



Preparedness Checklists for Military Families: Earthquake



Earthquake

According to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), 42 states are at moderate-to-high risk from damaging earthquakes, but they can occur anywhere at any time without warning. When earthquakes strike, they cause buildings and bridges to collapse; disrupt gas lines; interrupt electric; and phone services; and sometimes trigger landslides, avalanches, flash floods, fires, and even tsunamis. You can help protect your family during an earthquake by taking a few simple steps on your own or join forces with your neighbors and/or friends to do these preparations together.

Prepare Your Family

- Know your risk: find out if your home is in an earthquake vulnerable area by visiting [USGS](#).
- Learn to [drop, cover, and hold on](#), and plan and hold earthquake drills for your family and neighbors.
- Create a family emergency plan with important paperwork including military identification cards, health insurance identification cards, and power of attorney. Be sure to include a location for family members to meet if separated during an earthquake.
- Create a neighborhood emergency plan in addition to your family emergency plan in case you are injured or away from home at the time of an earthquake.
- If you live off base, plan for the possibility that you cannot regain access to the base for a few days after an earthquake. Plan alternative places to shop or obtain things you normally get on base. Also, be sure to contact your chain of command for further instructions, as well as the military or security police for updates on status of the base.

Protect Your Home

Move heavy furniture like bookcases, china cabinets, and entertainment centers away from beds, sofas, desks, or other places where people sit or sleep.

- [Anchor the tops of bookcases](#), file cabinets, and entertainment centers to one or more studs with flexible fasteners to prevent tipping.
- Secure televisions, computers, and stereos with buckles and safety straps that also allow for easy removal and relocation.
- Install latches on cabinet doors to prevent them from opening and spilling out contents.
- [Hang mirrors, pictures, and plants](#) using closed hooks to prevent them from falling.
- Identify where and [learn how to shut off electricity, gas](#), and water services to help prevent post- earthquake fires.

Upgrade Your Structure

- Secure a licensed contractor or structural engineer to perform an assessment of your home if you answer yes to any of the questions below:
 - Was the home built before 1985?
 - Is the home built on a raised basement or crawl space foundation?
 - Is the home on a hillside?
 - Do you have occupied space above a garage?

Check with your local building department or emergency management office to determine if they provide earthquake assessments or could recommend credible referrals.