

# What precautions should I take when travelling to earthquake-prone areas?

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## BEFORE | Precautionary measures

Here is how you can prepare for a possible earthquake, both before you travel and upon arrival at your destination:

- Look up the **official source** for information on earthquakes in your destination country. Then bookmark this website.
- Before travelling, register with the Foreign Office's [ELEFAND](#) crisis prevention scheme.
- Know the **telephone numbers for the police and fire brigade** in your destination country.
- Be aware of which **local radio stations** broadcast accident and disaster reports.
- Prepare your own **emergency supplies** for at least three days, including water, medication, non-perishable food, hygiene items, a torch, a charged power bank, a cash reserve and a first aid kit.
- **Carry the most important addresses and telephone numbers with you, as well as your passport.** Have these and other emergency documents, such as health insurance cards and account details, ready, or save scans of them online.
- Consider **protective shelter options** at your accommodation in the destination country (e.g. under a sturdy table or near a load-bearing interior wall). Do not block these shelter options with objects such as suitcases. Be aware of escape routes in advance.
- If you are a homeowner or tenant, make sure you know how to **turn off the gas, electricity and water** in your home.
- Establish **communication rules** in case family members become separated. Share preparedness knowledge with family members.
- **On site:** Familiarise yourself with the **recommendations of the local civil protection authorities** or earthquake services, which are usually adapted to the country's conditions. Find out if there is an earthquake early warning service and how warnings are issued. If necessary, download information apps from the relevant local services!



## DURING an earthquake

In seismically active areas, it is not unusual to occasionally experience minor earthquakes, which usually cause minimal or no damage.

If the **tremors increase significantly or continue over a prolonged period [> 60 seconds]**, act quickly. There are often only **a few seconds** between the initial tremors and the **strongest ground movement**.



**Follow the instructions on site!**



## Behaviour in buildings



### DO

#### Stay indoors.

Exception: staying on the ground floor near an external door that leads directly outside [e.g. garden or open space].

Crouch down under a sturdy piece of furniture or stand close to a load-bearing interior wall, protecting your head and face with your arms crossed.



### DON'T

Stay away from the stairwell.

Do not run out into a narrow street.

Do not use the lift.



## What to do outdoors



### DO

Find an open space.

If you are in a car, pull over to the side of the road immediately. Stay in the vehicle during the tremors and turn on the car radio.

Move away from buildings, street lamps, power lines, bridges and trees.



### DON'T

Do not remain on steep slopes.

Move away from steep slopes [danger of landslides or falling rocks].

In coastal regions, stay away from coastal paths and rivers.

There is a risk of a tsunami on the coast. Pay attention to tsunami warnings [sirens or push notifications, possibly mass media] – in the event of prolonged tremors [> 60 seconds], seek higher ground yourself [see tsunami information sheet].



## AFTER the earthquake

- **Expect aftershocks**  
[for several days, weeks or months after the main quake].
- Follow the reports and instructions issued by **the police and fire brigade**.
- **Turn off the gas, water and electricity** before leaving the house. Avoid using lifts and take care on stairs, as they may be damaged.
- Help others with utmost caution. **Do not move seriously injured people** unless there is immediate danger.
- Use short message services [SMS, WhatsApp, Signal, Telegram, etc.] to inform relatives and keep necessary phone calls very short. Do not use video calls under any circumstances [network overload].
- Only use your car for the most urgent emergencies.
- **Fires are a common consequence of earthquakes.** Remain alert for signs of fire. Also, observe the direction of the wind. If necessary, take your emergency bag with you to the designated assembly point.
- **Caution: Before returning to buildings, check for any damage.** If in doubt, arrange for experts to inspect the building and do not re-enter it until it has been cleared. In some countries, the local authorities organise such inspections.

**Disclaimer:** Please note that we do not accept any liability for the timeliness, accuracy or completeness of the information provided.