



# Home Safety Checklist

## Emergency Preparedness Essentials

Emergency situations such as fire, extreme weather and power outages can happen without warning. By taking the time to [prepare for a possible disaster](#) now, you and your family will be equipped to handle a crisis if one ever occurs.

## **Fire Escape Route and Meeting Spot**

It can take a mere five minutes for a fire to engulf your entire home. This is one reason having an [escape plan](#) is so important. Include at least two exit routes in your plan in case one is blocked, and designate a safe location for everyone in your household to meet. Identifying a secondary location outside your neighborhood is good to have in the event it's not safe to return or you're asked to evacuate.

## **List of Emergency Contacts**

Make laminated cards with a list of important phone numbers for each family member. This might include contact information for the local authorities and emergency services as well as your nearest relatives.

## **Home Safety Items**

Be prepared in case an emergency does occur by having these [home safety items](#):

- **Fire Extinguisher** -- Keep one on each floor, and check them annually to make sure they're functioning properly.
- **First-Aid Kit** -- Store it in a central location, such as the kitchen, and make sure everyone knows where it is.
- **Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors** -- Install detectors in each room and test them once a month. Use long-life lithium batteries to cut back on replacements.
- **Food and Water** -- Put together a three-day supply of nonperishable foods and at least three gallons of water for each member of your household.

There's often very little time to react in a crisis. But with a little [planning and prep work](#), you can be well-equipped and ready to respond accordingly.



Protect your family from potential safety hazards in the home

Your home is where you feel most comfortable, but you should always be aware of and on the lookout for potential safety hazards. Some are obvious, like a broken window, but others can easily slip our mind. Take a few minutes each month to review your household safety, point by point.

This safety checklist will help keep your home not only sweet, but safe.

### **Home Safety**

Follow these basic guidelines to keep your home safe for the entire family.

- Cordless Window Coverings:** Loose cords can strangle children in an instant. Switch out all corded blinds and curtains for cordless versions. If this is cost prohibitive or not possible, make sure all cords are stored out of children's reach and without loops or knots.
- Smoke Alarms:** Install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms outside every bedroom, as well as on every level of your home (including the basement) and in furnace areas. Buy dual alarms that use long-life lithium batteries. Test your smoke alarms at least once per month to make sure they're working properly and replace the batteries every year.
- Extension Cords:** No cords, including extension cords, should run across doorways or under rugs. If you're using an extension cord as a permanent fixture, consider having new electrical outlets installed.
- Outlet Safety:** Once a month, do a hand-check on all outlets; if they're warm, call your electrician. At all times, make sure you stay within manufacturer recommendations for maximum wattage per outlet, and never plug more than one high-wattage appliance into a single outlet.

*My goal is for you to enjoy your home and rest safely knowing you are prepared, just as I am prepared to help you with all of your real estate needs. Give me a call at 858-395-3176 if there's anything I can do for you. Ginny Winkler*



Print this home safety checklist and review at least once a month

- Sweep Your Chimney:** Schedule an annual flue and chimney sweep (inspection and cleaning) before firing up your first logs. And while we're on that topic, only burn dry or seasoned wood, which produces less creosote (soot) – a fire hazard.
- Water Heater Safety:** Your water heater should be set for a maximum 120° to prevent burns (especially if you have children). Always keep flammable or combustible materials (including household chemicals and aerosol cans) away from your hot water heater.
- Fire Extinguishers:** You should have a fire extinguisher in at least the kitchen and on every floor of your home. Replace extinguishers as directed by the manufacturer.
- Escape Route:** Establish a plan of escape in the event of fire. You should map out at least two exit routes, and should purchase a rescue ladder if your home is multi-level. Practice your escape plan at least twice per year, with at least one time at night.
- Emergency Numbers:** Compile a list of emergency phone numbers, from the local police and fire departments to who to call in case of emergency. Print several versions to post throughout your home (at least one per floor).
- Pool Safety:** If you have a pool (or any source of water on your property), surround it or block access with a 4-foot fence. The access gate should open out, and should close automatically (without slamming shut) and employ a self-latch system that positioned out of reach of little hands.
- Poison Control:** Keep all poisonous chemicals and other products behind locked doors. Additionally, controlled substances like alcohol and tobacco should be kept in a locked cabinet.
- Babyproofing and Childproofing:** Keeping your home safe for a baby or young child is essential. Learn more about [baby proofing](#) and [childproofing \(for toddlers+\)](#).

## Home Security



Smoke alarms and a practiced escape route will keep your family safe in case of emergency. Part of keeping your home safe is keeping it secure, so double-check your home for these basic security measures. For a more in-depth approach to burglarproofing your home, read up on the [best burglar deterrents](#) and other [home security tips](#).

- Use Deadbolts:** Use a sturdy deadbolt on every exterior door. If any doors have windows, also install a floor lock.
- Motion-Activated Floodlights:** Install motion-sensor floodlights around your home, and make sure their bulbs are in good, working condition.
- Sliding Doors:** Sliding or track doors require a solid bar or dowel in their tracking system to prevent break-in. This bar should measure almost the exact length of the track (within 1/4" of the total length).
- Spare Combination:** Do not store your spare key under a rock or on the doorframe – thieves know all about these hiding spots. Either give your key to a trusted neighbor or install a small combination safe somewhere on your property.
- Visible House Number:** In case of emergency, your house number should be clearly visible from the street. Consider using reflective numbers or installing a light over the area, so your home can be identified even in the dark.