

HOW TO BE PREPARED AT HOME

Tornado

What is a Tornado?

A tornado (or twister) is a powerful rotating column of wind that can hurt people and damage property. Very large thunderstorms can create many tornadoes. Tornadoes can appear after a heavy rain or hail in a sky that is green, yellow or black.



Warning signs include:

- Severe thunderstorms, with frequent thunder and lightning
- An extremely dark sky, sometimes highlighted by green or yellow clouds
- A rumbling sound or a whistling sound.
- A funnel cloud at the rear base of a thundercloud, often behind a curtain of heavy rain or hail.

Tornado facts

- Tornadoes are rotating columns of high winds.
- Sometimes they move quickly (up to 70 km/hour) and leave a long, wide path of destruction. At other times the tornado is small, touching down here and there.
- Large or small, they can uproot trees, flip cars and demolish houses.
- Tornadoes usually hit in the afternoon and early evening, but they have been known to strike at night too.

Prepare now

- Have a safe room in your home where everyone gathers during a tornado — a basement, storm cellar or interior room on the lowest floor with no windows
- Conduct a tornado drill to make sure everyone knows where to go if a tornado is coming
- Remove dead or rotting trees and branches that could fall and cause injury or damage



HOW TO BE PREPARED AT HOME

During a Tornado

If you are in a house

- Go to the basement or take shelter in a small interior ground floor room such as a bathroom, closet or hallway.
- If you have no basement, protect yourself by taking shelter under a heavy table or desk.
- In all cases, stay away from windows, outside walls and doors.

If you live on a farm

- Livestock hear and sense impending tornadoes. If your family or home is at risk, the livestock will be a non-issue. Open the gate, if you must, and then exit the area in a tangent direction away from the expected path of the twister.

If you are in an office or apartment building

- Take shelter in an inner hallway or room, ideally in the basement or on the ground floor.
- Do not use the elevator.
- Stay away from windows.

If you are in a gymnasium, church or auditorium

- Large buildings with wide-span roofs may collapse if a tornado hits.
- If possible, find shelter in another building.
- If you are in one of these buildings and cannot leave, take cover under a sturdy structure such as a table or desk.

Avoid cars and mobile homes

- More than half of all deaths from tornadoes happen in mobile homes.
- Find shelter elsewhere, preferably in a building with a strong foundation.
- If no shelter is available, lie down in a ditch away from the car or mobile home. Beware of flooding from downpours and be prepared to move.

If you are driving

- If you spot a tornado in the distance go to the nearest solid shelter.
- If the tornado is close, get out of your car and take cover in a low-lying area, such as a ditch.

In all cases

- Get as close to the ground as possible, protect your head and watch for flying debris.
- Do not chase tornadoes - they are unpredictable and can change course abruptly.
- A tornado is deceptive. It may appear to be standing still but is, in fact, moving toward you.