

Surviving a Blackout: Home Checklist

Courtesy of World Wide Survival Web Archive @ www.wwswa.com

This comprehensive checklist helps you prepare for and survive a power outage at home. It is organized into categories for easy reference. Print this checklist, check off items as you prepare, and keep it in your emergency kit. Aim for supplies to last at least 72 hours. Customize based on your household size, location, and specific needs (e.g., medical conditions).

1. Water and Food Supplies

- ☐ Stock at least 1 gallon of water per person per day for drinking and sanitation (aim for a 3-day supply).
- ☐ Include water for pets if applicable.
- ☐ Non-perishable food items: Canned goods (meats, fruits, vegetables), energy bars, peanut butter, crackers, dried fruits, nuts.
- ☐ Baby formula and food if needed.
- ☐ Manual can opener.
- ☐ Portable cooler with ice packs for perishable items like medications or dairy.
- ☐ Disposable plates, cups, utensils, and paper towels to avoid using water for washing.
- ☐ Check expiration dates on all food and water supplies annually.

2. Lighting and Power Alternatives

- ☐ Flashlights (one per person) with extra batteries.
- ☐ Battery-powered or hand-crank lanterns.
- ☐ Candles with matches or lighters (stored in a waterproof container); use safely to avoid fire hazards.
- ☐ Solar-powered chargers for phones and small devices.
- ☐ Portable power bank or generator (with fuel stored safely outside).
- ☐ Extension cords for generator use (if applicable).
- ☐ Glow sticks for safe, non-flammable lighting in children's areas.
- ☐ Avoid using generators indoors to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

3. Heating and Cooling

- ☐ Extra blankets, sleeping bags, or thermal emergency blankets.
- ☐ Warm clothing layers, hats, gloves, and socks.
- ☐ Portable heater (battery-powered or propane, used with caution and ventilation).
- ☐ Fans (handheld or battery-operated) for cooling in hot weather.
- ☐ Insulating materials like plastic sheeting and duct tape to cover windows and retain heat.
- ☐ Fireplace or wood stove supplies (wood, kindling) if available; ensure chimney is clear.
- ☐ Close off unused rooms to conserve heat.

4. First Aid and Health

- ☐ Fully stocked first aid kit: Bandages, gauze, antiseptic wipes, tweezers, scissors, pain relievers, allergy meds.
- ☐ Prescription medications (at least a 7-day supply) and medical devices (e.g., inhalers, glucose monitors).
- ☐ Over-the-counter remedies: For stomach issues, fever, colds.
- ☐ Hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes.
- ☐ Face masks and gloves for hygiene.
- ☐ List of emergency contacts, including doctors and family members.
- ☐ Consider needs for infants, elderly, or disabled household members (e.g., diapers, mobility aids).

5. Communication and Information

- ☐ Battery-powered or hand-crank radio for weather and news updates.
- ☐ Fully charged cell phone with backup charger.
- ☐ List of important phone numbers (printed, not just on phone).
- ☐ Whistle for signaling help.
- ☐ Notebook and pens for notes or messages.
- ☐ Cash in small bills (ATMs may not work).
- ☐ Maps of local area (in case GPS fails).

6. Sanitation and Hygiene

- ☐ Portable toilet or bucket with liners and waste bags.
- ☐ Toilet paper, moist towelettes, and feminine hygiene products.
- ☐ Bleach or water purification tablets for sanitizing water.
- ☐ Garbage bags and plastic ties for waste disposal.
- ☐ Soap, shampoo, and toothpaste.
- ☐ If water is limited, plan for "dry" methods like cat litter for toilets.

7. Home Safety and Maintenance

- ☐ Surge protectors for electronics (unplug during outage to prevent damage).
- ☐ Fire extinguisher (checked and accessible).
- ☐ Carbon monoxide detector (battery-powered).
- ☐ Smoke alarms with fresh batteries.
- ☐ Secure loose items outside to prevent wind damage if storm-related.
- ☐ Know how to manually open garage door or gates.
- ☐ Turn off appliances and lights to avoid surges when power returns.
- ☐ Inspect home for hazards like downed power lines post-outage.

8. Entertainment and Comfort

- ☐ Books, games, puzzles, or cards for mental well-being.
- ☐ Comfort items for children (toys, stuffed animals).
- ☐ Stress-relief items like journals or meditation aids.

Preparation Tips

- ☐ **Test and Maintain:** Review and update your kit every 6 months. Test flashlights, radios, and generators regularly.
- ☐ **Family Plan:** Discuss roles with household members (e.g., who handles lighting, who monitors food).
- ☐ **Evacuation Ready:** If blackout is due to a larger disaster, have a go-bag with essentials and know evacuation routes.
- ☐ **Special Considerations:** For extreme weather, add items like sandbags for flooding or chainsaws for debris.
- ☐ **Resources:** Consult local emergency services for region-specific advice (e.g., earthquakes vs. hurricanes).