HOUSEHOLD EMERGENCY PLAN

A practical fill-in plan aligned with the UK Government's Be Ready campaign

Get home. Be ready for 3 days. Get out in 20 minutes.

Why this plan exists

This fill-in plan helps you prepare for short-term disruption at home. The UK Government's Be Ready campaign asks households to be ready for 3 days if everyday services such as power, water or phones are interrupted. Having key information written down, and a few simple supplies ready, makes it easier to cope while support reaches those who need it most.

You do not need specialist equipment. Most of the items listed are things many households already have. Fill in the sections that apply to you, talk them through with everyone you live with, and keep a printed copy somewhere easy to find.

For further reading, checklists and updates, see our blog post:
https://chrisgarlandtraining.co.uk/emergency-preparedness-what-every-uk-household-needs-to-know/

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How to use this plan

1. Fill in the sections that apply to your household. Leave anything that does not apply blank.
2. Talk through the plan with everyone who lives with you (including older children).
3. Print a copy and keep it somewhere easy to find in the dark - for example with your important documents or near the front door.
4. Check and update it at least every six months (or sooner if medicines, contacts or living arrangements change).
5. Note the date you last reviewed it at the back of this plan.

Get Home - Your car bag to help you get home

Keep a small bag or kit in the car so you can get home (or stay safe while waiting for help) if you are delayed by traffic, a breakdown, severe weather or a temporary road closure. This is not a full emergency kit - it is the practical items that make a difference when you are away from home.

Suggested contents:

• Bottle of water and some long-life snacks (cereal bars, nuts)

• Torch (and spare batteries) plus a power bank and car charger for phones

• Warm layer, waterproof jacket or foil blanket, and hi-vis vest

• Basic first aid items (plasters, wipes, gloves) and any personal medication you may need

• Small amount of cash and a paper map or list of key phone numbers

• Warning triangle (useful on ordinary roads - not for use on motorways)

Check the bag every six months when you review the rest of this plan. Replace food, water and batteries as needed.

Be Ready for 3 days

Key numbers to write down

Phones can be lost, stolen, flat or unusable in an emergency. Write these numbers on paper and keep them where everyone can find them.

Number	What it is for
999 or 112	Emergency - police, ambulance, fire, coastguard. 112 works in the UK and across Europe.
111	NHS non-emergency medical advice
101	Police non-urgent
105	Power cut (England, Scotland & Wales). Free. Connects you to your local network operator.
03457 643643	Power cut - Northern Ireland
0800 111 999	National Gas Emergency Service (smell gas, suspected leak or carbon monoxide). Free, 24 hours.
0800 002 001	Gas emergency - Northern Ireland

If your phone is stolen or lost, the paper copy of this plan (and any ICE - In Case of Emergency - contacts written in it) remains available. Consider also setting up ICE contacts on any remaining devices.

In an emergency

If the emergency is outside the home:

• Go in - close windows and doors if advised.
• Stay in.
• Tune in - listen to local radio or official sources for advice.

If the emergency is inside the home (fire, gas leak, etc.):

• Get out.
• Stay out.
• Ring 999 or 112.

Agreed meeting points

Decide where you will meet if you cannot return home or contact each other. Choose places that are easy to find and open to the public, or a safe family member's home. Always follow emergency services advice about when it is safe to return.

Meeting point	Location / details
Just outside the home (fire, gas leak)	
In the neighbourhood (if you cannot go home)	
Outside the town / area (if the area is unsafe)	
Evacuation destination (family, friends, shelter)	

Important contacts

People you may need to reach in an emergency (family, neighbours, workplace, school, carers, etc.).

Name	Mobile	Landline	Notes

Neighbours / people to check on

If it is safe to do so, you may be able to check on neighbours or others who need extra support. Record their details here.

Name	Address	Phone

Current medication

List regular medicines, doses and who takes them. Request repeat prescriptions up to 5 working days before you need them so you do not run out. You can order repeats via the **NHS App** or the NHS website (nhs.uk). If you pay for prescriptions in England, a Prescription Prepayment Certificate (PPC) is often cheaper if you need regular items - check current prices and how to buy one at nhs.uk.

Medication name	Dose	How often	Who takes it

Insurance details

Insurance company names, phone numbers and policy numbers.

Type	Company	Phone	Policy number

Utilities shut-offs

If you have time and it is safe to do so, you might need to turn off the mains water, gas or electricity. Familiarise yourself with the locations. **Warning:** You can turn water and electricity back on yourself, but **NOT the gas**. Gas must be turned back on by a qualified engineer.

Utility	Location of shut-off
Water stopcock	
Gas isolation valve	
Electricity isolation switch / consumer unit	

Radio stations

Note the frequencies of any radio stations you use for local or national news. A battery or wind-up FM radio works when power and phones are down.

Radio station	Frequency

PMR446 radios (optional)

PMR446 radios (also called licence-free walkie-talkies) can be useful for short-range contact between family members when mobile networks are down or overloaded. They need no licence, no network and no subscription. Channel 8 is widely used as an informal calling channel in the UK.

Realistic limits: Range is typically a few hundred metres in built-up areas. In open country or from high ground it can be several kilometres or more (some users report contacts of many miles under good conditions). They cannot contact the emergency services. Everyone you need to speak to must have a compatible radio on the same channel. Channels are shared and can be busy.

They are useful for checking in on nearby neighbours or setting up a small local radio network with people you know. Agree a primary channel and a backup in advance.

Suggested options (pairs):

• Cheap: Motorola Talkabout T42 or similar - typically £25-35. Runs on AAA batteries. Simple and adequate for garden or nearby street use.

• Mid-range: Motorola Talkabout T82 Extreme or T62 - typically £60-90. Better weather resistance, often include a torch, and many can use AA batteries as well as the supplied rechargeable packs (useful for long-term storage).

Prefer models that take ordinary AA or AAA batteries so you can store spare alkalines for years. Agree a primary channel and a backup with everyone who has a radio, and write the channel numbers on a sticker on each set. Test them regularly. These are optional - a wind-up or battery FM radio for news is more important for most households.

Water

Be Ready minimum: 3 litres of drinking water per person per day for 3 days (9 litres each). More is needed for cooking and basic washing.
More comfortable restricted use: Aim for around 9-10 litres per person per day in total if you have the space. Prioritise

drinking water first.

Containers: Use food-grade containers only (purpose-made water jerry cans or HDPE containers marked for drinking water, recycling code 2). Never reuse containers that held chemicals, fuel or cleaning products. Do not use standard short-term commercial clear water bottles (PET) for long-term storage - they are not designed for repeated use or multi-month storage and can leach or become brittle. Opaque containers or storage in a dark cupboard help prevent algae. Sizes of 5-25 litres are easier to handle than one very large tank.

Cleaning and sterilising: Wash the container and lid in hot soapy water and rinse well. To sterilise, use Milton sterilising fluid or tablets, or a similar non-brand sterilising product (there are many available). Follow the pack instructions - typically 1 tablet or 30 ml (one capful) of fluid per 5 litres of cold water. Immerse the container for at least 15 minutes, then rinse with clean drinking water or cooled boiled water before filling. Also sterilise the threads of the lid and the neck of the container.

Storage: Fill from the cold mains kitchen tap (not a loft tank). Seal tightly, label with the date filled, and store in a cool, dark place off the floor. Replace the water at least every 6 months. Check the containers when you review the rest of this plan.

3-day supplies checklist

Build this gradually. Check what you already have. Tick the boxes and note the date checked. Review every 6 months.

Item	✓	Date / notes
Bottled or stored drinking water (minimum 3 litres per person per day for 3 days; more for cooking/washing)		
Non-perishable food for 3 days that needs no fridge or cooking (tinned meat, fish, vegetables, dried fruit, nuts, UHT milk, vacuum-packed ambient foods such as rice, pasta or ready meals, etc.) and a tin opener		
Hand sanitiser, wet wipes, hygiene and bathroom products		
Torch (battery or wind-up) and spare batteries - safer than candles		
Blankets, sleeping bags and warm clothing		
FM radio (battery or wind-up)		
Charged power bank for phones or medical devices		
Cash (mix of coins and small notes) and cards		
Printed copies of important documents (IDs, insurance, medical equipment instructions)		
First aid kit / first aid items		
Essential medication and supplies for several days		
Baby products if needed (nappies, wipes, ready-to-feed formula)		
Pet food and bottled water if needed		

Cash: The government does not specify an amount. LINK (the UK cash machine network) suggests around £50 per adult and £25 per child as a starting point for three days. Keep a mix of small notes (£5 and £10) and coins so you can pay for essentials if card payments or ATMs are disrupted. Store it securely.

First aid kit: A basic home kit should include sterile dressings, plasters, triangular bandages, safety pins, disposable gloves, eye pads, adhesive tape, and a guidance leaflet. A workplace-style kit meeting BS 8599-1 is a solid standard if you want a more comprehensive set. Check contents regularly and replace anything used or out of date. (A separate detailed first-aid kit checklist can be downloaded from our site if needed.)

Food rotation: Use colour-coded stickers or labels on tins, packets and containers. Write the purchase date or use-by date on them. Store newest items at the back and use oldest first (first in, first out). Review and rotate stock every six months when you check the rest of this plan. UHT milk and vacuum-packed ambient foods (rice, pasta, sauces, ready meals that store at room temperature) are useful additions to tinned goods.

Portable gas cookers (optional): Briefcase-style or single-burner camping gas cookers from camping shops can be useful for hot food or drinks if the power is off and you cannot use your normal hob. **Safety is essential:** only use them with good ventilation (open a window), never leave them unattended while lit, keep a carbon monoxide alarm in the home, and always follow the manufacturer's instructions. Never use a BBQ, charcoal or solid-fuel stove indoors. A single-burner cooker only heats one pan at a time. If you want to cook a proper meal (for example a pan and a kettle, or two pans), having two cookers is more practical. Store spare gas canisters in a cool place. Check them regularly for rust, dents or damage - the gas itself does not expire, but the canister can degrade over time.

Food & water log (optional)

Use this to track what you have stored and when it was bought or filled. Helps with rotation.

Item	Quantity	Date bought / filled	Use by / rotate by

Six-monthly review log

Check the plan, medicines, contacts, water and food stores at least every six months.

Date reviewed	Reviewed by	Changes made / notes

Get out in 20 minutes - Your home grab bag if you have to leave in 20 minutes

Keep a ready-packed bag near the front door or in an easy-to-reach cupboard so you can leave at short notice if told to evacuate (for example because of flooding, a gas leak, or a police incident). In September 2026, around 85 homes near RAF Fairford were evacuated at short notice after a major incident. Flooding events in places such as South Wales and Hebden Bridge have also shown how quickly people can need to leave. Aim to be able to pick up the bag and go within about 20 minutes.

Suggested contents (keep light enough to carry):

• Essential medication (several days' supply where possible) and a written list of what you take

• Copies of important documents (ID, insurance, prescriptions) in a waterproof bag

• Cash and cards, plus a printed list of phone numbers

• Phone charger and power bank

• Torch and a small bottle of water plus a few no-cook snacks

• Warm waterproof layer, spare socks and sturdy shoes

• Basic first aid items, hand sanitiser and wet wipes

• Any items for children, babies or pets (nappies, formula, pet food, lead/carrier)

Store the bag somewhere every adult in the household knows. Check it every six months and replace anything that is out of date.

This free plan is based on the official UK Government Be Ready Household Emergency Plan and checklist (beready.campaign.gov.uk). It is provided by Garland Training for general information only. Always follow advice from the emergency services. For official guidance visit gov.uk/BeReady.

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