

# BUILD OR BUY A KIT

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**Getting or making an emergency kit is a very important step in ensuring you are ready for emergencies. You should have an emergency preparedness kit in your home with enough supplies to meet the needs of your entire household for at least 3 days.**

Some disasters, such as floods, wildfires and major power outages, can create very unsafe conditions. If your safety is at risk, community officials may ask you to either take shelter at home, or evacuate to a safer place. If asked to evacuate, you may have only minutes to get what you need and leave. Having an emergency kit that you can either use at home or grab and take along will help you be prepared and get to the evacuation point quickly, if needed.

**Building a kit might seem expensive, but it doesn't need to be, and it is worth the effort! By taking the time now to store food, water and supplies, you can provide for yourself and your family in an emergency.**

## HERE ARE SOME TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED:

- Before you purchase anything, see what you already have in your home. You might already have some first aid supplies and non-perishable food items, which will save you time and money.

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- Start with the essential items listed below first, then add additional items when you can.

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- Keep a list of the things you need for your kit with you, in your phone, purse or wallet. When you are out doing regular shopping, check your list and purchase items when they are on sale.

- Purchase a couple of items from your list each week or month to help spread out the cost.

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- Ask your family and friends if they have any spare items they are willing to give you that are on your list. You may want to consider checking out garage sales or reaching out on social media as well.

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- When you're buying food for your kit, consider these points:
  - Buy items with a long shelf life. Check the best before dates on cans, boxes and bags and look for items that will not expire quickly.

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  - Make sure larger food items you buy don't need to be refrigerated after they are opened. During a disaster, the power may be out for hours or even days, meaning leftovers would need to be thrown out.

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  - Regularly check the best before and expiry dates on the food in your kit. When the date is getting close, take it out of the kit and replace it with a new item. You can eat the items that were closer to expiry so that they don't get thrown out.

Taking small steps towards being prepared will make a big difference during a disaster or emergency. It will be time and money well spent.

## BUILD A KIT

### ESSENTIAL ITEMS

Water for drinking – at least 1L per person per day (2L if including pets) for at least 3 days.

Water for cleaning and hygiene: 2L per person/per day

Non-perishable food for each person for at least one day, such as:

- Ready-to-eat canned food (meats, fruits, vegetables)
- Protein, granola or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Trail mix
- Peanut butter
- Dried fruit
- Dried meat
- Oatmeal
- Apple sauce
- Canned juices
- Non-perishable pasteurized milk
- Food for infants

**Tip**

Even non-perishable foods have expiry dates. Check your kit every year and replace the food as needed.

Manual can opener (if you include canned food items) and utensils

Items you cannot be without, such as medications (with copies of your prescriptions), extra eye glasses or contacts, baby supplies (diapers, formula, food, toys), hearing aids, dentures, diabetes supplies, walkers, pet foods and medications, etc., to last at least 3 days.

Important documents – consider including copies of:

- Birth and marriage certificates
- Passports, permanent resident cards, status cards, or any such important documents
- Health cards
- Licences
- Wills
- Land deeds
- Insurance

**Tip**

In addition to having paper copies of important documents in a safe location (consider a safe location other than your home), you may also want to consider saving electronic copies or photos of important documents in a safe location (such as an encrypted USB, or other secure device) or leaving with a trusted contact.

Copy of your emergency plan (see [redcross.ca/ready](http://redcross.ca/ready) for more information and to download a template)

Crank or battery-operated flashlight, with extra batteries

Crank or battery-operated radio, with extra batteries

Extra keys for your house and car

First aid kit

- Extra cash in small bills and coins
- Personal hygiene items
- Extra cell phone charger or battery pack
- Supplies for your pet, including:
  - Food
  - Medication
  - Vaccination records
- Paper and pens
- Whistle

### ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO CONSIDER

- Traditional medicines and/or easily portable ceremonial items that you use or want to have with you.
- Traditional foods that may be difficult to find in stores.
- Change of clothing and footwear for each person in your household
- Plastic sheeting
- Scissors and a pocket knife (not if evacuating by air or into a centre/shelter)
- Hand sanitizer
- Garbage bags and twist ties
- Toilet paper
- Multitool or basic tools (i.e. hammer, wrench, screwdriver, etc.)
- Duct tape
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each member of your household
- Toys, games, books, deck of cards
- Paper maps

### BUY A KIT

Would you prefer to buy a kit rather than build your own? You can purchase Red Cross emergency kits at <https://products.redcross.ca>. Kits are available in different sizes based on the number of people in your home. Once you receive your kit, be sure to add any items on the list above that are not included in the kit you purchased, including water and non-perishable food.

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### PACK YOUR KIT

We recommend storing these items all together in a sturdy and easy-to-carry bag, such as a backpack, that can be easily used and carried with you in an emergency.

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### STORE YOUR KIT

Once you have your kit put together, store it in a clean, dry place that's easy to access in case you must leave your home (evacuate) quickly. Make sure everyone in your family knows where it is.

Check your kit every year to ensure it is ready in case you need it.

➤ Be sure to resupply your kit after you use it.

See [redcross.ca/ready](https://redcross.ca/ready) for more tips on being prepared.

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