

The 15-Minute Home Emergency Kit

A short way to build a basic kit for your home, one small step at a time.



FIND WHAT YOU NEED

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START AND STOCK YOUR KIT

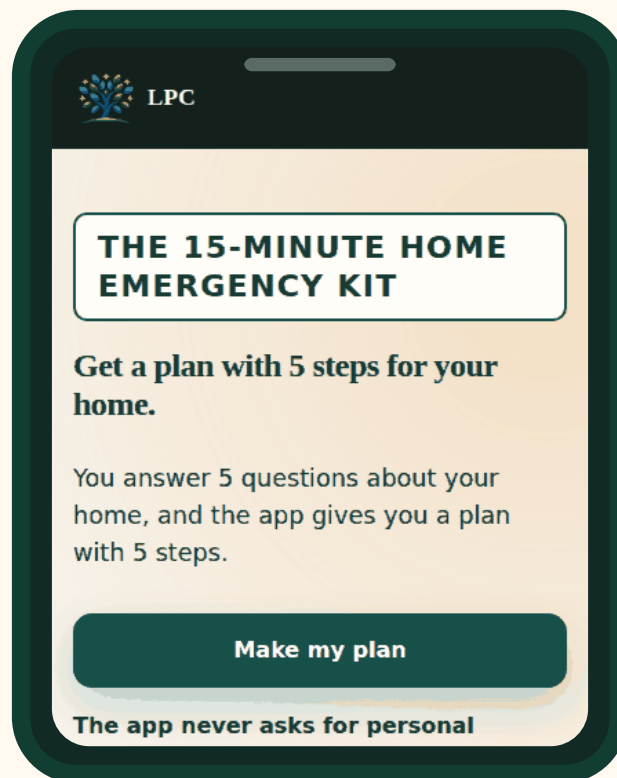
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Quick Route: Start with the Emergency Kit Companion App



If you want to take one small step toward a basic kit today, the Emergency Kit Companion App can help you start now.

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You answer 5 questions about your home, and the app gives you a plan with 5 steps. The steps follow the same list this guide follows, one item at a time.

Save favorites and add personal notes, so your app is tailored to your preferences.

You can create 2 complete personalized plans free.

Read the Important Note About Your Emergency Kit first. Then use the app if you want a plan for this week, or keep reading and learn the method at your own pace.

Open the Emergency Kit Companion App

<https://emergencykit.lifeperksclub.com>

A GENTLE NOTE

Important Note About Your Emergency Kit



This guide gives everyday advice about building a basic kit for your home. It is general information,

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not emergency or safety advice, and it does not replace the official source listed at the end.

It does not say what to do in an emergency. It does not tell you whether your home or your family is in a good place, and it does not promise any particular result. The 15-minute frame is this guide's own idea. It is a way to make a small start, and it does not come from an official source.

Every list of items in this guide comes from one source: the Ready.gov page "Build a Kit". Each time

CONTINUED

the guide names a list, it says "Ready.gov lists". The guide does not add items of its own. It does not give amounts, except for the one amount that Ready.gov writes itself, and where it does, it says so in the same sentence.

This guide and the companion app never ask you to type personal details, an address or medical information into them. Keep those to yourself.

You never have to do a step that feels confusing or too much. If a step does not fit your home, skip it and go on to another one. The guide does not name any product or brand. You choose what works for you.

[START HERE](#)

Why a Kit Starts Small



Most of us have meant to put a kit together at some point. We open a page, see a long list and

CONTINUED

close it again. The list is long, the week is full and a kit does not feel urgent today. So it waits.

A kit can wait for ordinary reasons. You may not know where to start. The list may look like too much at once. You may think it needs an open weekend and a big shopping trip. You may have started once, put a few things in a bag and then lost track of where the bag went.

The method in this guide goes around those reasons. It does not ask for a weekend. It asks for

CONTINUED

about 15 minutes in one week, one item from one list, and one place in your home. One item gotten this week is better than a long list you never start.

That is the whole method. Everything else in this guide is a way to make it easier to keep going.

The phrase basic kit in this guide means the first list on the Ready.gov page "Build a Kit". The page also has a second list, called additional items. You will find both in the sections that follow.

WHAT GOES IN A BASIC KIT

What Goes in a Basic Kit: The Ready.gov List



Here is what Ready.gov lists for the basic kit. This is the list the rest of the guide follows.

Ready.gov lists these items:

CONTINUED

- water

- food

- a battery-powered or hand crank radio

- a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert

- a flashlight

- a first aid kit

- extra batteries

- a whistle

- a dust mask

CONTINUED

- plastic sheeting
- scissors
- duct tape
- moist towelettes
- garbage bags
- plastic ties
- a wrench or pliers
- a manual can opener
- local maps
- a cell phone with chargers and a backup battery

WHAT GOES IN A BASIC KIT

What Goes in a Basic Kit: Water, Food, Light and Tools



That is a long line, and it is meant to be. You do not need to get it all this week, this month or in any particular order. The guide breaks it into 4 parts so you can look at one part at a time.

Water. Ready.gov lists water.

CONTINUED

Food. Ready.gov lists food.

Light and information. Ready.gov lists a battery-powered or hand crank radio, a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert, a flashlight, extra batteries, local maps, and a cell phone with chargers and a backup battery.

Tools and papers. Ready.gov lists a first aid kit, a whistle, a dust mask, plastic sheeting, scissors, duct tape, moist towelettes, garbage bags, plastic ties, a wrench or pliers and a manual can opener.

The 4 parts are this guide's own way of grouping the list. The list itself is Ready.gov's.

THE METHOD

Emergency Water and Food: What the Source Lists



Water and food are the first 2 items on the Ready.gov list, and they are the 2 places many people start. This section stays with what the source says. It does not add to it.

CONTINUED

On water, the Ready.gov page says: "one gallon per person per day for several days, for drinking and sanitation." That is the line as it stands on the page.

This guide does not add a number of days, and it does not change the line. If you want to know how much water that is for your home, read the line and count the people in your home. The guide leaves the rest to you.

On food, Ready.gov lists food. The excerpt of the page that this guide has seen does not give amounts or kinds of food. So this guide does not either. It does not name a food, a brand or a number of days. If you want more detail, open the Ready.gov page and read it there.

CONTINUED

Here is a small way to use this section. It takes about 15 minutes.

1. Open a note on your phone or take a piece of paper.

2. Write "water" at the top.

3. Under it, write the Ready.gov line as it stands: "one gallon per person per day for several days, for drinking and sanitation."

CONTINUED

4. Write how many people live in your home.

5. Stop. Next week, pick the next item.

You may notice that these 5 steps do not ask you to buy anything. That is on purpose. The first step is to read the line and write it down. A note is a small thing, and it is the thing that makes the next week easier.

If you want to go one step further, look in your home for water you already have, and write down where it is. That is the guide's own suggestion, not Ready.gov's.

THE METHOD

Emergency Light, Power and Information



This section is about the items that Ready.gov lists in the light and information part of the basic kit: a battery-powered or hand crank radio, a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert, a flashlight, extra

CONTINUED

batteries, local maps, and a cell phone with chargers and a backup battery.

The guide does not explain how these items work, and it does not tell you which one to choose. It does not say how many you need. It only helps you look at the list one line at a time.

Here is a way to go through it in about 15 minutes.

Pick 1 line from the list. For example: flashlight. Look around your home and ask yourself one

CONTINUED

question: do I have this? If you do, write down where it is. If you do not, write "flashlight" at the top of a note, and that is the item you get this week.

Next week, pick the next line.

Some people like to go through the list in the order Ready.gov gives it. Others like to start with the item that is easiest to get. Both are fine. The guide only asks you to pick one and stop.

EMERGENCY LIGHT, POWER AND

Emergency Light, Power and Information: 3 Small Tips



A few small things can make this part easier.

Keep items together. If you already have a flashlight, a radio or batteries, put them in one

CONTINUED

place. It is easier to look at the list when the items are in one spot. This is the guide's own suggestion, and it does not come from the source.

Write the date. Ready.gov says: "Replace expired items as needed." If an item has a date on it, write the date on your note. If an item has no date, write the day you got it. This is the guide's own way of following that line.

Look at the phone. The Ready.gov list includes a cell phone with chargers and a backup battery. If

CONTINUED

you have a phone, a charger and a backup battery, write down where each one is. If you do not have one of them, write the name of the one you want to get.

Light, power and information are 3 words, and you may find that you already have more of this part than you thought. Write it down. The note is the first step.

THE METHOD

First Aid, Tools and Papers for Your Kit



This section is about the items Ready.gov lists in the tools and papers part of the basic kit: a first aid kit, a whistle, a dust mask, plastic sheeting, scissors, duct tape, moist towelettes, garbage bags, plastic ties, a wrench or pliers and a manual can opener.

CONTINUED

The Ready.gov page also lists important family documents, but it puts them in the second list, the additional items. You will find them in the next section.

The guide does not tell you how to use any of these items. It does not give medical or first aid advice, and it does not say what is in a first aid kit. It only lists what the source lists.

The method is the same as before. Pick 1 line. Ask yourself: do I have this? If yes, write down where it is. If no, write the name of the item on your note, and that is the item you get this week.

CONTINUED

Here is a small way to do it.

1. Read the list once, slowly.

2. Pick the item that looks easiest. That may be scissors, garbage bags or duct tape.

3. Look for it in your home. Write down where it is, or write that you need it.

4. Stop.

CONTINUED

Some of these items are things many homes already have in a drawer or a toolbox. Others may not be. The guide does not know which are which in your home, and it does not say which ones matter more. It asks only for one at a time.

If an item is more than you want to get right now, leave it for a later week. The list does not have a deadline. The guide's own rule is that one item a week is a good pace, and that skipping a week is fine.

If you are not sure how to use an item, this guide cannot tell you. It does not give instructions on tools or on first aid. Look at the official source listed at the end, or ask someone you trust.

THE METHOD

Extra Kit Items to Think About



After the basic kit, Ready.gov lists additional items. This is the second list on the page.

Here is what Ready.gov lists as additional items:

CONTINUED

- soap

- hand sanitizer

- disinfecting wipes

- prescription and non-prescription medications

- prescription eyeglasses

- contact lens solution

- infant formula

- bottles

- diapers

CONTINUED

- pet food and water
- cash
- important family documents
- a sleeping bag or blanket
- a change of clothing
- sturdy shoes
- a fire extinguisher
- waterproof matches
- personal hygiene items
- mess kits

CONTINUED

- paper cups

- plates and towels

- plastic utensils

- paper

- a pencil

- books

- games and puzzles

This list is longer than the first, and it is not meant to be done at once. It is a list to read and think about. The guide does not say which items you need, and it does not say which are more important.

THE METHOD

Choose Your Extra Kit Items in 15 Minutes



Here is a way to use it. It takes about 15 minutes.

1. Read the additional items list once.

CONTINUED

2. Circle the lines that fit your home. If you live alone, some lines will not fit. If you have children or pets, other lines may.

3. Write the circled lines on a note under the heading "extra items."

4. Stop. Add them after the basic items, one at a time.

Circling is the guide's own way of working with the list. The list is Ready.gov's.

CONTINUED

Some lines on this list are about people and animals in your home, such as infant formula, bottles, diapers, and pet food and water.

Some are about things you may already own, such as a sleeping bag or blanket, a change of clothing, sturdy shoes, books, games and puzzles. Some are about papers and money, such as cash and important family documents.

The guide does not give advice on medications, medical items, food for infants or anything else on this list. It does not say how much of anything you should have.

It lists what Ready.gov lists, and nothing more. If you have questions about any of these items, look at the official source listed at the end, or ask someone you trust.

WHERE TO KEEP THE KIT

Where to Keep the Kit



The Ready.gov page lists what goes in a kit. The excerpt of the page that this guide has seen does not say where to keep it. So this section is the

CONTINUED

guide's own suggestion, and it does not come from a source.

You do not need a special place. You need a place you can find. The simplest rule is the one from the start of this guide: pick 1 spot in the home that you already use.

Here is a way to choose.

Pick a spot you already open. A shelf in a closet, a corner of a cupboard, a space under a bed or a box in a hallway. If you already open it every week, you will see the kit and remember it.

CONTINUED

Start with a box or a bag. One container is enough. Put the first item in it. Add the next item the following week. When the container is full, you can decide whether you want a second one.

Write the spot on your note. The note is the thing that helps you find the kit in a month or a year. Write where it is. If you move it, change the note.

Tell the people in your home. If you live with others, tell them where the kit is. It is a small thing to say, and it helps everyone know where to look.

FIT YOUR EMERGENCY KIT INTO

Fit Your Emergency Kit Into the Space You Have



Keep what you have with what you add. If you already have a flashlight, batteries or a first aid kit in different places, you can leave them where they

CONTINUED

are and write the places on your note, or you can move them to your spot. Both are fine.

If there is no room for a kit, that is a common problem. Start with the note. The note takes no room. Pick the spot first, put the first item there, and add 1 item at a time. A kit that has 1 item is a start.

The guide does not say what size the kit should be, how heavy it should be or what kind of container to use. It does not name a brand or a product. You choose what works for your home.

STEP BY STEP

The 15-Minute Weekly Kit Build



This is the heart of the guide. It is the method in one page. You can come back to this section whenever you lose the thread.

CONTINUED

The weekly build has 4 steps, and it takes about 15 minutes. The 15 minutes are this guide's own idea. They are a frame, not a rule from a source.

Step 1: Read (about 3 minutes). Open the Ready.gov page "Build a Kit", or look at the lists in this guide. Read the basic kit list once. You do not have to remember it.

Step 2: Pick (about 2 minutes). Pick 1 item from the list. It can be the easiest one or the one you care about most. Write it on your note.

CONTINUED

Step 3: Get (about 8 minutes). Get that 1 item this week. If you already have it, find it and put it in your spot. If you do not, write down where you will get it, and get it when you can this week. The guide does not say where to get any item.

Step 4: Note (about 2 minutes). Write the date and the item on your note. Write where it is. Then stop.

Stop. That is the most important part. You do not need to do a second item this week. Come back next week for the next one.

STEP BY STEP

What 4 Weeks of the Emergency Kit Build Might Look Like



Here is what 4 weeks might look like.

- Week 1: water. You read the line about water, write it on your note and count the people in your home.

CONTINUED

- Week 2: a flashlight. You look in your home and write down where it is, or you write that you need one.

- Week 3: scissors. You do the same.

- Week 4: you read the list again and pick the next item.

None of this has to follow the order of the list. The guide only asks for one item a week.

CONTINUED

If a week does not go as planned, skip it. The guide's own rule is that a skipped week is not a failure. Pick up the list next week and keep the same note.

If the list still looks too long, read only the first line: water, food, radio, flashlight. Make 1 pile for those, and leave the rest for later weeks.

If you have things but are not sure they still work, read the Ready.gov line, "Replace expired items as needed." Look at the date on each item and write the date on your note. That is the guide's own way of following that line.

THE METHOD

The Yearly Emergency Kit Check



A kit does not stay the same. The Ready.gov page says: "Re-think your needs every year and update your kit as your family's needs change." That is the line as it stands on the page. It is the one place in

CONTINUED

the excerpt that talks about coming back to the kit later.

This guide turns that line into a small yearly check. The check is the guide's own idea. It does not come from a source.

Pick 1 day of the year. It can be a birthday, the first day of a season or any day that is easy to remember. Write it on your note.

Read the line. On that day, read the Ready.gov line: "Re-think your needs every year and update your kit as your family's needs change."

CONTINUED

Look at the dates. Take out the items that have a date on them. Look at each date and write it on your note. Ready.gov says: "Replace expired items as needed." If an item needs to be replaced, write that on your note, and that is the item you get in the coming weeks.

Think about who lives in your home. If something has changed, such as a new person, a new pet or a move, read the additional items list again and circle the lines that now fit.

Stop. Then go back to the weekly build, one item at a time.

The yearly check takes about 15 minutes. It is not a test, and nothing is graded. It is only a way to make sure that the kit and the note still match.

MAKE NEXT MONTH EASIER FOR

Make Next Month Easier for Your Emergency Kit



A few small habits make the next month easier. You do not need all of them. Pick 1.

Keep 1 note. One note, in one place, with the items you have, where they are and the dates.

CONTINUED

When you have 1 note, you do not have to remember anything.

Write the date on it. If an item has no date, write the day you got it. The date tells you what to look at first. This is the guide's own rule.

Do the build on the same day each week. A fixed day, like a Sunday morning or the day you do the shopping, makes the 15 minutes easier to find.

Add 1 item at a time. Resist the urge to get everything in one trip. One item a week is a good pace, and a slow pace is still a pace.

Pick the easy items first. The easiest item is the one you will actually get. A few easy items make the kit look like a kit, and that is encouraging.

KEEP YOUR EMERGENCY KIT

Keep Your Emergency Kit Notes Where You Will See Them



Keep the list with the kit. Put your note in the box, or write the Ready.gov page name on the box. When you open it, you will know what to look at.

CONTINUED

Put your own notes where you will see them. A note about what you have, what you still need and what you want to try next is more useful than a rule. The companion app lets you save these.

Some weeks will be slow. A week may pass with no item at all, and that is fine. The note stays where it is, and the list stays where it is. When you come back, read your note first. It tells you what you

CONTINUED

already did, so you do not have to start from the top.

Other weeks will go faster than planned. If you have time and want to get a second item, you may. The guide's rule is only that 1 item is enough. A second item is a bonus, and it does not change what next week asks of you.

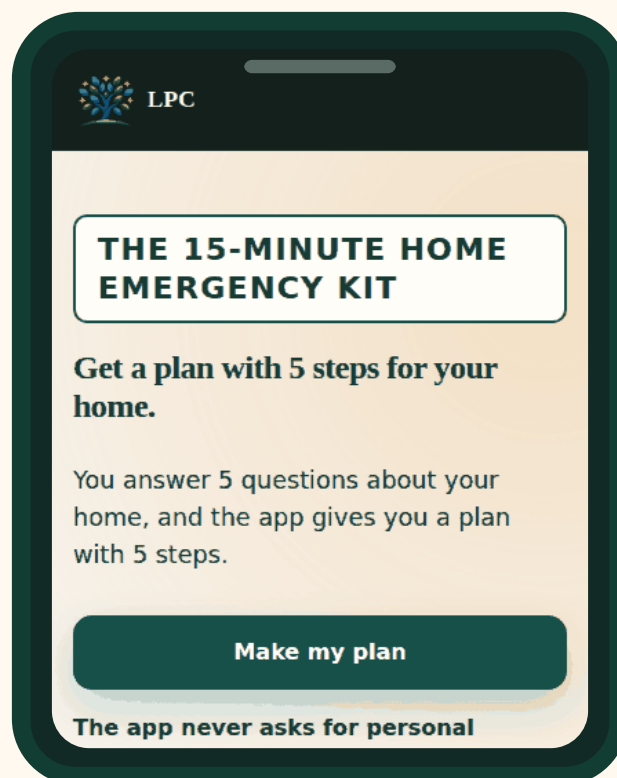
You are building a habit of looking at the list and getting one item. That habit is the whole method.

OPTIONAL COMPANION APP

The Emergency Kit Companion App

This guide explains the method. The Emergency Kit Companion App turns it into a plan for the week.

You answer 5 questions about your home, and the app gives you a plan with 5 steps. The steps follow



CONTINUED

the same list as this guide: water, food, light and information, tools and papers, and a place to keep the kit. The app does not give amounts that the source does not give, and it does not say what to do in an emergency.

Save favorites and add personal notes, so your app is tailored to your preferences.

You can create 2 complete personalized plans free. After that, a one-time unlock of \$9 keeps it yours. There is no subscription and no renewal.

The app never asks for personal details, an address or medical information.

Open the Emergency Kit Companion App

<https://emergencykit.lifeperksclub.com>

FINAL CHECKLIST

Final Checklist: Your Emergency Kit



☐ I read the basic kit list once.

☐ I picked 1 item this week.

CONTINUED

- ☐ I got that item, or I wrote down where I will get it.
- ☐ I wrote the date and the item on my note.
- ☐ I picked 1 spot in my home for the kit and wrote it on my note.
- ☐ I wrote the Ready.gov line on water on my note, as it stands on the page.
- ☐ I looked at the date on each item I already had, and wrote it down.
- ☐ I picked 1 day of the year for the yearly check.
- ☐ I know that this guide does not say what to do in an emergency.

The phrase basic kit means the first list on the Ready.gov page "Build a Kit".

SOURCES

Sources Used for Emergency Kit Guidance

The lists in this guide come from one U.S. government page. It was opened on October 5, 2026. Check the official page for the latest wording.

The 15-minute weekly build, the 4 parts, the note, the spot for the kit, the yearly check and the habits are our own suggestions. They are not official guidance. Where this guide names a list or a line, it comes from the source below.

This guide gives no amounts, times or kinds of items other than what Ready.gov writes on the

CONTINUED

page, because the page excerpt that we saw does not give more.

- Ready.gov, Build a Kit (Emergency Disaster Supplies Guide) — the basic kit list, the additional items list, "one gallon per person per day for several days, for drinking and sanitation", "Replace expired items as needed" and "Re-think your needs every year and update your kit as your family's needs change." <https://www.ready.gov/kit>

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