

# Preparing for an Earthquake

Preparing for an earthquake as a family involves several key steps to ensure everyone's safety. Here's a comprehensive guide to help you get ready:

## Before an Earthquake

### Create a Family Emergency Plan:

- **Meeting Place:** Decide on a safe place to meet after an earthquake if you're separated.
- **Out-of-Area Contact:** Choose a relative or friend out of the area who can relay information.
- **Communication Plan:** Plan how you will communicate during and after the earthquake.

### Build an Emergency Kit:

- **Water:** At least one gallon per person per day for three days.
- **Food:** Non-perishable items for at least three days.
- **First Aid Kit:** Include necessary medications.
- **Tools and Supplies:** Flashlights, batteries, multi-tool, manual can opener, local maps.
- **Personal Items:** Sanitation supplies, clothing, blankets, important documents, cash.

### Secure Your Home:

- **Furniture:** Anchor heavy furniture, shelves, and appliances to walls.
- **Breakables:** Store heavy and breakable items on lower shelves.

- **Safety Measures:** Install latches on cupboards, secure water heaters, and ensure gas appliances have flexible connections.
- **Structural Safety:** Inspect your home for structural issues and fix any weaknesses.

## Know How to Turn Off Utilities:

- **Gas:** Learn how to turn off the gas supply.
- **Electricity:** Know where your main electrical switch is.
- **Water:** Be aware of how to turn off the water supply.

## Practice Earthquake Drills:

- **Drop, Cover, and Hold On:** Practice this drill regularly with your family.
- **Evacuation Routes:** Identify and practice safe exit routes from your home.

# During an Earthquake

## Stay Calm:

- **Indoors:** Drop, cover, and hold on under sturdy furniture. Stay away from windows and heavy objects.
- **Outdoors:** Move to an open area away from buildings, trees, streetlights, and utility wires.
- **In a Vehicle:** Stop in a safe place, away from overpasses, bridges, and buildings. Stay inside the vehicle.

# After an Earthquake

## Check for Injuries:

- Administer first aid if necessary and seek professional medical help if needed.

## Inspect Your Home:

- Check for gas leaks, water leaks, electrical damage, and structural damage.
- Use a flashlight, not candles, due to potential gas leaks.

## Communicate:

- Contact your out-of-area emergency contact.
- Use text messages or social media to communicate with others if phone lines are down.

## Stay Informed:

- Listen to local news and emergency broadcasts for updates and instructions.

## Be Prepared for Aftershocks:

- Aftershocks can occur after the initial quake. Be ready to drop, cover, and hold on.

## Help Others:

- Assist neighbors, especially those who may need additional help (elderly, children, people with disabilities).

## **Evacuate if Necessary:**

- Follow local authorities' instructions if an evacuation is ordered.

Preparing for an earthquake involves both physical preparations and mental readiness. Regularly reviewing and practicing your emergency plan will help ensure your family's safety.