

Valuable Earthquake Safety Tips

By Michael Rudeen



Many earthquakes come without warning, but simple preparation can help you ride it out. Check with the [National Earthquake Information Center](#) (NEIC) and local emergency services agencies to determine if you live in an earthquake-prone area. Then, take these steps to protect yourself:

Brace your heater. It might be advisable to brace your water heater or heating and cooling units to help keep them from toppling. Materials such as plumber's tape or electrical metal tubing are commonly used for bracing.

Store food and water. Maintaining supplies of food and water is wise. A general rule of thumb for clean drinking water requirements is one gallon per person per day. Stock nonperishable foods that will last your family at least three days—and choose nutritious foods that do not require heat to eat safely, like energy bars.

Compile a household safety kit. A household safety kit can also keep you safe. This should include an emergency first aid kit, a seven-day supply of medications, batteries, a flashlight, a multipurpose tool, and cash.

Keep informed. The NEIC offers a feature called [Earthquake Notification Service](#), or ENS, which notifies you by text message or email of earthquake activity. Additionally, you can download smartphone apps, such as the [Earthquake Notification App](#) offered by the American Red Cross. These also provide information on the chance of substantial aftershocks.

Stay inside. If you're inside and feel the ground shaking, stay inside. Crawl under a table or desk for protection from falling objects. Remain in this position until the quake stops. Then follow a prepared evacuation plan. If in doubt, head to an open space away from falling debris.

