

The 72-Hour Emergency Checklist

Everything a household needs for the first three days of almost any emergency. Print it, tick it, put it inside a cupboard door.

WATER

- ☐ Water: 1 gallon / 4 litres per person per day, 3 days minimum
- ☐ A filter as backup (bacteria and protozoa only — not viruses or chemicals)
- ☐ Containers filled and dated, stored low and out of sunlight

FOOD

- ☐ 3 days of food needing no cooking and no refrigeration
- ☐ Manual can opener, stored with the food
- ☐ Anything your household actually eats — not novelty rations

LIGHT & INFORMATION

- ☐ Torch for each adult, plus spare batteries of one shared type
- ☐ Battery or crank radio (outage information is broadcast, not online)
- ☐ Power bank, charged, for phones and medical devices

WARMTH

- ☐ Emergency blankets — used underneath you, not over
- ☐ One small interior room chosen as the warm room
- ☐ Battery carbon monoxide alarm if burning anything indoors

MEDICAL

- ☐ 7 days of prescription medication, plus a written list of doses
- ☐ Basic first aid kit — opened and inventoried, not just owned
- ☐ Oral rehydration sachets (the most underrated item on any list)

PAPER & CASH

- ☐ Copies of ID, insurance and tenancy or deeds, in a waterproof bag
- ☐ \$200–300 / £150–200 in small notes — card readers fail with the power
- ☐ Phone numbers written on paper, including one out-of-area contact

THINGS TO KNOW, NOT BUY

- ☐ Where the water stopcock is — and that it actually turns
- ☐ Where the gas shut-off and consumer unit are
- ☐ Your meeting point, and who collects the children
- ☐ UK: report a power cut free on 105

Seventy-two hours is a floor, not a target. It is roughly how long organised help takes to reach a badly affected area — not how long the disruption lasts. If you can stretch water and food to a week, do. And the last section costs nothing at all, which is usually where the real gaps are.