



Earthquake

Did you know that doorways are no stronger than any other part of the house structure during an earthquake? During an earthquake remember to drop, cover and hold on!

Before

- Make a plan (see p. 5) and build a kit (see p. 6).
- Pick safe places in each room of your home, workplace and/or school. A safe place could be under a piece of furniture or against an interior wall away from windows, bookcases or tall furniture that could fall on you.
- Practice “drop, cover and hold on” in each safe place. If you do not have sturdy furniture to hold on to, sit on the floor next to an interior wall and cover your head and neck with your arms.
- Keep a flashlight and sturdy shoes by your bed in case the earthquake strikes in the middle of the night.
- Make sure your home is securely anchored to its foundation.
- Bolt and brace water heaters and gas appliances to wall studs.
- Bolt bookcases, china cabinets and other tall furniture to wall studs.
- Hang heavy items, such as pictures and mirrors, away from beds, couches and anywhere people sleep or sit.
- Brace overhead light fixtures.
- Install strong latches or bolts on cabinets. Large or heavy items should be close to the floor.
- Learn how to shut off the gas valves in your home and keep a wrench handy for that purpose.
- Learn about your area's seismic building standards and land-use codes before you begin new construction.

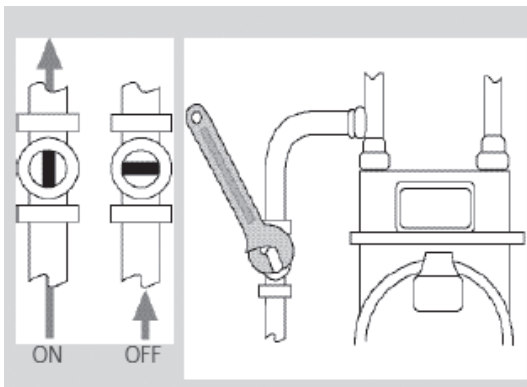
During

If you are inside when the shaking starts

- Drop, cover and hold on. Move as little as possible.
- If you are in bed, stay there, curl up and hold on. Protect your head with a pillow.
- Stay away from windows to avoid being injured by shattered glass.
- Stay indoors until the shaking stops and you are sure it is safe to exit. When it is, use stairs rather than the elevator in case there are aftershocks, power outages or other damage.
- Be aware that fire alarms and sprinkler systems frequently go off in buildings during an earthquake, even if there is no fire.

If you are outside when the shaking starts

- Find a clear spot (away from buildings, power lines, trees, streetlights) and drop to the ground. Stay there until the shaking stops.
- If you are in a vehicle, pull over to a clear location and stop. Avoid bridges, overpasses and power lines if possible. Stay inside with your seatbelt fastened until the shaking stops. Then, drive carefully, avoiding bridges and ramps that may have been damaged.
- If a power line falls on your vehicle, do not get out. Wait for assistance.
- If you are in a mountainous area or near unstable slopes or cliffs, be alert for falling rocks and other debris. Landslides are often triggered by earthquakes.



Shutting off your gas in your home in a natural disaster

- Locate the shut-off valve on the riser pipe from the ground to your meter or, on newer meters, the service line going from your meter into the house.
- Use an adjustable pipe or crescent-type wrench to turn the valve a quarter turn in either direction. When the valve head is parallel to the pipe, it is in the OPEN position.
- Turn the valve head crosswise (perpendicular) to the pipe and to set in OFF position. There are also shut-off valves on the lines fueling individual pieces of equipment.
- **Once the gas is off, leave it off.** Call your nearest gas utility company when you are ready for the gas to be restarted. A qualified service technician will check your system, turn on your service and re-light your appliances. Do not attempt to do this yourself.



Download the earthquake app and receive earthquake alerts, including information on what to do before, during and after an earthquake.

After

- After an earthquake, the disaster may continue. Expect and prepare for potential aftershocks, landslides or even a tsunami. Tsunamis are often generated by earthquakes. (see p. 14 to learn more about tsunamis)
- Each time you feel an aftershock, drop, cover and hold on. Aftershocks frequently occur minutes, days, weeks and even months following an earthquake.
- Check yourself for injuries and get first aid, if necessary, before helping injured or trapped persons.
- Put on long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, sturdy shoes and work gloves to protect against injury from broken objects.
- Look quickly for damage in and around your home and get everyone out if your home is unsafe.
- Listen to a portable, battery-operated or hand-crank radio for updated emergency information and instructions.
- Check the telephones in your home or workplace to see if you can get a dial tone. Make brief calls to report life-threatening emergencies.
- Look for and extinguish small fires. Fire is the most common hazard after an earthquake.
- Clean up spilled medications, bleach, gasoline or other flammable liquids immediately.
- Open closet and cabinet doors carefully as contents may have shifted.
- Help people who require special assistance, such as infants, children and the elderly or disabled.
- Watch out for fallen power lines or broken gas lines and stay out of damaged areas.
- Keep animals under your direct control.
- Stay out of damaged buildings.
- If you were away from home, return only when authorities say it is safe to do so. Use extreme caution and examine walls, floors, doors, staircases and windows to check for damage.
- Be careful when driving after an earthquake and anticipate traffic light outages.

The Cascadia Subduction Zone

The world's largest faults are associated with subduction zones and have produced earthquakes in the 9+ magnitude range. The last great earthquake on the Cascadia Subduction Zone occurred on January 26, 1700, more than 300 years ago. Geologists have found evidence for at least 40 great Cascadia earthquakes during the past 10,000 years and estimate they occur irregularly at intervals anywhere between 200 and 800 years. The next Cascadia earthquake may be similar to the earthquake that set off the 2011 Japan earthquake or the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. It could cause strong ground shaking from northern California to Southern Canada lasting for up to five minutes.

*From *Living On Shaky Ground: How to Survive Earthquakes and Tsunamis in Oregon*, ©2009, Humboldt State University/Oregon Emergency Management