



20 Weeks to Emergency Preparedness

Your handy, week-by-week guide to total preparedness.

- ❑ **Week 1:** Decide how and where your kit will be stored. The kit should be accessible and safe from water and vermin damage. Ideally the container will be somewhat portable. If storing the kit indoors, duffel bags, buckets, and even suitcases can work well. A sturdy rolling bin with a good seal works well for outdoor storage.
- ❑ **Week 2:** Decide how much water you will need and add it to your kit. Aim for 4 liters per person and large pet per day. Water filters, purification tablets, and storage treatments are great ways to keep your kit lightweight while still getting the water you need. Make sure you have a freshwater source nearby if you're taking this route.
- ❑ **Week 3:** Stock up with at least 1200 calories per person per day of food. We recommend using freeze dried food as it is nutritious, has great longevity (up to 25 years for some) and is light weight. Canned goods also work well, but require frequent rotation and a can opener.
- ❑ **Week 4:** Arrange an out of town contact person and keep their information (phone, email, and address) in your kit. Print copies of this information for family to keep in their wallet, or save it in the family cell phones. Make sure everyone knows to check in with that contact ASAP if they are caught away from home during a disaster.
- ❑ **Week 5:** Add food and supplies for your pets to your kit. Be sure to include a method of stowing or transporting them such as a carrier, leash, and/or tie out. Like humans, pets can behave erratically during an emergency and should be contained, even if usually trusted to roam.
- ❑ **Week 6:** Get a radio and flashlight for your kit. We recommend getting items with solar or crank charging capabilities, but if you're a fan of traditional alkaline batteries be sure to pack extra. Many models of modern emergency radios can charge a smart phone as well, making them extra handy as a communication tool.
- ❑ **Week 7:** Learn about hazards in your community. Find out if where you live is vulnerable to earthquakes, severe weather, forest fires, floods, or landslides and consider any unique preparations that may be necessary for those dangers. Research safety protocol for local dangers and secure appliances and furniture if necessary.
- ❑ **Week 8:** Stock a first aid kit. Make sure the kit reflects your medical ability and add extras of any medications and prescriptions that might be necessary for your family.
- ❑ **Week 9:** Identify safe places both in and out of the home. Plan and practice emergency drills for likely scenarios in your area and be sure everyone understands what to do. This is also the time to decide on a family meeting place where you can go if the home becomes untenable or family is caught out away from the home.
- ❑ **Week 10:** Add fire starter, matches, lighters, and candles to your kit. If it is safe to do so in your area practice starting a campfire.
- ❑ **Week 11:** Check and update your insurance policies and make records of your most valuable possessions. Add at least enough money for a tank of gas to your emergency kit in small bills.
- ❑ **Week 12:** Add garbage bags, dishes/cups (plastic is fine), and depending on your stored food cutlery and serving utensils.



- Week 13:** Add clothing to your kit for each person. Include a change of day clothes, warm clothes, work gloves, and sturdy shoes.
- Week 14:** Enroll a family member in a first aid course and pack HELP/OK signs into your kit.
- Week 15:** Assemble copies of important documents in either a waterproof envelope or on a secure USB stick. Include insurance papers, proof of identity, proof of parentage for children, family photos, and physical copies of clear identifying photos of each family member. If you can, keep these in a container that's fireproof as well as water tight.
- Week 16:** Add personal and sanitation items. A toilet bucket kit is a great place to start but don't forget tooth brushes, toothpaste, extra toilet paper, wet wipes, combs/brushes, razors, etc.
- Week 17:** Keep some tools in or near your kit. Items like axes, shovels, and rope can be invaluable for rescue and recovery efforts.
- Week 18:** Plan for cold nights by adding blankets and sleeping bags to your kits. Foil emergency blankets are compact, light weight, and energy efficient. Emergency ponchos are great for keeping the water off too.
- Week 19:** You're probably running out of space at this point, but hang in there! These are the last items to add: pocket knife/utility tool, signal whistle, a spare set of car and house keys, and comfort items like cards, books, and toys.
- Week 20:** You made it! All that's left is to meet with the neighbours to ensure that they are prepared and to discuss the possibility of sharing larger items like generators. Consider developing a neighbourhood plan that makes the best use of everyone's skills and supplies.

Yearly Maintenance

The hard work's all done, so don't let it go to waste. Pull out your kits once or twice a year (we find daylight savings time is a memorable time to do it) and check over the items looking for expired products that need changing out and testing electronics to be sure they're still up to snuff.

Items to check on:

- Food and Water
- Medications
- Flashlights, radios, USB sticks, and batteries
- First aid supplies with expirations (BZK wipes for example)
- Pet food

This is also a great time to run through an emergency drill or two to keep everybody up to date and on their toes!