

EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS:

BEFORE, DURING,
AND AFTER A QUAKE

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Earthquakes, one of nature's most unsettling phenomena, are unpredictable and can strike without warning. That's why it's important for you and your family to learn how to prepare for an earthquake and develop a plan to react quickly and safely if disaster strikes. Follow these steps in order to be prepared and remain safe before, during and after an earthquake.

BEFORE:

- Prepare an emergency earthquake kit with warm clothing, non-perishable food items and bottled water to last you and your family for at least 72 hours.
- Locate and learn how to use the shutoff valves for water, gas and electricity in your home.
- Bolt down and secure your water heater, refrigerator, furnace and gas appliances to the wall studs.
- Have an automatic gas shutoff valve installed that is triggered by strong vibrations.
- Hold earthquake drills with your family members: Drop, cover and hold on! Locate safe spots in each room under a sturdy table or against an inside wall. Practice moving to these places during each drill.
- Decide where and when to reunite with loved ones if you and your family are not together when an earthquake hits.
- Keep extra cash on hand. If electricity is out, you will not be able to use an ATM.
- Make copies of vital records and take photos and/or videos of your valuables. Make copies and keep them in a safety deposit box, preferably in another city or state.

Source: fema.gov

DURING:

- If you are outside, move to a clear area free of power lines, signage or trees that may fall on you.
- If you are driving, pull over until the shaking subsides. Avoid overpasses and power lines.
- If you are inside, stay there.
- Seek immediate shelter under a heavy desk or table, or brace yourself inside a door frame or against an inside wall, especially if in a high-rise building.
- Stay under the structure that is protecting you. If the shaking causes the table or desk to move, then you should move with it so you remain protected.
- Stay at least 15 feet away from windows, and out of kitchens and garages, if possible.
- If you use a wheelchair, lock the wheels if possible and cover your head with your arms.
- Resist the urge to panic. Organize your thoughts. Think as clearly as possible, and anticipate the sights and sounds that may accompany an earthquake.

AFTER:

- Remain in the same "safe" location for several minutes after the earthquake, in case there are any aftershocks.
- Unless absolutely necessary, do not attempt to evacuate or leave your area until you have been instructed to do so.
- Check for injuries and administer necessary first aid.
- Establish a temporary shelter area in your home away from areas that have severe damage.
- Restore daily life by reconnecting with others, repairing damage, and rebuilding the community.

For more information, please visit [fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov)