight lids
- [ ] Unscented household bleach for treating water
- [ ] Water purifying tablets
- [ ] Clean cloth or coffee filters for straining
- [ ] Marker pen and labels for dates
- [ ] Extra water for pets

PREPARE

- Store at least 1 gallon, about 3.8 litres, per person per day for at least 3 days.
- Aim for a two week supply if you have room.
- Store more for hot climates, children, pregnant or nursing women and sick people.
- Add extra water for baby formula, medical devices and pets.
- Use food-grade, unbreakable containers with tight lids, never ones that held chemicals.
- Wash home containers with soap, then sanitise with a weak unscented bleach solution.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- Treat any water of doubtful quality before drinking, cooking or brushing teeth.
- Let cloudy water settle or strain it through a clean cloth or coffee filter first.
- Boil water at a rolling boil for one full minute, then let it cool.
- If you cannot boil, use plain unscented household bleach at the dose officials give.
- Remember that tablets and filters do not remove chemical pollution.
- Listen to local authorities to find out if tap water is safe; if it is not, use bottled or stored water.

REVIEW

- Replace stored tap water every six months.
- Follow the expiry date on bottled water.
- Check stored water once or twice a year by look, smell and taste.
- Use old stored water for plants instead of pouring it away.

IN THE UAE

US guidance says water needs can double in very hot weather, so UAE households should store well above the minimum.

MY NOTES

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), How to Create an Emergency Water Supply (https://www.cdc.gov/water-emergency/about/how-to-create-and-store-an-emergency-water-supply.html); Ready.gov (FEMA), Water (https://www.ready.gov/water); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Access to water during a crisis (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/access-to-water-during-a-crisis/); UK Government (Prepare), Get prepared for emergencies (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/); Government of Canada, Emergency kits (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits.html); Health Canada, Food and drinking water safety in an emergency (https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-drinking-water-safe-emergency.html); Government of Canada, Emergency kit checklist (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits/get-kit.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Emergency food supply

A small stock of long-life food means your family can eat even when shops close or the power fails. This page explains what to store, how to build it up and how to eat safely during an outage.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Ready-to-eat canned meat, fish, fruit and vegetables
- [ ] Protein or energy bars
- [ ] Dry cereal or granola
- [ ] Peanut or other nut butter
- [ ] Dried fruit and nuts
- [ ] Long-life (UHT or powdered) milk
- [ ] Infant formula and baby food if needed
- [ ] Manual tin opener
- [ ] Plates, cups and utensils
- [ ] Comfort foods for stress

PREPARE

- Store at least several days of non-perishable food your family actually eats.
- Aim to be able to go a week without shopping.
- Choose foods that need no fridge, little water and little or no cooking.
- Stock canned meat, fish, fruit and vegetables, cereals, nut butter, dried fruit and bars.
- Include special diet foods, infant formula and baby food if needed.
- Add one or two extra long-life items to every regular shop.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- Eat food from the fridge first, then the freezer, then your stored food.
- Keep fridge and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
- Throw out perishable food that has been above 4°C (40°F) for two hours or more.
- Never eat from swollen, dented or rusty cans, or food that smells wrong.
- Use camping stoves and charcoal grills outdoors only.
- Eat commercially canned food straight from the tin if you cannot heat it.

REVIEW

- Throw away any food that touched floodwater.
- Replace expired food and anything you used.
- Replace stored non-perishable food at least once a year.
- Buy long-life versions of foods you already use, so stock rotates naturally.

MY NOTES

Sources: Ready.gov (FEMA), Food (https://www.ready.gov/food); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Access to food during a crisis (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/food/access-to-food-during-a-crisis/); Ready.gov (FEMA), Build A Kit (https://www.ready.gov/kit); Government of Canada, Emergency kit checklist (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits/get-kit.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Long-term food and backup power

Some crises last well beyond three days. This guide helps families build and maintain a two-week food reserve, keep food safe through long power cuts, and use backup power at home without risking carbon monoxide poisoning or fire.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Two weeks of non-perishable, easy-to-prepare food per person
- [ ] Water: about 4 litres (1 gallon) per person per day, for two weeks
- [ ] One month of long-term prescription medicines
- [ ] Baby formula, pet food and special needs equipment
- [ ] Camping stove with fuel
- [ ] Cooler with ice or frozen gel packs
- [ ] Fridge and freezer thermometers
- [ ] Battery-operated carbon monoxide alarm
- [ ] Heavy-duty outdoor-rated extension cord
- [ ] Labelled fuel safety can
- [ ] Battery pack that can recharge critical devices several times

PREPARE

- Build a home store of non-perishable, easy-to-prepare food and water to last two weeks.
- Add baby formula, pet food and any special equipment household members with special needs rely on.
- Keep a month of long-term prescription medicines at home, always using the oldest first.
- Ask the device maker whether it can run on batteries or a generator, and tell your electricity company.
- Keep a camping stove and fuel so you can cook without electricity. Use it only outdoors, never inside the home or garage.
- Get advice from a licensed electrician before buying or installing a backup generator.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- Keep fridge and freezer doors closed: a closed fridge keeps food cold about 4 hours, a full freezer about 48 hours (24 if half full).
- Check your stored food every few weeks and eat the oldest cans first.
- Keep cans in a cool, dry place below 29°C (85°F), away from stoves, sinks and damp areas.
- After 4 hours without power, move perishables into a cooler with ice, at 4°C (40°F) or below.
- If the outage may last long, get dry ice or block ice to keep the fridge cold.
- Run a generator outdoors only, 6 metres (20 feet) from doors, windows and vents, never in a garage.
- Use heavy-duty outdoor cords rated above the total load, with no cuts and all three prongs.
- Switch off and cool the generator before refuelling, and store fuel in labelled safety cans outside living areas.

REVIEW

- Check fridge and freezer temperatures. Keep or refreeze food at 4°C (40°F) or below, discard the rest.
- Throw out food with an odd smell, colour or texture, or that feels warm. Never taste it.
- Discard cans that are bulging, leaking, deeply dented or heavily rusted.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist whether refrigerated medicines are still safe to use.

MY NOTES

Sources: American Red Cross, What Do You Need In a Survival Kit (https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/survival-kit-supplies.html); American Red Cross, Power Outage Safety (https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/power-outage.html); American Red Cross, Safe Generator Use (https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/power-outage/safe-generator-use.html); Canadian Red Cross, Power Outages: Before, During and After (https://www.redcross.ca/how-we-help/emergencies-and-disasters-in-canada/types-of-emergencies/power-outages); US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), Safety Alert: Portable Generator Hazards (https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/5123_SafetyAlert_PortableGenerators_102021.pdf); CDC, Avoiding Carbon Monoxide Poisoning (https://www.cdc.gov/natural-disasters/psa-toolkit/avoiding-carbon-monoxide-poisoning.html); CDC, Keep Food Safe After a Disaster or Emergency (https://www.cdc.gov/food-safety/foods/keep-food-safe-after-emergency.html); USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Shelf-Stable Food Safety (https://www.fsis.usda.gov/es/node/3296); US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Are You and Your Food Prepared for a Power Outage? (https://www.usda.gov/node/19949); US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), FDA Offers Tips about Medical Devices and Natural Disasters (https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/emergency-situations-medical-devices/fda-offers-tips-about-medical-devices-and-natural-disasters); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Basics of home preparedness (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/basics-of-home-emergency-preparedness/); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), One month's supply of medicines at home (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/one-months-supply-of-medicines-at-home/); Government of Canada, Power outages: how to prepare (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/hazards-emergencies/power-outages/how-prepare.html); Government of Canada, Emergency kits (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Family emergency plan

Emergencies often strike when family members are in different places and phones do not work. A simple written plan tells everyone how to reach each other, where to meet and who does what.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Printed household emergency plan
- [ ] Paper list of family, school, doctor and utility numbers
- [ ] Out-of-area contact name and number
- [ ] Addresses of both meeting places
- [ ] Written plan of the exits from each room
- [ ] Paper maps with evacuation routes
- [ ] List of regular medicines for each person

PREPARE

- Talk together about the emergencies most likely where you live, work and study.
- Choose two meeting places: one just outside home, one outside your neighbourhood.
- Pick one out-of-area contact that every family member will reach.
- Write key phone numbers on paper, as a dead phone means lost contacts.
- Give everyone a written copy and save the details on their phones.
- Plan a main and a backup exit from each room, and more than one route out of the area.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- Send text messages instead of calling, to keep phone lines free.
- Contact your agreed out-of-area person to share where you are.
- Go to your agreed meeting point if you cannot get home or reach each other.
- Check on neighbours who may need help, especially during power cuts.

REVIEW

- Practise evacuating, including grabbing your kit, twice a year.
- Hold regular household meetings to review the plan.
- Practise your plan, including leaving your home, twice a year.
- Keep copies of the plan in your kit, in your car and at work.

IN THE UAE

Write the UAE emergency numbers on your paper contact list: 999 police, 998 ambulance, 997 civil defence.

MY NOTES

Sources: American Red Cross, National Preparedness Month: How to Make Your Emergency Plan (https://www.redcross.org/about-us/news-and-events/news/2019/national-preparedness-month-how-to-make-your-emergency-plan.html); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Access to communication during a crisis (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/access-to-communication-during-a-crisis/); Ready.gov (FEMA), Make a Plan (Ready Kids) (https://www.ready.gov/kids/make-a-plan); UK Government (Prepare), Get prepared for emergencies (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); Government of Canada, Form: Make an emergency plan (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/make-plan/emergency-plan-form.html); American Red Cross, Make a Disaster Preparedness Plan (https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/make-a-plan.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Important documents and cash

Cards, ATMs and online banking can stop working in a crisis, and lost papers slow down insurance claims and aid. This page shows which documents to copy, where to keep them and how much cash to hold.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Copies of passports and ID cards
- [ ] Copies of insurance policies
- [ ] Copies of birth and marriage certificates
- [ ] Bank records and account contacts
- [ ] Recent photo of each family member
- [ ] Cash in small notes
- [ ] Spare house and car keys
- [ ] Waterproof document container

PREPARE

- Copy passports, birth and marriage certificates, licences, wills, deeds and insurance policies.
- Keep paper and digital copies of key documents, and store them in a safe place.
- Keep originals of key papers in a safe place away from home, such as a deposit box.
- Put document copies in your kit in a waterproof container, or save them electronically.
- Keep recent photos of each family member where you can reach them easily.
- Photograph or video your home and belongings for insurance claims.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- If you evacuate, take your kit with ID for each person and copies of key documents.
- Keep your household plan with your passports and insurance papers so you can grab them fast.
- Use cash for essentials if digital payments stop working.
- Have more than one way to pay, such as cards from different banks or networks.

REVIEW

- Use your copies and home inventory to start insurance claims and aid applications.
- Top up your cash reserve and update document copies.
- Use cash occasionally so you stay familiar with it.
- Consider building an emergency savings fund for any crisis.

MY NOTES

Sources: Ready.gov (FEMA), Financial Preparedness (https://www.ready.gov/financial-preparedness); Ready.gov (FEMA), Build A Kit (https://www.ready.gov/kit); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Payments and cash in times of crisis (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/payments-and-cash-in-times-of-crisis/); UK Government (Prepare), Get prepared for emergencies (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/); Government of Canada, Make an Emergency Plan (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/make-plan.html); Government of Canada, Emergency kit checklist (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits/get-kit.html); Government of Canada, Floods: how to prepare (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/hazards-emergencies/floods/how-prepare.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Emergency alerts and staying informed

Knowing how official warnings reach you, and having a way to hear them without power or internet, can buy precious time. This page covers phone alerts, radios, official channels and avoiding rumours.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Battery or wind-up radio
- [ ] Spare batteries
- [ ] Charged power bank
- [ ] Car phone charger
- [ ] Paper list of emergency numbers and radio frequencies

PREPARE

- Find out how your country sends emergency alerts to phones.
- Keep a battery, solar, wind-up or car radio so you can follow news in a power cut.
- Note your local emergency radio frequencies on your paper contact list.
- Sign up for official weather and flood warnings where they are offered.
- Charge phones and power banks when a storm or disruption is forecast.
- Keep your phone software up to date.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- Stop what you are doing when an alert sounds and follow its instructions.
- If driving, pull over somewhere safe and legal before reading an alert.
- Follow updates from local authorities on radio, TV and official websites.
- Confirm serious news with official government sources before acting.
- Be wary of posts that provoke strong emotions, and share only trusted information.
- Check facts against more than one source.

REVIEW

- Keep listening to official channels until authorities say the danger has passed.
- Recharge devices and replace radio batteries once power returns.
- Check on neighbours and relatives and pass on official information.
- Sign up for any local weather, flood or air quality alerts you were missing.

IN THE UAE

The UAE National Early Warning System, a project started in 2017, sends text alerts to phones with safety steps, for example about dangerous weather. NCEMA, the Ministry of Interior, the seven emirates' police and the Ministry of Health and Prevention can send them. National numbers: 999 police, 998 ambulance, 997 fire department (civil defence).

MY NOTES

Sources: UK Government (Prepare), Alerts and warnings (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/alerts/); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Access to communication during a crisis (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/access-to-communication-during-a-crisis/); UK Government (Prepare), Get prepared for emergencies (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Before, During, and After an Emergency (https://www.cdc.gov/childrenindisasters/helping-children-cope.html); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Psychological defence (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/swedish-defence/psychological-defence/); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); Dubai Media Office (Government of Dubai), Safety Guide (March 2026) (https://mediaoffice.ae/SafetyGuide-March2026.pdf)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Children and emergencies

Children cope better with frightening events when they have been involved in preparing and adults stay calm and honest. This page covers how to prepare kids, talk to them during a crisis and support them afterwards.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Emergency card with contacts, medicines and allergies
- [ ] Note with home address and a relative's contact
- [ ] Small favourite toy
- [ ] Books, games or puzzles
- [ ] Infant formula, nappies and wipes if needed
- [ ] Three days of food, water and medicine for each family member, including children

PREPARE

- Talk through your family plan with children and agree actions together.
- Let children help pack the kit, including games or a favourite toy.
- Teach children when and how to call emergency services.
- Help them learn your home address and a parent's mobile number.
- Learn the school's emergency, contact and pick-up procedures.
- Put a card in your child's bag listing contacts, medicines and allergies.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- Stay calm yourself, as children pick up on adult worry.
- Explain what is happening in simple words suited to their age.
- Be truthful without frightening them, and say so if you do not know.
- Invite questions and listen carefully to their worries.
- Keep daily routines as normal as you can.
- Do not rush to the school if it evacuates children; wait for officials.
- Turn off constant news and do calming activities together.

REVIEW

- Keep children with you or another trusted adult.
- Let them help others in safe ways, but keep them out of clean-up work.
- Tell them clearly that they are safe now and not to blame.
- Expect to repeat explanations, especially with young children.

IN THE UAE

Teach children the UAE emergency numbers: 999 police, 998 ambulance, 997 civil defence.

MY NOTES

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Before, During, and After an Emergency (https://www.cdc.gov/childrenindisasters/helping-children-cope.html); UK Government (Prepare), Get prepared for emergencies (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/); Swedish Red Cross, How to talk to children about difficult incidents (https://www.rodakorset.se/en/get-help/mental-health/give-support-to-someone-in-a-crisis/how-to-talk-to-children-about-difficult-matters/); Ministry of the Interior, Czech Republic (72 hodin), Children (https://www.72h.gov.cz/en/children); Ready.gov (FEMA), Build A Kit (https://www.ready.gov/kit); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); Government of Canada, Make an Emergency Plan (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/make-plan.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Older adults and people with disabilities

Older people and people with disabilities may rely on medicines, powered equipment or carers that a crisis can interrupt. This page helps build a personal plan, a support network and a kit that covers those needs.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Medicines and medical supplies in a waterproof container
- [ ] Copies of insurance and medical cards
- [ ] Written list of conditions, allergies and medicines
- [ ] Instructions for medical devices
- [ ] Charged backup batteries for equipment and hearing aids
- [ ] Spare glasses and contact lens solution
- [ ] Supplies for service animal
- [ ] First aid kit, torch, water and food

PREPARE

- Build a support network of family, friends, neighbours and carers who know your needs.
- Give at least one trusted person a spare key and show them your supplies.
- Write a personal plan with contacts, medicines, equipment and treatment details.
- Ask your doctor about keeping a two week supply of medicines and supplies.
- Plan with your care team for powered equipment such as wheelchairs or oxygen if power fails.
- Register with your utility suppliers' priority lists where available.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- Keep your mobile phone with you at all times.
- Take assistive devices such as walkers and wheelchairs with you.
- Carry a card explaining how responders can communicate with you.
- If you cannot use stairs, arrange evacuation help in advance, such as an evacuation chair near the stairwell.
- Carers who cannot reach someone at risk should call emergency services.

REVIEW

- Arrange for someone to check on you if telecare alarms lose power or internet.
- Recharge backup batteries for medical and hearing equipment.
- Practise your plan with your support network.
- Update organisations that support you if your details or address change.

IN THE UAE

In Abu Dhabi, people of determination can text 5999 for medical help, according to the UAE government portal.

MY NOTES

Sources: Ready.gov (FEMA), Older Adults (https://www.ready.gov/older-adults); UK Government (Prepare), Advice for disabled persons and carers (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/advice-for-disabled-persons-and-carers/); Ready.gov (FEMA), Build A Kit (https://www.ready.gov/kit); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); Government of Canada, Emergency kits (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits.html); Government of Canada, Emergency preparedness for persons with disabilities (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-planning-resources/persons-disabilities.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Pets in emergencies

Many shelters and hotels do not accept animals, so pets need their own plan and supplies. This page covers pet ID, a pet kit, where pets can go and how to keep them safe afterwards.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Several days of pet food in an airtight container
- [ ] Water and a bowl
- [ ] Extra medicines in a waterproof container
- [ ] Spare collar with ID tag, plus harness or leash
- [ ] Labelled carrier or crate for each pet
- [ ] Vaccination records and vet contact details
- [ ] Recent photo of you with your pet
- [ ] Litter, litter tray and bin bags
- [ ] Familiar toy, treats or bedding

PREPARE

- Fit a collar and tag with current details, and microchip and register your pet.
- Find pet-friendly places to go, such as relatives, hotels or boarding kennels.
- Arrange a trusted neighbour to check on or move your pets if you are out.
- Keep at least one week of pet food, water and medicines.
- Train pets to enter and stay in their carrier, and practise evacuating together.
- Keep a leash or carrier near the exit.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- Bring pets indoors at the first warning of a storm.
- Take your pet and its kit with you if you evacuate.
- Never leave a pet chained outdoors.
- When sheltering at home, use an inner room with few windows and remove toxic items.
- If you must leave a pet behind, leave extra food and water.
- Keep pets away from stagnant water, strays and wildlife.

REVIEW

- Keep pets on a leash or in a carrier outside, as familiar landmarks may change.
- Check your home for sharp debris, spilled chemicals and loose wires before letting pets roam.
- Contact a vet if your pet seems stressed, unwell or injured.
- Approach an injured pet slowly and keep your face away from its mouth.

IN THE UAE

The u.ae emergency page lists animal-related contacts, including the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment on 8003050 and Dubai Municipality on 800900.

MY NOTES

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Be Prepared: Pet Safety in Emergencies (https://www.cdc.gov/healthy-pets/emergency-preparedness/index.html); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Preparedness for your pets (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/preparedness-for-your-pets/); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); FEMA, Are you "Petpared" for Disasters? (fact sheet) (https://www.fema.gov/print/pdf/node/615613)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Coping with stress during crises

Almost everyone feels distress during and after an emergency, and for most people it eases with time. This page offers practical ways to look after your mind and know when to seek more help.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Comfort foods
- [ ] Books, games or puzzles
- [ ] Ongoing prescribed medicines
- [ ] Paper list of people to call for support
- [ ] Radio to get trusted information

PREPARE

- Prepare ahead, as planning can lower stress when an emergency comes.
- Build healthy habits now: good food, regular exercise and enough rest.
- Get to know neighbours and people around you who can offer support.
- Learn basic first aid so you feel more able to help.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- Feeling stressed, scared or upset during an emergency is common and normal.
- Stay informed but take regular breaks from news and social media.
- Practise deep breathing and other calming activities.
- Talk to friends, family or others you trust about how you feel.
- Keep following any mental health treatment and keep taking prescribed medicine.
- Avoid alcohol, tobacco and drugs not prescribed to you.
- Ask whether a mental health worker is available if you are in a shelter.

REVIEW

- Return to familiar routines, as they can be comforting.
- Share your experience at your own pace and listen to others.
- Spend time on activities you enjoy.
- Lean on family, friends, community or faith groups for support.

MY NOTES

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), How to Cope with Your Feelings (https://www.cdc.gov/disability-emergency-preparedness/communication-resources/coping-easy-read.html); UK Government (Prepare), Coping with trauma (https://prepare.campaign.gov.uk/coping-with-trauma/); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Basics of home preparedness (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/basics-of-home-emergency-preparedness/); UK Government (Prepare), Get prepared for emergencies (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/); World Health Organization (WHO), Mental health in emergencies (https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-in-emergencies); Ready.gov (FEMA), Build A Kit (https://www.ready.gov/kit)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Living in a tower or apartment block

Fires and emergencies in tall buildings mean longer escape routes and a building-specific escape plan. This page helps residents learn their exits and plan, act safely when the alarm sounds, and know what to ask building management.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Copy of your building's evacuation plan
- [ ] Note of all exit stairs on your floor
- [ ] Working smoke alarms
- [ ] Torch for signalling
- [ ] Wet towels or sheets to block smoke at doors
- [ ] Ashtray for anyone who smokes on the balcony
- [ ] UAE numbers: 997 civil defence, 999 police, 998 ambulance
- [ ] Questions for management: alarms, sprinklers, announcements, what to do on an alarm

PREPARE

- Ask your landlord or building management for the fire safety information and evacuation plan.
- Ask management how alarms, sprinklers and announcements work, and what to do on an alarm.
- Find every exit stair on your floor, and report any that are locked, blocked or unmarked.
- Keep corridors and stairwells clear of belongings.
- Never wedge open fire doors. Flat, corridor and stair doors should close by themselves.
- Fit smoke alarms and make sure everyone at home knows the escape plan.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- If the fire is in your flat, leave at once and call the fire service.
- Use the stairs, never the lift.
- Feel doors for heat before opening. If hot, use another exit.
- Listen to building announcements and follow the instructions of Civil Defence and firefighters.
- In the UAE, leave the building straight away by the marked fire exits when the alarm sounds.
- If trapped, stay in a room, block gaps with soft materials to stop smoke, and call for help.
- Signal from a window with a torch or bright cloth. Do not break the glass.
- Stuck in a lift? Press the alarm, stay calm, and never force the doors or climb out.

REVIEW

- Go to your outdoor meeting point and stay there.
- Tell firefighters if anyone is trapped inside.
- Do not stay behind to collect belongings.
- Re-enter only when civil defence or police say it is safe.

IN THE UAE

The UAE government portal says to call civil defence on 997 from anywhere in the UAE, leave the building straight away by the marked exits, walk calmly, close doors behind you, never use lifts, use an extinguisher only if it is safe, and wait for police or civil defence before going back in.

MY NOTES

Sources: London Fire Brigade, Brigade reissues tower block safety advice (https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/grenfell/brigade-reissues-tower-block-safety-advice); Tennessee State Fire Marshal's Office (US), State Fire Marshal offers safety tips for high-rise dwellers (https://www.tn.gov/commerce/news/2016/3/3/state-fire-marshal-offers-safety-tips-for-high-rise-dwellers.html); UAE Government portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (fire safety) (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, Fire service issues urgent warning about balcony safety (https://www.manchesterfire.gov.uk/news/fire-service-issues-urgent-warning-about-balcony-safety-after-cigarettes-cause-two-fires-in-24-hours); NYC Department of Buildings, Elevator safety (https://www.nyc.gov/site/buildings/safety/elevator-safety.page)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Expats: be ready far from home

Living away from your home country adds extra layers to any emergency: residency papers, an embassy to reach and family in another time zone. This page helps expatriate residents sort documents, contacts and insurance, and know whose instructions to follow.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Valid passports and residence visas
- [ ] Paper and digital copies of each person's ID and passport
- [ ] Medical insurance details
- [ ] Insurer phone number and policy number
- [ ] Next of kin contact details
- [ ] Copy of your emergency plan with contact numbers
- [ ] UAE emergency numbers: 999, 998, 997
- [ ] Cash in small notes
- [ ] Prescription medicines

PREPARE

- Check whether your home country offers registration for citizens living abroad, and sign up.
- Subscribe to your government's travel advice email alerts for the UAE.
- Keep passports and visas for the whole family valid, stored safely but easy to reach.
- Keep paper and digital copies of each person's passport and other ID.
- Make sure your employer holds up to date next of kin details.
- Pick emergency contacts both close by and out of town.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- Follow instructions from UAE authorities and keep up with local and international news.
- Watch for official warning texts from NCEMA, the Interior Ministry and police.
- Call 999 for police, 998 for ambulance or 997 for civil defence anywhere in the UAE.
- Tell family at home and abroad whether you are safe or need help.
- If told to shelter, stay indoors or go to the nearest safe building or shelter.
- Contact your insurer and airline to learn what help they can give.
- Make your own plans to leave if needed; do not count on a government evacuation.
- Abroad with valid UAE residency? Register on MOFA's Tawajudi for residents for help returning in emergencies.

REVIEW

- Do not approach or touch drone or missile fragments or any unusual objects.
- Keep your departure plans under review.
- Tell your insurer promptly about any damage and photograph it for your claim.
- Keep receipts for lodging, repairs and supplies you pay for.

IN THE UAE

Abu Dhabi's AD999 app and Dubai's DCAS SOS app let you call for emergency help from your phone, and DCAS SOS shares the patient's exact location.

MY NOTES

Sources: UK Government (GOV.UK, FCDO), If you're affected by a crisis abroad (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-deal-with-a-crisis-overseas); UK Government (GOV.UK, FCDO), United Arab Emirates travel advice (https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/united-arab-emirates); Government of Canada, Registration of Canadians Abroad (https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/registration); UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tawajudi for residents who are outside the country (https://mofaic.gov.ae/en/missions/brussels/media-hub/embassy-announcements/tawajudi-for-residents-who-are-outside-the-country--a-new-service-launched-by-the); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Emergency phone numbers and apps (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies/important-phone-numbers-); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Getting a health insurance (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/health-and-fitness/getting-a-health-insurance); Government of Canada, Emergency kit checklist (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits/get-kit.html); Government of Canada, Make an emergency plan (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/make-plan.html); American Red Cross, Recovering Financially (https://www.redcross.org/get-help/disaster-relief-and-recovery-services/recovering-financially.html); UAE Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MoHRE), Health insurance scheme (https://mohre.gov.ae/en/media-center/Awareness-and-Guidance/health-insurance-scheme.aspx)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Brief your household helper

A nanny or domestic worker may be the only adult at home when a fire or medical emergency happens. This page helps families give their helper the numbers, address and simple steps they need, written on a card they can grab.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Printed emergency contact card for the helper
- [ ] List of important numbers posted where it is easy to see
- [ ] Fire extinguisher the helper knows how to use
- [ ] Torch or brightly coloured cloth for signalling
- [ ] Children's medicines list with doses
- [ ] Copy of the family emergency plan

PREPARE

• Provide medical care or health insurance for your helper, as UAE law requires.
• Let your helper keep their own passport and ID, as the law requires.
• Add your helper to your family emergency plan; plan forms include caregivers.
• Write a contact card with names, home address, phone numbers and key local numbers.
• Post the list of important numbers somewhere easy to see.
• Walk through the home's safe exits and outside meeting place together.

USE AND MAINTAIN

• In a fire, leave at once and do not stop for belongings.
• Do not use the lift, and close doors behind you if you can.
• If smoke blocks the way, stay low under it or use the second exit.
• If trapped, close the door, block the gap with a wet towel, call and signal from a window.
• Once outside, go to the meeting place, then call for help. Stay out.
• For a medical emergency, call 998 for an ambulance.
• Keep emergency calls short and give only the vital facts.
• Tell the listed emergency contacts, and share medical details with first responders.

REVIEW

• Do not re-enter the home until police or Civil Defence say it is safe.
• Cool a burn under cold running water for at least 20 minutes, then get medical care.
• Keep children with a trusted adult and reassure them that the disruption will pass.
• If your helper is hurt while working, remember employers must pay work injury compensation.

IN THE UAE

Dubai's DCAS SOS app can request an ambulance and pinpoint the patient's location, which helps a helper who is unsure of the address.

MY NOTES

Sources: UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Domestic workers (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/jobs/Workplace-regulations/domestic-helpers); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); Ready.gov (FEMA), Make a Plan Form (https://www.ready.gov/plan-form); American Red Cross, Household Preparedness Workbook (https://www.redcross.org/content/dam/redcross/get-help/youth/Household-Preparedness-Workbook.pdf); American Red Cross, What To Do If A Fire Starts (https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/fire/if-a-fire-starts.html); Government of Canada, Make an emergency plan (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/make-plan.html); Government of Canada, Emergency kit checklist (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits/get-kit.html); US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Keeping Children Safe Away from Home (https://www.cdc.gov/children-and-school-preparedness/keeping-safe/index.html); US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Before, During, and After an Emergency (https://www.cdc.gov/children-and-school-preparedness/before-during-after/index.html); Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), Early Education Institutions Emergency Management Policy (https://www.adek.gov.ae/-/media/Project/TAMM/ADEK/Policies/Early-Education-Policies/Health-safety-and-wellbeing/ADEK_EEI_Emergency-Management-Policy_EN.pdf); British Red Cross, Burns (https://www.redcross.org.uk/first-aid/learn-first-aid/burns) General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Renters: who does what in an emergency

When a pipe bursts, the power fails or a fire damages a rented flat, tenants often do not know what is theirs to handle and what is the landlord's. This page sets out the usual split, plus insurance, reporting and record keeping.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Copy of the registered tenancy contract
- [ ] Contents insurance policy details
- [ ] Note of where the water valve and electrical panel are
- [ ] Copies of repair requests sent to the landlord
- [ ] Phone or camera for damage photos
- [ ] Folder for repair and lodging receipts
- [ ] Electricity failure number 991

PREPARE

- Read your contract: in Dubai, unless agreed otherwise, landlords maintain the unit and fix defects you did not cause.
- Register your lease. In Dubai, lease disputes are not heard unless the contract is registered.
- Get your own contents insurance, as the landlord is not responsible for your belongings.
- Ask your landlord where the water and gas can be switched off in an emergency.
- Make sure everyone knows where the water valve, electrical panel and extinguisher are.
- Check there is a working smoke alarm and test it regularly.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- In a fire, call 997, leave at once without belongings and never use the lift.
- Report serious hazards such as faulty wiring to your landlord or agent straight away.
- For a power failure, call 991 or your local electricity and water provider.
- Follow authorities on whether to switch utilities off or leave them on.
- If you smell gas or hear hissing, leave at once and call for help once safe.
- Put repair requests in writing, by email or text, and keep copies.

REVIEW

- Do not go back in until police or Civil Defence say it is safe.
- Photograph damage to the home and your belongings.
- Tell your insurer promptly when, where and how the damage happened.
- List damaged items and keep them until the insurance adjuster has seen them.

IN THE UAE

Tenancy disputes go to Dubai's Rental Dispute Centre, Abu Dhabi's Rent Dispute Settlement Committee, Sharjah's Rental Regulation Department, or the local municipality in other emirates.

MY NOTES

Sources: Dubai Land Department (RERA), Tenancy Guide (https://dubailand.gov.ae/media/051bem5a/tenancyguideen.pdf); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Leasing a property in the UAE (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/moving-to-the-uae/leasing-a-property-in-the-uae); UK Government (GOV.UK), How to rent a safe home (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-rent-a-safe-home/how-to-rent-a-safe-home); UK Government (GOV.UK), Private renting: Repairs (https://www.gov.uk/private-renting/repairs); Government of Canada, Make an emergency plan (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/make-plan.html); Government of Canada, Emergency kit checklist (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits/get-kit.html); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); American Red Cross, Recovering Financially (https://www.redcross.org/get-help/disaster-relief-and-recovery-services/recovering-financially.html); American Red Cross, Safety Steps for Returning Home After the Flood (https://www.redcross.org/about-us/news-and-events/news/20-Red-Cross-Safety-Steps-for-Returning-Home-After-the-Flood.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

School emergencies and pickup plans

If an emergency hits during the school day, your children follow the school's plan, not yours. This page helps parents learn that plan, keep contact and pickup details current, and know when to wait rather than rush to the gate.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Emergency card in each child's school bag
- [ ] Matching contact card in your wallet
- [ ] School and nursery contact details
- [ ] Name of the person chosen to collect your children
- [ ] Backup contacts if you cannot be reached
- [ ] Extra essential medicines, such as an inhaler
- [ ] Extra food, milk or formula and overnight items your child needs
- [ ] School and childcare details written into your family plan

PREPARE

- Learn the school's emergency plan, including how it will reach you and reunite families.
- Ask where parents should go to collect children after an evacuation.
- Tell the school straight away when your phone number or address changes.
- Name a backup person the school can call if your phone fails.
- Choose who will collect your children if you cannot, and give the school their name.
- Put an emergency card in each child's bag listing contacts, medicines and allergies.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- Watch for school messages by text or app; Abu Dhabi schools must have fast parent alerts.
- If students are evacuated, do not go to the school; wait until officials say pickup is safe.
- Follow official instructions to shelter in place or evacuate.
- Watch for official text alerts from NCEMA, the Interior Ministry and police.
- Use texts or messages if calls fail, and keep any calls short.
- Stay calm and explain events to children in simple words.

REVIEW

- Wait for the school to share the reunification location after the all clear.
- Expect children to be released only to a parent or verified pick-up person.
- Keep children with you or another trusted adult and reassure them.
- Ask about mental health support; Abu Dhabi schools must offer it after serious whole-school emergencies.

IN THE UAE

Abu Dhabi schools must post their health and safety policy on their website and run emergency drills at least once a year, so parents can read the plan there.

MY NOTES

Sources: US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Before, During, and After an Emergency (https://www.cdc.gov/children-and-school-preparedness/before-during-after/index.html); US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Keeping Children Safe Away from Home (https://www.cdc.gov/children-and-school-preparedness/keeping-safe/index.html); US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Lost and Found: Reuniting with Loved Ones in an Emergency (https://blogs.cdc.gov/publichealthmatters/2019/08/family-reunification/); Government of Canada, Make an emergency plan (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/make-plan.html); Ready.gov (FEMA), Make a Plan Form (https://www.ready.gov/plan-form); Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), School Health and Safety Policy (https://www.adek.gov.ae/-/media/Project/TAMM/ADEK/Policies/School-Policies/Health-safety-and-wellbeing/ADEK_S_Health-and-Safety-Policy_EN.pdf); Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), Early Education Institutions Emergency Management Policy (https://www.adek.gov.ae/-/media/Project/TAMM/ADEK/Policies/Early-Education-Policies/Health-safety-and-wellbeing/ADEK_EEI_Emergency-Management-Policy_EN.pdf); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); Welsh Government (GOV.WALES), Emergency planning and response guidance for education and childcare settings (https://gov.wales/emergency-planning-and-response-guidance-education-and-childcare-settings-html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Power outage

A blackout can cut lighting, cooling, refrigeration, phone charging and medical devices for hours or days. This page helps your family prepare, stay safe while the power is off, and restart your home safely afterwards.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Torch with spare batteries
- [ ] Battery or wind-up radio
- [ ] Charged power bank for phones
- [ ] Backup battery for medical equipment
- [ ] Bottled water: at least 4 litres (about 1 gallon) per person per day, and more in hot weather
- [ ] Food that needs no cooking, plus a manual tin opener
- [ ] First aid kit
- [ ] Small notes and coins in cash
- [ ] Cool box with frozen gel packs
- [ ] Fridge and freezer thermometers
- [ ] Paper list of important phone numbers

BEFORE

- Write key phone numbers, including your power fault line, on paper and keep them handy.
- Keep torches, a battery or wind-up radio and spare batteries where everyone can find them.
- Keep a charged power bank and backup batteries for any medical device you rely on.
- Fit a carbon monoxide alarm with battery backup and keep smoke alarms working.
- Put thermometers in your fridge and freezer and keep frozen gel packs or water bottles ready.
- Protect computers and televisions with surge protector power strips.

DURING

- Check your fuse box first. If neighbours are also dark, report the outage to your utility.
- Switch off or unplug appliances and electronics to avoid a surge when power returns.
- Keep fridge and freezer doors shut. A closed fridge keeps food safe for about 4 hours.
- Use torches rather than candles. If you must use candles, never leave them unattended.
- Never run generators, barbecues or camping heaters indoors, in garages or near windows.
- Run any generator outside, at least 6 metres (20 feet) from doors, windows and vents.
- Never plug a generator into a wall socket, as it can cause serious injury.
- If a carbon monoxide alarm sounds, get out at once and call emergency services.

AFTER

- Keep well away from fallen power lines and report them to the authorities.
- Reconnect heating or cooling first, then fridge and freezer, then other appliances 10 to 15 minutes later.
- Make sure your water heater is full before switching its power back on.
- Do not plug in electrical equipment that got wet until it has dried and a qualified electrician has checked it.

IN THE UAE

In Dubai, check the outage cause with DEWA's Smart Response service in its app or website. For faults inside your building, call your building maintenance team or a licensed electrician. For faults on DEWA's network, call 991.

MY NOTES

Sources: Government of Canada, Power outages: how to prepare (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/hazards-emergencies/power-outages/how-prepare.html); UK Government (Prepare), Get prepared for emergencies (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/); CDC, Keep Food Safe After a Disaster or Emergency (https://www.cdc.gov/food-safety/foods/keep-food-safe-after-emergency.html); CDC, Avoiding Carbon Monoxide Poisoning (https://www.cdc.gov/natural-disasters/psa-toolkit/avoiding-carbon-monoxide-poisoning.html); Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), DEWA urges customers to take precautions to avoid power disruptions during rainy season (https://dewa.gov.ae/en/about-us/media-publications/latest-news/2025/11/dewa-urges-customers-to-take-precautions-to-avoid-power-disruptions-during-rainy-season); Ready.gov (FEMA), Water (https://www.ready.gov/water); Government of Canada, Power outages: how to prepare (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/hazards-emergencies/power-outages/how-prepare.html); GOV.UK (UK Health Security Agency), How to recover from flooding (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flooding-and-health-advice-for-frontline-responders/how-to-recover-from-flooding); Government of Canada, Emergency kit checklist (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits/get-kit.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Water supply failure

Tap water can stop or become unsafe after a burst main, contamination or a wider emergency. This page helps you store water, use it sparingly, make it safe to drink, and follow official water notices.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Sealed bottled water, at least 4 litres per person per day
- [ ] Unscented household bleach (check strength on label)
- [ ] Dropper or measuring spoon for bleach
- [ ] Clean cloth or coffee filters for cloudy water
- [ ] Clean lidded containers for treated water
- [ ] Hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol
- [ ] Ready-to-use baby formula
- [ ] Bucket with a lid for carrying water
- [ ] Strong plastic bags and sawdust or litter for emergency toilet use

BEFORE

- Store sealed water: at least 1 gallon (about 4 litres) per person per day for 3 days, more in hot weather.
- Keep extra water for babies, pets and anyone whose medical condition uses more water.
- Keep stored water sealed, cool and dark, and check it once or twice a year.
- Freeze some bottles, not filled to the top. They give spare drinking water and keep the freezer cold in a power cut.
- Keep unscented household bleach, a clean cloth and lidded containers for treating water.
- Keep hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol for when soap and safe water run short.

DURING

- Follow your water supplier's notices and local officials' advice.
- Save bottled water for drinking, cooking, brushing teeth and mixing baby formula.
- Under a boil notice, bring water to a rolling boil for 1 minute, then cool and store covered.
- No way to boil? Add 2 drops of 5 to 9% unscented bleach per litre, stir and wait at least 30 minutes.
- Filter cloudy water through a clean cloth first, and double the bleach dose.
- Boiling does not remove chemicals. Under a do not drink notice, use only bottled water.
- Skip fridge ice and water dispensers. Brush teeth with bottled or boiled water.
- If toilets cannot flush, line the bowl with a bag, cover waste with sawdust, and seal it.

AFTER

- Keep following any boil or limit use notice until your water company says it can stop.
- Do not drink discoloured water until your water company confirms it is safe.
- Report discoloured water to your water company and note each time it happens.

IN THE UAE

In Dubai, report water or electricity technical emergencies to DEWA on 991. For billing and general questions, call DEWA customer services on 04 601 9999. DEWA's Customer Care Centre runs 24/7.

MY NOTES

Sources: UK Government (Prepare), Water supply interruptions or outages (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-informed-about-hazards/water-supply-interruptions-or-outages/); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Access to water during a crisis (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/access-to-water-during-a-crisis/); CDC, How to Make Water Safe in an Emergency (https://www.cdc.gov/water-emergency/about/index.html); CDC, Drinking Water Advisories: An Overview (https://www.cdc.gov/water-emergency/about/drinking-water-advisories-an-overview.html); CDC, What You Can Do to Prevent Diarrheal Illness After a Disaster (https://www.cdc.gov/water-emergency/safety/index.html); CDC, Preventing Crypto at Home During a Boil Water Advisory (https://www.cdc.gov/cryptosporidium/prevention/crypto-home-boil-water.html); Drinking Water Inspectorate (UK), Discoloured water (https://www.dwi.gov.uk/consumers/learn-more-about-your-water/discoloured-water/); UK Government (Prepare), Get prepared for emergencies (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/); Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), Customer Care Centre services (https://dewa.gov.ae/en/consumer/useful-tools/customer-care-centre-services); CDC, How to Create an Emergency Water Supply (https://www.cdc.gov/water-emergency/about/how-to-create-and-store-an-emergency-water-supply.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Phone and internet outage

Mobile networks, landlines and broadband can fail during storms, power cuts or technical faults, cutting you off from family, news and emergency help. This page helps you plan backup ways to stay informed and in touch.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Battery, solar or wind-up radio
- [ ] Spare batteries
- [ ] Charged power bank
- [ ] Car phone charger
- [ ] Paper list of important phone numbers
- [ ] Printed local maps
- [ ] Written family meeting point

BEFORE

- Write important numbers on paper: family, school, utilities, doctor. Keep the list in your kit.
- Keep a battery, solar or wind-up radio with spare batteries for official updates.
- Download or print maps of your area so you are not relying on internet navigation.
- Agree a family meeting point in case you cannot reach each other.
- Make sure everyone in the family, including older relatives, knows how to send a text.
- Check how personal alarms or medical sensors behave when the network is down.

DURING

- If your landline fails, try a mobile. Emergency calls can use any available network.
- If mobile signal is gone but Wi-Fi works, turn on Wi-Fi Calling.
- Send texts instead of calling. Texts often get through when calls fail.
- Keep calls short and wait 10 seconds before redialling a failed call.
- Lower screen use and switch on battery saving to stretch your phone charge.
- Try moving a short distance or using public Wi-Fi if calls will not connect.
- Listen to the radio, including a car radio, for local news and instructions.
- Check on neighbours who live alone or may need help.

AFTER

- Report lasting faults to your provider and check its service status page.
- Replace used batteries and recharge power banks so your kit is ready again.
- Install pending phone software updates once you are back online.
- If your local coverage is worse than your provider claims, report it to the regulator.

IN THE UAE

The UAE National Early Warning System sends public alerts to mobile phones. When one arrives, acknowledge it and follow its instructions.

MY NOTES

Sources: Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Access to communication during a crisis (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/access-to-communication-during-a-crisis/); UK Government (Prepare), Phone and broadband outages (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-informed-about-hazards/phone-broadband-outages/); FCC / FEMA, Emergency Communications Tips (https://www.fcc.gov/emergency); FCC, Tips for Communicating in an Emergency (https://www.fcc.gov/reports-research/guides/tips-communicating-emergency); UAE National Emergency Crisis and Disaster Management Authority (NCEMA), The National Early Warning System (https://www.ncema.gov.ae/en/e-participation/blog/the-national-early-warning-system.aspx); Government of Canada, Emergency kits (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Cyberattacks, GPS and grid failures

Cyberattacks, IT failures and severe space weather can knock out power, payments, navigation and online services, and scammers often exploit the confusion. This page helps your family secure accounts, keep offline backups, and avoid outage scams.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Cash in mixed small denominations
- [ ] Bank cards from more than one provider, PINs memorised
- [ ] Printed local maps
- [ ] Paper list of important phone numbers
- [ ] External hard drive with backups of key files
- [ ] Solar or hand-crank phone charger
- [ ] Car phone charger
- [ ] Battery or wind-up radio

BEFORE

- Protect your email first with a strong unique password or passkey and 2-step verification.
- Use a password manager to create and store different passwords for each account.
- Switch on automatic updates for phones, computers and smart home devices.
- Back up photos and key documents, ideally automatically or at least weekly, and practise restoring them.
- Keep some cash at home in mixed small notes, and hold cards from more than one provider.
- Keep printed maps and a paper contact list in case GPS and phones stop working.

DURING

- In a severe space weather alert, save electricity to help prevent forced power cuts.
- Keep phone calls for emergencies only, and avoid lifts in case power fails.
- Follow official emergency alerts and instructions carefully.
- Treat unexpected messages about the outage with suspicion, even if they look official.
- Watch for scam signs: urgency, threats, claims of authority, or offers that play on fear.
- Do not click links, scan QR codes or download fixes from unsolicited messages.
- Check any request by contacting the organisation through its official website, not the message.
- Remember banks never ask you to confirm account details by email.

AFTER

- Report scam messages and websites so authorities can take them down.
- If you think you were scammed, report it to the police straight away.
- Report suspected fraud quickly, even if you feel embarrassed. Fast reports help.
- Restore any lost or damaged files from your backups.

IN THE UAE

In the UAE, report online scams and cyber-enabled fraud through the Dubai Police eCrime platform (ecrimehub.gov.ae) or your local police. For emergencies, call police on 999.

MY NOTES

Sources: UK Government (Prepare), Cyber (https://prepare.campaign.gov.uk/be-informed-about-hazards/cyber/); UK National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), Top tips for staying secure online (https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/top-tips-for-staying-secure-online); US National Weather Service (NOAA), Before an Extreme Solar Event (https://www.weather.gov/safety/space-before); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Payments and cash in times of crisis (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/payments-and-cash-in-times-of-crisis/); UK Government (Prepare), Phone and broadband outages (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-informed-about-hazards/phone-broadband-outages/); US National Weather Service (NOAA), During an Extreme Solar Event (https://www.weather.gov/safety/space-during); UK National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), Statement on major IT outage and phishing threat (https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/news/major-it-outage); UK National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), Spot scams (https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/phishing-scams/spot-scams); UK National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), Phishing attacks: defending your organisation (https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/phishing); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Reporting economic crimes (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/business/important-digital-services/reporting-economic-crimes)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Floods and heavy rain

Heavy rain can cause flash floods with little warning, even outside known flood zones. This page helps families plan ahead, stay safe while water is rising, and return home and clean up carefully.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Drinking water for several days
- [ ] Non-perishable food
- [ ] Important documents in a waterproof container
- [ ] Password-protected digital copies of documents
- [ ] Spare medication
- [ ] Printed list of emergency contacts
- [ ] Copy of your flood plan
- [ ] Weather alert radio
- [ ] Heavy work gloves, boots and face masks for clean-up
- [ ] Cleaning supplies

BEFORE

- Find out how likely flooding is where you live, and remember it can happen outside mapped areas.
- Sign up for official flood warnings by text, phone or email.
- Make a written household flood plan covering where to go, what to do and your pets.
- Keep spare medicine, important papers and contact numbers stored safely with your plan.
- Learn your evacuation routes and practise them with the family.
- Clear drains and gutters, and move valuables to higher shelves or floors.

DURING

- When a warning is issued, move people, pets and key items upstairs or to higher ground.
- Switch off gas, power and water only if safe, and never touch switches while standing in water.
- Never walk, swim, cycle or drive through floodwater. Shallow moving water can knock you over.
- Keep off bridges above fast flowing water and never drive around road barriers.
- Leave immediately if authorities tell you to evacuate.
- If trapped in a building, go to the highest level. Only go onto the roof if you must, then signal for help.
- If water rises inside your car, climb onto the roof and call for help.
- Keep listening to official alerts for updated instructions.

AFTER

- Go home only once authorities confirm it is safe.
- Stay out of floodwater: it may be contaminated, hide debris or be live from fallen power lines.
- Do not touch wet electrical items, or anything electrical while standing in water.
- Wear heavy gloves, boots, protective clothing and a mask when clearing mud and mould.

IN THE UAE

Abu Dhabi Government guidance for unstable weather says: do not drive in wadi beds when unstable weather is announced, stay away from pools of water and flood channels, and if your vehicle is caught in floodwater or a wadi, call 999 and do not get out unless it is absolutely necessary.

MY NOTES

Sources: Ready.gov (FEMA), Floods (https://www.ready.gov/floods); GOV.UK, Prepare for flooding (https://www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding); GOV.UK, What to do before or during a flood (https://www.gov.uk/help-during-flood); Abu Dhabi Media Office (Abu Dhabi Government), Safety Guidelines in Adverse Weather Conditions (https://www.mediaoffice.abudhabi/en/safety-guidelines-adverse-weather-conditions); Ready.gov (FEMA), Floods (https://www.ready.gov/floods)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Extreme heat

Very hot weather can make anyone ill, and heat stroke can kill. This page helps families keep homes and bodies cool, spot the difference between heat exhaustion and heat stroke, and act fast.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Refillable water bottle
- [ ] Oral rehydration powder or sports drinks
- [ ] Wide-brimmed hat
- [ ] Loose, light-coloured clothing
- [ ] Cold packs and a cloth to wrap them
- [ ] Cool box for medicines that need chilling
- [ ] List of nearby cool public places

BEFORE

• Learn the warning signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
• Locate nearby cool public places, such as malls or libraries, to use if your cooling fails.
• Shade windows with curtains, blinds or reflective film to keep heat out.
• Seal gaps around doors and windows and improve insulation.
• Ask your doctor before changing any medicine, and plan how to keep chilled medicines cold in a power cut.
• Know who is most at risk: babies, young children, over 65s, pregnant women and people with heart or lung conditions.

DURING

• Never leave children, adults or pets in a parked car, even briefly.
• Drink plenty of water through the day and limit alcohol.
• Stay out of direct sun around the middle of the day and keep to the shade.
• Wear loose, light-coloured, lightweight clothes and a wide-brimmed hat.
• Do not rely on a fan as your main cooling in very hot rooms. Use air conditioning or a cool place.
• Take cool showers and use the oven less to keep the home cooler.
• Look in on older relatives, neighbours who live alone and anyone with a long-term illness.
• Give pets shade and cool water, and keep their paws off hot pavement.

IN THE UAE

Every summer since 2005, the UAE midday break has banned work in direct sun and open-air spaces; in 2025 it ran from 12:30pm to 3pm between 15 June and 15 September. Check each year's announcement; the hours are a useful guide for timing family outdoor activity too.

MY NOTES

Sources: Ready.gov (FEMA), Extreme Heat (https://www.ready.gov/heat); NHS, Heat exhaustion and heatstroke (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heat-exhaustion-heatstroke/); CDC, About Heat and Your Health (https://www.cdc.gov/heat-health/about/index.html); Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MoHRE), MoHRE to implement Midday Break for the 21st consecutive year from 15 June to 15 September 2025 (3 June 2025) (https://mohre.gov.ae/en/media-center/news/3/6/2025/mohre-to-implement-midday-break-for-the-21st-consecutive-year-from-15-june-to-15-september-2025); CDC (NIOSH), Heat-related Illnesses (https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/heat-stress/about/illnesses.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Extreme cold and winter storms

Cold snaps and winter storms bring snow, ice and freezing temperatures that can cut power, block roads and cause hypothermia, frostbite or carbon monoxide poisoning. This page helps families prepare the home and car, keep warm safely, and respond to cold injuries.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Drinking water, about 3.8 litres (1 gallon) per person per day
- [ ] At least two weeks of food and supplies at home
- [ ] One month of medicines plus a list of medicines and doses
- [ ] Hats, mittens and blankets for everyone
- [ ] Battery powered radio with spare batteries
- [ ] Torch with spare batteries
- [ ] Battery operated carbon monoxide detector
- [ ] Snow shovel and ice melt for paths
- [ ] Phone, power bank and extra batteries
- [ ] Car: blankets or sleeping bag, warm clothes and boots
- [ ] Car: ice scraper, jumper cables and sand or cat litter for grip

BEFORE

- Sign up for official weather alerts. A watch means get ready, a warning means act now.
- Seal draughts with insulation, caulk and weather stripping, and insulate water pipes along outside walls.
- Make a household plan that covers older relatives, children, pets and anyone with health needs.
- Have chimneys and furnaces checked yearly, and fit battery carbon monoxide detectors near fuel-burning heaters.
- Store at least two weeks of food, medicine and water, about 3.8 litres (1 gallon) per person daily.
- Service the car before winter: antifreeze, tyres, battery and brakes. Keep the fuel tank nearly full.

DURING

- Stay indoors and avoid travel. If you must drive, go in daylight and tell someone your route.
- Keep anything that can burn at least 1 metre (3 feet) from space heaters and fireplaces.
- Never heat your home with a gas oven or cooking stove.
- Run generators only outdoors, at least 6 metres (20 feet) from doors, windows and vents. Never grill indoors.
- If anyone feels dizzy, sick or weak, get them into fresh air immediately. Carbon monoxide can kill.
- Use torches and battery lights instead of candles during a power cut.
- If stranded, stay in the car unless help is visible within about 90 metres (100 yards).
- Run the engine about 10 minutes each hour, with the exhaust clear of snow and a downwind window open slightly.

AFTER

- Shivering, confusion, slurred speech or drowsiness can mean hypothermia. Treat it as an emergency and get medical help.
- While waiting, move the person somewhere warm, remove wet clothes and wrap them in blankets, head covered.
- Do not use hot baths, hot water bottles or heat lamps, rub their limbs or give alcohol.
- For frostbite, remove rings and wet gloves, then soak the area in warm, not hot, water.

MY NOTES

Sources: American Red Cross, Winter Storm Safety (https://redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/winter-storm.html); CDC, Preparing for a Winter Storm (https://www.cdc.gov/winter-weather/safety/index.html); CDC, Preventing Hypothermia (https://www.cdc.gov/winter-weather/prevention/index.html); CDC, Preventing Frostbite (https://cdc.gov/winter-weather/prevention/preventing-frostbite.html); NHS, Hypothermia (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Hypothermia/); NHS, Frostbite (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/frostbite/); CDC, Avoiding Carbon Monoxide Poisoning (https://www.cdc.gov/natural-disasters/psa-toolkit/avoiding-carbon-monoxide-poisoning.html); Government of Canada (Get Prepared), Winter storms (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/hazards-emergencies/winter-storms.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Sandstorms and dust storms

Sand and dust storms can arrive suddenly, cutting visibility on roads and irritating lungs and eyes. This page helps families protect their health at home, drive safely, and clean up once the dust settles.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Face masks, with spares to change often
- [ ] Protective glasses or goggles
- [ ] Towels to dampen and seal door and window gaps
- [ ] Asthma inhalers and prescribed medicines
- [ ] Prescribed antihistamines for severe allergy sufferers

BEFORE

• Follow weather forecasts and official dust warnings so you are not caught out.
• If anyone has asthma or a breathing condition, follow their doctor's instructions and use their medicine as prescribed.
• Before a storm, park your car in a safe place and keep children indoors.
• Know that storms can hit as a sudden wall of dust and usually pass within minutes.

DURING

• Stay indoors and only go out if you really need to.
• Shut doors and windows tightly and block gaps with damp towels.
• Outside, cover nose and mouth with a mask or damp cloth and change it often.
• Do not rub your eyes. Wear protective glasses if you must be outdoors.
• People with asthma or lung disease should stay inside and take medicine as prescribed.
• Avoid open spaces at the peak of the storm and when visibility is poor.
• Wash your face, nose and mouth often.

AFTER

• Clean dust thoroughly from the home, especially bedrooms, sheets and blankets.
• Visit a health centre if you develop a cough, wheezing, asthma symptoms or watery eyes.
• Go to the emergency department straight away for any difficulty breathing.
• Do not go out until conditions are back to normal, and keep following official updates.

IF YOU ARE DRIVING

• Avoid driving into a dust storm if at all possible.
• Close all windows and shut the air conditioning's outside air intake.
• If dust is thick, pull right off the road, stop and set the handbrake. US weather services advise then turning off all lights, so other drivers do not follow you off the road.
• In the UAE, NCEMA advises leaving the main road if visibility becomes very poor and stopping with your lights on. Where advice differs, follow your local authority.
• Pull completely off the road and keep your seatbelt on.
• If you cannot pull off, slow right down, use lights and follow the road markings.

IN THE UAE

NCEMA, the UAE federal emergency authority, advises keeping children with asthma, allergies or breathing problems indoors during sandstorms unless it is urgent, and avoiding open areas if you have allergies, asthma or a chest infection.

MY NOTES

Sources: Saudi Ministry of Health, MOH Directs Safety Tips to Avert the Dust Storm Hitting Some of KSA Regions (https://www.moh.gov.sa/en/ministry/mediacenter/news/pages/news-2013-03-18-001.aspx); US National Weather Service (NOAA), Dust Storm Safety (https://www.weather.gov/safety/wind-dust-storm); Ready Illinois (Illinois Emergency Management Agency), Dust Storms Fact Sheet (https://ready.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/ready/plan/documents/DustStorms_Factsheet.pdf); Qatar Tribune (report of Qatar Ministry of Public Health advice, Aug 2016), MoPH gives tips to stay safe during sandstorms (https://www.qatar-tribune.com/article/17164/NATION/MoPH-gives-tips-to-stay-safe-during-sandstorms); National Emergency Crisis and Disaster Management Authority (NCEMA), Sand Storms (awareness message) (https://www.ncema.gov.ae/en/media-center/awareness-messages/sand-storms.aspx)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Severe storms, cyclones and hurricanes

Thunderstorms, cyclones and hurricanes bring damaging winds, lightning and flooding, and can cut power and water for days. This page helps families plan shelter or evacuation, ride out the storm safely, and recover afterwards.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Three days of food and water in a portable grab bag
- [ ] Two weeks of food and water at home
- [ ] One month of medicines in a child-proof container
- [ ] Battery powered radio
- [ ] Torches and battery lights
- [ ] Power bank and chargers for phones and medical devices
- [ ] Personal, financial and medical records kept safe
- [ ] Plastic sheeting and sandbags
- [ ] Work gloves, goggles and boots

BEFORE

- Sign up for official weather alerts and learn that a watch means prepare and a warning means act now.
- Decide where you would go if told to evacuate, how you would get there and where you would stay.
- Choose a safe room: a small, windowless interior room on the lowest floor of a sturdy building.
- Bring in or tie down outdoor furniture, bins and gas cylinders that wind could throw.
- Protect windows with storm shutters or pre-cut boards, and trim trees near the house.
- Pack a three-day grab bag and keep two weeks of supplies at home.

DURING

- If told to evacuate, leave straight away with your emergency kit and use official routes.
- If staying, shelter in your safe room and keep away from windows and glass doors.
- When you hear thunder, get inside a solid building. Tents, sheds and trees give no protection.
- Indoors, avoid plugged-in devices and running water during lightning.
- If driving, pull off the road away from trees and power lines if you cannot reach a building.
- Head for higher ground before flooding starts, and never enter floodwater.
- Stay indoors until official forecasts say the danger has passed.

AFTER

- Return home only when officials say your area is safe.
- Keep well clear of fallen power lines and report them.
- Use torches, not candles, during power cuts.
- Run generators only outdoors, at least 6 metres (20 feet) from doors, windows and vents, to avoid carbon monoxide.

IN THE UAE

Abu Dhabi Government guidance for adverse weather says to stay indoors and away from windows and metal doors during heavy rain and thunderstorms, avoid open areas and using phones outdoors, keep away from trees, poles and loose objects in strong winds, and avoid going to sea.

MY NOTES

Sources: American Red Cross, Hurricane Safety (https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/hurricane.html); American Red Cross, Thunderstorm Safety (https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/thunderstorm.html); Abu Dhabi Media Office (Abu Dhabi Government), Safety Guidelines in Adverse Weather Conditions (https://www.mediaoffice.abudhabi/en/safety-guidelines-adverse-weather-conditions); CDC, Use a Generator Safely (https://www.cdc.gov/natural-disasters/psa-toolkit/use-a-generator-safely.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Earthquakes

Earthquakes strike without warning and can be followed by aftershocks. This page helps families secure their home in advance, protect themselves while the ground shakes, and stay safe in the hours afterwards.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Food and water for at least three days
- [ ] Torch
- [ ] Spare batteries
- [ ] Whistle
- [ ] Fire extinguisher
- [ ] Medicines and personal needs for each person
- [ ] Pet supplies
- [ ] Phone chargers or power bank
- [ ] Battery powered radio
- [ ] Work gloves and sturdy shoes

BEFORE

• Fix TVs, shelves and wall-hung objects firmly so they cannot fall.
• Keep heavy or breakable items on low shelves.
• Practise Drop, Cover, Hold On with family members and colleagues.
• Agree a family contact living in another area and a place to meet if separated.
• Pack a supply kit with food, water and essentials for at least three days.
• Check whether your insurance covers earthquake damage, as standard policies often do not.

DURING

• Drop to your hands and knees, cover your head and neck under a sturdy table or desk, and hold on until the shaking stops. If there is no shelter nearby, get down near an inside wall or low furniture that will not fall on you, and cover your head and neck with your arms.
• Do not stand in a doorway or run outside while shaking continues.
• If in bed, stay there and shield your head and neck with a pillow.
• If driving, stop in an open spot clear of buildings, trees, bridges and power lines.
• If already outdoors, stay outside.
• In a tall building, expect alarms and sprinklers, and never use the lifts.
• Near hills or cliffs, watch for falling rocks and landslides.

AFTER

• Be ready for aftershocks.
• Check yourself for injuries, then help others if you are trained.
• Leave a damaged building quickly and do not go back in.
• If trapped, cover your mouth and signal by tapping, texting or whistling instead of shouting.

IN THE UAE

NCEMA, the UAE federal emergency authority, advises staying away from glass windows and doors, not going back into damaged buildings, keeping phone use to a minimum, and following official media for updates.

MY NOTES

Sources: Ready.gov (FEMA), Earthquakes (https://www.ready.gov/earthquakes); National Emergency Crisis and Disasters Management Authority (NCEMA), Earthquakes (https://www.ncema.gov.ae/en/media-center/awareness-messages/earthquakes.aspx); US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Safety Guidelines: During an Earthquake (https://www.cdc.gov/earthquakes/safety/stay-safe-during-an-earthquake.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Wildfires

Wildfires can spread fast, force sudden evacuations and fill the air with harmful smoke far from the flames. This page helps families plan escape routes, protect their lungs from smoke, and return home safely.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Three days of portable supplies in a grab bag
- [ ] Two weeks of supplies at home
- [ ] One month of medicines in a child-proof container
- [ ] Personal, financial and medical records
- [ ] Battery powered radio
- [ ] Phone power bank
- [ ] Well-fitting respirators or masks for each adult and child aged 2 and over
- [ ] Goggles and work gloves
- [ ] Pet carrier and pet supplies

BEFORE

• Plan where you would go, how you would get there and where you would stay.
• Work out several escape routes, then drive and practise them with the household.
• Sign up for local emergency alerts and keep a way to charge your phone.
• Keep well-fitting respirators or masks at home for each adult, and for children aged 2 and over in a size that fits them.
• Pick a room you can seal from outside air and set up a portable air cleaner there.
• Clear flammable material around your home to create a defensible space.

DURING

• Follow fire and smoke updates and do exactly what local authorities say.
• Be ready to leave at short notice with your grab bag.
• Leave if told to, or if you feel unsafe, even without an official order.
• If smoky, stay inside with windows shut and set air conditioning to recirculate.
• Avoid burning anything indoors, including candles, incense and gas, and skip vacuuming.
• If you must go outside, wear a well-fitted N95 or P100 respirator.
• Watch people with asthma, heart disease, diabetes or pregnancy for new symptoms and get help early.

AFTER

• Go back only when officials confirm it is safe.
• Watch for hot ash, smouldering debris and hidden hot spots in the ground.
• Mark ash pits and warn family and neighbours to keep away.
• Stay away from damaged or fallen power lines.

MY NOTES

Sources: American Red Cross, Wildfire Safety (https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/wildfire.html); CDC, Preparing for Wildfires (https://www.cdc.gov/wildfires/safety/index.html); CDC, Safety Guidelines: Wildfires and Wildfire Smoke (https://www.cdc.gov/wildfires/safety/how-to-safely-stay-safe-during-a-wildfire.html); CDC, Preparing for Wildfires (https://www.cdc.gov/wildfires/safety/index.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

First aid essentials

In many emergencies the first minutes matter most, before professional help arrives. This page covers the basics: stopping heavy bleeding, the recovery position, when to call for help, and why to take a proper CPR course.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Absorbent compress dressings
- [ ] Assorted adhesive bandages
- [ ] Sterile gauze pads and roller bandages
- [ ] Adhesive cloth tape
- [ ] Antiseptic wipes
- [ ] Non latex gloves
- [ ] CPR breathing barrier with one way valve
- [ ] Emergency blanket
- [ ] Instant cold compress
- [ ] Triangular bandages
- [ ] Tweezers and a non glass thermometer
- [ ] First aid instruction leaflet and emergency numbers

BEFORE

- Take a first aid course or learn the basic skills from online videos.
- Download a free first aid app to learn and practise first aid.
- Keep a first aid kit at home and another in the car.
- Find out where first aid kits are kept at your workplace.
- Check the kit regularly and replace used or expired items.
- Add emergency phone numbers and any personal medicines to your kit.

DURING

- Heavy bleeding: press firmly on the wound with any cloth you have.
- Call emergency services, or ask someone nearby to call, and keep pressing until help arrives.
- If an object is stuck in a wound, leave it in and press around it.
- If they seem pale, cold or dizzy, lay them down, raise their feet and keep them warm.
- Unresponsive but breathing: move them onto their side, tilt their head back and call for help.
- Unresponsive and not breathing: call for help, then push hard on the centre of the chest.
- If a defibrillator is available, switch it on and follow its spoken instructions.
- Treat noisy, irregular or gasping breathing as not breathing.

AFTER

- Stay with the person until help arrives.
- Call back if their condition or your location changes.
- Turn on lights, or car hazard lights, so responders can find you.
- Gather their medicines and tell paramedics about any known allergies.

IN THE UAE

In the UAE dial 998 for an ambulance and 999 for police from anywhere; hospitals give stabilising emergency treatment free.

MY NOTES

Sources: British Red Cross, Bleeding heavily (https://www.redcross.org.uk/first-aid/learn-first-aid/bleeding-heavily); British Red Cross, Unresponsive and breathing (https://www.redcross.org.uk/first-aid/learn-first-aid/unresponsive-and-breathing); British Red Cross, Unresponsive and not breathing (https://www.redcross.org.uk/first-aid/learn-first-aid/unresponsive-and-not-breathing); NHS (UK), When to call 999 (https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care-services/when-to-call-999/); British Red Cross, Learn first aid (https://www.redcross.org.uk/first-aid/learn-first-aid); American Red Cross, Make a First Aid Kit (https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/anatomy-of-a-first-aid-kit.html); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Pandemics and disease outbreaks

A pandemic is a disease outbreak that spreads widely and can close schools, workplaces and shops for weeks. This page helps your family stock up sensibly, cut the chance of infection and cope until life returns to normal.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Bottled water
- [ ] Non perishable food
- [ ] Prescription medicines
- [ ] Cleaning and disinfecting supplies
- [ ] Soap and alcohol based hand sanitiser
- [ ] Face masks
- [ ] Thermometer
- [ ] Tissues
- [ ] Copies of important documents

BEFORE

- Learn the ways disease spreads, including from people who show no symptoms.
- Build up several weeks of supplies gradually so shelves stay stocked for others.
- Set up home schooling, remote work and online social options in case of closures.
- Make a family plan covering care for children, older relatives and anyone who falls ill.
- Check what your health insurance covers, including remote doctor consultations.
- Keep password protected digital copies of key documents and stay alert to scams.

DURING

- Follow local health authority guidance, including on vaccination.
- Wash hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol based hand rub.
- Keep your distance from people outside your household and avoid crowded indoor spaces.
- Wear a well fitting mask indoors or when you cannot keep your distance.
- Cough or sneeze into a bent elbow or tissue, bin the tissue, then clean hands.
- Open windows to bring fresh air indoors.
- Stay home when sick except to get medical care, and clean high touch surfaces.
- Share only accurate information and stay in touch with others to manage stress.

AFTER

- Keep good habits: handwashing, covering coughs and staying home when ill.
- Return to normal activities gradually, following official health advice.
- Review and update your family emergency plan.
- Talk with your community about lessons learned and how to prepare better next time.

IN THE UAE

In the UAE, call 998 for an ambulance in an emergency; treatment in hospital to stabilise an emergency case is free.

MY NOTES

Sources: Ready.gov (FEMA), Pandemic (https://www.ready.gov/pandemic); World Health Organization, Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): How is it transmitted? (https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-how-is-it-transmitted); Emirates Health Services (UAE), Pandemic readiness and response (https://www.ehs.gov.ae/en/100-preview-c-001/pandemic-readiness-and-response); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Home fire

A house or flat fire can fill rooms with smoke in moments, leaving little time to escape. This page helps your family prevent fires, get out safely and recover afterwards.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Working smoke alarms with spare or long life batteries
- [ ] Kitchen fire extinguisher
- [ ] Torch for escaping and signalling
- [ ] Light coloured cloth for signalling from a window
- [ ] Towels or tape to seal door gaps
- [ ] Written escape plan with two exits per room
- [ ] Digital copies of key documents

BEFORE

- Fit smoke alarms on every level of your home and never disable one while cooking.
- Make a fire escape plan with two exits from every room and practise it twice a year.
- Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen and learn how to use it.
- Stay in the kitchen while frying, grilling or broiling food.
- Replace damaged cords and never run cables under rugs or furniture.
- Lock matches and lighters away from children and teach them not to hide from firefighters.

DURING

- Get out immediately and leave belongings behind.
- Stay low and crawl under smoke towards your exit.
- Feel doors before opening; if hot or smoky, keep it shut and use another exit.
- Close doors behind you and never use lifts.
- If you cannot reach someone who needs help, get out and call the fire service.
- If trapped, shut the door, seal gaps with cloth, call for help and signal from a window.
- If clothes catch fire, stop, drop, cover your face and roll until the flames are out, then cool the burn with cool water.

AFTER

- Do not go back inside until fire officials say it is safe.
- Leave utilities for professionals to reconnect.
- Contact a relief service such as the Red Cross for shelter, food and medicine.
- Make a list of damaged items before throwing anything away.

IN THE UAE

In the UAE call Civil Defence on 997, walk calmly to marked exits and avoid lifts.

MY NOTES

Sources: Ready.gov (FEMA), Home Fires (https://www.ready.gov/home-fires); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Gas leaks and carbon monoxide

A gas leak can cause fire or explosion, and carbon monoxide is an invisible, odourless gas that can poison a household without warning. This page helps you prevent both, spot the signs and act fast.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Carbon monoxide alarm for each room with a fuel burning appliance
- [ ] Spare batteries for alarms
- [ ] Location of the gas main tap, marked and known to all
- [ ] Gas emergency number saved in phones
- [ ] Gas emergency line in Sharjah: SEWA 991 (24 hours)

BEFORE

- Fit a carbon monoxide alarm in each room with a gas, oil, coal or wood burning appliance.
- Test alarm batteries regularly and replace alarms as the maker advises.
- Have gas cookers, heaters and boilers installed and serviced by a qualified engineer.
- Keep rooms ventilated and chimneys and flues clean.
- Never use barbecues, charcoal or camping stoves indoors.
- Never run a car or generator in a garage or enclosed space.

DURING

- If you smell gas, open doors and windows straight away.
- Turn off the gas at the meter or main tap if it is safe to do so.
- Do not smoke, light matches or turn electrical switches on or off.
- Get everyone out on foot, then call for help from a safe place outside: in the UAE call Civil Defence on 997, in the UK 0800 111 999, in the US 911.
- Suspect carbon monoxide? Switch off the appliance if safe and go outside.
- Watch for headache, dizziness, nausea, tiredness, confusion and breathlessness.
- Call an ambulance for breathing trouble, confusion or collapse; do not drive yourself.

AFTER

- Wait outside for the engineer and stay out until told it is safe.
- Get medical advice promptly if anyone felt unwell.
- Tell medical staff you may have been exposed to gas or carbon monoxide.

IN THE UAE

Abu Dhabi Civil Defence says not to light anything if you suspect a gas leak, as any spark could cause an explosion, and to keep cylinders out of direct sunlight.

MY NOTES

Sources: Croydon Council (UK local government), If you smell gas (https://www.croydon.gov.uk/housing/information-council-tenants/housing-maintenance-and-safety/housing-maintenance-and-safety/home-safety-services/if-you-smell-gas); NHS (UK), Carbon monoxide poisoning (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/carbon-monoxide-poisoning/); CDC, About Carbon Monoxide Poisoning (https://www.cdc.gov/carbon-monoxide/about/index.html); National Gas (UK), Emergency contacts (https://www.nationalgas.com/emergency-contacts); US Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Pipeline Leak Recognition and What to Do (https://www.phmsa.dot.gov/safety-awareness/pipeline/pipeline-leak-recognition-and-what-do); Abu Dhabi Police (Civil Defence), Fire prevention near gas cylinders (https://www.adpolice.gov.ae/en/Media-Center/News/2021/06/29/ADP-Civil-Defense-Urges-for-Fire-Prevention-near-Explosive-Gas-Cylinders); Abu Dhabi Police (Civil Defence), Home kitchens and 10 fire prevention tips (https://www.adpolice.gov.ae/en/Media-Center/News/2021/07/01/Abu-Dhabi-Civil-Defense--Home-Kitchens-and-10-Fire-Prevention-Tips); Sharjah Electricity, Water and Gas Authority (SEWA), Contact us (https://sewa.gov.ae/en/contact-us)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Stranded in the desert or car breakdown

A breakdown on a busy road or a remote desert track can quickly become dangerous, especially in extreme heat. This page helps you prepare your car, stay safe while you wait and get help to find you.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Drinking water, plenty for every passenger
- [ ] Non perishable snacks
- [ ] Phone charger and backup battery
- [ ] Torch with spare batteries
- [ ] First aid kit
- [ ] Whistle for signalling
- [ ] Booster cables
- [ ] Warning triangle or flares
- [ ] Road map
- [ ] Blanket
- [ ] High visibility or reflective vest
- [ ] GPS device for desert trips

BEFORE

• Keep an emergency kit in the car in case you get stranded.
• Check tyres, lights, brakes, wipers and fluid levels regularly.
• Keep your fuel tank well filled.
• Check weather and road conditions before setting off.
• Avoid going deep into the desert; if you do, share your location and carry GPS.
• Never leave children or pets alone in a closed car on a hot day.

DURING

• Move the car off the road if you can and switch on hazard lights.
• Get out on the side away from traffic and stand clear of the vehicle.
• If you cannot get out safely, stay belted in with hazards on and call police.
• If it is safe, put a warning triangle well behind the car, taking great care, and follow local road rules.
• In dust or poor visibility, pull over to the side of the road away from traffic (the right-hand side in the UAE) and avoid stopping under trees or billboards.
• Call for help and give your location; in the UAE dial 999.
• In heat, seek shade, sip water and watch for dizziness, cramps or confusion.

AFTER

• Call an ambulance immediately if anyone shows signs of heat stroke.
• Cool an overheated person in shade with wet cloths on neck, armpits and groin.
• On a motorway or highway, do not attempt repairs yourself.
• Replace used or expired items in your car kit.

IN THE UAE

Abu Dhabi Police advise against venturing far into the desert; if you go, share your location and carry GPS.

MY NOTES

Sources: Ready.gov (FEMA), Car Safety (https://www.ready.gov/car); GOV.UK, The Highway Code: Breakdowns and incidents (274 to 287) (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code/breakdowns-and-incidents-274-to-287); GOV.UK, The Highway Code: Annex 6, vehicle maintenance, safety and security (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code/annex-6-vehicle-maintenance-safety-and-security); Abu Dhabi Police, Abu Dhabi Traffic Urges Drivers to Reduce Speed in Dusty Conditions (https://www.adpolice.gov.ae/en/Media-Center/News/2021/06/19/Abu-Dhabi-Traffic-Urges-Drivers-to-Reduce-Speed-in-Dusty-Conditions); Abu Dhabi Police, Tal Moreeb Race Participants to Practice in Designated Areas (https://www.adpolice.gov.ae/en/Media-Center/News/2021/06/29/Tal-Moreeb-Race-Participants-to-Practice-in-Designated-Areas); Ready.gov (FEMA), Extreme Heat (https://www.ready.gov/heat); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); Ready.gov (FEMA), Build A Kit (https://www.ready.gov/kit)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Water safety: pools, beaches and the sea

Drowning can happen within minutes and is often silent, in a home pool as easily as at the beach. This page helps families set up barriers and skills in advance, stay safe in the water, and respond correctly when someone gets into trouble.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Life jackets for children
- [ ] Swim ring or float
- [ ] Throw rope tied to a float, or a long reaching pole
- [ ] Dry clothes and blankets
- [ ] Charged phone to call emergency services hands free
- [ ] Hat, cover-up and sunscreen
- [ ] Plenty of fluids to drink
- [ ] Written list of emergency numbers

BEFORE

- Put a safe fence around home pools and lock doors that lead to the pool.
- Give pool fencing gates that close and latch by themselves.
- Enrol children in swimming lessons and teach basic water survival skills.
- Learn CPR: parents, carers, older children and pool owners should all know it.
- Never leave standing water in buckets, paddling pools or baths.
- Choose a beach with lifeguards and ask them about local conditions.

DURING

- Stay within arm's reach of young children and new swimmers.
- Put your phone away while children swim. Drowning can happen within minutes.
- Keep watching closely. Drowning can happen in seconds and is often silent.
- On lifeguarded beaches, swim only inside the marked safe zone, such as between red and yellow flags.
- Caught in a rip current? Do not fight it. Swim parallel to the shore, then head in.
- If you struggle, lean back and float until your breathing calms, then call for help.
- If someone struggles, reach with a pole or throw a rope tied to a float. Do not swim out untrained.
- In the UAE, call 998 for an ambulance, 999 for police or 996 for the coastguard.

AFTER

- If the person is not breathing, call 998, give 5 rescue breaths, then start CPR: 30 chest compressions to 2 rescue breaths.
- Be ready to roll them onto their side, as many drowning casualties vomit.
- Once breathing, place them in the recovery position and keep checking them.
- Swap wet clothes for dry ones and cover them with blankets to keep warm.

IN THE UAE

Dubai Municipality says qualified lifeguards guard its beaches. It asks beachgoers to follow lifeguard instructions, watch children constantly, and night swim only in designated zones.

MY NOTES

Sources: Abu Dhabi Police, Abu Dhabi Police: 5 steps to avoid children drowning in swimming pools (https://www.adpolice.gov.ae/Media-Center/News/2021/07/01/Abu-Dhabi-Police--5-steps-to-avoid-children-drowning-in-swimming-pools); American Red Cross, Water safety tips for the pool, beach and water park (https://www.redcross.org/about-us/news-and-events/news/2018/water-safety-tips-for-the-pool--beach-and-water-park.html); RNLI, Rip currents (https://rnli.org/safety/know-the-risks/rip-currents); RoSPA, Respect the Water (https://rospa.com/leisure-safety/water/respectthewater); MedlinePlus (US National Library of Medicine), Near drowning (https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000046.htm); St John Ambulance, Drowning: first aid advice (https://www.sja.org.uk/first-aid-advice/drowning/); Dubai Municipality, Dubai opens three new beaches for night swimming (https://www.dm.gov.ae/?p=292624); Dubai Municipality, Jumeira Beach (beach rules and flags) (https://www.dm.gov.ae/?p=8668); UAE Government portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); CDC, About drowning (https://www.cdc.gov/drowning/about/)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Children and cars in hot weather

A parked car can heat to deadly levels within minutes, and children overheat much faster than adults. This page helps families build habits that stop a child or pet being left behind, and explains what to do if you find a child alone in a hot car.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Habit: check the back seat every time you leave the car
- [ ] Reminder item placed in the back seat
- [ ] Car always locked when not in use
- [ ] Car keys stored out of children's reach
- [ ] Nursery or school asked to call if your child is absent
- [ ] UAE emergency numbers saved: 999 police, 998 ambulance

BEFORE

- Never leave a child alone in a parked car, even with the windows open.
- A car can heat up 20°F (about 11°C) in 10 minutes. Cracked windows or shade barely help.
- Children heat up three to five times faster than adults.
- Check the whole car, especially the back seat, every time you get out.
- Leave a reminder in the back seat, such as your bag, so you always look.
- Ask the nursery or school to call you if your child does not arrive.

DURING

- If you see a child alone in a car, check if they respond. If not, call emergency services.
- In the UAE, call 999 for police or 998 for an ambulance.
- If the child seems fine, look for the parent or ask shop security to page them.
- If two of you are there, one searches for the parent while the other stays by the car.
- If the child is unresponsive or distressed, get in to help, even by breaking a window.
- Once out, cool the child down as quickly as possible.
- Never leave a dog in a warm car. If you see one in distress, call the emergency number.

AFTER

- Treat confusion, slurred speech or hot, red skin as heat stroke. Get hospital care at once.
- Move the child somewhere cool, ideally air-conditioned, and apply cool wet cloths.
- Place cold wet cloths or ice on the head, neck, armpits and groin.
- Do not give drinks to someone with heat stroke.

IN THE UAE

Abu Dhabi Police say leaving children alone in a vehicle and endangering their lives is a crime, and negligent people are referred to the judicial authorities. They warn a child can suffocate if the car stops running, or cause an accident by playing with the gear stick.

MY NOTES

Sources: Abu Dhabi Police, Leaving children in vehicles and endangering them is punishable by law (https://www.adpolice.gov.ae/Media-Center/News/2021/07/01/Leaving-children-in-vehicles-and-endangering-them-is-punishable-by-law-); NHTSA (US Department of Transportation), NHTSA urges public to help prevent child heatstroke (https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/nhtsa-urges-public-help-prevent-child-heatstroke); NHTSA (US Department of Transportation), Consumer advisory: NHTSA issues alert to prevent child heatstroke in cars (https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/consumer-advisory-nhtsa-issues-alert-prevent-child-heatstroke-cars); CDC, Protect your kids when it's hot outside (https://cdc.gov/natural-disasters/psa-toolkit/protect-your-kids-when-its-hot-outside.html); Bassetlaw District Council (UK), Dogs die in hot cars (https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/environmental-health/animal-welfare/dogs-die-in-hot-cars); US National Weather Service, Heat illness (https://weather.gov/safety/heat-illness); UAE Government portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); CDC (NIOSH), Heat-related illnesses (https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/heat-stress/about/illnesses.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Desert trips and getting stuck in sand

A desert drive or camping trip can turn dangerous fast if a car gets stuck or breaks down far from help in high heat. This page helps you plan the route and kit, get a vehicle out of soft sand, and spot heat illness early.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] At least one US gallon (about 4 litres) of water per person per day, plus extra
- [ ] Extra food and any needed medicines for several days
- [ ] First aid kit
- [ ] Spare tyres and a jack with a base plate
- [ ] Tyre inflator and pressure gauge
- [ ] Shovel
- [ ] Sand recovery tracks
- [ ] Good map
- [ ] Torch and extra clothing for after sunset
- [ ] Hat, sunglasses and sunscreen
- [ ] Satellite communicator or emergency beacon
- [ ] Fire extinguisher for the campsite

BEFORE

- Plan your route and check road and weather conditions before you set off.
- Tell someone your route, destination, return date, and your car's make and plate number.
- Use a high-clearance 4x4 with off-road tyres, and fill the tank before leaving.
- Do not rely on phone map apps alone, as they may not work in remote areas.
- Carry a satellite communicator or emergency beacon, as phone signal may be absent.
- Pack at least one US gallon (about 4 litres) of water per person per day, plus extra.

DURING

- Lower tyre pressure to about 20 psi or less on soft sand, and drive slowly.
- If you get stuck, stop spinning the wheels. Reverse gently in your own tracks, then go forward.
- Still stuck? Let out more air, down to about 10 psi in very soft sand.
- Dig a clear path for each tyre, then drive out.
- If the car breaks down, stay with it. It gives shade and is easier for rescuers to see.
- Avoid hard effort in extreme heat, drink water freely, and wear a hat and sunscreen.
- For headache, dizziness or heavy sweating, get out of the heat and take frequent sips of cool water.
- Confusion, slurred speech or passing out can mean heat stroke. Call for help and cool them fast.

AFTER

- Pump tyres back up before you return to normal roads.
- Get medical help if heat symptoms get worse, include vomiting, or last over an hour.
- Do not give drinks to someone with heat stroke. Get them to hospital straight away.
- Keep your campsite clean.

IN THE UAE

In Dubai, winter camping needs a Dubai Municipality permit and takes place in the designated Al Aweer camping area during the season (check Dubai Municipality's announcement for the current season). Fire extinguishers are compulsory at camps and fireworks are banned.

MY NOTES

Sources: US National Park Service (Death Valley), News release, 21 August 2026: visitor death and desert travel safety (https://www.nps.gov/deva/learn/news/2026-08-21.htm); US National Park Service (Mojave National Preserve), Safety (https://www.nps.gov/moja/planyourvisit/safety.htm); US National Park Service, Desert driving safety (https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/desertdrivingsafety.htm); Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (Western Australia), Shark Bay and Francois Peron National Park sand driving information (https://www.dbca.wa.gov.au/media/6434/download); CDC (NIOSH), Heat-related illnesses (https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/heat-stress/about/illnesses.html); US National Weather Service, Heat illness (https://weather.gov/safety/heat-illness); Dubai Municipality, Winter camp reservations open with all-new features (https://www.dm.gov.ae/winter-camp-reservations-open-with-all-new-features/); UAE Government portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Economic crisis, shortages and banking disruption

An economic shock, supply disruption or payment system failure can empty shop shelves and stop cards and ATMs working for days. This page helps your family build a modest buffer of supplies, cash and payment options and stay calm while things recover.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Cash in small notes for about a week of essentials
- [ ] Cards from more than one bank and card network
- [ ] One week of long-life food the family eats
- [ ] One month of long-term prescription medicines
- [ ] Stored drinking water
- [ ] Battery or wind-up radio
- [ ] Copies of insurance and financial documents

BEFORE

- Build up about a week of food, medicines and fuel for your household.
- Add one or two long-life items to each normal shop instead of buying all at once.
- Choose foods your family already eats that need little or no cooking.
- Keep some cash at home in small notes in case cards and ATMs stop working.
- Hold accounts at more than one bank and cards from different card networks.
- If you take long-term prescription medicine, aim to keep a month's supply at home.

DURING

- Pay for essentials in cash if card or mobile payments are down.
- Know your card PINs, as contactless tapping may stop working.
- Switch to another bank, card or payment app if your usual one fails.
- Cook from cheap staples such as potatoes, cabbage, onions and carrots to stretch your budget.
- Share supplies with neighbours and buy in bulk together where possible.
- Get updates from official channels and be wary of rumours.
- Check on neighbours who may need extra help, such as older or ill people.

AFTER

- Restock gradually, using the oldest food and medicines first.
- Top up your cash reserve once banking returns to normal.
- Use cash now and then so you stay familiar with it.
- Review your insurance cover and the hazards it includes.

IN THE UAE

In the UAE, keep the national emergency numbers on your paper list: 999 police, 998 ambulance, 997 civil defence, 991 electricity failure.

MY NOTES

Sources: Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Payments and cash in times of crisis (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/payments-and-cash-in-times-of-crisis/); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Access to food during a crisis (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/food/access-to-food-during-a-crisis/); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), One month's supply of medicines at home (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/one-months-supply-of-medicines-at-home/); Ready.gov (FEMA), Financial Preparedness (https://www.ready.gov/financial-preparedness); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Basics of home emergency preparedness (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/basics-of-home-emergency-preparedness/); UK Government (Prepare), Get prepared for emergencies (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); European Commission, EU preparedness union strategy (https://commission.europa.eu/topics/preparedness_en)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Evacuation and leaving home quickly

Fire, flooding, a chemical release or other threats can mean leaving home with little warning. This page helps your family pack a grab bag, plan routes and meeting points, and leave and return safely.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Bottled water: at least 4 litres (about 1 gallon) per person per day, and more in hot weather
- [ ] Non-perishable food and a manual can opener
- [ ] Torch and spare batteries
- [ ] Battery or wind-up radio
- [ ] First aid kit
- [ ] Medicines, glasses, hearing aids and prescriptions
- [ ] ID for each person and copies of key documents
- [ ] Cash in small notes and payment cards
- [ ] Phone, charger and car charger
- [ ] Spare house and car keys
- [ ] Warm clothes
- [ ] Paper list of contacts and your family plan

BEFORE

- Pack an easy-to-carry grab bag, such as a backpack, for each person and keep it somewhere easy to reach.
- Choose one meeting place near home and another outside your neighbourhood.
- Pick an out-of-town contact everyone will call or text if separated.
- Learn more than one route out of your neighbourhood.
- Plan two ways out of every room, and use stairs, not lifts, in a building.
- Keep ID and key papers where any family member can grab them fast.

DURING

- Follow official instructions and use the routes authorities give.
- In a fire, leave at once and take nothing with you.
- Tell everyone, help children, older people and anyone who cannot pack alone.
- Take your grab bag, ID for everyone, and your pets.
- Turn off utilities if officials tell you to.
- Leave a note saying when you left and where you are going.
- Tell your out-of-town contact where you are heading and when you arrive.
- Register at the desk if you go to an evacuation centre.

AFTER

- Go home only when authorities say it is safe.
- Watch for hidden hazards such as debris, broken covers and dirty water.
- Have gas, water and electricity checked before switching them back on.
- Photograph damage before cleaning up and contact your insurer.

IN THE UAE

In the UAE, leave burning buildings at once, avoid lifts, close doors behind you and only go back in when police or Civil Defence say it is safe. Call 997 for Civil Defence.

MY NOTES

Sources: Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), If you need to evacuate (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/civil-defence-shelters-evacuation-and-warning-systems/if-you-need-to-evacuate2/); UK Government (Prepare), Get prepared for emergencies (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/); GOV.UK, What to do after a flood (https://www.gov.uk/after-flood); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies); Ready.gov (FEMA), Water (https://www.ready.gov/water); Government of Canada, Emergency kits (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits.html); Government of Canada, Make an Emergency Plan (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/make-plan.html); Government of Canada, Form: Make an emergency plan (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/make-plan/emergency-plan-form.html); Government of Canada, Wildfires: how to prepare (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/hazards-emergencies/wildfires/how-prepare.html); Government of Canada, Floods: how to prepare (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/hazards-emergencies/floods/how-prepare.html); NSW State Emergency Service (Australia), Evacuation centres (https://www.ses.nsw.gov.au/during-an-emergency/evacuation-centres); Government of Canada, Emergency kit checklist (https://www.canada.ca/en/services/policing/emergencies/preparedness/get-prepared/emergency-kits/get-kit.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

War, air raids and sheltering

In a conflict, air raid warnings can come with little notice and services may be disrupted for days. This page covers civilian steps only: knowing your nearest shelter, packing for it, responding to official alerts and coping afterwards.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Bottled or canned water
- [ ] Food that can be eaten at room temperature
- [ ] Medicines and first aid kit
- [ ] Hygiene items and toilet paper
- [ ] Warm clothing
- [ ] ID, cash and bank card
- [ ] Keys
- [ ] Phone with charger or power bank
- [ ] Torch
- [ ] Battery or wind-up radio

BEFORE

- Find the shelters or protected spaces nearest your home, school and workplace.
- Learn your country's warning signals and what each one means.
- Pack a shelter bag with water, food, medicines, torch and phone charger.
- Keep at least a week of food, water and medicines at home.
- Get a battery, solar or wind-up radio so you can follow official news.
- Agree a meeting point with family in case phones stop working.

DURING

- When an air raid warning sounds, take cover at once in a shelter or other protective structure.
- If no shelter is close, stay indoors in a room without windows.
- Go to the nearest shelter, as places are not assigned in advance.
- Bring your own food and hygiene items, since shelters do not supply them.
- For a public warning, go inside, close windows and doors and switch off ventilation.
- Stop and follow the instructions in any official phone alert.
- Expect water and power cuts and use your stored supplies.
- Share only information from official, reliable sources.

AFTER

- Wait for the official all clear before leaving shelter.
- Keep following official radio and alert channels for next steps.
- Check facts with official sources before believing or sharing news.
- Check on neighbours and relatives and see whether they need help.

IN THE UAE

The UAE National Early Warning System sends alerts to phones in the country. NCEMA says the most important step is to read each alert and follow its instructions.

MY NOTES

Sources: Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Good to know about civil defence shelters (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/civil-defence-shelters-evacuation-and-warning-systems/good-to-know-about-civil-defence-shelters/); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), About the warning and information systems (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/civil-defence-shelters-evacuation-and-warning-systems/public-service-announcement-and-other-varnings/about-the-warning--and-information-systems/); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Basics of home emergency preparedness (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/basics-of-home-emergency-preparedness/); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Access to communication during a crisis (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness--prepping-for-at-least-a-week/access-to-communication-during-a-crisis/); GOV.UK, Emergency Alerts (https://www.gov.uk/alerts); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Psychological defence (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/swedish-defence/psychological-defence/); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Heightened state of alert (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/swedish-defence/heightened-state-of-alert/); UK Government (Prepare), Coping with trauma (https://prepare.campaign.gov.uk/coping-with-trauma/); NCEMA (UAE), The National Early Warning System (https://www.ncema.gov.ae/en/e-participation/blog/the-national-early-warning-system.aspx); Dubai Media Office (Government of Dubai), Safety Guide (March 2026) (https://mediaoffice.ae/SafetyGuide-March2026.pdf)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Attack in a public place

Attacks with weapons in busy public places are rare, but knowing what to do can save lives. This page explains the UK Run, Hide, Tell advice and the US Run, Hide, Fight advice, how to help others, what to do when police arrive and how to cope afterwards.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Habit of noting the two nearest exits in any building
- [ ] Places to hide identified at work, school and places you visit often
- [ ] Family has talked through school and workplace emergency plans
- [ ] At least one adult trained in first aid
- [ ] Gloves or a cloth to protect your hands when pressing on a wound
- [ ] Emergency numbers saved on every phone, for example 999 for police in the UAE
- [ ] Everyone knows how to report suspicious activity

BEFORE

• Whenever you enter a shopping centre, venue or other building, notice the two nearest exits.
• Think about where you could hide, such as a lockable room without windows or behind heavy furniture.
• Ask your children's school and your workplace about their emergency plans, and talk them through as a family.
• Learn first aid, including how to help someone who is badly hurt until help arrives.
• Report suspicious behaviour or unattended items to the police straight away.
• In the UK, report anything that does not feel right at gov.uk/ACT, or call 999 in an emergency.

DURING

• If there is a safe way out, run. Getting away is the best option.
• Leave your belongings, do not stop to film, and urge others to come without waiting for anyone who hesitates.
• If you cannot get away, hide. Bullets can go through glass, brick, wood and metal, so find cover behind solid or heavy reinforced walls.
• Lock or block the door, move away from it, turn off lights and silence your phone, including vibrate.
• Spread out rather than group together, and stay hidden until police tell you it is safe.
• UK advice: when safe, call 999 and say where the attackers are, which way they went and what they look like.
• US advice: call or text 911 if you can.
• US advice only (Ready.gov) adds Fight: a last resort when your life is in immediate danger. UK advice does not include it.

AFTER

• When police arrive, stay calm, follow their instructions and put down anything you are holding, such as bags.
• Keep your hands visible and empty. Do not point, shout, move suddenly or grab officers.
• UK police advice: armed officers may point guns at you or handle you firmly, because they cannot yet tell who the attacker is.
• Officers may pass injured people at first to end the danger. Leave in the direction they show you.

IN THE UAE

In the UAE, call 999 to report crimes and emergencies from anywhere in the country, 998 for an ambulance and 997 for fire (Civil Defence). In Dubai, the Al Ameen service (8004888) takes safety concerns.

MY NOTES

Sources: ProtectUK (Counter Terrorism Policing), Run Hide Tell (https://www.protectuk.police.uk/advice-and-guidance/response/run-hide-tell); ProtectUK (Counter Terrorism Policing), Stay safe: weapons and firearms attack (https://www.protectuk.police.uk/stay-safe-weapons-and-firearms-attack); Counter Terrorism Policing (UK), Run Hide Tell (https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk/runhidetell/); Ready.gov (FEMA), Terrorism (https://www.ready.gov/terrorism); Ready.gov (FEMA), Active Shooter Information Sheet (https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/active-shooter_information-sheet.pdf); CISA (US Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency), Active Shooter Pocket Card (https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/CISA-Active-Shooter-Pocket-Card-052022-508.pdf); Ready.gov (FEMA), Steps to Control Bleeding (You Are the Help Until Help Arrives) (https://www.ready.gov/training/steps_to_control_bleeding.pdf); GOV.UK (Home Office), Advice on how to support a victim of terrorism (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-on-how-to-support-a-victim-of-terrorism/advice-on-how-to-support-a-victim-of-terrorism); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Civil unrest and lockdowns

Protests, unrest or official curfews can close roads, shops and airports and cut phone or internet services at short notice. This page helps your family stay away from trouble, follow official instructions and stay supplied and in touch while staying home.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Several days of food and water
- [ ] Prescription medicines and first aid supplies
- [ ] Torch and spare batteries
- [ ] Valid passports and visas
- [ ] Battery or wind-up FM radio
- [ ] Paper list of key phone numbers
- [ ] Charged phone and power bank
- [ ] Travel insurance details and policy number

BEFORE

- Keep several days of food, water, medicines, a torch and batteries at home.
- Keep passports and visas valid and stored where you can grab them.
- Keep fuel in your car and a grab bag ready in case you need to leave quickly.
- Make a family plan that does not depend on government help.
- Sign up for official travel or emergency alerts for where you live or travel.
- Keep paper copies of key numbers and download offline maps.

DURING

- Stay away from crowds, protests and large gatherings.
- If trouble starts nearby, leave quickly and do not stop to watch or film.
- Follow local authority instructions, including curfews or orders to move.
- Follow local media and official updates for planned protests and closures.
- Tell family and friends that you are safe or need help.
- Save phone battery and try messaging or Wi-Fi calling if calls fail.
- Check on vulnerable neighbours who live alone.
- Share only news from official or reliable sources.

AFTER

- Keep checking official advice before travelling, as conditions can change fast.
- Contact your airline, tour operator and insurer about disrupted plans.
- Talk through what happened with people you trust and ease back into routines.
- Seek professional help if distress lasts more than two to four weeks.

IN THE UAE

In the UAE, read each National Early Warning System phone alert and follow its instructions; NCEMA calls this the key step to protect lives.

MY NOTES

Sources: GOV.UK (FCDO), How to deal with a crisis overseas (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-deal-with-a-crisis-overseas); UK Government (Prepare), Phone and broadband outages (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-informed-about-hazards/phone-broadband-outages/); GOV.UK (FCDO), DR Congo travel advice: safety and security (https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/safety-and-security); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Psychological defence (https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/swedish-defence/psychological-defence/); UK Government (Prepare), Overseas emergencies (https://prepare.campaign.gov.uk/be-informed-about-hazards/overseas-emergencies/); UK Government (Prepare), Coping with trauma (https://prepare.campaign.gov.uk/coping-with-trauma/); NCEMA (UAE), The National Early Warning System (https://www.ncema.gov.ae/en/e-participation/blog/the-national-early-warning-system.aspx)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Travelling during a crisis

Conflict, unrest or a natural disaster can hit while you are abroad, and your own government may not be able to get you out. This page helps you prepare before you travel, stay safe and in touch during a crisis, and find support once you are home.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Passport that meets your destination's entry rules
- [ ] Extra photo ID besides your passport
- [ ] Copies of documents, also saved as photos on your phone
- [ ] Printed health insurance documents
- [ ] Embassy contact details and your government's 24/7 consular number
- [ ] Prescription medicines in labelled bottles, with copies of prescriptions
- [ ] Several days of food and water
- [ ] First aid kit
- [ ] Torch with spare batteries
- [ ] Backup way to pay if your main method fails

BEFORE

- Read official travel advice for every country on your trip and sign up for its email alerts.
- US citizens: enrol in STEP so the embassy can send alerts and reach you in an emergency.
- Canadians: register with the free ROCA service and add your co-travellers.
- Buy travel insurance as soon as you book, and tell the insurer about any medical conditions.
- Copy your travel documents. Give one set to someone you trust and keep one apart from the originals.
- Give family or friends your detailed itinerary and contact details.

DURING

- Tell family and friends whether you are safe or need help.
- Follow the advice of local authorities.
- Contact your airline or tour operator, and your insurer, about what help is available.
- Avoid crowds, demonstrations and large gatherings.
- Keep a grab bag ready, plus medicines, food and water for several days.
- If told to shelter, stay indoors, away from windows, in a room with few outside walls.
- Call your government's 24/7 consular line. Canadians can call +1 613 996 8885.
- Do not expect your government to evacuate you. Have your own plan to leave.

AFTER

- If you feel unwell or are struggling to cope, see a doctor and mention the crisis abroad.
- Look for emotional support, for example from the Red Cross.
- Use bereavement helplines if you have lost someone.
- UK nationals: check if you qualify for help if injured or bereaved by terrorism abroad.

IN THE UAE

UAE nationals can register free with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Twajudi service before or while travelling, so the ministry can reach them in an emergency. Register with UAE Pass on the MOFA website or app, and find MOFA's current contact numbers there.

MY NOTES

Sources: GOV.UK (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office), If you're affected by a crisis abroad (https://gov.uk/guidance/how-to-deal-with-a-crisis-overseas); GOV.UK (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office), Foreign travel checklist (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/foreign-travel-checklist); US Department of State, International traveler's checklist (https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-checklist.html); Government of Canada (travel.gc.ca), Registration of Canadians Abroad (https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/registration); Global Affairs Canada (canada.ca), Advice for Canadians: Register when travelling abroad (https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2019/02/advice-for-canadians-register-when-travelling-abroad.html); Government of Canada (travel.gc.ca), Request emergency assistance outside Canada (https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-assistance); UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Twajudi service (https://www.mofa.gov.ae/en/services/twajudi) General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Nuclear or radiation emergency

A radiation release from an accident or attack cannot be seen, smelled or felt, so official instructions are your main guide. This page explains the core rule of getting inside, staying inside and staying tuned, plus how to clean off contamination safely.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Battery or hand-crank radio
- [ ] Bottled water for several days
- [ ] Non-perishable food and a tin opener
- [ ] Medicines for several days
- [ ] Soap and mild shampoo
- [ ] Wet wipes or damp cloths
- [ ] Sealable bags for contaminated clothing
- [ ] Clean clothes stored indoors
- [ ] Face masks and waterproof gloves

BEFORE

- Find out your local emergency plans for radiation incidents.
- Keep a battery or hand-crank radio for official updates.
- Store a few days of water, food and medicines in case you must stay indoors.
- If you are given stable iodine tablets, read the patient leaflet before taking them.
- Know that schools, nurseries and care homes have their own plans to shelter people.

DURING

- Get inside the nearest solid building at once; cars and tents do not protect you.
- Move to the middle of the building, or a basement if there is one, away from outer walls and roof.
- Close windows, doors and vents, and switch off fans and air conditioning.
- Stay inside for at least 24 hours, or longer if officials say so.
- Do not go out to collect family from school or elsewhere.
- Take off outer clothes and shoes, bag them, and wash with soap and water.
- Take stable iodine only if officials tell you to, and only the tablets provided.
- Follow official news on radio, TV and online, and text if calls fail.

AFTER

- Leave shelter or evacuate only when authorities tell you to.
- Keep sealed food and drinks stored indoors; they are considered safe.
- Wait for official advice before eating home-grown or outdoor-stored food.
- Return home only when told it is safe.

IN THE UAE

In the UAE, follow instructions sent through National Early Warning System phone alerts; NCEMA says following warnings is the most important factor in protecting lives.

MY NOTES

Sources: GOV.UK (UK Health Security Agency), What to do in a radiation emergency (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/radiation-emergencies-information-for-the-public/what-to-do-in-a-radiation-emergency); CDC, What to Do: Get Inside (https://www.cdc.gov/radiation-emergencies/response/get-inside.html); CDC, Preparing for a Radiation Emergency (https://www.cdc.gov/radiation-emergencies/safety/index.html); GOV.UK (UK Health Security Agency), How to remove radioactive material from your skin and clothes (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/radiation-emergencies-information-for-the-public/how-to-remove-radioactive-material-from-your-skin-and-clothes-self-decontamination-guidance); UK Government (Prepare), Get prepared for emergencies (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-ready-for-emergencies/); NCEMA (UAE), The National Early Warning System (https://www.ncema.gov.ae/en/e-participation/blog/the-national-early-warning-system.aspx); CDC, What to Do: Get Inside (https://www.cdc.gov/radiation-emergencies/response/get-inside.html)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Chemical incidents

A chemical leak from an industrial site, transport accident or deliberate release may mean sealing yourself indoors or leaving the area fast. This page helps your family prepare a safe room, follow official instructions and clean off any chemical safely.

CHECKLIST

- [ ] Duct tape and scissors
- [ ] Pre-cut plastic sheeting labelled for each window
- [ ] Towels for blocking gaps
- [ ] Large and small rubbish bags
- [ ] Disposable gloves
- [ ] Medicines for you and your pets
- [ ] Phone and charging cables
- [ ] Radio for emergency broadcasts
- [ ] Mild soap and moist wipes
- [ ] Clean change of clothes

BEFORE

- Choose a large safe room, ideally upstairs with a water source, that you can seal.
- Make a sealing kit: duct tape, scissors, towels and plastic sheets cut to fit windows.
- Practise sealing air conditioner units, exhaust fans and vents.
- Pack go kits for home and car, with rubbish bags and disposable gloves.
- Agree how family members will contact each other if separated.
- Never mix household chemicals such as bleach and ammonia.

DURING

- Follow official instructions on whether to shelter in place or evacuate.
- If told to shelter, go in with pets, close windows and doors, and switch off fans and AC.
- Take medicines, phone and charger to your safe room and tape plastic over windows, vents and door gaps.
- Use towels or clothing to block gaps if you have no plastic sheeting.
- If exposed outdoors, move away from the area and upwind if you can.
- Do not rely on a car for protection, as vehicles may not be airtight enough.
- If evacuating, take your kit and use the route officials give, with no shortcuts.
- Do not smoke, eat or drink if you may be contaminated.

AFTER

- If exposed, remove clothing as soon as you can, cutting off anything that goes over your head.
- Seal used clothing in a bag inside a second bag and keep it out of normal rubbish.
- Wash from head to feet with lukewarm water and mild soap for at least 2 to 3 minutes, without scrubbing and keeping water out of your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Flush eyes with water for 10 to 15 minutes if they burn or vision blurs.

IN THE UAE

In the UAE, follow National Early Warning System phone alerts and call Civil Defence on 997 or an ambulance on 998.

MY NOTES

Sources: CDC, What to Do to Shelter in Place for a Chemical Emergency (https://www.cdc.gov/chemical-emergencies/response/shelter-in-place.html); American Red Cross, Chemical Emergency Preparedness (https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/chemical-emergency.html); CDC, What to Do in a Chemical Emergency (https://www.cdc.gov/chemical-emergencies/response/index.html); UK Government (Prepare), Hazardous substance and radiation exposure (https://beready.campaign.gov.uk/be-informed-about-hazards/hazardous-substance-and-radiation-exposure/); CDC, About Getting Clean (https://www.cdc.gov/chemical-emergencies/response/get-clean.html); UAE Government Portal (u.ae), Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.

Our family emergency plan

Household members

Emergency contact (local)

Emergency contact (out of area)

Meeting point near home

Meeting point outside the neighbourhood

School or workplace emergency contacts

Medical needs and medicines

Doctor, pharmacy and insurance

Pets and their needs

Where our kit and documents are kept

UAE: Police 999 | Ambulance 998 | Civil Defence 997

Source: u.ae, Handling emergencies (https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/handling-emergencies)