



Storing drinking water

Safe water is the first thing to run short when supplies are cut. This page covers how much to store per person, which containers to use, and how to rotate and treat water.

CHECKLIST

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| ☐ Sealed bottled water, at least 3 days per person | ☐ Water purifying tablets |
| ☐ Small bottles you can carry if you must leave | ☐ Clean cloth or coffee filters for straining |
| ☐ Food-grade water containers with tight lids | ☐ Marker pen and labels for dates |
| ☐ Unscented household bleach for treating water | ☐ Extra water for pets |

PREPARE

- Store at least 1 gallon, about 3.8 litres, per person per day for at least 3 days.
- Aim for a two week supply if you have room.
- Store more for hot climates, children, pregnant or nursing women and sick people.
- Add extra water for baby formula, medical devices and pets.
- Use food-grade, unbreakable containers with tight lids, never ones that held chemicals.
- Wash home containers with soap, then sanitise with a weak unscented bleach solution.

USE AND MAINTAIN

- Treat any water of doubtful quality before drinking, cooking or brushing teeth.
- Let cloudy water settle or strain it through a clean cloth or coffee filter first.
- Boil water at a rolling boil for one full minute, then let it cool.
- If you cannot boil, use plain unscented household bleach at the dose officials give.
- Remember that tablets and filters do not remove chemical pollution.
- When unsure if water is safe, ask local authorities and do not drink it.

REVIEW

- Replace stored tap water every six months.
- Follow the expiry date on bottled water.
- Check stored water once or twice a year by look, smell and taste.
- Use old stored water for plants instead of pouring it away.

IN THE UAE

US guidance says water needs can double in very hot weather, so UAE households should store well above the minimum.

MY NOTES

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), How to Create an Emergency Water Supply (<https://www.cdc.gov/water-emergency/about/how-to-create-and-store-an-emergency-water-supply.html>); Ready.gov (FEMA), Water (<https://www.ready.gov/water>); Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF), Access to water during a crisis (<https://www.mcf.se/en/advice-for-individuals/home-preparedness-prepping-for-at-least-a-week/access-to-water-during-a-crisis/>); Get Prepared (Public Safety Canada), Your Emergency Preparedness Guide (<https://www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/yprrdnssgd/>); UK Government (Prepare), Get prepared for emergencies (<https://prepare.campaign.gov.uk/get-prepared-for-emergencies/>)
General guidance in our own words. Always follow your local authorities.