



War, air raids and sheltering

In a conflict, air raid warnings can come with little notice and services may be disrupted for days. This page covers civilian steps only: knowing your nearest shelter, packing for it, responding to official alerts and coping afterwards.

CHECKLIST

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| ☐ Bottled or canned water | ☐ ID, cash and bank card |
| ☐ Food that can be eaten at room temperature | ☐ Keys |
| ☐ Medicines and first aid kit | ☐ Phone with charger or power bank |
| ☐ Hygiene items and toilet paper | ☐ Torch |
| ☐ Warm clothing | ☐ Battery or wind-up radio |

BEFORE

- Find the shelters or protected spaces nearest your home, school and workplace.
- Learn your country's warning signals and what each one means.
- Pack a shelter bag with water, food, medicines, torch and phone charger.
- Keep at least a week of food, water and medicines at home.
- Get a battery, solar or wind-up radio so you can follow official news.
- Agree a meeting point with family in case phones stop working.

DURING

- When an air raid warning sounds, take cover at once in a shelter, cellar or basement.
- If no shelter is close, stay indoors in a room without windows.
- Go to the nearest shelter, as places are not assigned in advance.
- Bring your own food and hygiene items, since shelters do not supply them.
- For a public warning, go inside, close windows and doors and switch off ventilation.
- Stop and follow the instructions in any official phone alert.
- Expect water and power cuts and use your stored supplies.
- Share only information from official, reliable sources.

AFTER

- Wait for the official all clear before leaving shelter.
- Keep following official radio and alert channels for next steps.
- Check facts with official sources before believing or sharing news.
- Check on neighbours and relatives and see whether they need help.

IN THE UAE

The UAE National Early Warning System sends alerts to phones in the country. NCEMA says the most important step is to read each alert and follow its instructions.

MY NOTES

Sources: Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Good to know about civil defence shelters (<https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/civil-defence-shelters-evacuation-and-warning-systems/good-to-know-about-civil-defence-shelters/>); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), About the warning and information systems (<https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/civil-defence-shelters-evacuation-and-warning-systems/public-service-announcement-and-other-warnings/about-the-warning-and-information-systems/>); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Basics of home emergency preparedness (<https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness-prepping-for-at-least-a-week/basics-of-home-emergency-preparedness/>); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Access to communication during a crisis (<https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness-prepping-for-at-least-a-week/access-to-communication-during-a-crisis/>); GOV.UK, Emergency Alerts (<https://www.gov.uk/alerts>); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Psychological defence (<https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/swedish-defence/psychological-defence/>); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Heightened state of alert (<https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/swedish-defence/heightened-state-of-alert/>); UK Government (Prepare), Coping with trauma (<https://prepare.campaign.gov.uk/coping-with-trauma/>); NCEMA (UAE), The National Early Warning System (<https://www.ncema.gov.ae/en/e-participation/blog/the-national-early-warning-system.aspx>); Gulf News (report of Abu Dhabi Emergency, Crisis and Disaster Management Centre guidance, updated 4 May 2026), Heard an emergency alert while shopping, driving, or out in public? How to respond immediately (<https://gulfnews.com/uae/heard-an-emergency-alert-while-shopping-driving-or-out-in-public-act-immediately-1.500488338>)

General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.