

# How to Survive a Flood

Floods can strike quickly in many parts of the world. Surviving a flood is a combination of preparation and taking appropriate action as soon as the natural disaster begins.

## Steps

**Be aware of your area's flood risk**

**Check to see if you have insurance that covers flooding.** If not, find out how to get flood insurance.

**Keep insurance policies, documents, and other valuables in a safe-deposit box.**

**Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit.** The kit should contain:

- First aid kit and essential medications.
- Canned food and can opener
- At least three gallons of water per person
- Protective clothing, rainwear, and bedding or sleeping bags
- Battery-powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries.
- Identification, such as a passport, drivers license, etc.
- Special items for infants, elderly, or disabled family members, such as diapers, toys, etc.
- Written instructions for how to turn off electricity, gas and water if authorities advise you to do so. (Remember, you'll need a professional to turn them back on.)

**Identify where you could go if told to evacuate.** Choose several places, such as a friend's home in another town, a motel, or a shelter. Make sure everyone in the family knows where each place is located and how to get there.

- Call your local Red Cross chapter, emergency management office, or planning and zoning department.
- If it has been raining hard for several hours, or steadily raining for several days, listen to local radio or TV stations for flood information.

**Reduce potential flood damage.**

- Raise your furnace, water heater and electric panel to a higher level if they are in areas of your home that could flood.
- Move valuables to higher points in your home.

**Pay attention to flood warning updates.** Floods may take several hours to develop, or can occur in a matter of minutes.

- A flood **WATCH** means a flood is possible in your area.
- A flood **WARNING** means flooding is already occurring or will occur soon in your area.

**When a flood WATCH is issued, move your furniture and valuables to higher floors of your home.** Fill your car's gas tank, in case an evacuation notice is issued, and be alert to signs of flash flooding and be ready to evacuate on a moment's notice.

**When a flood WARNING is issued, listen to local radio and TV stations for information and advice.** If told to evacuate, do so as soon as possible. Always listen to the instructions authorities give.

## During a Flood

**Evacuate immediately.** You may have only a short time to escape. Act quickly, utilizing your planning route.

**Move to higher ground away from rivers, streams, creeks, and storm drains.** Do not drive around barricades. They are there for your safety.

**If evacuating in your car, drive through as little water as possible and take the shortest route to your meeting place.** Make sure you have your emergency kit with you.

**Never walk through moving water.** The currents in even 6 inches (15 cm) of water can be dangerous. In still water, use a stick or another long object to test the area and make sure it is safe.

**If your car stalls in rapidly rising waters, abandon it immediately and climb to higher ground.**