

# 72-Hour Emergency Kit Builder

*"Prepared, not scared. Stay ready." · Emergency preparedness for everybody.*

Congratulations on taking a step toward preparing your household for an emergency. While there are items that everyone should consider, preparing should be customized to your specific set of circumstances. This guide helps you think through what items make the most sense for you. At Stay Ready Preps, we believe in preparedness for **EVERY body**. Our goal is to make sure everyone has the same chance to survive or even thrive in an emergency. You don't have to prepare everything at one time. Go as quickly as your schedule and budget allow. What's most important is to start. We have prioritized the preps for you, so it will be most beneficial to prep in the order presented.

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**This guide assumes you do not have access to water or power for 72 hours and that you will shelter in place. There is a section on how to prepare a go-bag if you need to evacuate quickly.**

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# MODULE 1 · Page 1 of 3

KEEP YOU ALIVE — WATER

## Water: Your 72-Hour Calculator

Water is your #1 priority. FEMA recommends 1 gallon per person per day — but that's the floor, not the goal. **If you can, plan for 2 gallons per person per day** to cover drinking, cooking, and basic hygiene. Use this calculator to find your household total.

PEOPLE	
Number of people in your household:	_____ people
Gallons per person per day (recommended: 2):	_____ gal / person / day
Number of days:	<b>3 days</b>
<b>People Total = _____ people × _____ gallons × 3 = _____ gallons</b>	

PETS		
Dogs / Cats:	_____ pets	0.5 gal / pet / day
Small animals (rabbits, birds, etc.):	_____ pets	~0.25 gal / pet / day
<b>Pets Total = (_____ dogs/cats × 0.5) + (_____ small × 0.25) × 3 = _____ gallons</b>		

<b>HOUSEHOLD GRAND TOTAL</b>	People _____ gal + Pets _____ gal =	<b>_____ GALLONS</b>
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Example: A family of 3 people + 1 dog needs at least **21 gallons** (3 people × 2 gal × 3 days = 18 gal, + 1 dog × 0.5 gal × 3 days = 1.5 gal).

### STORAGE TIPS

- Store in food-grade containers, if you can** — BPA-free jugs or sealed barrels. Never reuse milk jugs.
- Have a water filter** — If you're not certain the water is 100% safe, filter it! You can also boil it (1 minute rolling boil) or treat it with unscented bleach — 8 drops per gallon.
- Replace water every 6–12 months** — Label with date stored. Rotate like food.
- Tap water is fine unsealed for 6 months** — Commercially sealed water: 1–2 years.
- Keep water accessible** — Store where you can reach it quickly — not buried in a closet.

## Food: 72-Hour Supply

Plan for roughly **2,000 calories per person per day**. The total amount depends on your household size — figure that out below. Focus on shelf-stable foods that need little or no cooking.

My household has \_\_\_\_\_ people. I need food for \_\_\_\_\_ x 3 days = \_\_\_\_\_ person-days.

**Calorie-dense snacks**

Nut butters, jerky, granola bars, trail mix, dried fruit, seeds

**Canned goods**

Beans, tuna, chicken, soups, veggies, fruit — pack a manual can opener

**Ready-to-eat meals**

Freeze-dried pouches, MREs, RTD protein shakes, instant oatmeal

**Comfort foods**

Crackers, cookies, hot cocoa packets, instant coffee, hard candies

**Baby / infant food (if applicable)**

Formula, pouches, jars — age-appropriate, no-cook versions

**Pet food (if applicable)**

Dry or canned; 3-day supply per pet

**Kitchen tools**

Manual can opener, utensils, plates, cups — disposable if water is limited

**Consider This:** You should check food expiration dates every 6 months. If you have foods that are about to expire and you will not eat, donate them to your local food bank or pantry.

## Health & Medical

Your kit should keep you going *without* access to a pharmacy or doctor for 72 hours.

- Prescription medications**  
7+ day supply; rotate regularly
- Over-the-counter pain relievers**  
Ibuprofen, acetaminophen
- Antidiarrheal & antacid medications**  
Digestive stress is common in emergencies
- Antidotes & poisoning treatment**  
Activated charcoal — keep on hand; follow poison control guidance
- Emergency mylar blanket**  
Also useful for treating shock — keeps body heat in
- First aid kit**  
Bandages, gauze, antiseptic, tape, scissors
- Thermometer**  
Digital preferred
- Medical equipment + backup power**  
CPAP, nebulizer, glucose meter, etc.
- List of all medications & dosages**  
Stored with documents
- Doctor/pharmacy contact info**  
Written down, not just in your phone

**Consider This:** Keep a running "medical needs" list on paper and store it with your kit documents. If you or a family member has chronic health needs, plan for 2x the minimum.

# Keep You Safe

Once water, foods and meds are covered, safety is your next layer. These three categories keep you informed, warm, and connected.

## Light & Power

### Headlamps

(1 per person) — hands-free lighting; especially important with kids or medical needs

### Flashlights

Size and lumen strength can vary. Choose what's best for your individual needs.

### Lantern

Can be hand crank, battery powered, rechargeable — or all three

### Portable power bank

Electronics can be powered by batteries, solar, hand-crank, or all three. Having more than one way to power your device is helpful — if one method fails (like a power bank you forgot to charge), you have backup. If using battery-operated devices, store the batteries outside of the device to avoid corrosion if the batteries go bad.

### Extra batteries in correct sizes

Check AA, AAA, C, D for your devices. Store them outside of devices.

**Consider This:** *If you have sensitive beings in your household, consider warm-colored lanterns over harsh white LEDs. There are even color-changing lanterns that can help calm the environment. String lights can make a space feel cozy and decorated rather than stark and emergency-like — a small thing that makes a real difference in morale.*

### Shelter and Climate Control

Controlling the climate of your home or shelter is important for your physical health as well as your mental and emotional comfort. Based on the climate in your area, store the appropriate clothing and tools to keep warm, dry, and/or cool.

#### Layered clothing

Dressing in appropriate layers is your first best defense against unfavorable climates. Besides underwear and socks, prepare three layers: base, mid, and top. In colder climates, wool or synthetic moisture-wicking materials keep perspiration away from skin — avoid cotton. In warmer climates, wear breathable materials. In rainy climates, store the appropriate outer layers — like an umbrella, rain jacket, and waterproof shoes or boots.

#### Temperature control items

Fans (handheld or battery-powered), chemical ice packs, propane heaters, and hand warmers can provide relief and help you maintain healthy temperatures.

#### Emergency mylar blankets

1–2 per person; retain 90% body heat — also useful for treating shock

#### Sleeping bags rated for your area

Check overnight lows in your area

#### Plastic sheeting + duct tape

Can seal a room or create a windbreak

#### Gloves

Keeping your hands warm and protected are important in emergencies.

#### Shoes

Protecting our feet can be the difference between surviving an emergency or not. Protect our feet from weather, water, and debris. Make sure shoes are fit for walking long distances if necessary. Don't forget socks!

**Consider This:** For our friends with tactile sensitivities, materials that feel good against the skin matter. Wool can feel scratchy — consider soft synthetic materials instead. A weighted blanket or weighted toy can also be a great comfort during times of distress.

### Communication

When cell towers fail or power goes out, you need a backup communication plan. Know the alerts, know where to go, and know who to call.

#### Battery-powered or hand-crank NOAA weather radio

Receives emergency broadcasts without cell signal

#### Whistle (1 per person)

Signal for help if trapped; louder than shouting

#### Written contact list

Names, phones, addresses of family/friends outside area

#### Out-of-area contact person designated

Local lines jam in disasters; out-of-area calls often work

#### Know your local alert system

Sign up for county/city emergency alerts NOW

#### Two-way radios (walkie-talkies)

Good for families splitting up during evacuation

#### Physical maps of your area

GPS and phones may not work

**Consider This:** *Our friends who are sensitive to noise might not like the sound of radios and whistles. Foam earplugs or noise-canceling headsets can make a real difference in how well everyone functions during a stressful event.*

**YOUR HOUSEHOLD MEETING PLAN**

Meeting spot near home: \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g., front yard, neighbor's driveway)

Meeting spot away from home: \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g., school, community center)

Out-of-area contact name & phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evacuation route: \_\_\_\_\_

# Keep You Functional

Functioning at baseline during an emergency takes more than food and water. Hygiene keeps you healthy. Sensory tools keep anxiety manageable. Mobility planning keeps everyone moving.

## Hygiene & Sanitation

- Hand sanitizer (60%+ alcohol)**  
If water is limited, this is critical
- Moist towelettes / baby wipes**  
Full-body cleaning without water
- Toilet paper (3-day supply)**  
Don't forget extra if water is off
- Portable toilet or 5-gallon bucket with lid**  
If sewage lines fail or you can't leave
- Heavy-duty garbage bags**  
Line portable toilet; also waste disposal
- Feminine hygiene products**  
For anyone who needs them
- Soap, toothbrush, toothpaste**  
Morale matters
- Bleach (unscented) + dropper**  
8 drops per gallon to purify water if needed, and to dilute with water as a cleaner
- Nitrile gloves**  
Sanitation and first aid — nitrile only (latex-free)

**Consider This:** Many folks are sensitive to or even allergic to scents. Where possible, consider using unscented products without artificial coloring. During an emergency is a bad time to discover someone in your household has an allergy to Red #5.

### Sensory & Calm

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Emergencies are loud, unpredictable, and disorienting. Having comfort items ready reduces distress for everyone — especially children, neurodivergent family members, and anyone with anxiety.

- Comfort items for children**  
Small stuffed animal, familiar toy, book
- Noise-canceling headphones or foam earplugs**  
Especially valuable for sensory-sensitive individuals
- Fidget tools or stress-relief objects**  
Fidget rings, stress balls, putty
- Familiar scents or items**  
A worn t-shirt, a small familiar object
- Printed visual schedule or emergency routine**  
Reduces uncertainty for kids and neurodivergent adults
- Card games, dice, or small activities**  
Long waits are hard; low-tech entertainment helps
- Sunglasses / extra glasses**  
Bright light, debris, and vision needs

### Mobility

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If you or anyone in your household has mobility limitations, plan specifically for how you will move during an evacuation.

- Mobility aids accessible (wheelchair, walker, cane)**  
Keep near bed or exit
- Backup wheelchair battery or manual backup**  
Power outages affect powered chairs
- Evacuation chair if in a multi-story building**  
Can't always use elevators
- Neighbor / building buddy agreement**  
Someone who knows and will check on you
- Pre-identified accessible evacuation routes**  
Walk them now, not during the emergency
- Medical alert info on person**  
ID bracelet, card in wallet

## Special Household Considerations

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**Check every category that applies to your household.** These needs are real, common, and often overlooked in generic prep guides. You're not an afterthought here.

### Infants & Young Children

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- Formula + bottles (3-day supply)**  
Pre-measured powder packets for easy portability
- Baby food pouches or jars**  
Age-appropriate; no cooking versions
- Diapers (72 hours worth + extra)**  
Plus disposable changing pads
- Baby wipes (extra)**  
For cleaning, not just diaper changes
- Infant medications (fever reducer, etc.)**  
Check doses and expiration
- Comfort items (pacifier, small toy, blanket)**  
Essential for calming
- Baby carrier or wrap**  
Hands-free carrying during evacuation

### Elderly Family Members

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- All prescription medications (7-day supply minimum)**  
Keep rotating so it stays fresh
- Medical devices + backup batteries**  
Hearing aids, CPAP, blood pressure cuffs
- Contact lenses or glasses backup pair**
- Incontinence supplies**  
No-stigma — plan ahead
- Comfortable, non-slip footwear**  
Falls are the #1 risk during evacuation
- List of conditions, medications, doctors**  
In writing; give a copy to a family member

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NEURODIVERSE · PETS · MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

### Neurodivergent Family Members

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**Sensory kit (headphones, sunglasses, fidget tools)**

See Module 3 for full sensory list

**Printed emergency routine with visuals**

Unpredictability is the main stressor

**Preferred safe foods stocked**

Texture, taste sensitivities matter

**Meltdown de-escalation plan written out**

Share with all caregivers

**Medications (stimulants, anxiety, etc.)**

Work with provider for emergency supply

**Communication device backup (if AAC-dependent)**

Charge and pack it

### Pets

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*Water for pets is already in your calculator on page 1.*

**Food (3-day supply)**

Dry food is easiest to store and transport

**Collar with ID tag + microchip registered**

Update contact info annually

**Leash, carrier, or crate**

Carriers required for shelters; leash for evacuation

**Medications + veterinary records**

Vaccination records especially

**Familiar comfort item (toy, blanket)**

Reduces stress for the animal

**Poop bags / litter and small tray**

Even in an emergency, plan for waste

### Medical Equipment Users

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**Portable power bank or UPS for equipment**

CPAP, oxygen concentrator, infusion pump

**Know your equipment's power requirements**

Generator compatibility, battery hours

**Register with your utility as a medical baseline customer**

May delay shutoffs; apply now

**Contact your equipment supplier about loaner/backup plan**

**Printed operating instructions**

Stress impairs memory — don't rely on remembering

### Go-Bag & Documents

A go-bag is a ready-to-grab bag with everything you need to leave in under 5 minutes. Pack it now. Store it near your door.

**Consider This:** Many of the items listed in previous modules are in this list. You don't need to buy double — just store them in your go-bag so they're ready to grab. Consider rotating items in and out every few months to avoid spoilage and keep up with larger sizes for growing children.

#### The Go-Bag Essentials

- Backpack or duffle bag (one per person is ideal)**  
Water-resistant preferred
- Water (at least 1 liter per person for first 24 hrs)**  
Collapsible bottles save space
- 3-day food supply (grab-and-go format)**  
Bars, pouches, trail mix
- First aid kit**  
Compact version for the bag
- Phone charger + power bank**  
Fully charged before any event
- Flashlight + headlamp**  
With extra batteries
- Emergency mylar blanket (1 per person)**  
Compact, lightweight
- Change of clothes + sturdy shoes**  
Per person
- Personal hygiene and diaper supplies**  
Toothbrush, wipes, feminine products, diapers — whatever your household needs
- Comfort items**  
Photos of loved ones, a favorite toy or a worry stone. Whatever small item can bring comfort.
- Rain poncho or light jacket**
- Cash in small bills**  
ATMs and card readers may be down
- Copies of important documents**  
See documents section below
- Medications (3–7 days)**  
In original labeled containers
- N95 masks**  
Wildfire smoke, dust, airborne hazards
- Whistle**  
Signal for help
- Local maps (paper)**  
Can't rely on GPS

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DOCUMENTS, CASH & SHELTER vs. EVACUATE

## Documents & Cash

Keep copies in a waterproof envelope in your go-bag. Store originals in a fireproof box at home. Consider a secure cloud backup too.

**IDs (driver's license, passport, state ID)**

All household members

**Birth certificates**

All household members

**Social Security cards**

Or write numbers on paper and store securely

**Insurance cards & policies (home, health, auto)**

**Medication list with dosages + doctor info**

**Bank account numbers & credit card info**

Last 4 digits + bank phone numbers

**Property deeds or lease agreement, if needed**

Proof of address for FEMA claims

**Pet vaccination records**

**Emergency contacts list (written, not just in phone)**

**Cash: small bills (\$20s and smaller)**

Keeping smaller bills lets you buy from corner stores when power is out — easier to make \$3 change than \$93 change.

## Shelter-in-Place vs. Evacuate

STAY HOME WHEN	LEAVE IMMEDIATELY WHEN
No mandatory evacuation order	Mandatory evacuation order issued
No structural damage to your home	Fire, flood, or gas leak present
Roads are passable and safe	Roads or infrastructure compromised
You have adequate supplies for 72+ hrs	You lack water, food, or medication
Outdoor air quality is acceptable	Toxic spill or wildfire smoke is severe

## Your Complete 72-Hour Plan

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The first 24 hours are the most disorienting. Having a written plan means you don't have to think — you just follow the steps.

### The First 24 Hours — Action Sequence

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- 1. Check on household members**  
Everyone accounted for?
  - 2. Grab your go-bag if evacuating**  
Already packed — grab and go
  - 3. Locate and check on pets**  
Secure them before opening doors
  - 4. Follow evacuation order if issued**  
Don't wait — leave early
  - 5. Assess safety of your home**  
Check for gas leaks, structural damage, fire
  - 6. Get information**  
Use cell phone or battery-powered radio for emergency broadcasts and local alerts
  - 7. Contact your out-of-area person**  
Let them know you're safe
  - 8. Locate your water supply**  
Know how many gallons you have
  - 9. Check medications**  
Do you have enough? If not, note now for resupply
  - 10. Document damage with photos**  
For insurance claims — once you are safe
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# MODULE 6 · Page 2 of 2

BUDGET PLANNING & YOU'RE READY

## Budget Your Kit Build

You don't have to do this all at once. Build your kit over time — start with the highest-priority items and add one thing per week.

PRIORITY	CATEGORY	HAVE IT?
1 — Critical	Water (containers + supply)	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 — Critical	Food (3-day shelf stable)	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 — Critical	Medication & First Aid	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 — Critical	Flashlight + headlamp + batteries	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 — Important	Go-bag + packed supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 — Important	NOAA weather radio	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 — Important	Documents (waterproof envelope)	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 — Important	Emergency blankets	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 — Add Over Time	Portable toilet / sanitation supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 — Add Over Time	Cash reserve (\$100–\$300)	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 — Add Over Time	Backup power bank / solar charger	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 — Add Over Time	Special needs items (pets, infants, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>

**"Prepared, not scared."**

You've done the work. Your household is more prepared than most. Review this kit every 6 months — rotate food and water, update documents, recharge power banks. Stay ready.

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