

Build an Emergency Kit on a Budget

Being ready for an emergency starts with what's already in your home. Even a few basic items can make a big difference during an emergency. This simple, low-cost guide will help you start your kit.



Choose your bag

- You don't need a special bag – use what you have: an old backpack, tote bag, reusable grocery bag or small suitcase.
- Choose something you can grab quickly if you need to leave fast.



Start with what you have

- Check your home for canned food, granola bars, water containers, copies of important documents, extra medications, a flashlight, chargers and first aid supplies.
- Gather these items in a bag – you've already started your kit!



Leverage community support

- Ask friends or family if they have extras.
- Check food banks, community food programs, community gardens, food pantries, community centres and local mutual aid groups.
- Try online groups like Facebook “Buy Nothing” or Freecycle.
- Split bulk purchases with neighbours, friends or family, or build a shared building or neighbourhood kit.



Build your kit carefully

- Make a list of essential items (water, food, medications) and helpful extras (comfort items).
- Keep the list on your phone or in your wallet.
- Add one or two items at a time, and shop sales when possible.
- Spread purchases over weeks or months.

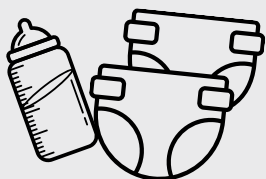


Shop smart using creative ideas

- Use flyers and apps to find deals (for example Flipp app alerts).
- Check dollar stores, grocery sales and thrift stores.
- Make a DIY lantern: place a lit glow stick behind a water jug filled with water.
- Use battery-operated candles or night lights as a flashlight alternative.
- Fill clean reusable bottles for water storage instead of buying bottled water.
- Request for preparedness items if receiving gifts.
- Buy multi-use items first – prioritize things that help every day and in emergencies.

Build an Emergency Kit on a Budget

Being ready for an emergency starts with what's already in your home. Even a few basic items can make a big difference during an emergency. This simple, low-cost guide will help you start your kit.



Personalize your kit

Add items based on your household's specific needs:

- Infants and toddlers: diapers, formula, snacks.
- Pets: food, water, leash and carrier.
- Cultural foods and comfort items.
- Medications and medical supplies.
- Personal comfort items such as your favourite tea, a book or a small toy.



Prepare for your context

- Power outages: Have a portable power bank.
- Elevators may stop: Keep your kit easy to carry.
- No power: Choose foods that don't need cooking.
- ATMs may be offline: Keep a small amount of cash on hand.



Keep it current

Every six months:

- Rotate stored food – eat what's expiring and replace it.
- Check and replace batteries and medications.
- Label items with dates so you know when to swap them out.
- Refresh water supplies if you filled your own containers.

Remember:

To be ready for emergencies:

- You don't need a perfect kit, expensive gear or everything at once.
- Preparedness is doing what you can, with what you have, where you are.
- A half-full bag is enough to start – a few items can save your life.