READY AT HOME · VOLUME 0

Start Here

Household plan & emergency numbers

How the series works and where to start
Ireland's most likely emergencies, ranked
Your household plan, numbers and yearly check-up



THE SERIES

0 Start Here	**1** Just Add Water	**2** Power Cuts & Storms	**3** Water & Sanitation	**4** Cooking & Warmth	**5** First Aid	**6** Symptoms & Home Care	**7** Home Systems & Repairs
8 Fire Safety & Security	**9** Communications	**10** Grab Bags & Kits	**11** Pantry & Stockpile	**12** Outdoor Skills	**13** Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	**14** Offline Knowledge &	**15** Other Emergencies

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1. How the series works

Ready at Home is a set of short handbooks you can print, punch and keep in one folder. Each volume stands on its own, but they all link together. Start with this one: it helps you work out what matters most for your household, then points you to the right volume.

Vol	Handbook	Read it when...
0	**Start Here**	Household plan & emergency numbers
1	**Just Add Water**	Home-dehydrated emergency meals
2	**Power Cuts & Storms**	Getting through long outages
3	**Water & Sanitation**	Storing, treating, toilets
4	**Cooking & Warmth**	Without mains power
5	**First Aid**	Step-by-step emergency care
6	**Symptoms & Home Care**	Red flags, minor illness, medicines
7	**Home Systems & Repairs**	Shut-offs, leaks, storm damage, floods
8	**Fire Safety & Security**	Alarms, escape plans, extinguishers
9	**Communications**	Family plan, radios, signals
10	**Grab Bags & Kits**	72-hour, car, child & pet kits
11	**Pantry & Stockpile**	A 30-day food store you rotate
12	**Outdoor Skills**	Fire, shelter, knots, navigation
13	**Kids, Morale & Wellbeing**	Keeping people okay
14	**Offline Knowledge & Media**	Libraries, maps & media without internet
15	**Other Emergencies**	Radiation, chemicals, heat, illness, cut off

The three things that matter most

- **Water.** You can't flush, wash or cook without it. Store it first (Vol 3).
- **Warmth and light.** Irish emergencies are mostly winter storms. Plan for a week without power (Vols 2, 4).
- **Knowing what to do.** Basic first aid and a family plan are free and make the biggest difference (Vols 5, 9).

What's actually likely in Ireland

Prepare for the emergencies you're most likely to face, not the dramatic ones. In January 2025 Storm Éowyn cut power to hundreds of thousands of homes; in Mayo many households were still without electricity a week later, and some rural homes waited more than two weeks. Long power cuts are the single most useful thing to plan for in the west of Ireland.

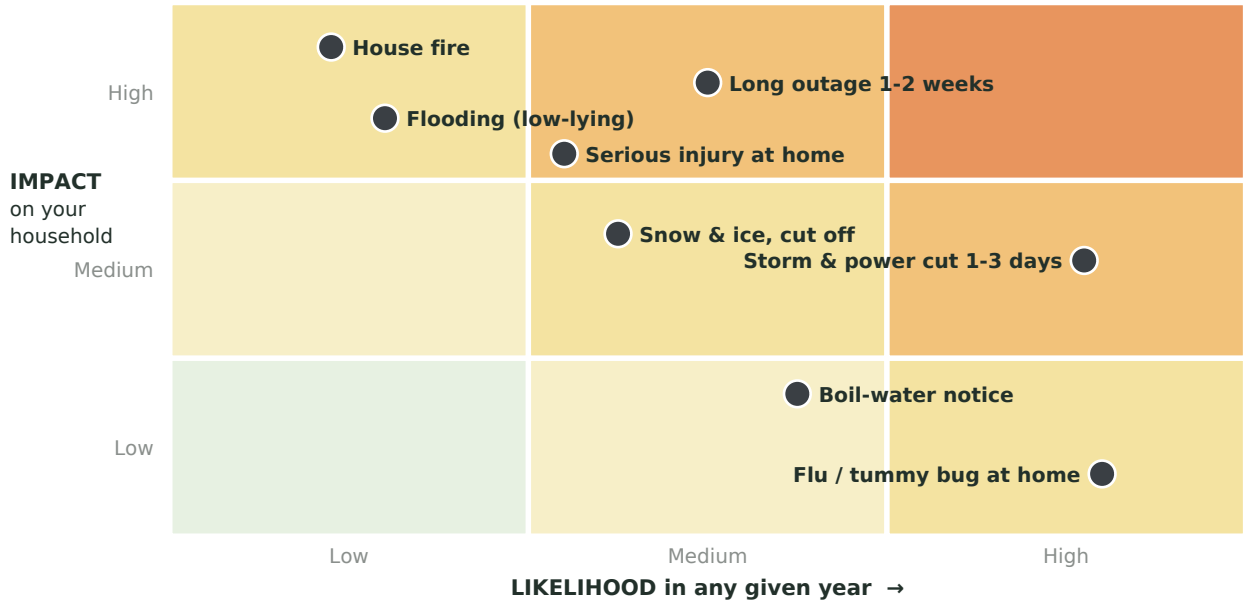


Figure 1. A rough guide for a rural or small-town household in the west. Move the dots for your own situation (e.g. if you're on a well, a power cut also means no water).

2. How prepared do you want to be?

Work up in stages. Each level builds on the last, and Level 1 can be done in a weekend for under €100.

Level 1

72 hours

- 3 days of water (9 L/person)
- Torch + spare batteries per person
- Power bank charged
- 3 days of no-cook food
- Battery or wind-up radio
- First-aid kit
- Cash (€100-200)
- This plan filled in

Level 2

1 week

- Water for 7 days or a way to treat it
- Camping stove + fuel
- One warm room plan
- Power station or big power banks
- 7 days of meals (Vol 1, 11)
- Grab bags packed
- Medicines buffer agreed with GP

Level 3

2 weeks +

- Water filter + rain collection
- Dehydrated meal stock
- 30-day pantry rotation
- Solar charging
- Off-grid comms (Vol 9)
- First-aid course done
- Offline library and maps (Vol 14)
- Neighbour network

Figure 2. Readiness levels. Most households should aim for Level 2.

Your first weekend: 10 jobs

☐ Fill in the household plan (next pages)	☐ Save emergency numbers in every phone
☐ Find the water stopcock, gas valve and fuse board (Vol 7)	☐ Test smoke and CO alarms
☐ Store 9 litres of water per person	☐ Put a torch by every bed
☐ Charge and label power banks	☐ Buy a battery/wind-up FM radio
☐ Set aside 3 days of no-cook food	☐ Put €100-200 cash somewhere safe

3. Household emergency plan

Fill this in by hand, keep one copy in this folder and one in each grab bag. Take a photo of it on every phone.

People in the house

Name	Date of birth	Medical conditions / allergies	Medicines & doses	Mobile

Key contacts

Who	Name	Phone	Notes

Include: GP, out-of-hours doctor, pharmacy, vet, two nearby neighbours, an out-of-area contact (a relative in another county everyone checks in with), school or crèche, work, your county council, insurance policy numbers.

Where things are in our home

Water stopcock (inside) _____

Water stopcock (outside / road) _____

Gas meter & shut-off valve _____

Oil tank & valve _____

Fuse board / main switch _____

Well pump / pressure switch (if any) _____

Torches & batteries _____

First-aid kit _____

Grab bags _____

Stored water _____

Spare keys _____

Important documents _____

Emergency cash (and any kept with family elsewhere) _____

Meeting points

1. Just outside the house (fire) _____

2. In our area (can't get home) _____

3. Out of area (evacuation) _____

Out-of-area contact person _____

Special needs to plan for

Medical equipment needing power _____

Medicines that must stay cold _____

Mobility / hearing / sight _____

Babies & young children _____

Pets & animals _____

Elderly neighbours we check on _____

4. Keeping it current

A plan only works if the batteries are charged and the food is in date. Tie these jobs to dates you'll remember, like the clock changes.

Monthly	Test smoke & CO alarms. Eat 2-3 stored meals and replace them. Charge power banks, lanterns and the power station to 80-100%.
Every 3 months	Check grab bags (clothes still fit, batteries, phone chargers). Run the radio and torches. Rotate bottled water you've opened. Check medicine expiry dates.
Every 6 months (clock change)	Refill stored tap water. Review this plan with everyone. Practise the fire escape route. Check the first-aid kit.
Every October	Winter-ready: heating oil or fuel stocked, gutters cleared, outdoor taps lagged, chimney swept, grit/salt in, car winter kit in the boot.

Figure 3. The yearly maintenance rhythm.

When a warning is issued

Met Éireann issues **Yellow**, **Orange** and **Red** weather warnings. Treat them as triggers:

YELLOW	Be aware. Check the forecast, charge everything, fill water containers, bring in loose garden items.
ORANGE	Be prepared. Fill the bath, move the car away from trees, check on neighbours, plan to stay in, get cash, top up fuel.
RED	Take action. Stay indoors. Don't travel unless your life depends on it. Follow instructions from Gardaí and the council.

Figure 4. Turning weather warnings into actions.

Training worth doing

- A first-aid course (Irish Red Cross, Order of Malta, St John Ambulance, or your workplace).
- A CPR/defibrillator session (Irish Heart Foundation runs free community sessions).
- Find out if your area has a Community First Responder group, or join one.

Emergency numbers & the series

Service	Number	Use it for
Emergency services	**112 or 999**	Ambulance, Garda, fire, coast guard. Works from any phone, any network.
ESB Networks	1800 372 999	Power cuts, fallen or damaged lines (24/7)
Gas Networks Ireland	1800 20 50 50	Smell of gas (24/7). Call from outside the house.
Uisce Éireann (Irish Water)	1800 278 278	Water outages, burst mains, boil-water notices
HSELive	1800 700 700	Health service information
Public Poisons Line	01 809 2166	Advice if someone has swallowed or touched something harmful (8am-10pm daily)
Samaritans	116 123	Anyone struggling to cope (24/7)
Text About It	Text HELLO to 50808	Free text support (24/7)
Childline	1800 66 66 66	Children and young people up to 18 (24/7)
Your county council		Roads, flooding, local emergency centres
Met Éireann	met.ie / Met Éireann app	Weather warnings

Numbers checked November 2026. Write in your county council's number above, and your own local numbers (GP, out-of-hours doctor, pharmacy, vet, neighbours) in Volume 0.

The Ready At Home series

Vol	Title	What it covers
0	**Start Here**	Household plan & emergency numbers
1	Just Add Water	Home-dehydrated emergency meals
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This series gives general preparedness guidance. It is not a substitute for professional medical, electrical, gas or structural advice, or for a certified first-aid course. In an emergency, call 112 or 999 and follow the call-taker's instructions.

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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 1

Just Add Water

Home-dehydrated emergency meals from Tesco ingredients

23 meal recipes · 16 building blocks · exact grams & water (ml)
Dehydrate, condition, pack, seal with oxygen absorbers, store, rotate
For anyone at home with a dehydrator (oxygen absorbers optional)



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1. How this guide works

This guide turns everyday Tesco groceries into sealed, shelf-stable meals that you cook by adding boiling water, the same idea as the shop-bought freeze-dried buckets, made at home with a dehydrator. It is built in two layers:

- **Building blocks** (Part 2): single ingredients you dry in bulk, such as instant rice, beef 'rocks', dried onion and tomato powder. Each has prep, cook, temperature, time and a dryness test.
- **Meal recipes** (Part 3): 23 recipes that weigh those blocks plus a few dry Tesco staples into one bag per serving. Each lists exact grams, how many bags a batch makes, the water in ml and how to cook it.

Every recipe page shows a 'batch of 4 bags' column, the building blocks you need, a diagram of what's in the bag, and the water level. The shopping list in Part 4 totals everything if you make the full set.

Absorbers: optional but important

Oxygen absorbers are optional, but they are what makes long storage work. Without them, store bags or jars somewhere cool and eat within 3-6 months. With Mylar bags and absorbers, the best-before dates on each recipe apply. Absorbers are only for food that is brittle-dry (see the dryness test).

The whole process at a glance

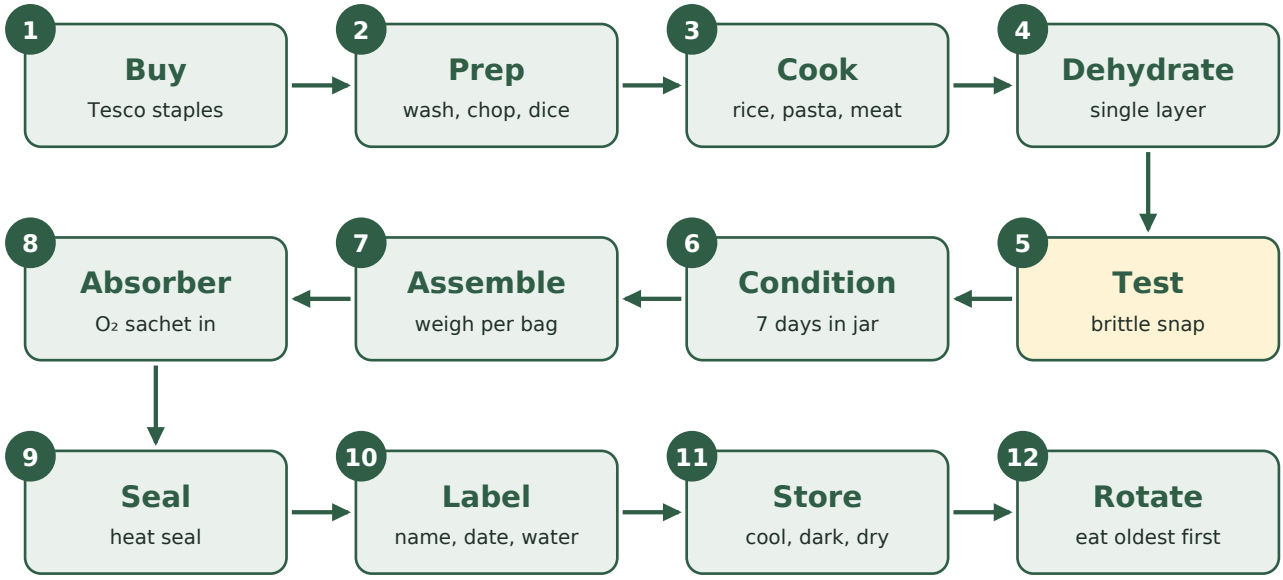


Figure 1. The twelve-step loop. Steps 4-6 (dry, test, condition) are where most batches fail, so don't rush them.

Kit list

Item	Why	Notes
Dehydrator with temperature control	Drying	Needs to reach 68°C for meat. Mesh or solid sheets for small pieces.
Digital kitchen scales (1 g steps)	Weighing each bag	Accuracy matters: water amounts are based on weight.
Food-grade Mylar bags, 1 litre (approx. 18 × 26 cm)	One bag = one meal	5-mil (thick) bags resist punctures. Zip-top versions are handy.
Oxygen absorbers, 100 cc	Remove oxygen	Sold in sealed packs of 10-100. Keep spares in a jar.
Hair straightener or clothes iron	Heat-sealing	An impulse sealer is quicker if you do a lot.
Glass jars with lids	Conditioning	Any large clean jars (e.g. 1 L Kilner).

Item	Why	Notes
Small zip bags	Inner pouches	For instant mash or anything kept separate in a meal.
Permanent marker + labels	Labelling	Write before filling.
Food-grade bucket or plastic box	Storage	Keeps out light, mice and crushing.
Blender or spice grinder	Tomato powder	Also good for crumbling dried veg for soups.

2. Safety rules (read first)

Dried food is safe because microbes can't grow without water. Most problems come from food that is not dry enough, fat that goes rancid, or meat that wasn't properly cooked before drying.

1. **Cook all meat before drying.** Mince must reach 71°C and chicken 74°C in the pan, before it goes in the dehydrator. Dehydrator heat alone is not enough to make raw meat safe.
2. **Lean only.** Use 5% fat mince and skinless breast. Rinse cooked mince with boiling water. Fat goes rancid in weeks and gives an off, paint-like smell.
3. **Brittle-dry before using an absorber.** Low oxygen plus moisture can allow dangerous bacteria (including the one that causes botulism) to grow. If it bends, it isn't ready.
4. **Never home-dry eggs, cheese, butter or cream.** Buy powders made commercially instead (this guide uses dried skimmed milk).
5. **Condition every batch** for 7 days in a jar to even out moisture before sealing.
6. **Hands, boards and trays clean.** Use a separate board for raw meat. Wash trays in hot soapy water.
7. **When in doubt, throw it out.** Discard any bag that is puffed up, smells off or rancid, or shows mould, damp patches or insects.
8. **Allergens:** stock cubes, noodles, gravy granules and couscous contain gluten, and milk powder contains milk. Check labels if anyone in your household has allergies.

Good for this guide	Short-term only (jar, 1-3 months)	Do not dry & store
Rice, pasta, lentils, beans (cooked then dried)	Leathery fruit, jerky with fat	Raw eggs, cheese, butter, cream
Vegetables, onions, peppers, mushrooms	Nuts, seeds, trail mix (fats)	Fatty mince or sausages
Lean cooked mince, poached chicken breast	Brown rice (oily bran)	Avocado, olives, anything oily
Tomato purée (as powder), crisp apple	Whole-milk powder	Anything that still bends after drying

3. Dehydrating properly

Temperatures

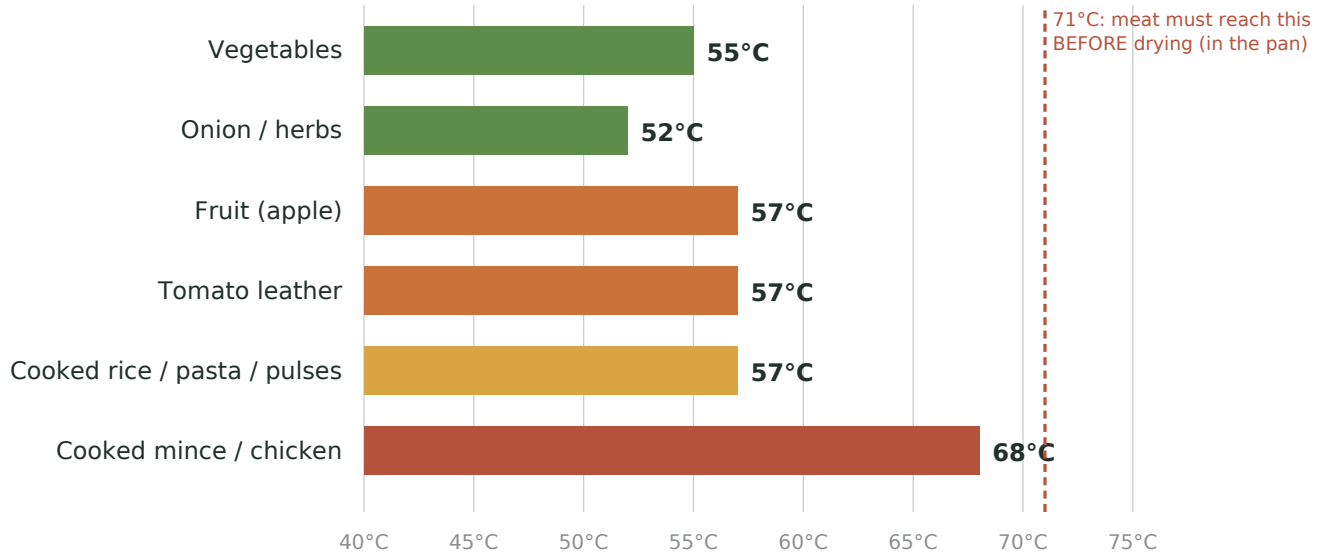


Figure 2. Drying temperatures used in this guide. Times vary with your machine, humidity and piece size, so always use the dryness test, not just the clock.

Loading trays

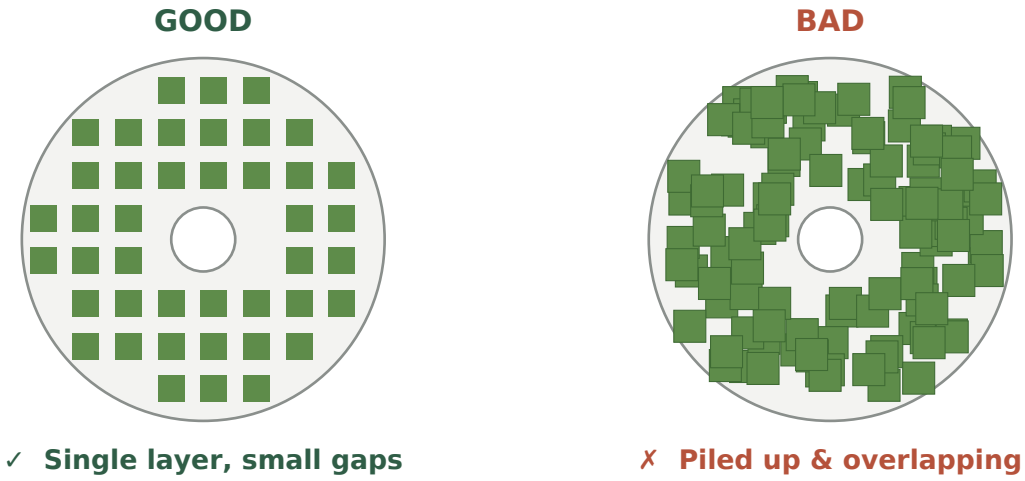


Figure 3. One layer, small gaps, same-size pieces. Piled food dries on the outside and stays wet in the middle.

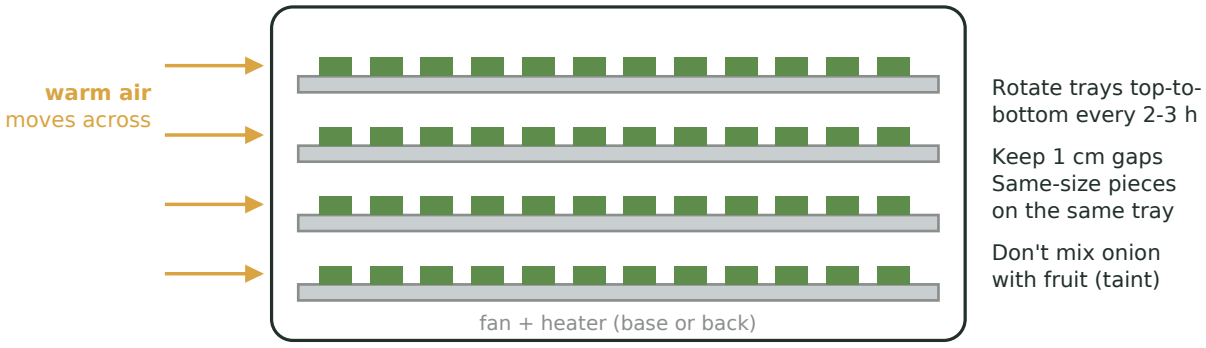


Figure 4. Rotate trays for even drying, especially on stacking (base-fan) models.

4. Is it dry? Testing and conditioning

The dryness test

Take a few pieces off the tray and let them cool for 5 minutes first, because warm food feels softer than it is. Then test:

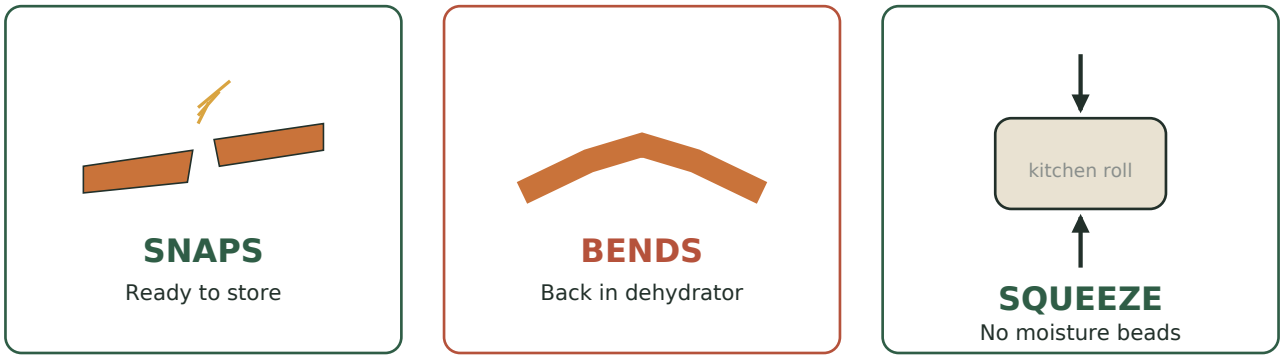


Figure 5. Vegetables, grains and meat should snap or shatter. Squeeze a handful in kitchen roll: there should be no damp marks.

Conditioning (7 days)

Even a 'dry' batch has some pieces wetter than others. Conditioning lets moisture spread out evenly so you catch wet spots before sealing.

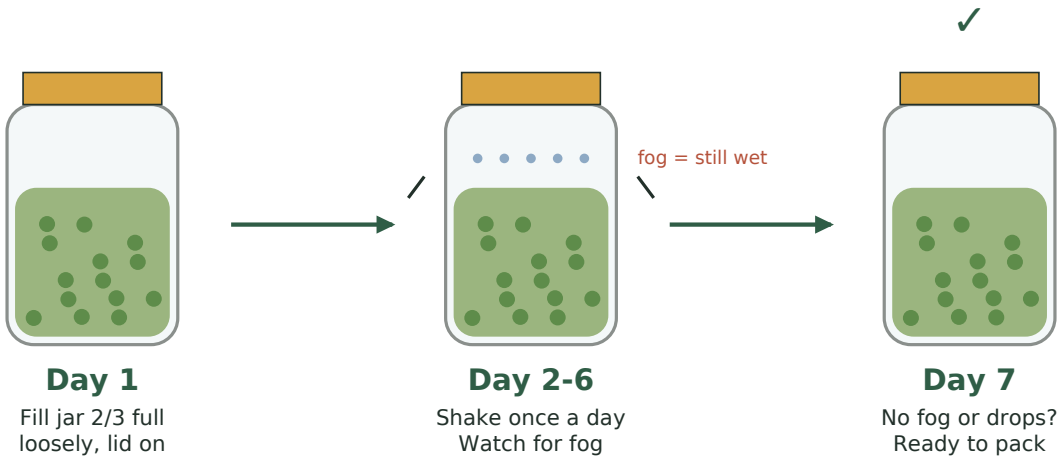


Figure 6. If the jar fogs or droplets appear, put the whole batch back in the dehydrator for 2-4 hours, then start conditioning again.

Tips

- Label each jar with what's in it and the date it came off the trays.
- Conditioned building blocks keep in sealed jars for 1-3 months while you build up a full set to bag.
- Weigh the batch when it comes off the trays. Your yield tells you how much of each recipe you can make.

5. Packing & sealing

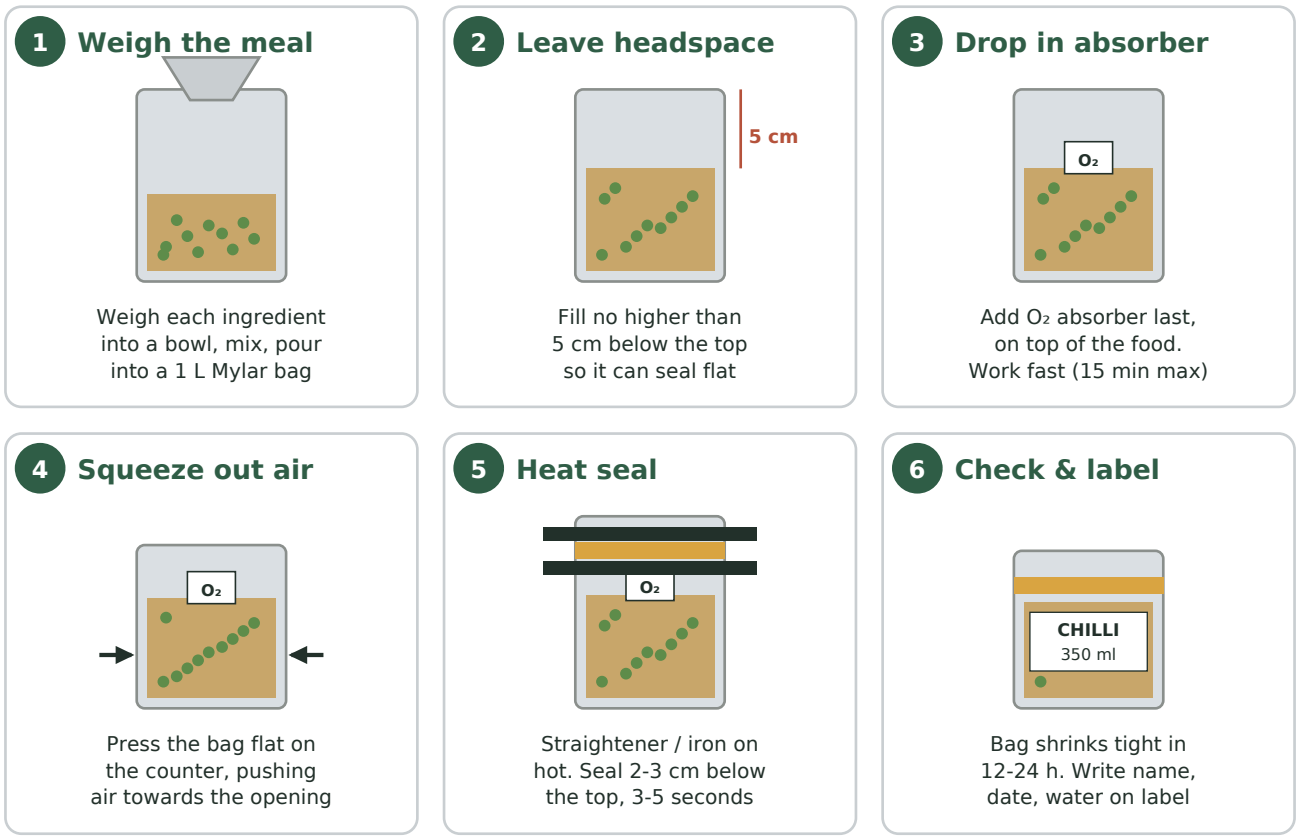


Figure 7. Six steps from weighed ingredients to a sealed meal bag.

Oxygen absorber sizing

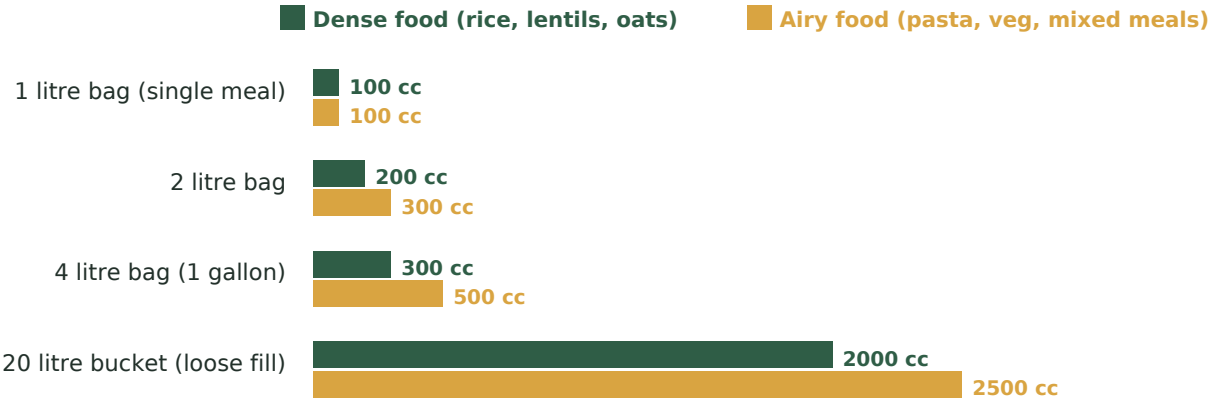


Figure 8. Absorber size by container. Every meal in this guide fits a 1 litre bag with one 100 cc absorber.

Handling absorbers

- Absorbers start working as soon as they touch air. Open the pack, take out only what you'll use in 15 minutes, and seal the rest in a small jar straight away.
- A good absorber feels soft, like powder inside. If it feels hard and lumpy, it's used up.
- Line up all your filled bags first, then add absorbers and seal one after another.
- No absorbers? Seal the bags anyway, squeezing out as much air as possible. Store cool and eat within 3-6 months.

Heat-sealing with a hair straightener

- Wipe the inside of the bag mouth clean. Powder in the seal causes leaks.
- Highest heat. Clamp 2-3 cm below the top edge for 3-5 seconds, then move along overlapping by 1 cm.
- Do a second seal line 1 cm below the first for safety.
- Check after 24 hours: bags with absorbers go tight and 'vacuum-packed'. A loose bag usually means a leaky seal, so open it, add a fresh absorber and reseal.

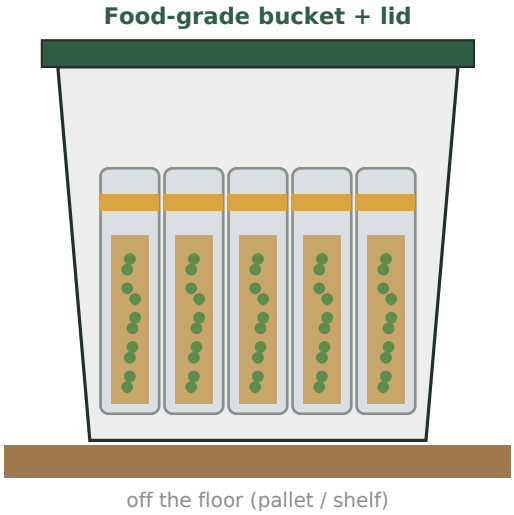
6. Labelling, storage & rotation

BEEF CHILLI CON CARNE + RICE

Packed:	07/11/2026	Best before:	07/05/2027
Dry weight:	152 g	Add water:	350 ml BOILING
Method:	Simmer 10 min	Absorber:	100 cc | Tier 3

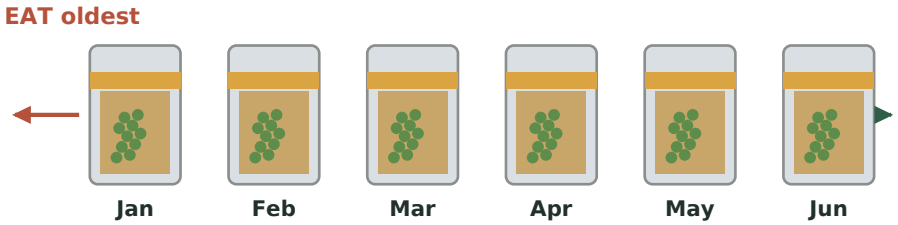
Write in permanent marker BEFORE filling (it's easier on a flat bag)

Figure 9. Every bag gets a label like this. The water amount is the most important line.



10-20°C	Steady, cool. Every 10°C hotter roughly halves shelf life.
DARK	Light breaks down fats and vitamins.
DRY	Not a damp shed or under the sink.
PEST-PROOF	Mylar alone won't stop mice - use a bucket/box.
UPRIGHT	Bags standing, labels facing out, oldest at front.
NOT NEAR	Fuel, paint, chemicals - smells pass through.

Figure 10. Where and how to store sealed meals.



Eat 1-2 bags a month (camping, busy nights) and replace them. Stock stays fresh.

Figure 11. First in, first out keeps stock fresh.

How long will it last?

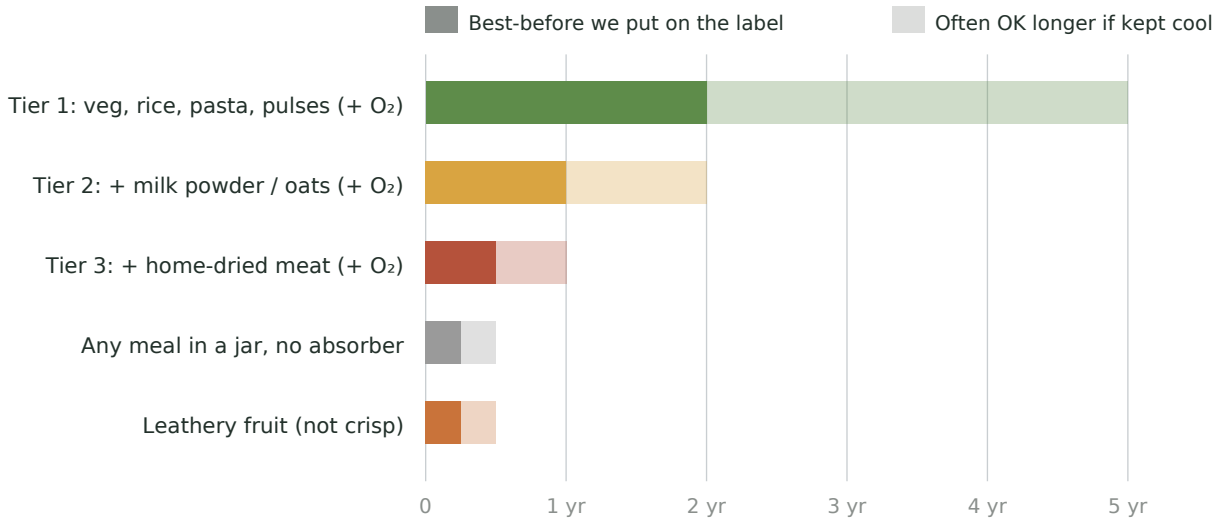
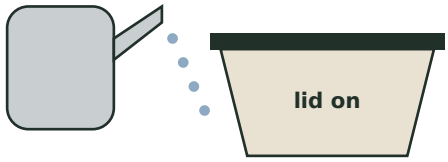


Figure 12. Conservative best-before dates used on the recipe pages. Home-dried food won't match the 25-year claims of commercial freeze-dried meals; plan to rotate.

7. Cooking from a bag

METHOD A: Pour & stand

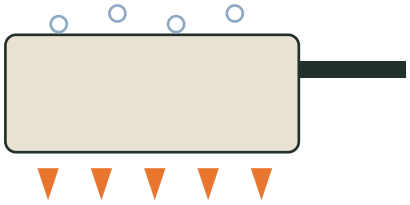
veggie meals, porridge, couscous



1. Empty bag into bowl/pot 2. Add boiling water
3. Stir, cover, wrap in a towel 4. Stand 10-15 min
5. Stir again before eating

METHOD B: Simmer

any meal with meat, noodles, rice pudding



1. Water + bag contents in pot 2. Bring to boil
3. Simmer gently (time on label), stirring
4. Lid on, rest 5 min. Meat should be tender

Figure 13. Two cooking methods. Each recipe says which to use.

- **Measure the water.** The ml on each label is a starting point. Add a splash more for a looser sauce. Soups are deliberately generous.
- **Boiling water matters.** Lukewarm water leaves the meat and rice chewy. If you're unsure of the water source, boil it hard for 1 minute (filtered water still needs boiling for viruses).
- **Fuel saving:** with Method A, put the pot in a 'cosy' made from a towel, sleeping bag or insulated box. It keeps cooking with no extra gas.
- **Stir twice**, at the start and before eating, to break up milk powder and tomato powder clumps.

A day of meals

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Drinking
Porridge bag	Soup bag	Main bag	per person, per day
~470 kcal	~380 kcal	~510 kcal	
350 ml water	480 ml water	340 ml water	2000 ml water

Bags give ~1,400 kcal. Top up with snacks, bread, tins to reach ~2,000-2,500 kcal/day.

Figure 14. A simple day from three bags. Typical values; see each recipe for exact numbers.

Store at least **3 litres of water per person per day** (about 2 L to drink, plus about 1 L to cook these meals). For a family of four for one week, that is about 84 litres.

Part 2: Building blocks

Dry these in bulk, condition them, then keep each in a labelled jar until you assemble meals. The table shows roughly what you get back. Dried food weighs a fraction of fresh.

Building block	Buy (Tesco)	Raw in	Dry out	°C	Hours
Dried mixed vegetables	Tesco Frozen Mixed Vegetables (carrot, peas, green beans, sweetcorn)	1000 g	~140 g	55	8-12
Dried sweetcorn	Tesco Frozen Sweetcorn	500 g	~120 g	55	8-10
Dried onion	Tesco Brown Onions (loose or net)	450 g	~50 g	55	6-10
Dried peppers	Tesco Mixed Peppers (3 pack)	450 g	~40 g	55	8-12
Dried mushrooms	Tesco Closed Cup White Mushrooms	500 g	~40 g	55	6-8
Dried leek	Tesco Leeks	600 g	~50 g	55	6-8
Dried potato dice	Tesco Rooster Potatoes	1000 g	~180 g	55	8-12
Tomato powder	Tesco Tomato Puree (double concentrate tubes)	200 g	~56 g	57	6-10
Instant rice	Tesco Easy Cook Long Grain Rice	500 g	~470 g	57	5-8
Instant pasta	Tesco Macaroni or small pasta shapes (orzo, ditalini)	500 g	~480 g	57	4-6
Instant red lentils	Tesco Red Split Lentils 1kg	500 g	~470 g	57	5-8
Instant kidney beans	Tesco Red Kidney Beans in Water (400g tins)	480 g	~170 g	57	6-10
Instant chickpeas	Tesco Chick Peas in Water (400g tins)	480 g	~180 g	57	6-10
Beef 'rocks' (dried mince)	Tesco Lean Beef Steak Mince 5% Fat	500 g	~170 g	68	6-8
Dried chicken	Tesco Fresh Chicken Breast Fillets	600 g	~190 g	68	6-8
Dried apple chips	Tesco Bramley or eating apples	900 g	~110 g	57	8-12

Raw weights for tinned beans are drained weight. Yields are typical; yours will vary.

Dried mixed vegetables

55°C · 8-12 h · 1000 g in -> ~140 g out

Buy: Tesco Frozen Mixed Vegetables (carrot, peas, green beans, sweetcorn) (1000 g makes about 140 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Use straight from frozen - no blanching needed (frozen veg is already blanched).
2	**Prep**	Break up any frozen clumps by tapping the bag on the counter.
3	**Prep**	Cut any large pieces of carrot or bean to pea size (about 1 cm).
4	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **55°C for 8-12 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
5	**Test**	Hard and brittle. Peas shatter when pressed with a spoon; carrot snaps.
6	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
7	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Tip: Line trays with mesh sheets or baking paper with holes poked in it so peas don't fall through.

Dried sweetcorn

55°C · 8-10 h · 500 g in -> ~120 g out

Buy: Tesco Frozen Sweetcorn (500 g makes about 120 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Use from frozen. Spread loose, no blanching needed.
2	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **55°C for 8-10 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
3	**Test**	Shrunken, hard and rattles like gravel. No soft centre when bitten.
4	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
5	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Tip: Use a mesh sheet - kernels shrink and fall through standard trays.

Dried onion

55°C · 6-10 h · 450 g in -> ~50 g out

Buy: Tesco Brown Onions (loose or net) (450 g makes about 50 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Peel and dice into 5-8 mm pieces (about 3 medium onions).
2	**Prep**	Separate the layers so pieces lie flat.
3	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **55°C for 6-10 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
4	**Test**	Papery and crisp. Pieces snap rather than bend.
5	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
6	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Tip: Strong smell - run the dehydrator in a garage, shed or by an open window.

Dried peppers

55°C · 8-12 h · 450 g in -> ~40 g out

Buy: Tesco Mixed Peppers (3 pack) (450 g makes about 40 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Wash, de-seed and remove the white pith.
2	**Prep**	Dice into 1 cm squares. Lay skin-side down.
3	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **55°C for 8-12 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
4	**Test**	Leathery-to-crisp and snaps when bent. No sticky spots.
5	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
6	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Dried mushrooms

55°C · 6-8 h · 500 g in -> ~40 g out

Buy: Tesco Closed Cup White Mushrooms (500 g makes about 40 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Wipe clean with kitchen roll (don't soak them in water).
2	**Prep**	Slice 5 mm thick or dice into 1 cm pieces.
3	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **55°C for 6-8 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
4	**Test**	Crisp and snap cleanly. Very light.
5	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
6	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Dried leek

55°C · 6-8 h · 600 g in -> ~50 g out

Buy: Tesco Leeks (600 g makes about 50 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Trim roots and dark tops. Split lengthways and rinse out grit.
2	**Prep**	Slice into 5 mm half-moons.
3	**Cook**	Blanch 2 minutes in boiling water, then drain and cool in cold water. Pat dry.
4	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **55°C for 6-8 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
5	**Test**	Papery and crumbles when crushed.
6	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
7	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Dried potato dice

55°C · 8-12 h · 1000 g in -> ~180 g out

Buy: Tesco Rooster Potatoes (1000 g makes about 180 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Peel and cut into 1 cm dice.
2	**Prep**	Rinse in cold water to remove surface starch.
3	**Cook**	Boil 5-6 minutes until just tender (a knife goes in with slight resistance).
4	**Cook**	Drain, rinse in cold water and spread out to steam dry for 5 minutes.
5	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **55°C for 8-12 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
6	**Test**	Hard and glassy (translucent). Snaps or shatters when hit with a spoon.
7	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
8	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Tip: Raw potato goes black when dried - always par-boil first.

Tomato powder

57°C · 6-10 h · 200 g in -> ~56 g out

Buy: Tesco Tomato Puree (double concentrate tubes) (200 g makes about 56 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Line a solid fruit-leather tray (or baking paper) and spread purée 2-3 mm thick.
2	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **57°C for 6-10 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
3	**Test**	Leather peels off cleanly and cracks when bent. Flip halfway through.
4	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
5	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Tip: Break the dried leather into pieces and blitz in a blender or spice grinder to a powder. Keep powder sealed - it soaks up moisture from the air quickly.

Instant rice

57°C · 5-8 h · 500 g in -> ~470 g out

Buy: Tesco Easy Cook Long Grain Rice (500 g makes about 470 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Weigh the dry rice.
2	**Cook**	Cook fully in plenty of salted water, following pack time.
3	**Cook**	Drain and rinse with hot water to wash off sticky starch.
4	**Cook**	Spread on trays one grain deep.
5	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **57°C for 5-8 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
6	**Test**	Grains are hard, glassy and rattle. Break up any clumps halfway through.
7	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
8	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Tip: Cooked-then-dried rice rehydrates in 10-15 minutes in hot water instead of 20 minutes of boiling.

Instant pasta

57°C · 4-6 h · 500 g in -> ~480 g out

Buy: Tesco Macaroni or small pasta shapes (orzo, ditalini) (500 g makes about 480 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Use small shapes - they rehydrate evenly. Avoid thick shapes like penne.
2	**Cook**	Cook 1 minute less than the pack time (al dente).
3	**Cook**	Drain, rinse in cold water, shake dry. Do not add oil.
4	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **57°C for 4-6 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
5	**Test**	Rock hard and brittle throughout. Snap one: no soft middle.
6	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
7	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Instant red lentils

57°C · 5-8 h · 500 g in -> ~470 g out

Buy: Tesco Red Split Lentils 1kg (500 g makes about 470 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Rinse lentils in a sieve until the water runs clear.
2	**Cook**	Simmer in 3x their volume of water for 8-10 minutes until just soft but holding shape.
3	**Cook**	Drain well. Spread thinly - they will clump into a sheet.
4	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **57°C for 5-8 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
5	**Test**	Crumbly and hard. Break the sheet into crumbs halfway through.
6	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
7	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Instant kidney beans

57°C · 6-10 h · 480 g in -> ~170 g out

Buy: Tesco Red Kidney Beans in Water (400g tins) (480 g makes about 170 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Drain and rinse 2 tins of beans (about 480g drained).
2	**Cook**	Tinned beans are already cooked. Press each bean lightly with a fork to split the skin - this helps them dry and rehydrate.
3	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **57°C for 6-10 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
4	**Test**	Hard, cracked and very light. Snap one - no moisture inside.
5	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
6	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Instant chickpeas

57°C · 6-10 h · 480 g in -> ~180 g out

Buy: Tesco Chick Peas in Water (400g tins) (480 g makes about 180 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Drain and rinse 2 tins (about 480g drained). Rub off loose skins.
2	**Cook**	Lightly crush each chickpea with a fork to split it.
3	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **57°C for 6-10 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
4	**Test**	Hard all the way through. Snaps cleanly.
5	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
6	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Beef 'rocks' (dried mince)

68°C · 6-8 h · 500 g in -> ~170 g out

Buy: Tesco Lean Beef Steak Mince 5% Fat (500 g makes about 170 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Use the leanest mince you can find - fat goes rancid in storage.
2	**Cook**	Brown the mince in a dry pan, breaking it into small crumbs. Cook until no pink remains and it reaches 71°C inside.
3	**Cook**	Tip into a sieve and pour over a kettle of boiling water to rinse off fat.
4	**Cook**	Pat dry with kitchen roll. Spread on lined trays.
5	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **68°C for 6-8 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
6	**Test**	Dark, hard pebbles that rattle. No greasy feel. Blot any fat beads with kitchen roll during drying.
7	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
8	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Tip: Optional: mix 2 tbsp dried breadcrumbs per 500g into the raw mince - it helps the rocks rehydrate more tenderly.

Dried chicken

68°C · 6-8 h · 600 g in -> ~190 g out

Buy: Tesco Fresh Chicken Breast Fillets (600 g makes about 190 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Trim off all visible fat and skin.
2	**Cook**	Poach the breasts in simmering water for 15-20 minutes until 74°C in the thickest part.
3	**Cook**	Cool, then shred finely with two forks or dice into 5 mm pieces.
4	**Cook**	Spread thinly on lined trays.
5	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **68°C for 6-8 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
6	**Test**	Hard, dry and stringy. Pieces snap. No soft or pink bits.
7	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
8	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Tip: Shredded chicken rehydrates much better than cubes.

Dried apple chips

57°C · 8-12 h · 900 g in -> ~110 g out

Buy: Tesco Bramley or eating apples (900 g makes about 110 g dried)

1	**Prep**	Peel and core (about 6 apples). Slice 3-4 mm thick or dice small.
2	**Prep**	Dip in water with a squeeze of lemon juice to stop browning.
3	**Dry**	Spread in a single layer. Dehydrate at **57°C for 8-12 hours**, rotating trays every 2-3 hours.
4	**Test**	Must be CRISP for long storage (not leathery). Leathery apple is fine to eat but store it in a jar without an oxygen absorber and use within 6 months.
5	**Condition**	Cool, then jar for 7 days, shaking daily. If the jar fogs, dry for 2-4 more hours.
6	**Store**	Sealed jar (up to 3 months) or straight into meal bags.

Part 3: Meal recipes

Each recipe is **one serving per bag**, with quantities for a batch of 4 bags. Scale up as you like. Make the building blocks first, then assemble meals in one sitting.

#	Recipe	Type	Dry g	kcal	Water	Method	Tier
1	**Apple & Cinnamon Porridge**	Breakfast	123	450	350 ml	Pour	2
2	**Banana & Raisin Porridge**	Breakfast	133	500	340 ml	Pour	2
3	**Creamy Rice Pudding**	Breakfast / Dessert	129	460	280 ml	Simmer	2
4	**Apple & Oat Pudding**	Dessert	101	370	240 ml	Pour	2
5	**Beef Chilli con Carne with Rice**	Main - beef	152	550	350 ml	Simmer	3
6	**Spaghetti-style Bolognese**	Main - beef	137	510	330 ml	Simmer	3
7	**Beef Stroganoff**	Main - beef	141	530	340 ml	Simmer	3
8	**Shepherd's Pie in a Bag**	Main - beef	111	420	520 ml	Simmer	3
9	**Irish Beef & Potato Stew**	Main - beef	104	390	390 ml	Simmer	3
10	**Chilli Mac**	Main - beef	140	510	320 ml	Simmer	3
11	**Chicken Curry & Rice**	Main - chicken	140	510	330 ml	Simmer	3
12	**Chicken Noodle Soup**	Soup - chicken	103	370	430 ml	Simmer	3
13	**Creamy Chicken & Mushroom Pasta**	Main - chicken	140	510	330 ml	Simmer	3
14	**Chicken & Sweetcorn Chowder**	Soup - chicken	126	450	580 ml	Simmer	3
15	**Chicken 'Fried' Rice**	Main - chicken	128	460	230 ml	Simmer	3
16	**Red Lentil Dahl with Rice**	Main - veggie	131	450	300 ml	Pour	1
17	**Lentil Bolognese**	Main - veggie	144	490	350 ml	Pour	1
18	**Moroccan Chickpea Couscous**	Main - veggie	141	490	220 ml	Pour	1
19	**Mexican Bean & Rice Bowl**	Main - veggie	145	490	270 ml	Pour	1
20	**Minestrone Soup**	Soup - veggie	105	340	460 ml	Pour	1
21	**Mushroom Risotto**	Main - veggie	120	410	290 ml	Pour	2
22	**Potato & Leek Soup**	Soup - veggie	100	330	580 ml	Pour	2
23	**Irish Vegetable & Lentil Soup**	Soup - veggie	94	300	460 ml	Pour	1

Tier	What's in it	Best before on label
Tier 1	Veg, grains & pulses only	Best before: 2 years
Tier 2	Contains milk powder / oats	Best before: 12 months
Tier 3	Contains home-dried meat	Best before: 6 months (12 if frozen)

kcal are approximate, calculated from typical values for each ingredient.

1. Apple & Cinnamon Porridge

Breakfast · 1 serving per bag · ~450 kcal · 123 g dry

Tier 2 Best before: 12 months

What's in the bag (by weight)



Carbs Fruit Milk powder Seasoning

Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Tesco Porridge Oats	70 g	280 g	
Dried skimmed milk powder (e.g. Marvel)	25 g	100 g	
Dried apple chips	15 g	60 g	crisp chips, crumbled
Tesco Granulated Sugar	12 g	48 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	1 g	4 g	½ tsp ground cinnamon
Total dry weight	**123 g**	**492 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

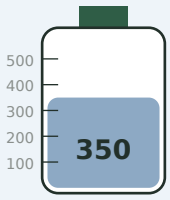
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Dried apple chips	60 g	500 g raw	Peel, slice 3-4 mm, lemon dip; dry until crisp	57°C, 8-12 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **350 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



350 ml boiling water

Pour & stand: empty into a pot or bowl, pour over the boiling water, stir, cover and stand for **5 minutes** (wrap in a towel). Stir and serve.

Tip: Stir well after 2 minutes. Add more water for a thinner porridge.

2. Banana & Raisin Porridge

Breakfast · 1 serving per bag · ~500 kcal · 133 g dry

Tier 2 Best before: 12 months

What's in the bag (by weight)



Carbs Fruit Milk powder Seasoning

Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Tesco Porridge Oats	70 g	280 g	
Dried skimmed milk powder (e.g. Marvel)	25 g	100 g	
Tesco Banana Chips	15 g	60 g	broken small
Tesco Raisins	15 g	60 g	
Tesco Granulated Sugar	8 g	32 g	
Total dry weight	**133 g**	**532 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

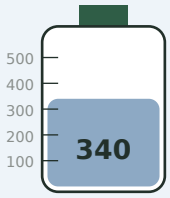
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **340 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



340 ml boiling water

Pour & stand: empty into a pot or bowl, pour over the boiling water, stir, cover and stand for **5 minutes** (wrap in a towel). Stir and serve.

Tip: Banana chips stay slightly crunchy - that's normal.

3. Creamy Rice Pudding

Breakfast / Dessert · 1 serving per bag · ~460 kcal · 129 g dry

Tier 2 Best before: 12 months

What's in the bag (by weight)



Carbs Fruit Milk powder Seasoning

Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Instant rice (home-dried)	60 g	240 g	
Dried skimmed milk powder (e.g. Marvel)	35 g	140 g	
Tesco Granulated Sugar	18 g	72 g	
Tesco Raisins	15 g	60 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	1 g	4 g	pinch of ground nutmeg
Total dry weight	**129 g**	**516 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

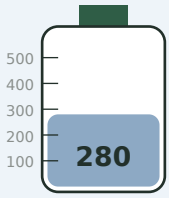
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Instant rice	240 g	260 g raw	Cook fully, rinse, spread one grain deep	57°C, 5-8 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **280 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



280 ml boiling water

Simmer: put the contents and the water in a pot, bring to the boil and simmer gently for **8 minutes**, stirring. Rest 5 minutes with the lid on.

Tip: Simmer, stirring, until thick and creamy.

4. Apple & Oat Pudding

Dessert · 1 serving per bag · ~370 kcal · 101 g dry

Tier 2 Best before: 12 months

What's in the bag (by weight)



Carbs Fruit Milk powder Seasoning

Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Tesco Porridge Oats	40 g	160 g	
Dried apple chips	20 g	80 g	
Tesco Granulated Sugar	20 g	80 g	
Dried skimmed milk powder (e.g. Marvel)	20 g	80 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	1 g	4 g	½ tsp cinnamon
Total dry weight	**101 g**	**404 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

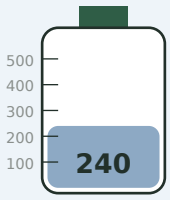
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Dried apple chips	80 g	660 g raw	Peel, slice 3-4 mm, lemon dip; dry until crisp	57°C, 8-12 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **240 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



240 ml boiling water

Pour & stand: empty into a pot or bowl, pour over the boiling water, stir, cover and stand for **8 minutes** (wrap in a towel). Stir and serve.

Tip: Like a soft apple crumble. Good as a hot dessert on a cold night.

5. Beef Chilli con Carne with Rice

Main - beef · 1 serving per bag · ~550 kcal · 152 g dry

Tier 3 Best before: 6 months (12 if frozen)

What's in the bag (by weight)



Carbs Protein Vegetables Seasoning

Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Beef 'rocks' (home-dried mince)	30 g	120 g	
Instant kidney beans (home-dried)	30 g	120 g	
Instant rice (home-dried)	60 g	240 g	
Dried onion	6 g	24 g	
Dried peppers	6 g	24 g	
Tomato powder (home-made)	12 g	48 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	3 g	12 g	1 tsp chilli powder + ½ tsp cumin + pinch salt
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	5 g	20 g	½ beef cube
Total dry weight	**152 g**	**608 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

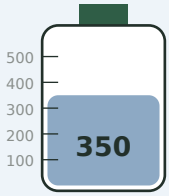
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Beef 'rocks' (dried mince)	120 g	360 g raw	Brown to 71°C, rinse off fat, pat dry	68°C, 6-8 h
Instant kidney beans	120 g	340 g raw	Drain, rinse, split skins with a fork	57°C, 6-10 h
Instant rice	240 g	260 g raw	Cook fully, rinse, spread one grain deep	57°C, 5-8 h
Dried onion	24 g	220 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h
Dried peppers	24 g	270 g raw	De-seed, dice 1 cm	55°C, 8-12 h
Tomato powder	48 g	180 g raw	Spread purée 2-3 mm, dry, then grind	57°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **350 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



350 ml boiling water

Simmer: put the contents and the water in a pot, bring to the boil and simmer gently for **10 minutes**, stirring. Rest 5 minutes with the lid on.

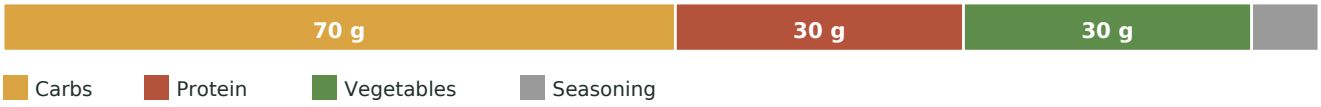
Tip: Simmer 10 minutes, then stand 5 minutes with a lid on.

6. Spaghetti-style Bolognese

Main - beef · 1 serving per bag · ~510 kcal · 137 g dry

Tier 3 Best before: 6 months (12 if frozen)

What's in the bag (by weight)



Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Beef 'rocks' (home-dried mince)	30 g	120 g	
Instant pasta (home-dried)	70 g	280 g	
Dried mixed veg	10 g	40 g	
Dried onion	6 g	24 g	
Tomato powder (home-made)	14 g	56 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	2 g	8 g	1 tsp mixed herbs + ½ tsp garlic granules
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	5 g	20 g	½ beef cube
Total dry weight	**137 g**	**548 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

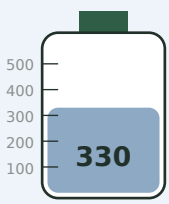
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Beef 'rocks' (dried mince)	120 g	360 g raw	Brown to 71°C, rinse off fat, pat dry	68°C, 6-8 h
Instant pasta	280 g	300 g raw	Cook 1 min under pack time, rinse	57°C, 4-6 h
Dried mixed vegetables	40 g	290 g raw	Frozen mixed veg straight onto trays (no blanching)	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried onion	24 g	220 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h
Tomato powder	56 g	200 g raw	Spread purée 2-3 mm, dry, then grind	57°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **330 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



330 ml boiling water

Simmer: put the contents and the water in a pot, bring to the boil and simmer gently for **10 minutes**, stirring. Rest 5 minutes with the lid on.

Tip: Uses small pasta shapes rather than spaghetti strands (they rehydrate evenly).

7. Beef Stroganoff

Main - beef · 1 serving per bag · ~530 kcal · 141 g dry

Tier 3 Best before: 6 months (12 if frozen)

What's in the bag (by weight)



Carbs Protein Vegetables Milk powder Seasoning

Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Beef 'rocks' (home-dried mince)	30 g	120 g	
Instant pasta (home-dried)	70 g	280 g	
Dried mushrooms	8 g	32 g	
Dried onion	6 g	24 g	
Dried skimmed milk powder (e.g. Marvel)	20 g	80 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	2 g	8 g	1 tsp paprika + black pepper
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	5 g	20 g	½ beef cube
Total dry weight	**141 g**	**564 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

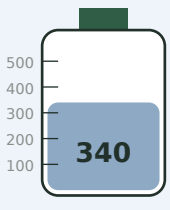
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Beef 'rocks' (dried mince)	120 g	360 g raw	Brown to 71°C, rinse off fat, pat dry	68°C, 6-8 h
Instant pasta	280 g	300 g raw	Cook 1 min under pack time, rinse	57°C, 4-6 h
Dried mushrooms	32 g	400 g raw	Wipe clean, slice 5 mm	55°C, 6-8 h
Dried onion	24 g	220 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **340 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



340 ml boiling water

Simmer: put the contents and the water in a pot, bring to the boil and simmer gently for **10 minutes**, stirring. Rest 5 minutes with the lid on.

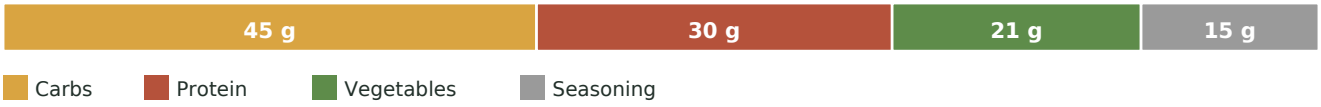
Tip: Stir in the milk powder sauce well so it doesn't clump.

8. Shepherd's Pie in a Bag

Main - beef · 1 serving per bag · ~420 kcal · 111 g dry

Tier 3 Best before: 6 months (12 if frozen)

What's in the bag (by weight)



Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Beef 'rocks' (home-dried mince)	30 g	120 g	
Dried mixed veg	15 g	60 g	
Dried onion	6 g	24 g	
Bisto Gravy Granules	15 g	60 g	about 3 tsp
Tesco Instant Mashed Potato	45 g	180 g	in its own small inner bag
Total dry weight	**111 g**	**444 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

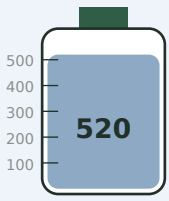
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Beef 'rocks' (dried mince)	120 g	360 g raw	Brown to 71°C, rinse off fat, pat dry	68°C, 6-8 h
Dried mixed vegetables	60 g	430 g raw	Frozen mixed veg straight onto trays (no blanching)	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried onion	24 g	220 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **520 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Put the instant mash in its own small zip bag, sealed, and drop it into the Mylar bag.
4. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
5. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



520 ml boiling water (300 ml for the filling + 220 ml for the mash)

Simmer: put the contents and the water in a pot, bring to the boil and simmer gently for **10 minutes**, stirring. Rest 5 minutes with the lid on.

Tip: Two stages: simmer the mince, veg and gravy in 300 ml water for 10 minutes. Separately stir the mash pouch into 220 ml just-boiled water. Spoon mash on top.

9. Irish Beef & Potato Stew

Main - beef · 1 serving per bag · ~390 kcal · 104 g dry

Tier 3 Best before: 6 months (12 if frozen)

What's in the bag (by weight)



Protein Vegetables Seasoning

Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Beef 'rocks' (home-dried mince)	30 g	120 g	
Dried potato dice	35 g	140 g	
Dried mixed veg	15 g	60 g	
Dried onion	6 g	24 g	
Bisto Gravy Granules	12 g	48 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	1 g	4 g	½ tsp dried thyme
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	5 g	20 g	½ beef cube
Total dry weight	**104 g**	**416 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

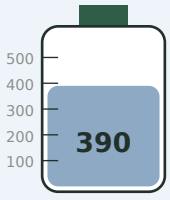
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Beef 'rocks' (dried mince)	120 g	360 g raw	Brown to 71°C, rinse off fat, pat dry	68°C, 6-8 h
Dried potato dice	140 g	780 g raw	Dice 1 cm, boil 5-6 min, drain	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried mixed vegetables	60 g	430 g raw	Frozen mixed veg straight onto trays (no blanching)	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried onion	24 g	220 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **390 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



390 ml boiling water

Simmer: put the contents and the water in a pot, bring to the boil and simmer gently for **12 minutes**, stirring. Rest 5 minutes with the lid on.

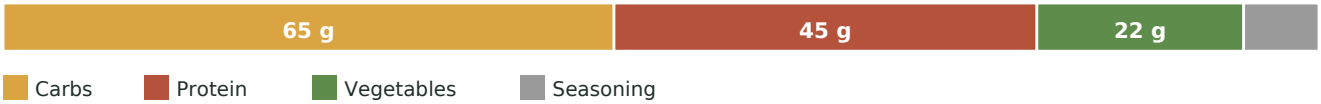
Tip: Potato dice need the full simmer time to soften.

10. Chilli Mac

Main - beef · 1 serving per bag · ~510 kcal · 140 g dry

Tier 3 Best before: 6 months (12 if frozen)

What's in the bag (by weight)



Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Beef 'rocks' (home-dried mince)	25 g	100 g	
Instant pasta (home-dried)	65 g	260 g	
Instant kidney beans (home-dried)	20 g	80 g	
Dried onion	5 g	20 g	
Dried peppers	5 g	20 g	
Tomato powder (home-made)	12 g	48 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	3 g	12 g	1 tsp chilli powder + ½ tsp cumin + ½ tsp paprika
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	5 g	20 g	½ beef cube
Total dry weight	**140 g**	**560 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

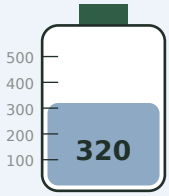
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Beef 'rocks' (dried mince)	100 g	300 g raw	Brown to 71°C, rinse off fat, pat dry	68°C, 6-8 h
Instant pasta	260 g	280 g raw	Cook 1 min under pack time, rinse	57°C, 4-6 h
Instant kidney beans	80 g	230 g raw	Drain, rinse, split skins with a fork	57°C, 6-10 h
Dried onion	20 g	180 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h
Dried peppers	20 g	230 g raw	De-seed, dice 1 cm	55°C, 8-12 h
Tomato powder	48 g	180 g raw	Spread purée 2-3 mm, dry, then grind	57°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **320 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



320 ml boiling water

Simmer: put the contents and the water in a pot, bring to the boil and simmer gently for **10 minutes**, stirring. Rest 5 minutes with the lid on.

11. Chicken Curry & Rice

Main - chicken · 1 serving per bag · ~510 kcal · 140 g dry **Tier 3** Best before: 6 months (12 if frozen)

What's in the bag (by weight)



Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Dried chicken (home-dried)	30 g	120 g	
Instant rice (home-dried)	65 g	260 g	
Dried onion	6 g	24 g	
Dried peppers	6 g	24 g	
Tomato powder (home-made)	6 g	24 g	
Dried skimmed milk powder (e.g. Marvel)	15 g	60 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	4 g	16 g	2 tsp mild curry powder
Tesco Granulated Sugar	3 g	12 g	
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	5 g	20 g	½ chicken cube
Total dry weight	**140 g**	**560 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

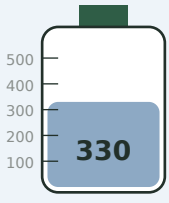
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Dried chicken	120 g	380 g raw	Poach to 74°C, shred finely	68°C, 6-8 h
Instant rice	260 g	280 g raw	Cook fully, rinse, spread one grain deep	57°C, 5-8 h
Dried onion	24 g	220 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h
Dried peppers	24 g	270 g raw	De-seed, dice 1 cm	55°C, 8-12 h
Tomato powder	24 g	90 g raw	Spread purée 2-3 mm, dry, then grind	57°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **330 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



330 ml boiling water

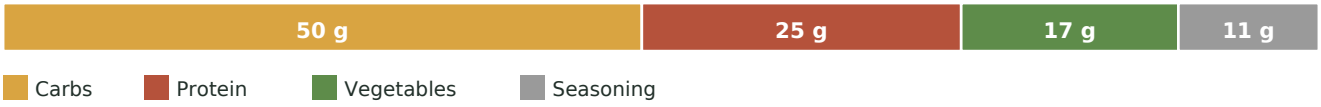
Simmer: put the contents and the water in a pot, bring to the boil and simmer gently for **10 minutes**, stirring. Rest 5 minutes with the lid on.

Tip: Milk powder makes a mild, creamy sauce. Add chilli flakes for heat.

12. Chicken Noodle Soup

Soup - chicken · 1 serving per bag · ~370 kcal · 103 g dry **Tier 3** Best before: 6 months (12 if frozen)

What's in the bag (by weight)



Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Dried chicken (home-dried)	25 g	100 g	
Tesco Medium Egg Noodles (dried)	50 g	200 g	1 nest, broken
Dried mixed veg	12 g	48 g	
Dried onion	5 g	20 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	1 g	4 g	½ tsp mixed herbs
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	10 g	40 g	1 chicken cube
Total dry weight	**103 g**	**412 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

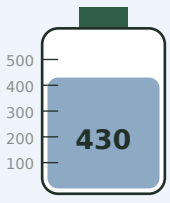
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Dried chicken	100 g	320 g raw	Poach to 74°C, shred finely	68°C, 6-8 h
Dried mixed vegetables	48 g	350 g raw	Frozen mixed veg straight onto trays (no blanching)	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried onion	20 g	180 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **430 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



430 ml boiling water

Simmer: put the contents and the water in a pot, bring to the boil and simmer gently for **6 minutes**, stirring. Rest 5 minutes with the lid on.

Tip: Simmer 6 minutes until the noodles are soft.

13. Creamy Chicken & Mushroom Pasta

Main - chicken · 1 serving per bag · ~510 kcal · 140 g dry **Tier 3** Best before: 6 months (12 if frozen)

What's in the bag (by weight)



Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Dried chicken (home-dried)	28 g	112 g	
Instant pasta (home-dried)	70 g	280 g	
Dried mushrooms	8 g	32 g	
Dried onion	5 g	20 g	
Dried skimmed milk powder (e.g. Marvel)	22 g	88 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	2 g	8 g	½ tsp garlic granules + ½ tsp mixed herbs
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	5 g	20 g	½ chicken cube
Total dry weight	**140 g**	**560 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

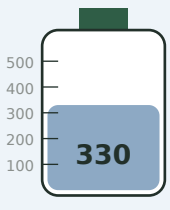
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Dried chicken	112 g	360 g raw	Poach to 74°C, shred finely	68°C, 6-8 h
Instant pasta	280 g	300 g raw	Cook 1 min under pack time, rinse	57°C, 4-6 h
Dried mushrooms	32 g	400 g raw	Wipe clean, slice 5 mm	55°C, 6-8 h
Dried onion	20 g	180 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **330 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



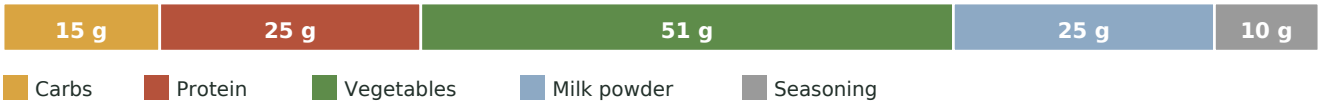
330 ml boiling water

Simmer: put the contents and the water in a pot, bring to the boil and simmer gently for **10 minutes**, stirring. Rest 5 minutes with the lid on.

14. Chicken & Sweetcorn Chowder

Soup - chicken · 1 serving per bag · ~450 kcal · 126 g dry **Tier 3** Best before: 6 months (12 if frozen)

What's in the bag (by weight)



Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Dried chicken (home-dried)	25 g	100 g	
Dried sweetcorn	20 g	80 g	
Dried potato dice	25 g	100 g	
Dried onion	6 g	24 g	
Dried skimmed milk powder (e.g. Marvel)	25 g	100 g	
Tesco Instant Mashed Potato	15 g	60 g	thickener
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	10 g	40 g	1 chicken cube
Total dry weight	**126 g**	**504 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

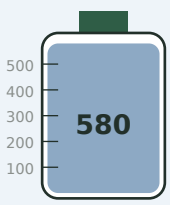
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Dried chicken	100 g	320 g raw	Poach to 74°C, shred finely	68°C, 6-8 h
Dried sweetcorn	80 g	340 g raw	Frozen sweetcorn onto a mesh sheet	55°C, 8-10 h
Dried potato dice	100 g	560 g raw	Dice 1 cm, boil 5-6 min, drain	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried onion	24 g	220 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **580 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Put the instant mash in its own small zip bag, sealed, and drop it into the Mylar bag.
4. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
5. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



580 ml boiling water

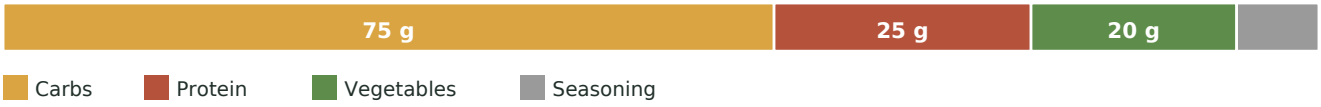
Simmer: put the contents and the water in a pot, bring to the boil and simmer gently for **10 minutes**, stirring. Rest 5 minutes with the lid on.

Tip: Mash flakes thicken the soup - stir them in at the end.

15. Chicken 'Fried' Rice

Main - chicken · 1 serving per bag · ~460 kcal · 128 g dry **Tier 3** Best before: 6 months (12 if frozen)

What's in the bag (by weight)



Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Dried chicken (home-dried)	25 g	100 g	
Instant rice (home-dried)	75 g	300 g	
Dried mixed veg	15 g	60 g	
Dried onion	5 g	20 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	1 g	4 g	½ tsp Chinese five spice
Tesco Granulated Sugar	2 g	8 g	
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	5 g	20 g	½ chicken cube
Total dry weight	**128 g**	**512 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

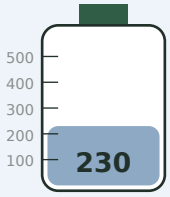
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Dried chicken	100 g	320 g raw	Poach to 74°C, shred finely	68°C, 6-8 h
Instant rice	300 g	320 g raw	Cook fully, rinse, spread one grain deep	57°C, 5-8 h
Dried mixed vegetables	60 g	430 g raw	Frozen mixed veg straight onto trays (no blanching)	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried onion	20 g	180 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **230 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



230 ml boiling water

Simmer: put the contents and the water in a pot, bring to the boil and simmer gently for **10 minutes**, stirring. Rest 5 minutes with the lid on.

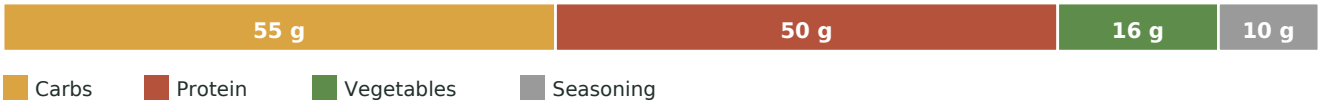
Tip: Simmer until the water is absorbed. Add a soy sauce sachet if you have one.

16. Red Lentil Dahl with Rice

Main - veggie · 1 serving per bag · ~450 kcal · 131 g dry

Tier 1 Best before: 2 years

What's in the bag (by weight)



Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Instant red lentils (home-dried)	50 g	200 g	
Instant rice (home-dried)	55 g	220 g	
Dried onion	8 g	32 g	
Tomato powder (home-made)	8 g	32 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	5 g	20 g	2 tsp curry powder + ½ tsp turmeric + ½ tsp garlic granules
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	5 g	20 g	½ vegetable cube
Total dry weight	**131 g**	**524 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

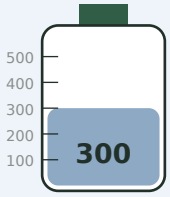
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Instant red lentils	200 g	220 g raw	Simmer 8-10 min, drain, spread thin	57°C, 5-8 h
Instant rice	220 g	240 g raw	Cook fully, rinse, spread one grain deep	57°C, 5-8 h
Dried onion	32 g	290 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h
Tomato powder	32 g	120 g raw	Spread purée 2-3 mm, dry, then grind	57°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **300 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



300 ml boiling water

Pour & stand: empty into a pot or bowl, pour over the boiling water, stir, cover and stand for **15 minutes** (wrap in a towel). Stir and serve.

17. Lentil Bolognese

Main - veggie · 1 serving per bag · ~490 kcal · 144 g dry **Tier 1** Best before: 2 years

What's in the bag (by weight)



Carbs Protein Vegetables Seasoning

Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Instant red lentils (home-dried)	40 g	160 g	
Instant pasta (home-dried)	65 g	260 g	
Dried mixed veg	12 g	48 g	
Dried onion	6 g	24 g	
Tomato powder (home-made)	14 g	56 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	2 g	8 g	1 tsp mixed herbs + ½ tsp garlic granules
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	5 g	20 g	½ vegetable cube
Total dry weight	**144 g**	**576 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

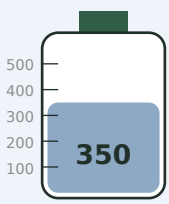
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Instant red lentils	160 g	180 g raw	Simmer 8-10 min, drain, spread thin	57°C, 5-8 h
Instant pasta	260 g	280 g raw	Cook 1 min under pack time, rinse	57°C, 4-6 h
Dried mixed vegetables	48 g	350 g raw	Frozen mixed veg straight onto trays (no blanching)	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried onion	24 g	220 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h
Tomato powder	56 g	200 g raw	Spread purée 2-3 mm, dry, then grind	57°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **350 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



350 ml boiling water

Pour & stand: empty into a pot or bowl, pour over the boiling water, stir, cover and stand for **15 minutes** (wrap in a towel). Stir and serve.

18. Moroccan Chickpea Couscous

Main - veggie · 1 serving per bag · ~490 kcal · 141 g dry

Tier 1 Best before: 2 years

What's in the bag (by weight)



Carbs Protein Vegetables Fruit Seasoning

Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Instant chickpeas (home-dried)	35 g	140 g	
Tesco Couscous	70 g	280 g	
Dried peppers	6 g	24 g	
Dried onion	6 g	24 g	
Tomato powder (home-made)	6 g	24 g	
Tesco Raisins	10 g	40 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	3 g	12 g	1 tsp cumin + ½ tsp paprika + pinch cinnamon
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	5 g	20 g	½ vegetable cube
Total dry weight	**141 g**	**564 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

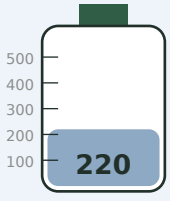
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Instant chickpeas	140 g	380 g raw	Drain, rinse, crush lightly	57°C, 6-10 h
Dried peppers	24 g	270 g raw	De-seed, dice 1 cm	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried onion	24 g	220 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h
Tomato powder	24 g	90 g raw	Spread purée 2-3 mm, dry, then grind	57°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **220 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



220 ml boiling water

Pour & stand: empty into a pot or bowl, pour over the boiling water, stir, cover and stand for **10 minutes** (wrap in a towel). Stir and serve.

Tip: Fluff with a fork. Chickpeas stay slightly firm - that's normal.

19. Mexican Bean & Rice Bowl

Main - veggie · 1 serving per bag · ~490 kcal · 145 g dry

Tier 1 Best before: 2 years

What's in the bag (by weight)



Carbs Protein Vegetables Seasoning

Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Instant kidney beans (home-dried)	40 g	160 g	
Instant rice (home-dried)	65 g	260 g	
Dried sweetcorn	12 g	48 g	
Dried peppers	6 g	24 g	
Dried onion	6 g	24 g	
Tomato powder (home-made)	8 g	32 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	3 g	12 g	1 tsp chilli powder + ½ tsp cumin + ½ tsp paprika
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	5 g	20 g	½ vegetable cube
Total dry weight	**145 g**	**580 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

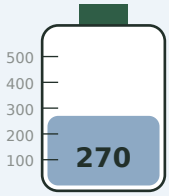
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Instant kidney beans	160 g	460 g raw	Drain, rinse, split skins with a fork	57°C, 6-10 h
Instant rice	260 g	280 g raw	Cook fully, rinse, spread one grain deep	57°C, 5-8 h
Dried sweetcorn	48 g	200 g raw	Frozen sweetcorn onto a mesh sheet	55°C, 8-10 h
Dried peppers	24 g	270 g raw	De-seed, dice 1 cm	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried onion	24 g	220 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h
Tomato powder	32 g	120 g raw	Spread purée 2-3 mm, dry, then grind	57°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **270 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



270 ml boiling water

Pour & stand: empty into a pot or bowl, pour over the boiling water, stir, cover and stand for **15 minutes** (wrap in a towel). Stir and serve.

20. Minestrone Soup

Soup - veggie · 1 serving per bag · ~340 kcal · 105 g dry **Tier 1** Best before: 2 years

What's in the bag (by weight)



Carbs Protein Vegetables Seasoning

Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Instant pasta (home-dried)	35 g	140 g	
Instant kidney beans (home-dried)	25 g	100 g	
Dried mixed veg	15 g	60 g	
Dried onion	6 g	24 g	
Tomato powder (home-made)	12 g	48 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	2 g	8 g	1 tsp mixed herbs + ½ tsp garlic granules
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	10 g	40 g	1 vegetable cube
Total dry weight	**105 g**	**420 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

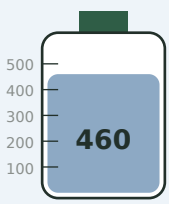
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Instant pasta	140 g	150 g raw	Cook 1 min under pack time, rinse	57°C, 4-6 h
Instant kidney beans	100 g	290 g raw	Drain, rinse, split skins with a fork	57°C, 6-10 h
Dried mixed vegetables	60 g	430 g raw	Frozen mixed veg straight onto trays (no blanching)	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried onion	24 g	220 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h
Tomato powder	48 g	180 g raw	Spread purée 2-3 mm, dry, then grind	57°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **460 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



460 ml boiling water

Pour & stand: empty into a pot or bowl, pour over the boiling water, stir, cover and stand for **15 minutes** (wrap in a towel). Stir and serve.

21. Mushroom Risotto

Main - veggie · 1 serving per bag · ~410 kcal · 120 g dry **Tier 2** Best before: 12 months

What's in the bag (by weight)



Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Instant rice (home-dried)	75 g	300 g	
Dried mushrooms	10 g	40 g	
Dried onion	8 g	32 g	
Dried skimmed milk powder (e.g. Marvel)	15 g	60 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	2 g	8 g	½ tsp garlic granules + ½ tsp thyme + black pepper
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	10 g	40 g	1 vegetable cube
Total dry weight	**120 g**	**480 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

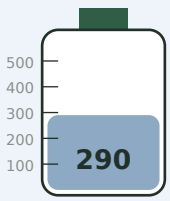
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Instant rice	300 g	320 g raw	Cook fully, rinse, spread one grain deep	57°C, 5-8 h
Dried mushrooms	40 g	500 g raw	Wipe clean, slice 5 mm	55°C, 6-8 h
Dried onion	32 g	290 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **290 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



290 ml boiling water

Pour & stand: empty into a pot or bowl, pour over the boiling water, stir, cover and stand for **15 minutes** (wrap in a towel). Stir and serve.

Tip: Stir vigorously at the end to make it creamy.

22. Potato & Leek Soup

Soup - veggie · 1 serving per bag · ~330 kcal · 100 g dry **Tier 2** Best before: 12 months

What's in the bag (by weight)



Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Tesco Instant Mashed Potato	35 g	140 g	
Dried potato dice	20 g	80 g	
Dried leek	8 g	32 g	
Dried onion	6 g	24 g	
Dried skimmed milk powder (e.g. Marvel)	20 g	80 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	1 g	4 g	black pepper + pinch dried parsley
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	10 g	40 g	1 vegetable cube
Total dry weight	**100 g**	**400 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

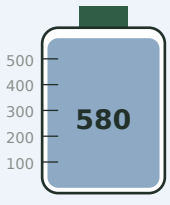
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Dried potato dice	80 g	450 g raw	Dice 1 cm, boil 5-6 min, drain	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried leek	32 g	390 g raw	Slice 5 mm, blanch 2 min	55°C, 6-8 h
Dried onion	24 g	220 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **580 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



580 ml boiling water

Pour & stand: empty into a pot or bowl, pour over the boiling water, stir, cover and stand for **12 minutes** (wrap in a towel). Stir and serve.

23. Irish Vegetable & Lentil Soup

Soup - veggie · 1 serving per bag · ~300 kcal · 94 g dry

Tier 1 Best before: 2 years

What's in the bag (by weight)



Protein Vegetables Seasoning

Ingredient	Per bag	Batch of 4	Note
Instant red lentils (home-dried)	30 g	120 g	
Dried mixed veg	20 g	80 g	
Dried potato dice	20 g	80 g	
Dried onion	8 g	32 g	
Dried leek	5 g	20 g	
Dried spices / herbs (see recipe)	1 g	4 g	½ tsp mixed herbs
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	10 g	40 g	1 vegetable cube
Total dry weight	**94 g**	**376 g**	

Step 1: Prepare & dehydrate the building blocks

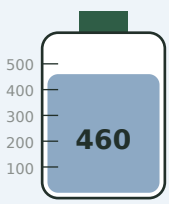
Block	Need (4 bags)	Buy about	Prep & cook (summary)	Dry
Instant red lentils	120 g	130 g raw	Simmer 8-10 min, drain, spread thin	57°C, 5-8 h
Dried mixed vegetables	80 g	580 g raw	Frozen mixed veg straight onto trays (no blanching)	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried potato dice	80 g	450 g raw	Dice 1 cm, boil 5-6 min, drain	55°C, 8-12 h
Dried onion	32 g	290 g raw	Peel, dice 5-8 mm, separate layers	55°C, 6-10 h
Dried leek	20 g	240 g raw	Slice 5 mm, blanch 2 min	55°C, 6-8 h

Full method, dryness test and tips for each block are in Part 2. Condition every block for 7 days before packing.

Step 2: Assemble, seal & label

1. Set out 4 Mylar bags (1 L) and label them first: name, date, best-before, **460 ml**, and the method.
2. For each bag, weigh every ingredient into a bowl using the 'Per bag' column. Crumble stock cubes, mix, then funnel into the bag.
3. Tap the bag down, leave 5 cm headspace, add one **100 cc oxygen absorber** on top (optional).
4. Squeeze out the air and heat-seal twice, 2-3 cm below the top. Check the bags are tight after 24 hours.

To cook (print this on the label)



460 ml boiling water

Pour & stand: empty into a pot or bowl, pour over the boiling water, stir, cover and stand for **15 minutes** (wrap in a towel). Stir and serve.

Part 4: Master shopping list

Totals for making **every recipe once as a batch of 4**: 92 bags (about a month of meals for one person, or a week for a family of four at three meals a day). Building-block quantities are converted back to what you buy raw. Round up to pack sizes.

Buy at Tesco	For	Dried needed	Buy (approx.)
Tesco Frozen Mixed Vegetables (carrot, peas, green beans, sweetcorn)	Dried mixed vegetables	456 g	3.30 kg
Tesco Frozen Sweetcorn	Dried sweetcorn	128 g	550 g
Tesco Brown Onions (loose or net)	Dried onion	464 g	4.20 kg
Tesco Mixed Peppers (3 pack)	Dried peppers	116 g	1.35 kg
Tesco Closed Cup White Mushrooms	Dried mushrooms	104 g	1.30 kg
Tesco Leeks	Dried leek	52 g	650 g
Tesco Rooster Potatoes	Dried potato dice	400 g	2.25 kg
Tesco Tomato Puree (double concentrate tubes)	Tomato powder	368 g	1.35 kg
Tesco Easy Cook Long Grain Rice	Instant rice	1820 g	1.95 kg
Tesco Macaroni or small pasta shapes (orzo, ditalini)	Instant pasta	1500 g	1.60 kg
Tesco Red Split Lentils 1kg	Instant red lentils	480 g	550 g
Tesco Red Kidney Beans in Water (400g tins)	Instant kidney beans	460 g	1.30 kg
Tesco Chick Peas in Water (400g tins)	Instant chickpeas	140 g	400 g
Tesco Lean Beef Steak Mince 5% Fat	Beef 'rocks' (dried mince)	700 g	2.10 kg
Tesco Fresh Chicken Breast Fillets	Dried chicken	532 g	1.70 kg
Tesco Bramley or eating apples	Dried apple chips	140 g	1.15 kg
Tesco Porridge Oats	Use as bought	720 g	750 g
Tesco Couscous	Use as bought	280 g	300 g
Tesco Medium Egg Noodles (dried)	Use as bought	200 g	200 g
Tesco Instant Mashed Potato	Use as bought	380 g	400 g
Dried skimmed milk powder (e.g. Marvel)	Use as bought	888 g	900 g
Tesco Granulated Sugar	Use as bought	252 g	300 g
Tesco Raisins	Use as bought	160 g	200 g
Tesco Banana Chips	Use as bought	60 g	100 g
Stock cube (Oxo / Knorr), crumbled	Use as bought	480 g	500 g (~48 cubes)
Bisto Gravy Granules	Use as bought	108 g	150 g

Spice cupboard (small jars cover the whole set)

Mild curry powder, chilli powder, ground cumin, paprika, turmeric, ground cinnamon, nutmeg, dried thyme, mixed herbs, dried parsley, garlic granules, Chinese five spice, black pepper, salt.

Packaging (for 92 bags)

- 100 × 1 litre food-grade Mylar bags (spares for mistakes)
- 100 × 100 cc oxygen absorbers (bought in sealed packs of 10-20, so they aren't wasted)
- Small zip bags for the 4 shepherd's pie mash pouches
- 2-3 food-grade buckets with lids, labels and a marker

Part 5: Stock log

Print this page and keep it on the storage bucket. Tick bags out as you eat them.

Recipe	Bags	Packed	Best before	Location	Eaten

This guide gives general food-preservation guidance based on common home-drying practice. Home dehydrated food does not have the shelf life of commercial freeze-dried food. Inspect every bag before eating and follow the safety rules in Section 2.

Emergency numbers & the series

Service	Number	Use it for
Emergency services	**112 or 999**	Ambulance, Garda, fire, coast guard. Works from any phone, any network.
ESB Networks	1800 372 999	Power cuts, fallen or damaged lines (24/7)
Gas Networks Ireland	1800 20 50 50	Smell of gas (24/7). Call from outside the house.
Uisce Éireann (Irish Water)	1800 278 278	Water outages, burst mains, boil-water notices
HSELive	1800 700 700	Health service information
Public Poisons Line	01 809 2166	Advice if someone has swallowed or touched something harmful (8am-10pm daily)
Samaritans	116 123	Anyone struggling to cope (24/7)
Text About It	Text HELLO to 50808	Free text support (24/7)
Childline	1800 66 66 66	Children and young people up to 18 (24/7)
Your county council	_____	Roads, flooding, local emergency centres
Met Éireann	met.ie / Met Éireann app	Weather warnings

Numbers checked November 2026. Write in your county council's number above, and your own local numbers (GP, out-of-hours doctor, pharmacy, vet, neighbours) in Volume 0.

The Ready At Home series

Vol	Title	What it covers
0	Start Here	Household plan & emergency numbers
1	**Just Add Water**	Home-dehydrated emergency meals
2	Power Cuts & Storms	Getting through long outages
3	Water & Sanitation	Storing, treating, toilets
4	Cooking & Warmth	Without mains power
5	First Aid	Step-by-step emergency care
6	Symptoms & Home Care	Red flags, minor illness, medicines
7	Home Systems & Repairs	Shut-offs, leaks, storm damage, floods
8	Fire Safety & Security	Alarms, escape plans, extinguishers
9	Communications	Family plan, radios, signals
10	Grab Bags & Kits	72-hour, car, child & pet kits
11	Pantry & Stockpile	A 30-day food store you rotate
12	Outdoor Skills	Fire, shelter, knots, navigation
13	Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	Keeping people okay
14	Offline Knowledge & Media	Libraries, maps & media without internet
15	Other Emergencies	Radiation, chemicals, heat, illness, cut off

This series gives general preparedness guidance. It is not a substitute for professional medical, electrical, gas or structural advice, or for a certified first-aid course. In an emergency, call 112 or 999 and follow the call-taker's instructions.

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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 2

Power Cuts & Storms

Getting through long outages

Before, during and after a big storm
Keeping food cold, lights on and phones charged
Power stations, generators and carbon monoxide safety



THE SERIES

0 Start Here	1 Just Add Water	2 Power Cuts & Storms	3 Water & Sanitation	4 Cooking & Warmth	5 First Aid	6 Symptoms & Home Care	7 Home Systems & Repairs
8 Fire Safety & Security	9 Communications	10 Grab Bags & Kits	11 Pantry & Stockpile	12 Outdoor Skills	13 Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	14 Offline Knowledge &	15 Other Emergencies

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1. Before the storm

Storms are the most common cause of long power cuts in Ireland. You usually get 1-3 days' warning from Met Éireann, which is enough time to do everything on this page.

When a Yellow or Orange warning is issued

☐ Charge every phone, power bank, laptop and lantern	☐ Charge the power station to 100%
☐ Fill water containers and the bath (washing and flushing)	☐ Fill the car with fuel; get some cash
☐ Turn the freezer to its coldest setting	☐ Freeze bottles of water to fill gaps
☐ Bring in bins, trampolines, garden furniture	☐ Park away from trees and power lines
☐ Check torches and spare batteries	☐ Check on elderly or vulnerable neighbours
☐ Download offline maps and save numbers	☐ Put stored meals and a stove where you can reach them

If someone at home depends on electricity for medical equipment

- Ask your electricity supplier to put you on their Priority Services Register.
- Ask the equipment supplier (oxygen concentrator, CPAP, home dialysis, pumps) what backup they provide and how long the battery lasts.
- Have a plan to go somewhere with power (family, hospital) if an outage will last longer than your backup.

2. When the power goes

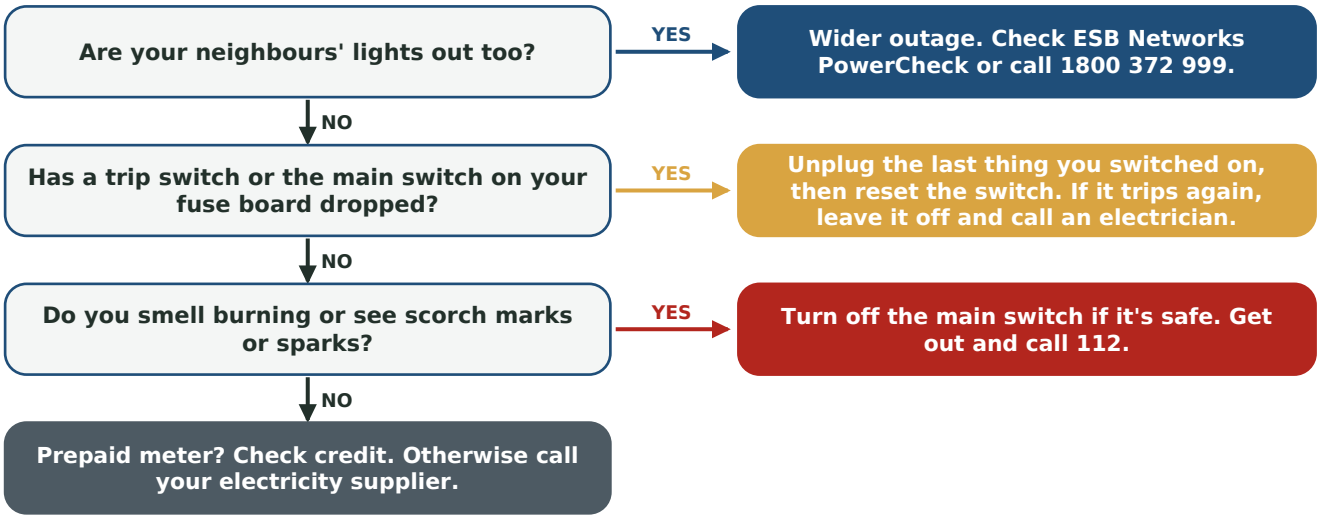


Figure 1. Is it just my house?

Fallen or damaged lines

Always assume a fallen line is live, even if it's sparking or silent. Keep everyone, including pets, well back. Don't touch anything it's lying on (fences, trees, cars, water). Call ESB Networks on 1800 372 999 straight away, or 112 if someone is hurt.

The first day, hour by hour

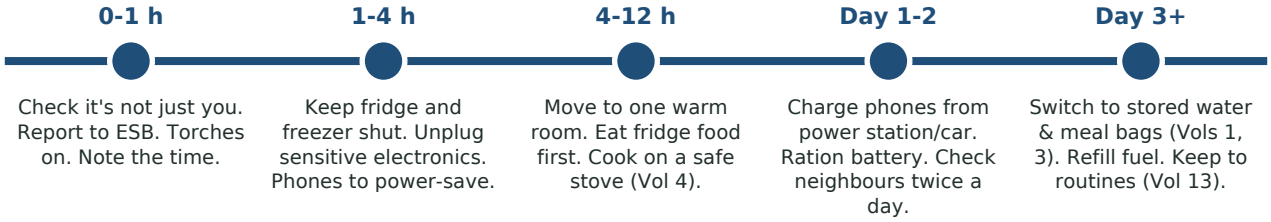


Figure 2. What to do as an outage goes on.

3. Food in the fridge and freezer

Keep the doors shut. Every opening lets out cold air. Food is safe as long as it stays at 5°C or below in the fridge and frozen solid in the freezer.

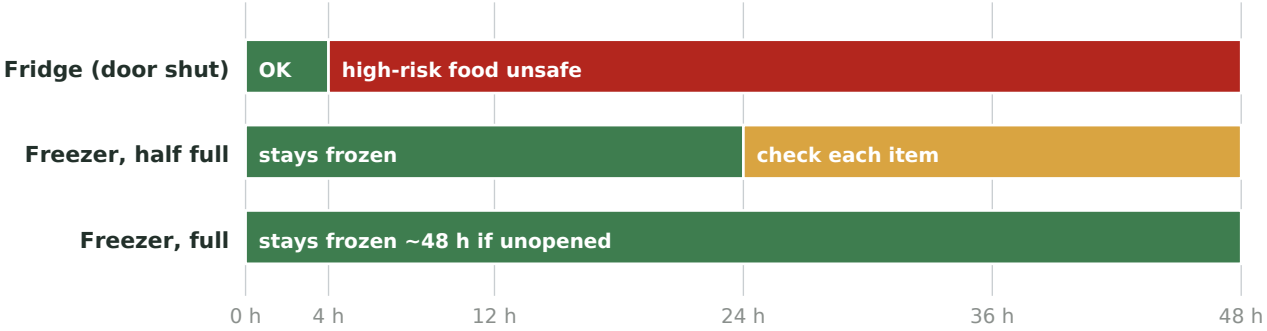


Figure 3. Typical times with doors kept shut. A fridge thermometer removes the guesswork.

Food	Above 5°C for more than 2-4 hours	Notes
Raw & cooked meat, fish, poultry	Throw out	Includes deli meats, sausages, leftovers
Milk, cream, soft cheese, yoghurt	Throw out	Hard cheese and butter usually keep
Cooked rice, pasta, potatoes	Throw out	Rice is a particular risk
Eggs, egg dishes, custards	Throw out	
Fruit, raw veg, jams, sauces, bread	Usually fine	Discard if mouldy, slimy or smells off
Freezer food with ice crystals	Safe to refreeze	Quality may drop
Freezer food fully thawed and warm	Throw out	Cook straight away only if still cold

If in doubt, throw it out

Food that has gone unsafe often looks and smells normal. Never taste something to check it.

Make your freezer last longer

- A full freezer stays cold far longer. Fill gaps with bottles of water (leave room to expand).
- Group items together and cover the freezer with blankets or a duvet (don't block vents once power returns).
- Eat fridge food first, then freezer food, then stored food.

4. Light, power & phones

Lighting

DO

- A headtorch for every person (hands free)
- LED lanterns for rooms
- Rechargeable batteries plus a set of alkaline spares
- Glow sticks for children's rooms and stairs
- Solar garden lights: bring them in at night as night lights

DON'T

- Candles near curtains, children, pets or in bedrooms
- Leaving a candle unattended, even briefly
- Paraffin or oil lamps without good ventilation
- Car headlights for long (flat battery)

Figure 4. LED lights are safer, brighter and cheap. Volume 4 covers candles and oil lamps as a backup.

What a power station can run

A typical 'river size' power station (about 250-300 Wh, such as the EcoFlow River 3 Plus) gives roughly 240 Wh of usable power. Runtime is roughly **usable Wh ÷ watts**.

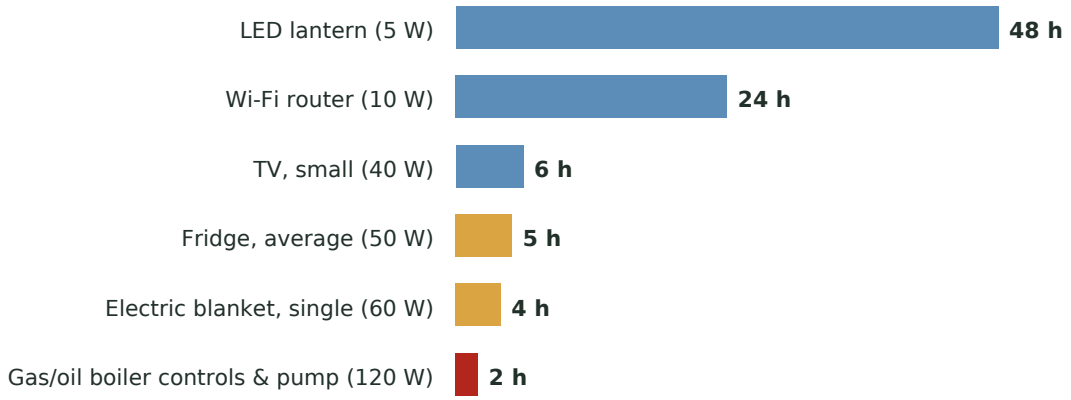


Figure 5. Approximate hours on one full charge of a ~240 Wh usable power station.

Charging	Energy per charge	Charges from ~240 Wh
Smartphone	about 15 Wh	about 15
Tablet	about 30 Wh	about 8
Laptop	about 60 Wh	about 4
Power bank 20,000 mAh	about 75 Wh	about 3
Headtorch / lantern	5-10 Wh	25+

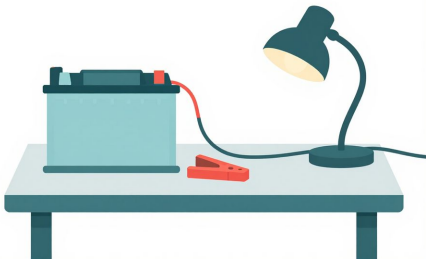
- Kettles, heaters, ovens and immersions use far too much. Use gas or stored hot drinks (flasks).
- **Recharge it** from a car, a solar panel, or a friend with power (Section 5).
- Many gas and oil boilers won't fire without electricity. Ask a registered electrician (Safe Electric) about fitting a plug so the boiler can run from a power station or generator.
- Medical devices first, then light, then communications, then comfort.

Phones when the network struggles

- Mobile masts have backup batteries that can run out in a long outage. Texts get through when calls don't.
- Turn on low-power mode, lower brightness, turn off Bluetooth and location.
- Agree a check-in time with family (e.g. 8 am and 8 pm) instead of calling all day.
- Keep a wind-up or battery FM/DAB radio. RTÉ Radio 1 and local radio give outage and road updates.

5. Backup power: car, power station, generator

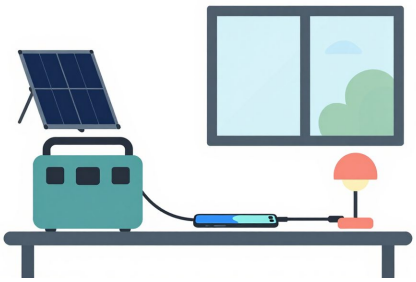
Power from the car



A car battery holds roughly 500-700 Wh, but you need to keep enough to start the engine. Treat the car as a charger that runs while the engine is on.

- USB sockets and a 12 V USB adapter charge phones and power banks.
- A small inverter (150 W) in the 12 V socket runs a laptop or router.
- A larger inverter (300-1000 W) clips straight onto the battery terminals: red to +, black to -. Keep the engine running while you use it.
- Choose a 'pure sine wave' inverter for laptops and medical devices.
- Run the engine outdoors only, never in a garage, and not with the exhaust near a window.

Power stations and solar

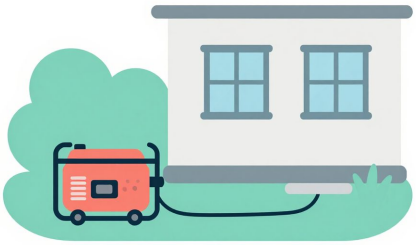


A portable power station is a big rechargeable battery with sockets. It's silent, safe indoors and has no fumes. Size it to what you'd actually run (Figure 5).

Panel	Summer day	Winter day
100 W	300-500 Wh	50-150 Wh
200 W	600-1000 Wh	100-300 Wh

Rough Irish yields, panel facing south and angled to the sun. Cloud cuts output a lot.

Generators



- Run it outdoors only, at least 6 metres from doors, windows and vents, exhaust pointing away from the house. Never in a garage, shed, porch or under a carport.
- Plug appliances into the generator itself with outdoor-rated extension leads.
- Never plug a generator into a wall socket or wire it to the fuse board. It can send power back down the lines to ESB crews. To power house circuits, have a registered electrician fit a changeover switch.
- Switch it off and let it cool before refuelling.
- Keep it dry: use it under an open-sided cover, not a tarp wrapped round it.



Looking after a generator

1. Check the oil level on the dipstick before every use, on level ground.
2. Change the oil after the first 5-20 hours (see the manual), then every 50-100 hours, or every season.
3. To change it: run for a few minutes to warm the oil, switch off and let it cool a little, drain it into a pan, refill with the grade in the manual (often 10W-30) to the mark.
4. Take old oil to a civic amenity site.
5. Run it for 15 minutes under a light load once a month, so it starts when you need it.
6. Keep a spare spark plug, an air filter and a funnel with it.

Storing fuel legally and safely

Fuel	What the rules allow at home	How to keep it
Petrol for engines (generator, mower, car)	Up to 100 litres without a licence or notification. Tell your local fire authority if you keep 100-273 litres, or use a container bigger than 23 litres.	Approved petrol cans (UN-marked metal or plastic), in a shed or detached garage away from the house and anything that sparks. Add fuel stabiliser; untreated petrol goes stale in about 6 months.
Diesel	Less strict (harder to ignite), but use sensible amounts.	Approved diesel cans, cool and dry. Keeps about a year.
Kerosene (home heating oil)	Your oil tank.	Keep the tank above a quarter full in winter (Volume 4).
Gas cylinders and cartridges	No household limit, but keep it modest.	Upright, outdoors or in a ventilated shed, out of the sun. Never in a cellar.

Petrol rules: Dangerous Substances (Retail and Private Petroleum Stores) Regulations 1979, as summarised by the Health and Safety Authority. 20-50 litres in proper cans is well within the limit for home use.

Carbon monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas with no smell or colour, given off by anything that burns fuel. Power cuts raise the risk because people use stoves, barbecues and generators they don't normally use. A CO alarm on every floor gives you early warning.

Headache
Often the first sign. Does it ease outside?

Dizziness
Feeling faint, confused or unsteady

Nausea
Feeling sick or being sick

Breathless
Short of breath, chest tight

Tiredness
Unusual sleepiness

Others too
Several people or pets unwell at once

CO alarm
One on every floor, near boilers, stoves and bedrooms

Act
Get everyone into fresh air. Call 112.

Figure 6. Signs to look out for.

If you suspect CO

- Turn off the appliance if you can do it quickly.
- Open doors and windows and get everyone outside.
- Call 112 or 999 if anyone has symptoms. Don't go back in until it's been checked.
- A smell of gas (rotten eggs) is different: leave and call Gas Networks Ireland on 1800 20 50 50 from outside.

6. After the storm

1. Check on neighbours, especially anyone living alone or elderly.
2. Walk round the outside of the house in daylight: roof, slates, chimney, gutters, trees, fences.
3. Photograph all damage before you clear anything, for your insurer.
4. Leave fallen trees near lines to ESB. Chainsaws need training and protective gear.
5. When power returns, switch appliances back on a few at a time.
6. Check the fridge and freezer contents (Section 3) before eating anything.
7. Recharge everything, refill water, restock what you used and write down what you wished you'd had.

Emergency numbers & the series

Service	Number	Use it for
Emergency services	**112 or 999**	Ambulance, Garda, fire, coast guard. Works from any phone, any network.
ESB Networks	1800 372 999	Power cuts, fallen or damaged lines (24/7)
Gas Networks Ireland	1800 20 50 50	Smell of gas (24/7). Call from outside the house.
Uisce Éireann (Irish Water)	1800 278 278	Water outages, burst mains, boil-water notices
HSELive	1800 700 700	Health service information
Public Poisons Line	01 809 2166	Advice if someone has swallowed or touched something harmful (8am-10pm daily)
Samaritans	116 123	Anyone struggling to cope (24/7)
Text About It	Text HELLO to 50808	Free text support (24/7)
Childline	1800 66 66 66	Children and young people up to 18 (24/7)
Your county council		Roads, flooding, local emergency centres
Met Éireann	met.ie / Met Éireann app	Weather warnings

Numbers checked November 2026. Write in your county council's number above, and your own local numbers (GP, out-of-hours doctor, pharmacy, vet, neighbours) in Volume 0.

The Ready At Home series

Vol	Title	What it covers
0	Start Here	Household plan & emergency numbers
1	Just Add Water	Home-dehydrated emergency meals
2	**Power Cuts & Storms**	Getting through long outages
3	Water & Sanitation	Storing, treating, toilets
4	Cooking & Warmth	Without mains power
5	First Aid	Step-by-step emergency care
6	Symptoms & Home Care	Red flags, minor illness, medicines
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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 3

Water & Sanitation

Storing, treating, toilets

How much water to store, and how to keep it fresh
Filtering, boiling and disinfecting water you're unsure of
Toilets and hygiene when the taps stop



THE SERIES

0 Start Here	1 Just Add Water	2 Power Cuts & Storms	3 Water & Sanitation	4 Cooking & Warmth	5 First Aid	6 Symptoms & Home Care	7 Home Systems & Repairs
8 Fire Safety & Security	9 Communications	10 Grab Bags & Kits	11 Pantry & Stockpile	12 Outdoor Skills	13 Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	14 Offline Knowledge &	15 Other Emergencies

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1. How much water you need

Plan on at least **3 litres per person per day** for drinking and food, plus more for washing. Children, nursing mothers, sick people and anyone working hard need more. Don't forget pets (roughly 50 ml per kg of dog per day).

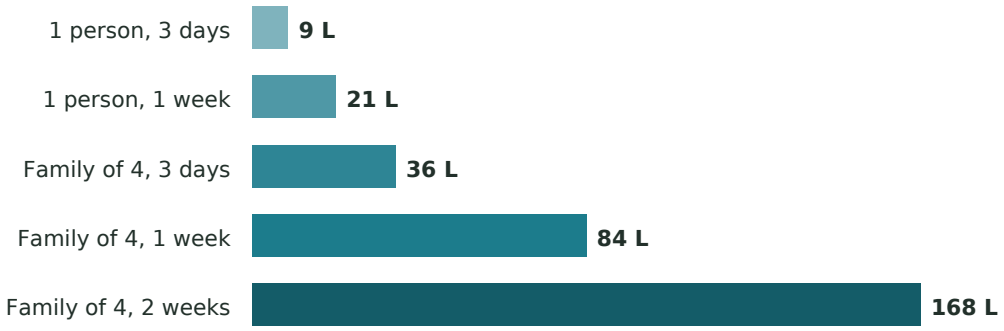


Figure 1. Drinking and cooking water only, at 3 L per person per day.

Why this matters more in rural Ireland

If your house is on a private well or a group scheme with an electric pump, a power cut is also a water cut. Electric showers, pressure pumps and some boilers stop too. Store water as if your taps will fail whenever the power does.

A simple home water store



For a family, two 20-litre food-grade water containers plus a gravity filter covers most outages and gives you a way to make more safe water once they run low.

- **2 × 20 L containers** (blue or white, marked food-grade or 'for drinking water'), with a tap. Fill from the mains, add a date label, and refresh every 6 months.
- Keep them somewhere cool and dark, off concrete, away from fuel and chemicals.
- A full 20 L container weighs 20 kg: keep them low down, where you'll use them.
- Add a crate of sealed bottled water for grab bags and the car.
- Know where your **stopcock** is (Volume 7). If pipes burst you'll want to close it fast; if you're on mains, also find the outside box near the boundary.



Gravity filters

A gravity filter (two stacked chambers: pour water in the top, clean water drips into the bottom) makes 10-20 litres a day with no power.

- Ceramic candle filters (e.g. Doulton/British Berkefeld) and 'Berkey'-style systems are common. Look for independent test results (e.g. NSF/ANSI 42, 53 or 401) rather than marketing claims.
- Most remove bacteria and parasites but not viruses. For rain, stream or flood-affected water, filter **and** then boil or use tablets.
- Prime and clean the elements as the instructions say, and keep a spare set.

Storing water

Option	Shelf life	Tips
Bottled water (sealed)	Use-by on bottle (often 1-2 years)	Easiest. Rotate: drink the oldest and replace.
Tap water in food-grade jerry cans	6 months	Wash containers with a little unscented bleach and rinse. Fill to the top, cap, date.
Large drums (25-200 L)	6-12 months	Food-grade only (blue drums). Use a siphon or tap. Keep off concrete floors.
Bath filled before a storm	Days	For flushing and washing, not drinking (unless the bath is spotless and you treat it).

- Store in the dark, away from fuel, paint and chemicals (plastic absorbs smells).
- Never reuse milk or juice cartons: they can't be cleaned well enough.
- Label every container with the fill date.

Hidden water already in your house

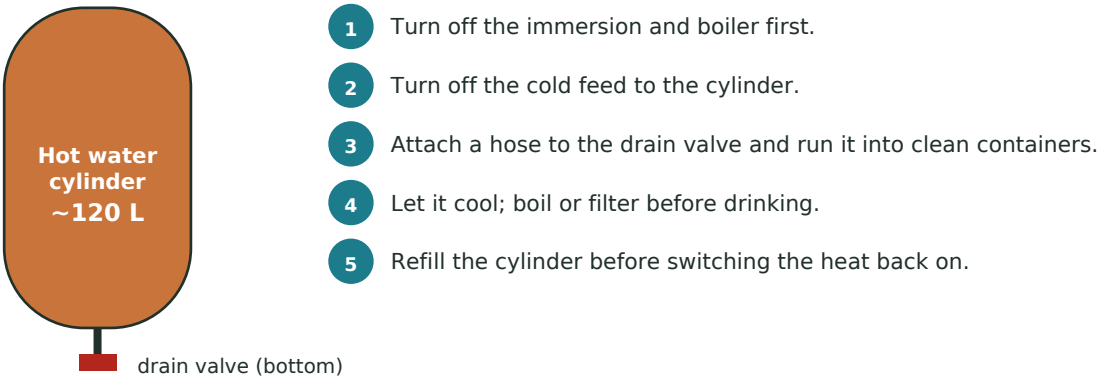


Figure 2. A hot water cylinder can hold over 100 litres.

- The cold water tank in the attic (treat before drinking).
- Ice cubes and frozen bottles in the freezer.
- Liquid in tinned vegetables and fruit.
- Never drink from toilet bowls, radiators or the heating system: it's full of chemicals.

2. Making water safe

If the mains supply is affected, or you're using rain, stream or well water, treat it before drinking, brushing teeth, washing food or making baby bottles.

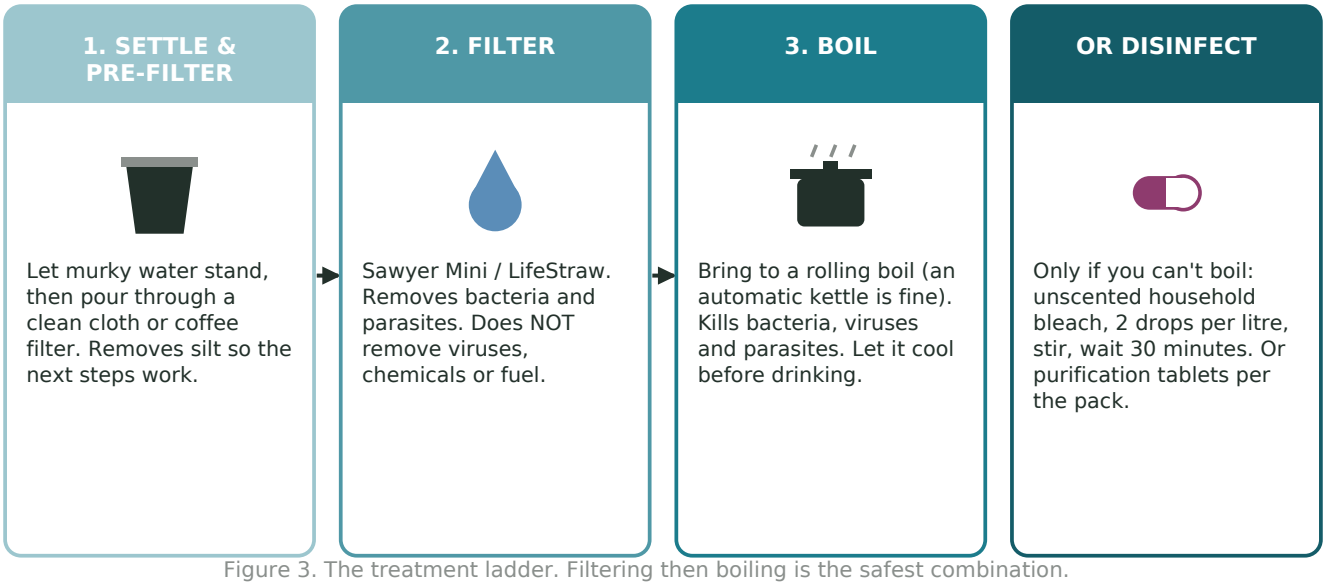


Figure 3. The treatment ladder. Filtering then boiling is the safest combination.

Using bleach correctly

- Use plain, unscented household bleach (sodium hypochlorite). No added cleaners, scents or 'thick' formulas.
- 2 drops per litre of clear water (4 drops if cloudy or very cold). Stir, wait 30 minutes.
- It should smell faintly of chlorine. If not, repeat and wait another 15 minutes.
- Bleach and filters don't remove chemicals, fuel or flood contamination. Don't drink flood water.



Boiling: a full rolling boil for 1 minute.



Stream water: collect from flowing water, pre-filter, then filter and boil.

Water purification tablets

- Chlorine dioxide tablets (e.g. Katadyn Micropur Forte, Aquatabs MicroPur) are the best all-round choice: they work against bacteria, viruses and most parasites.
- Follow the pack exactly; most need 30 minutes, some up to 4 hours for full protection against parasites.
- Iodine tablets are no longer recommended for regular use, and not at all in pregnancy or with thyroid conditions.

Using a Sawyer Mini or similar filter

1. Fill the squeeze pouch with the clearest water you can find (pre-filter through cloth if murky).
2. Screw on the filter. Squeeze clean water into a clean container, or drink through it.
3. Keep 'dirty' and 'clean' threads and containers separate.
4. Backflush with the syringe and clean water when the flow slows.
5. Don't let it freeze when wet: ice can crack the fibres invisibly. Keep it in a pocket in winter.

Water notices from Uisce Éireann

Notice	What it means	What to do
Boil Water Notice	Water may contain germs	Boil before drinking, brushing teeth, making ice or preparing food. Fine for washing and flushing.
Do Not Drink	Not safe to drink even if boiled	Use bottled water for drinking and food. Usually fine for washing and flushing.
Do Not Consume	Not safe to drink, cook with or wash food	Bottled water only for anything you eat or drink. Follow the notice's advice on washing.

Check water.ie or call 1800 278 278 for notices in your area.

Collecting rainwater



- Fit a water butt to a downpipe with a diverter kit (€30-60). In Ireland a 200 L butt can fill after a day or two of steady rain.
- Let the first few minutes of rain run to waste: it washes dust and droppings off the roof.
- Keep a lid on (mosquitoes, leaves, children).
- Untreated rainwater is ideal for flushing, washing clothes and cleaning.
- To drink it: filter, then boil or use tablets.

Condensation traps and solar stills



A clear plastic sheet over a pit or bowl, with a cup in the middle, collects water that evaporates and condenses. It does work, and it's a good thing to show children, but be realistic: in Irish weather expect a few hundred millilitres a day at best. Rain collection gives you far more for far less effort.

3. Toilets without running water

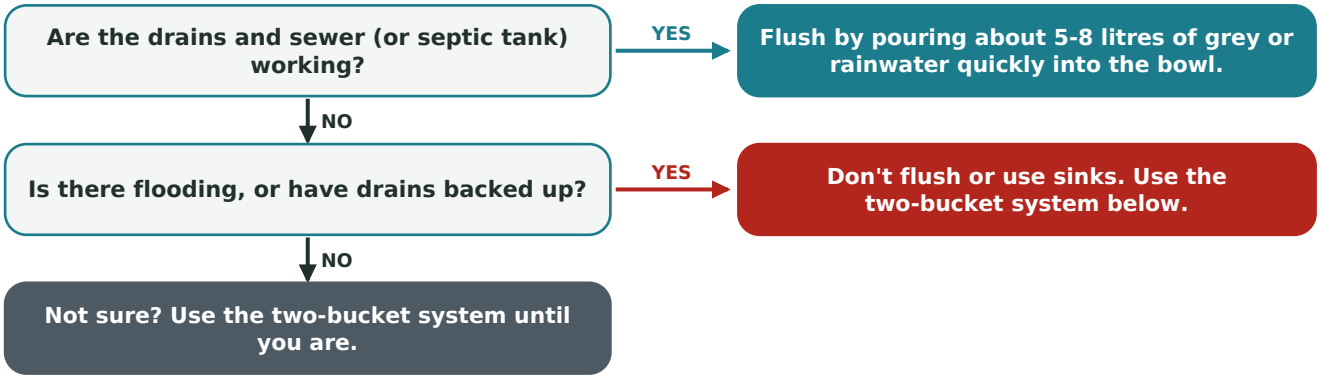
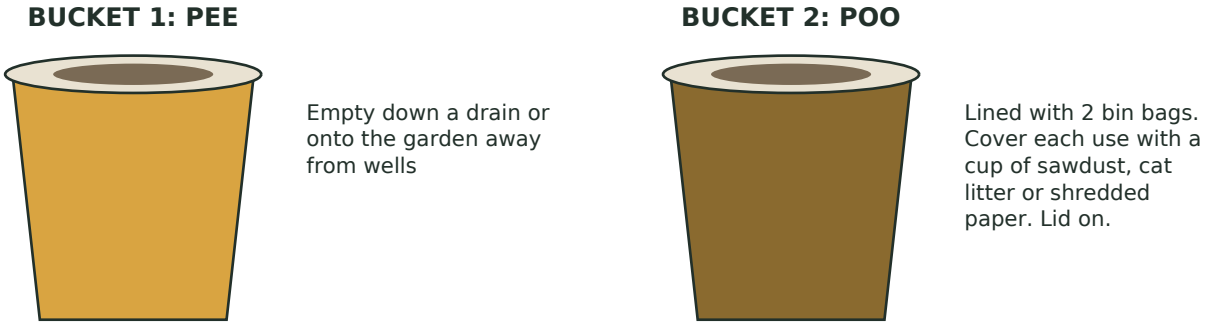


Figure 4. Can I still flush?



Keeping pee separate means far less smell and fewer bags. Wash hands after every use.

Figure 5. The two-bucket toilet.

Toilet kit	Amount for a family of 4, 1 week
Two buckets with tight lids (or a camping toilet)	2
Heavy-duty bin bags	1 roll (20+)
Sawdust, cat litter or peat	1 large bag
Toilet roll	8-12 rolls
Disinfectant, gloves, hand sanitiser	1 each

- Tie off full bags, double-bag them and store in a lidded wheelie bin away from the house.
- Don't put human waste in a compost bin or bury it near a well, stream or vegetable patch.
- Babies' nappies: same as above. Store extra nappies and wipes.

4. Hygiene when water is short

Handwashing station

Jerry can with a tap, a basin and soap by the toilet and kitchen. Hands after toilet and before food: always.

Hand sanitiser

60%+ alcohol. Fine when hands aren't visibly dirty.

Grey water

Reuse washing-up and wash water to flush the toilet.

Washing up

Paper plates save water. Wash in one basin, rinse in a second with a capful of bleach.

Body wash

Basin wash or wet wipes. Prioritise hands, face, armpits, groin, feet.

Teeth

Use treated or bottled water.

Rubbish

Bag tightly, keep lids on bins; flies spread illness fast.

Tummy bugs

Spread fast without water. Bleach-clean toilet area daily (Vol 6).

Figure 6. Staying clean on a few litres a day.

Emergency numbers & the series

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Gas Networks Ireland	1800 20 50 50	Smell of gas (24/7). Call from outside the house.
Uisce Éireann (Irish Water)	1800 278 278	Water outages, burst mains, boil-water notices
HSELive	1800 700 700	Health service information
Public Poisons Line	01 809 2166	Advice if someone has swallowed or touched something harmful (8am-10pm daily)
Samaritans	116 123	Anyone struggling to cope (24/7)
Text About It	Text HELLO to 50808	Free text support (24/7)
Childline	1800 66 66 66	Children and young people up to 18 (24/7)
Your county council	_____	Roads, flooding, local emergency centres
Met Éireann	met.ie / Met Éireann app	Weather warnings

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The Ready At Home series

Vol	Title	What it covers
0	Start Here	Household plan & emergency numbers
1	Just Add Water	Home-dehydrated emergency meals
2	Power Cuts & Storms	Getting through long outages
3	**Water & Sanitation**	Storing, treating, toilets
4	Cooking & Warmth	Without mains power
5	First Aid	Step-by-step emergency care
6	Symptoms & Home Care	Red flags, minor illness, medicines
7	Home Systems & Repairs	Shut-offs, leaks, storm damage, floods
8	Fire Safety & Security	Alarms, escape plans, extinguishers
9	Communications	Family plan, radios, signals
10	Grab Bags & Kits	72-hour, car, child & pet kits
11	Pantry & Stockpile	A 30-day food store you rotate
12	Outdoor Skills	Fire, shelter, knots, navigation
13	Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	Keeping people okay
14	Offline Knowledge & Media	Libraries, maps & media without internet
15	Other Emergencies	Radiation, chemicals, heat, illness, cut off

This series gives general preparedness guidance. It is not a substitute for professional medical, electrical, gas or structural advice, or for a certified first-aid course. In an emergency, call 112 or 999 and follow the call-taker's instructions.

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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 4

Cooking & Warmth

Without mains power

Radiators, oil boilers, stoves and lighting a proper fire
Cooking on camping stoves and the BBQ; haybox cooking
Draughts, layers, one warm room, safe homemade light



THE SERIES

0 Start Here
1 Just Add Water
2 Power Cuts & Storms
3 Water & Sanitation
4 Cooking & Warmth
5 First Aid
6 Symptoms & Home Care
7 Home Systems & Repairs
8 Fire Safety & Security
9 Communications
10 Grab Bags & Kits
11 Pantry & Stockpile
12 Outdoor Skills
13 Kids, Morale & Wellbeing
14 Offline Knowledge &
15 Other Emergencies

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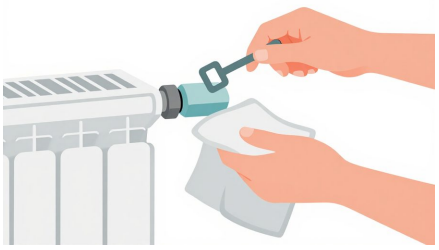
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1. Keeping your heating working

Most heating problems in a cold snap are small ones you can fix yourself in a few minutes. Knowing how saves a cold night waiting for a call-out.

Bleeding a radiator



If a radiator is cold at the top and warm at the bottom, air is trapped in it.

1. Turn the heating off and let the radiators cool (hot water can spray).
2. Hold a cloth under the bleed valve at the top corner. Fit a radiator key (a few euro in any hardware shop; keep two).
3. Turn the key a quarter turn anticlockwise. You'll hear air hissing out.
4. As soon as water starts to dribble out, close it again (clockwise). Don't over-tighten.
5. Do every radiator that needed it, starting downstairs.
6. Check the boiler pressure gauge. Sealed systems usually sit at 1-1.5 bar when cold. If it has dropped below 1, top it up using the filling loop as your boiler manual describes.

Oil (kerosene) boilers



Boiler stopped and a red light is on (lockout)

1. Check the obvious: is the timer on, the thermostat turned up, and is there oil in the tank?
2. Press the reset button **once**. The burner should try to start within a minute.
3. If it locks out again, wait 15 minutes and try **one** more time.
4. If it still won't run, stop. Repeated resets pump unburnt oil into the boiler, which can be dangerous when it finally lights. Call an OFTEC-registered technician.



If you've run out of oil

1. Check the tank gauge or dip it with a clean stick.
2. After a delivery, wait about an hour before restarting. This lets any sludge stirred up from the bottom of the tank settle.
3. Make sure the valve at the tank outlet is open and the filter bowl isn't clogged.
4. Many burners need the air bled from the fuel line after running dry. Some models do this themselves after a reset or two; others have a bleed screw on the burner pump.
5. If your manual shows how, and you're comfortable: fit a clear tube to the bleed screw into a jar, open the screw, press reset, and close it once oil flows with no bubbles. Otherwise ask your service engineer to show you at the next service.

Avoid running out

- Never let the tank fall below a quarter. Order before a cold spell; delivery waits can stretch to a week or two in winter.
- Fit a lock to the tank cap and consider a remote gauge.
- Have the boiler serviced every year.

2. Lighting a proper fire

An open fire or stove is a great backup, but only if it's lit well and the chimney is clean. A cold, smoky fire wastes fuel and coats the chimney with tar.



The top-down fire

1. Open the stove's air vents fully (or the damper on an open fire).
2. Bottom layer: 2-3 larger logs or a few lumps of smokeless fuel, side by side.
3. Middle: a layer of smaller split logs crossways on top.
4. Top: a generous layer of dry kindling with 2 firelighters (or twists of newspaper) in it.
5. Light the top. It burns down through the layers with little smoke and needs no fiddling.
6. After 15-20 minutes, once the bigger logs are burning well, close the vents partly to slow the burn.

Do	Don't
Burn dry, seasoned wood (under 20% moisture), smokeless fuel or approved briquettes	Burn wet wood, painted or treated timber, pallets, plastic or rubbish
Have the chimney swept at least once a year (twice if burning a lot of wood)	Leave a fire burning overnight in an open grate, or leave the room without a fireguard if children are about
Fit a carbon monoxide alarm in the room and keep a fireguard in front	Use petrol, paraffin or barbecue fluid to light a fire
Store fuel off the ground and under cover, a few days' supply indoors to dry	Close a stove right down to smoulder all night; it causes tar build-up

Ireland's solid-fuel rules ban the sale of smoky coal and of wet wood in small quantities. Buy wood marked 'Ready to Burn' or check it with a cheap moisture meter.

3. Cooking without mains power

Stove	Fuel	Use indoors?	Notes
Single-burner camping stove	Butane cartridge	Only in a well-ventilated room, window open, CO alarm, never left alone	Cheap and quick. Butane struggles below about 5°C.
Twin-burner camping stove	Propane bottle	Better outdoors or a well-ventilated porch	Good for family meals.
Meths (Trangia-type)	Methylated spirits	Ventilated room, on a non-flammable surface	Silent, fuel keeps for years. Flame is hard to see.
Wood-burning stove	Wood, smokeless fuel	Yes, if it's an installed stove with a swept chimney	Cook and boil a kettle on top.
Charcoal or gas BBQ	Charcoal, propane	**No**. Outdoors only	Gives off carbon monoxide; never bring it inside, even when cooling.
Kelly kettle / rocket stove	Twigs, scrap wood	No	Boils water fast, outside.



Boiling a kettle on the barbecue

1. Set the BBQ up outdoors on level ground, well away from the house, sheds and fences.
2. Gas: light a burner (or the side burner) and put a stovetop kettle or pot straight on the grill.
3. Charcoal: light it and wait until the coals are covered in grey ash (20-30 minutes). Spread them into a tight pile under the kettle.
4. A metal stovetop kettle or saucepan with a lid works; never an electric kettle.
5. Fill flasks with every kettle you boil, so the next cup needs no fuel.
6. Let charcoal die out completely outside before putting it away. Never bring it into a house, porch, garage or tent.

Stove safety

- Use stoves on a stable, non-flammable surface away from curtains and cupboards.
- Change gas cartridges outdoors, away from any flame.
- Keep a fire blanket within reach and children well back.
- Turn off at the valve when finished. Store cylinders upright, outside the living space.

How much cooking gas to keep

Task	Gas used (roughly)	Per 230 g cartridge
Boil 1 litre of water	10-15 g	15-20 litres boiled
One meal bag (350-500 ml water)	5-8 g	about 30 meals
Simmer a meal 10 minutes	15-20 g	about 12 meals
A simple day for one person (3 meals, 2 hot drinks)	40-60 g	about 4 days

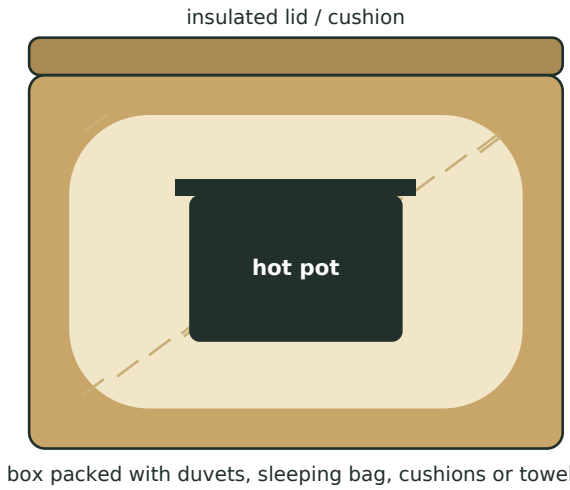
Approximate for a canister stove with a lid on the pot. Plan on one 230 g cartridge per person every 3-4 days. Meals that only need hot water added (Volume 1), couscous, instant noodles and porridge oats use the least fuel and water.

Haybox (retained-heat) cooking

The best way to save fuel. Food keeps cooking in its own heat inside an insulated box, like a slow cooker with no power. Good for rice, porridge, pasta, stews and the meal bags in Volume 1.



A box, a lidded pot and old bedding is all you need.



1. Bring the pot to a full boil (stew: simmer 10 min first).
2. Lid on tight. Move it straight into the box (no peeking).
3. Pack insulation all round and on top.
4. Leave it: rice 30-45 min, porridge overnight, stews 2-4 h, meal bags 30 min.
5. Reheat to boiling before serving if it's below 63°C (piping hot).

Figure 1. How to haybox.

Food safety

Food should still be steaming hot (above 63°C) when you take it out. If it has cooled to lukewarm, bring it back to a full boil before eating. Don't leave cooked food in the box overnight to eat later.

4. Staying warm

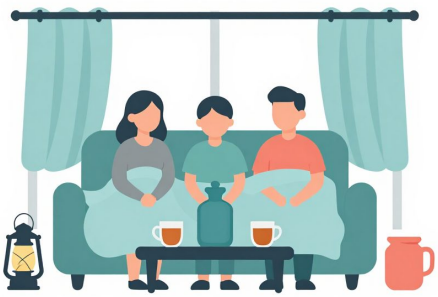
Without heating, a typical Irish house cools to about 10-12°C within a day or two in winter. That's chilly but manageable if you heat people rather than the whole house.



Figure 2. Layering: base, mid, outer, plus hat, socks and gloves. Trapped air does the work, so several loose layers beat one thick one.

Layer	What to wear
Base	Wool, merino or synthetic thermals. Avoid cotton next to the skin; it holds damp.
Mid	Fleece or a wool jumper. Two thin layers beat one thick.
Outer	A down or synthetic jacket indoors if needed; windproof and waterproof outside.
Ends	Hat, thick socks, slippers, fingerless gloves. Cold hands and feet make you miserable fastest.

One warm room

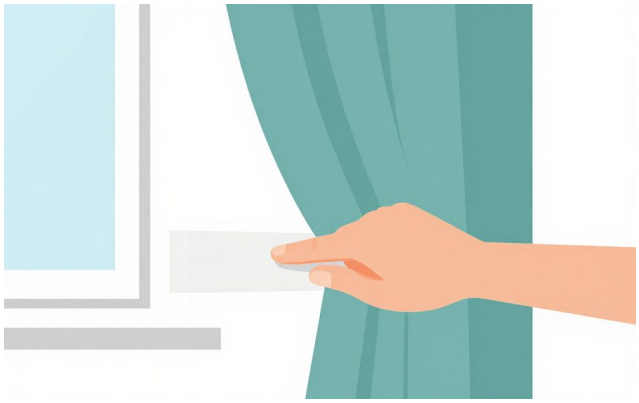


- Pick one room: the smallest, sunniest one with the fewest outside walls.
- Shut the doors to every other room and put draught snakes along the bottom.
- Open curtains in sunshine; close them, plus a blanket, as soon as the light goes.
- Rugs, blankets or even cardboard on bare floors.
- Everyone in together: each person gives off about as much heat as a 100 W bulb.
- Sleep there too if the rest of the house gets very cold.

Stopping draughts



Draught snake and heavy curtain at the door.



Foam strip and film kit on a leaky window.

Where	Quick fix	Cost
Bottom of doors	Draught snake (or a rolled towel); brush strip screwed to the door	€5-15
Door and window frames	Self-adhesive foam or rubber strip in the gap	€5-10 a roll
Single-glazed or leaky windows	Shrink-film secondary glazing kit (applied with a hairdryer), or bubble wrap pressed onto wet glass	€10-20
Letterbox and keyhole	Letterbox brush, keyhole cover	€5
Unused chimney	Chimney balloon or a removable board. **Remove before lighting a fire.**	€20-30
Floorboards and skirting	Flexible filler or a rug	€5

Keep air vents open

Don't block wall vents or window trickle vents in any room with a fire, stove, boiler or gas heater. They supply the air those appliances need to burn safely.

Portable gas heaters



A cabinet heater running on a butane or propane bottle can warm a living room for a day or so per bottle. Used carefully, it's a useful backup.

- Buy one with an oxygen depletion sensor (ODS) and tip-over cut-off.
- Keep a window open a little and a working CO alarm in the room.
- Never use one in a bedroom, bathroom, small room, caravan or tent, or while asleep.
- Keep it a metre from furniture and curtains. Change bottles outdoors.
- A wood-burning stove that's properly installed is safer for long outages.

Warmth tricks that work

Do	Why
Hot water bottle with hot (not boiling) water, in a cover	Boiling water perishes rubber and can scald. Replace bottles every couple of years.
Eat regularly and have hot drinks	Your body turns food into heat.
Move about every hour	Ten minutes of activity warms you through (Volume 13 has ideas).
Sleep in a hat, in a sleeping bag under the duvet	Several degrees warmer than a duvet alone.
Put a mat or blanket **under** you	You lose heat into a cold mattress or floor.
Foil (Mylar) blanket, as a last resort	Wrapped inside your clothes or bedding it holds body heat; on its own it's crinkly and gets damp. Blankets and sleeping bags are better.

Never use these to heat a room

Gas hobs or ovens, barbecues, patio heaters, camping stoves or generators. They give off carbon monoxide, a gas you can't see or smell (see Volume 2).

5. Light without power

LED headtorches and lanterns are the safest and brightest option (Volume 2). Candles and oil lamps are a backup. Lit flames are the most common cause of house fires during power cuts, so use them carefully.



A cooking-oil lamp in a jar.



Tin candles with home-made wicks.

Light	How to make it	Notes
Cooking-oil lamp	Bend a paperclip or florist's wire into a stand that holds a cotton wick (a strip of old T-shirt or a shoelace) upright. Put it in a jam jar with 2-3 cm of olive or vegetable oil; the wick should stick up about 5 mm above the oil. Let the wick soak, then light it.	Olive oil is hard to ignite if spilled, which makes it a safer choice. About an hour per tablespoon.
Tuna-tin lamp	A tin of tuna in oil: push a hole in the lid, feed in a twist of paper or cotton, let it soak for a minute, light.	Burns 1-2 hours. Eat the tuna afterwards.
Fat or wax candle	Melt lard, dripping or leftover candle wax in a pan of hot water (never over a direct flame). Pour into a tin with a cotton wick held upright by a clothes peg or pencil across the top.	Lard candles are smoky and smell of cooking; wax is cleaner.
Crayon candle	Stand a wax crayon upright in a dish and light the tip of the paper label.	Lasts about 30 minutes. Fun in an emergency, not a long-term light.

Flame safety

- Always stand flames on a plate or tray, on a stable surface, away from curtains, books and anything that can catch.
- Never leave one burning in an empty room or while sleeping.
- Keep them out of reach of children and pets.
- Have a working smoke alarm on every floor (Volume 8).

6. Hypothermia

Hypothermia means the body's core has cooled below 35°C. It can creep up slowly indoors in a cold house, especially for older people, babies, and anyone who is unwell or has been drinking.

EARLY	Shivering, cold pale skin, tiredness, clumsy hands, slow speech. Get them warm and dry now.
SERIOUS	Shivering stops, confusion, very drowsy, slow breathing, hard to wake. Call 112.
BABIES	May look well but feel cold, are limp, very quiet and won't feed. Call 112.

Figure 3. Signs to look for.

1. Move them somewhere warmer and out of the wind. Call 112 if you see the serious signs.
2. Swap wet clothes for dry ones.
3. Wrap them in blankets or a sleeping bag, including the head (not the face).
4. Warm the middle of the body first: chest, neck, armpits, groin. Wrapped warm bottles or your own body heat work well.
5. If they're alert and can swallow, give warm sweet drinks and food. No alcohol.
6. Be gentle. Don't rub limbs, use a hot bath or put heat directly on the skin.
7. Stay with them and keep checking on them.

Check on people

During any cold-weather outage, look in on older neighbours and anyone living alone at least once a day. A warm drink, a spare blanket or a lift to somewhere with heat makes a real difference.

Emergency numbers & the series

Service	Number	Use it for
Emergency services	**112 or 999**	Ambulance, Garda, fire, coast guard. Works from any phone, any network.
ESB Networks	1800 372 999	Power cuts, fallen or damaged lines (24/7)
Gas Networks Ireland	1800 20 50 50	Smell of gas (24/7). Call from outside the house.
Uisce Éireann (Irish Water)	1800 278 278	Water outages, burst mains, boil-water notices
HSELive	1800 700 700	Health service information
Public Poisons Line	01 809 2166	Advice if someone has swallowed or touched something harmful (8am-10pm daily)
Samaritans	116 123	Anyone struggling to cope (24/7)
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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 5

First Aid

Step-by-step emergency care

What to look for, and what to do, step by step
CPR, the recovery position, choking, bleeding, burns
A pharmacy first-aid kit for about €30



THE SERIES

0 Start Here	**1** Just Add Water	**2** Power Cuts & Storms	**3** Water & Sanitation	**4** Cooking & Warmth	**5** First Aid	**6** Symptoms & Home Care	**7** Home Systems & Repairs
8 Fire Safety & Security	**9** Communications	**10** Grab Bags & Kits	**11** Pantry & Stockpile	**12** Outdoor Skills	**13** Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	**14** Offline Knowledge &	**15** Other Emergencies

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How to use this book

This is a reminder of what you'd learn on a first-aid course, not a replacement for one. A half-day course (Red Cross, Order of Malta, St John Ambulance, or a local Community First Responder group) is the single best thing you can do. In any emergency, call **112 or 999** early: the call-taker will talk you through each step, including CPR.

1. The first minute

When someone has collapsed or is badly hurt, work through these steps in order. They keep you calm and make sure nothing important is missed.

D	R	S	A	B	C	D
Danger	**Response**	**Shout**	**Airway**	**Breathing**	**CPR**	**Defib**
Make sure it's safe for you to help. Don't rush in.	Speak loudly and tap their shoulders: "Can you hear me?"	Get someone to call 112 or 999 and fetch the nearest defibrillator (AED).	Gently tilt the head back and lift the chin.	Look, listen and feel for up to 10 seconds.	No normal breathing? Start chest compressions.	Switch the AED on. It talks you through every step.

Figure 1. DRSABCD: the first-minute checklist.

2. Signs to look for

These are the signs that tell you which page to turn to. You don't need to work out what's wrong; just match what you see.

What you notice	What it means for you	Go to
Doesn't respond to your voice or a tap, **and** isn't breathing, or only gives occasional gasps	They need CPR now. Gasps are a reflex, not normal breathing.	Section 3
Doesn't respond, but **is breathing normally**	Keep the airway open while you wait for help.	Section 4
Clutching throat, can't speak or cough, may turn blue around the lips	Something is blocking the airway.	Section 5
Blood flowing or spurting fast from a wound	Press on it straight away.	Section 6
Pale, cold, clammy skin, fast breathing, confused	Their circulation needs support.	Section 6
Burn or scald	Cool it with running water for 20 minutes.	Section 7
Face drooping, arm weak, speech slurred	Possible stroke: call 112.	Section 8
Chest pain or pressure spreading to arm, jaw or back	Possible heart attack: call 112.	Section 8
Swelling of lips or tongue, wheeze, after a food, sting or medicine	Possible severe allergy: use their auto-injector, call 112.	Section 8

3. CPR for adults

Start CPR when someone **doesn't respond and isn't breathing normally**. Starting quickly gives the best possible chance, and you can't make things worse by trying. The call-taker will count with you.



1. Call 112 or 999 and put the phone on speaker. Ask someone to bring an AED.
2. Kneel beside them on the floor. Place the heel of one hand in the centre of the chest, the other hand on top, fingers linked.
3. Keep your arms straight with your shoulders over your hands.
4. Press down firmly, 5-6 cm, then let the chest come fully back up.
5. Go at 100-120 a minute: the beat of 'Staying Alive'.
6. If you've been trained and are willing, give 2 rescue breaths after every 30 compressions. If not, keep doing compressions only. Both help.
7. Keep going until the AED is ready, help takes over, or they start breathing normally.



Using a defibrillator (AED)

AEDs are designed for anyone to use. Open the lid or press the green button and it gives clear spoken instructions.

- Stick the pads on bare skin exactly where the pictures show.
- Make sure nobody is touching the person when it says 'analysing' or 'shock'.
- Restart compressions as soon as it tells you to.
- Find your nearest AEDs now: pharmacies, GAA clubs, churches and shops often have one.

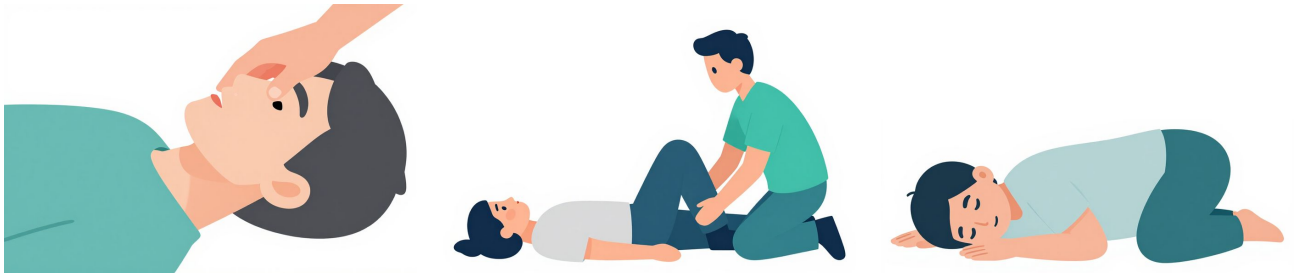
Children and babies

	Child (1 year to puberty)	Baby (under 1 year)
Begin with	5 rescue breaths, then 30 compressions	5 rescue breaths (your mouth over the baby's mouth and nose)
Hands	One hand (or two), centre of chest	Both thumbs on the centre of the chest, hands around the chest
Depth	About one-third of the chest	About one-third of the chest
Rate	100-120 a minute, 30 to 2 (15 to 2 if trained in child CPR)	100-120 a minute, 30 to 2 (15 to 2 if trained)
AED	Child pads or setting if there is one; adult pads otherwise	Yes: child pads or setting if there is one, one pad on the front, one on the back

If you are on your own with a child, call on speaker and start straight away. With no phone, give one minute of CPR before going for help.

4. The recovery position

For someone who **doesn't respond but is breathing normally**. Lying on their side keeps the airway clear and lets fluid drain from the mouth.



Open the airway: one hand on the forehead, two fingers lifting the chin.

Kneel beside them. Bring the far arm across, bend the far knee, and roll them towards you.

On their side: top knee bent to stop them rolling, head tilted back, hand under cheek.

Figure 2. From back to side.

1. Kneel beside them. Take off glasses and remove bulky items from pockets.
2. Place the arm nearest you out at a right angle, elbow bent, palm facing up.
3. Bring the far arm across their chest and hold the back of that hand against their cheek.
4. With your other hand, pull up the far knee so the foot is flat on the floor.
5. Keeping their hand pressed to their cheek, pull on the knee to roll them towards you onto their side.
6. Bend the top leg so hip and knee are at right angles. Tilt the head back slightly to keep the airway open.
7. Stay with them and keep checking their breathing until help arrives. If it stops being normal, roll them onto their back and start CPR.

> **If you think they've hurt their neck or back**
> Only move them if you need to, for example to keep the airway clear or if they're in danger. Support the head in line with the body as you roll them.

5. Choking

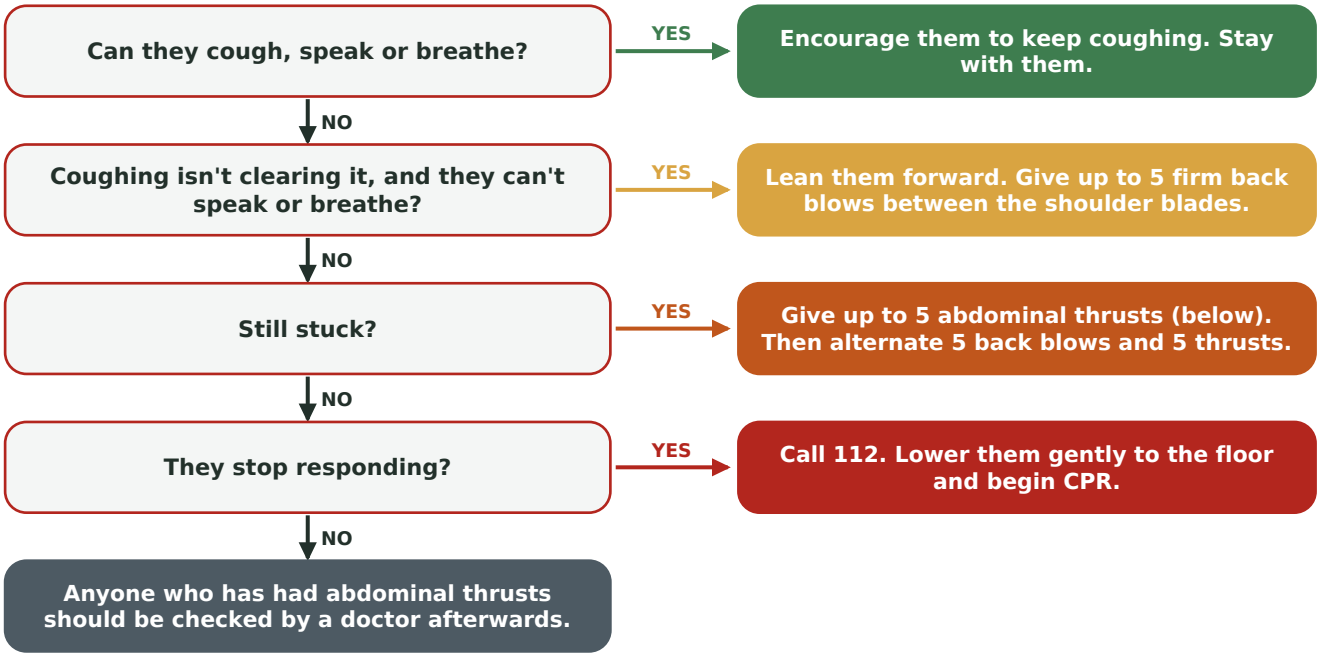
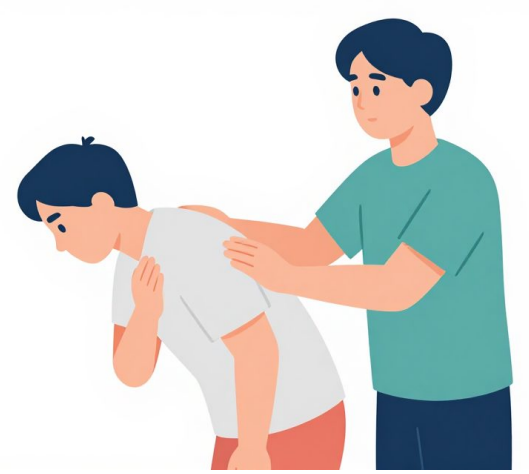


Figure 3. Choking in adults and children over 1 year.



Back blows: lean them well forward, heel of hand between the shoulder blades.



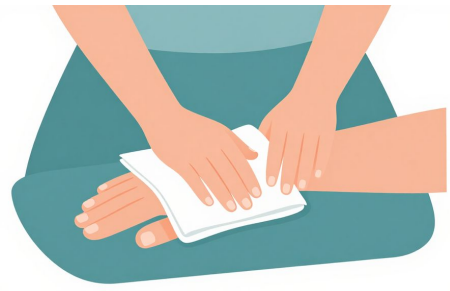
Abdominal thrusts: stand behind, fist just above the belly button, pull sharply in and up.



Babies under 1 year

1. Lay the baby face down along your forearm, head lower than the body, supporting the jaw.
2. Give up to 5 back blows with the heel of your hand.
3. Turn them face up and give up to 5 chest thrusts: hands around the chest, both thumbs on the centre of the chest, pressing sharply.
4. Never use abdominal thrusts on a baby. Keep repeating, and call 112 if it doesn't clear.
5. If they stop responding, call 112 and begin baby CPR.

6. Bleeding and shock



Heavy bleeding

1. Call 112. Put on gloves if you have them.
2. Press firmly on the wound with a pad or clean cloth. Use both hands and lean your weight in.
3. For a deep wound, pack gauze or cloth into it and keep pressing.
4. Don't lift the pad to look. If blood soaks through, add more on top.
5. Bandage firmly over the pad. Keep them lying down and warm.

Making a field dressing

A trauma (Israeli-type) bandage combines the pad and the bandage. If you don't have one, improvise: a folded clean tea towel or sanitary pad as the pad, held with a crepe bandage, a strip of sheet or cling film wrapped firmly round. It should be tight enough to keep pressure on, not so tight that fingers or toes beyond it go blue or numb.



Tourniquets

Only for very heavy bleeding from an arm or leg that firm pressure isn't controlling.

- Place it 5-7 cm above the wound, never over a joint.
- Twist the windlass until the bleeding stops. It is usually uncomfortable; that's expected.
- Lock the windlass and note the time on the strap.
- Leave it on. Paramedics or the hospital will take it off.
- Buy a genuine CAT or SOF-T tourniquet; cheap copies can snap.



Shock

After blood loss, burns or a severe allergic reaction, the body may not get enough circulation. Look for pale, cold, clammy skin; fast, shallow breathing; a fast, weak pulse; thirst; confusion or sleepiness.

- Call 112 and deal with the cause (e.g. press on the bleeding).
- Lie them down and raise their legs if that doesn't hurt them.
- Keep them warm with coats or a blanket. Loosen tight clothing.
- Nothing to eat or drink. Talk to them calmly and keep checking their breathing.

7. Burns and scalds



1. **Cool** under cool running water for 20 minutes, starting as soon as possible. It still helps up to 3 hours later.
2. **Remove** rings, watches and clothing near the burn, unless stuck to the skin.
3. **Cover** loosely with cling film laid on (not wrapped), or a clean plastic bag over a hand.
4. **Keep warm**: cool the burn, not the person. Watch small children for shivering.
5. **Avoid** ice, butter, toothpaste, creams and fluffy dressings. Don't burst blisters.

Get medical help for

Burns bigger than the person's palm, deep or white/charred burns, burns to the face, hands, feet, groin or joints, chemical and electrical burns, and any burn on a baby, young child or older person.

8. Medical emergencies

Stroke: think FAST

F — FACE
Has one side of the face drooped? Can they smile evenly?

A — ARMS
Can they lift both arms and keep them up?

S — SPEECH
Is their speech slurred or muddled?

T — TIME
Call 112 straight away. Note the time it started.

Heart attack

Look for chest pain, pressure or tightness, often spreading to the arm, jaw, neck or back, with breathlessness, sweating or feeling sick. Women, older people and people with diabetes sometimes have milder or unusual symptoms such as tiredness or indigestion-like pain.

- Call 112 straight away. An ambulance is safer than driving them in.
- Help them sit comfortably, often half-sitting with knees bent.
- If they aren't allergic to it, give one 300 mg aspirin to chew slowly and swallow.
- If they stop responding and aren't breathing normally, begin CPR and get an AED.

Seizures

DO

- Note the time it starts
- Move hard or sharp objects away
- Cushion their head
- When it stops, use the recovery position
- Stay until they're fully alert

DON'T

- Hold them down
- Put anything in their mouth
- Give food or drink until fully alert
- Leave them alone

Call 112 if it lasts more than 5 minutes, it's their first seizure, they're injured, another one follows, or they don't come round.

Severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis)

Signs: swelling of the lips, tongue or throat; wheeze or difficulty breathing; a hoarse voice; feeling faint; often within minutes of a food, sting or medicine.

1. Use their adrenaline auto-injector (EpiPen, Jext, Anapen) into the outer thigh, through clothing if needed. Hold it in place for the time shown on the device.
2. Call 112 and say 'anaphylaxis'.
3. Lie them down with legs raised. If breathing is hard, let them sit up. Don't let them stand or walk.
4. If they're no better or getting worse after 5 minutes, use a second auto-injector in the other thigh.
5. If they stop responding and aren't breathing normally, begin CPR.

9. Everyday injuries



Nosebleed

Sit down and lean **forward** (not back). Pinch the soft part of the nose firmly for 10-15 minutes and breathe through the mouth. Get help if it lasts over 15 minutes, is heavy, follows a head injury, or the person takes blood thinners.

Injury	What to do	Get help if
Head bump	Rest, cold pack wrapped in a cloth, an adult nearby for 24 hours.	112: knocked out, repeated vomiting, drowsy, confused, a fit, clear fluid from nose or ears, headache getting worse
Sprain	Rest, cold pack 15-20 min every 2-3 hours, support bandage, raise the limb.	Can't bear weight, looks misshapen, numb, or no better after a few days
Broken bone	Support it as you found it. Pad around it; a rolled towel or magazine makes a splint.	Always. 112 if the bone is through the skin, or for hip, thigh, neck or back
Something in the eye	Chemical: rinse with clean water for 15+ minutes. Object stuck in: don't remove it, cover both eyes.	Any chemical, embedded object, or change in vision
Swallowed something harmful	Don't make them sick. Keep the packet. Call the Poisons Line 01 809 2166 (8am-10pm daily).	112 if drowsy, fitting, struggling to breathe, or not responding
Cuts and grazes	Rinse under running water, pat dry, cover with a clean dressing.	Gaping, deep, dirty, a bite, or spreading redness, heat, pus or fever

10. A pharmacy first-aid kit for about €30

Pre-made kits are often padded with tiny plasters. You'll get a better kit by buying these at a pharmacy or supermarket. Keep one in the house, a smaller one in the car and grab bags, and check dates every six months.



Item	Roughly	Why
Disposable nitrile gloves (10 pairs)	€3	Protects you and the wound
Sterile dressings, medium and large (4)	€5	The pad for any bleeding wound
Crepe bandages 7.5 cm (2) + triangular bandage	€5	Hold dressings, support sprains, make a sling
Fabric plasters, assorted + blister plasters	€4	Everyday cuts
Medical tape + safety pins	€2	Securing dressings
Saline pods (10)	€4	Rinsing eyes and wounds when water is doubtful
Antiseptic cream (e.g. Savlon, Germolene)	€4	Minor cuts and grazes
Tweezers, small scissors, tick remover	€3	Splinters, ticks, cutting tape
Foil blanket (2)	€2	Warmth for shock
Cling film (from the kitchen)	-	Covering burns

Worth adding as budget allows

- A trauma bandage (Israeli-type) and a genuine CAT tourniquet.
- A digital thermometer and a CPR face shield.
- Paracetamol and ibuprofen (see Volume 6), antihistamine tablets, oral rehydration sachets.
- Water purification tablets: chlorine-based (e.g. Aquatabs, Katadyn Micropur Forte) are preferred over iodine, which isn't suited to regular use, pregnancy or thyroid conditions.

Antibiotic creams (e.g. fusidic acid) are prescription-only in Ireland. For wounds that look infected, see a pharmacist or GP.

Sterilising tweezers and instruments

Boil metal instruments for 10 minutes in a covered pot, or run them through a pressure cooker cycle (about 15 minutes at pressure). Let them cool in the closed pot and use them straight away. This cleans tools; it doesn't make a pressure cooker suitable for canning low-acid foods (see Volume 11).

Emergency numbers & the series

Service	Number	Use it for
Emergency services	**112 or 999**	Ambulance, Garda, fire, coast guard. Works from any phone, any network.
ESB Networks	1800 372 999	Power cuts, fallen or damaged lines (24/7)
Gas Networks Ireland	1800 20 50 50	Smell of gas (24/7). Call from outside the house.
Uisce Éireann (Irish Water)	1800 278 278	Water outages, burst mains, boil-water notices
HSELive	1800 700 700	Health service information
Public Poisons Line	01 809 2166	Advice if someone has swallowed or touched something harmful (8am-10pm daily)
Samaritans	116 123	Anyone struggling to cope (24/7)
Text About It	Text HELLO to 50808	Free text support (24/7)
Childline	1800 66 66 66	Children and young people up to 18 (24/7)
Your county council		Roads, flooding, local emergency centres
Met Éireann	met.ie / Met Éireann app	Weather warnings

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The Ready At Home series

Vol	Title	What it covers
0	Start Here	Household plan & emergency numbers
1	Just Add Water	Home-dehydrated emergency meals
2	Power Cuts & Storms	Getting through long outages
3	Water & Sanitation	Storing, treating, toilets
4	Cooking & Warmth	Without mains power
5	**First Aid**	Step-by-step emergency care
6	Symptoms & Home Care	Red flags, minor illness, medicines
7	Home Systems & Repairs	Shut-offs, leaks, storm damage, floods
8	Fire Safety & Security	Alarms, escape plans, extinguishers
9	Communications	Family plan, radios, signals
10	Grab Bags & Kits	72-hour, car, child & pet kits
11	Pantry & Stockpile	A 30-day food store you rotate
12	Outdoor Skills	Fire, shelter, knots, navigation
13	Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	Keeping people okay
14	Offline Knowledge & Media	Libraries, maps & media without internet
15	Other Emergencies	Radiation, chemicals, heat, illness, cut off

This series gives general preparedness guidance. It is not a substitute for professional medical, electrical, gas or structural advice, or for a certified first-aid course. In an emergency, call 112 or 999 and follow the call-taker's instructions.

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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 6

Symptoms & Home Care

Red flags, minor illness, medicines

Red flags: when to call 112 straight away
A-Z of common problems you can care for at home
Medicine cabinet, rehydration drink, fever guide



THE SERIES

0 Start Here
1 Just Add Water
2 Power Cuts & Storms
3 Water & Sanitation
4 Cooking & Warmth
5 First Aid
6 Symptoms & Home Care
7 Home Systems & Repairs
8 Fire Safety & Security
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14 Offline Knowledge &
15 Other Emergencies

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How to use this handbook

Start with the **red flags**. If any apply, call 112 or 999 now. Otherwise, use the A-Z to care for minor problems at home and see when to get help. This is general information, not a diagnosis. If you're worried, trust your instinct and ask for help. Always read medicine labels and ask a pharmacist about doses for children.

1. Which level of help?

CALL 112 / 999	Urgent: the red-flag signs on the next page. Don't wait, don't drive yourself.
SEE A DOCTOR TODAY	Your GP, out-of-hours GP service, or an injury unit. Problems that are getting worse, very painful, or in babies, the elderly and people with long-term illness.
ASK A PHARMACIST	Minor illness, medicine questions, the right dose for a child. Free, no appointment.
CARE AT HOME	Most colds, tummy bugs, minor cuts and sprains. Use the A-Z, and move up a level if things get worse.

Figure 1. Matching the problem to the right help.

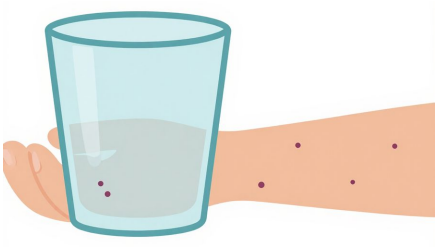
2. Red flags: call 112 or 999

Area	Call 112 / 999 if you notice...
Breathing	Struggling to breathe, can't finish a sentence, blue or grey lips, choking
Chest	Chest pain or pressure, especially spreading to arm, jaw, neck or back, or with sweating
Stroke	Face drooping, arm weakness, slurred speech (FAST, Vol 5), sudden confusion or loss of vision
Consciousness	Unresponsive, very hard to wake, fitting, sudden confusion
Bleeding	Bleeding that won't stop with firm pressure; vomiting or coughing blood
Sepsis	Infection plus any of: slurred speech or confusion; extreme shivering or muscle pain; no urine all day; severe breathlessness; says they feel extremely unwell, worse than ever before; mottled or discoloured skin
Meningitis	Fever with stiff neck, dislike of bright lights, severe headache, drowsiness, or a rash that doesn't fade under a glass
Allergy	Swelling of lips, tongue or throat, wheeze, collapse after a trigger
Injury	Serious head injury, suspected broken hip/thigh/neck/back, large or deep burns
Mental health	Someone at immediate risk of harming themselves or others

Extra red flags in babies and children

☐ Baby under 3 months with a temperature of 38°C or higher	☐ Floppy, unresponsive or very hard to wake
☐ Weak, high-pitched or continuous cry	☐ Ribs pulling in, grunting, or very fast breathing
☐ Not feeding, or far fewer wet nappies	☐ A rash that doesn't fade under a glass
☐ Pale, blotchy, blue or grey skin	☐ Fit (seizure) for the first time
☐ Bulging soft spot on a baby's head	☐ Green vomit, or vomiting with severe tummy pain

The glass test



1. Press the side of a clear drinking glass firmly against the spots or rash.
2. Look through the glass. Most rashes fade or turn pale under the pressure.
3. If the spots **stay visible** through the glass, call 112 or go to the emergency department straight away. It can be a sign of meningitis or sepsis, which need urgent treatment.
4. On darker skin, check paler areas: palms, soles, inside the eyelids and the roof of the mouth.

Someone who seems very unwell needs help even if there's no rash, or the rash fades. Trust your instinct.

3. A-Z of common problems

Problem	Care at home	See GP / pharmacist if...	Call 112 if...
Allergic reaction (mild)	Antihistamine by the label. Avoid the trigger. Cool compress for itchy skin.	Rash spreading, or keeps coming back	Swelling of lips/tongue/throat, wheeze, collapse (Vol 5)
Back pain	Keep moving gently. Heat pack. Paracetamol/ibuprofen by the label.	No better after 2 weeks, or pain down a leg	Numb groin/bottom, can't control bladder or bowel, after a fall with weakness
Bites & stings	Remove sting by scraping sideways. Wash, cold pack, antihistamine.	Spreading redness or hot swelling after 2 days; any animal or human bite that broke the skin	Signs of anaphylaxis
Blisters	Leave intact. Cover with a blister plaster.	Signs of infection	-
Burns (minor)	Cool under running water 20 min, then cover loosely (Vol 5).	Bigger than a €2 coin, or on face/hands/feet/groin: go to ED	Large, deep, electrical or chemical burns
Cold	Rest, fluids, honey and lemon (not for under 1s), paracetamol by the label.	Over 3 weeks, or earache/sinus pain getting worse	Struggling to breathe
Constipation	More water, fibre (fruit, veg, oats, prunes), move about.	Over a week, severe pain, or blood in stools	Severe tummy pain with vomiting and no wind passed
Cough	Fluids, honey (over 1s), steam, rest.	Over 3 weeks, coughing blood, or weight loss	Struggling to breathe, blue lips, chest pain
Cuts & grazes	Rinse under running water, pat dry, clean dressing.	Gaping, dirty, or infected	Bleeding you can't stop with pressure (Vol 5)
Dehydration	Sip water or rehydration drink (opposite).	Not passing urine for 8+ hours	Very drowsy, confused, sunken eyes, no urine for 12+ hours, or a floppy baby
Diarrhoea & vomiting	Small frequent sips; rehydration drink; eat plain food when ready. Wash hands, bleach toilet.	Over 2 days (adults) or 1 day (children); blood in stools	Signs of severe dehydration, vomiting blood or green fluid
Earache	Paracetamol/ibuprofen by the label, warm cloth. Usually settles in 3 days.	Over 3 days, fluid from the ear, swelling behind ear	-
Eye: red / gritty	Wash with cooled boiled water; don't rub. No contact lenses.	Painful, light-sensitive, or vision changes	Chemical in eye or sudden loss of vision
Fever	See the fever guide opposite.	Over 3 days, or a baby (see chart)	Fever with red-flag signs
Food poisoning	As diarrhoea & vomiting.	Over 2-3 days	Severe dehydration, blood, high fever
Hay fever	Antihistamine, close windows, shower after being outside.	Wheezing	-
Headache	Water, rest, paracetamol/ibuprofen by the label.	Frequent, or with vision changes	Sudden 'worst ever' headache, with stiff neck, rash, confusion, or after a head injury
Heartburn	Smaller meals, avoid late eating, antacid by the label.	Weekly or more, trouble swallowing	Chest pain spreading to arm/jaw (treat as heart attack)
Insomnia / stress	Routine, daylight, less caffeine; slow breathing (Vol 13).	Lasting weeks or affecting daily life	Thoughts of suicide: 112, or Samaritans 116 123
Nosebleed	Lean forward, pinch soft part 10-15 min (Vol 5).	Frequent. Go to ED if over 15 min, heavy, or after a head injury	Heavy, with fainting or trouble breathing

Problem	Care at home	See GP / pharmacist if...	Call 112 if...
Rash	Note when it started; cool, loose clothing.	Spreading, blistering, with fever	Doesn't fade when a glass is pressed on it (possible meningitis/sepsis)
Sore throat	Fluids, gargle warm salt water (adults), paracetamol/ibuprofen by the label.	Over a week, white patches with fever	Drooling, can't swallow saliva, struggling to breathe
Splinter	Clean tweezers, pull out at the same angle it went in, wash.	Deep, or signs of infection	-
Sprain	Rest, ice wrapped 15-20 min, support, raise (Vol 5).	Can't bear weight after a day	Deformed limb
Sunburn	Cool shower, after-sun or aloe, fluids, stay out of the sun.	Blistering over a large area	Confused, fainting (heatstroke)
Tick bite	Remove with fine tweezers or a tick remover close to the skin, pull straight up. Wash.	A spreading red 'bullseye' rash or flu-like illness within weeks (possible Lyme disease)	-
Toothache	Paracetamol/ibuprofen by the label, cold pack, avoid very hot/cold food.	See a dentist	Swelling of face/neck with fever or trouble swallowing
Urinary symptoms	Drink plenty of water.	Burning or frequent passing of urine: pharmacist (women 16-64) or GP	With high fever, back pain, shivering or confusion

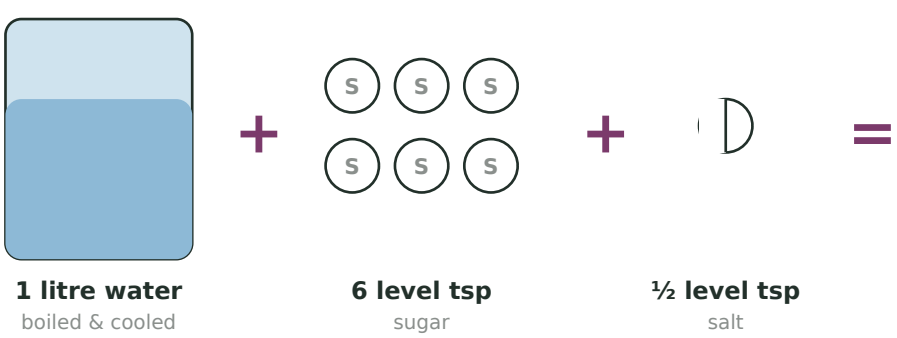
4. Fever & dehydration

Normal	About 36-37.4°C. A little higher in the evening or after exercise.
Fever	38°C or above. Usually a sign of infection. Rest, fluids, light clothing. Paracetamol or ibuprofen for comfort, by the label.
Urgent	Any baby under 3 months with 38°C or higher: contact a doctor now. Babies 3-6 months with 39°C or higher: see a GP the same day. Anyone with fever plus a red-flag sign (Section 2): 112.
Too cold	Below 35°C is hypothermia (Vol 4).

Figure 2. Fever guide. Measure under the arm or in the ear with a digital thermometer.

- Treat the child, not the number: a child who is playing and drinking is usually okay.
- Dress in light clothes; don't wrap up or sponge with cold water.
- Offer plenty of fluids. Paracetamol or ibuprofen can be given for distress, by the label, based on age and weight. Don't give both at once unless a doctor or pharmacist says so.
- Never give aspirin to anyone under 16.

Homemade rehydration drink



1 litre water
boiled & cooled

6 level tsp
sugar

½ level tsp
salt

Stir until dissolved. Sip little and often: a mouthful every 1-2 minutes if vomiting. Make fresh daily. Too much salt is dangerous, so measure carefully. Shop-bought sachets (e.g. Dioralyte) are better if you have them.

Figure 3. World Health Organization home recipe for rehydration.

5. Simple home remedies

For everyday aches, colds and stress, these simple measures genuinely help and cost very little. They work alongside medicines, not instead of getting help when you need it.



For	Try	Notes
Cough	A teaspoon of honey in warm water with lemon	Not for babies under 1 year (risk of botulism)
Sore throat	Gargle with warm salt water (half a teaspoon of salt in a glass); warm drinks, ice lollies for children	See a GP if it lasts over a week or swallowing is very hard
Blocked nose	Saline nose spray or drops; raise the head of the bed; steam from a hot shower	Avoid bowls of boiling water with children: scalds are common
Feeling sick	Small sips often; ginger biscuits or ginger tea; fresh air	Watch for dehydration (Section 4)
Indigestion, wind	Peppermint tea; smaller meals; don't lie down straight after eating	
Constipation	More water, fruit, prunes, oats; a daily walk	
Itchy skin, bites	Cool compress; a lukewarm bath with a cup of porridge oats in a sock	
Aches, stiff muscles	Warm (not hot) water bottle or warm bath; gentle stretching (Volume 13)	Ice wrapped in a cloth for fresh sprains instead
Poor sleep, worry	Regular bedtime, daylight in the morning, less caffeine after midday, box breathing (Volume 13)	Talk to someone if it's weighing on you

6. Medicine cabinet

Keep enough for a two-week emergency. Store cool, dry, locked or out of reach of children, in original packaging. Always read the label. Ask your pharmacist what suits your family.

Item	Used for	Notes
Paracetamol (adult + children's liquid)	Pain, fever	Check other products don't also contain paracetamol
Ibuprofen (adult + children's liquid)	Pain, fever, inflammation	With food. Not for everyone (asthma, stomach, kidney problems): ask a pharmacist
Antihistamine tablets/liquid	Hay fever, itchy bites, mild allergy	Some cause drowsiness
Oral rehydration sachets	Diarrhoea and vomiting	Better than homemade
Antacid	Heartburn, indigestion	
Loperamide (adults)	Diarrhoea when you must travel	Not for children, or if there's blood or fever
Antiseptic cream / wipes	Cleaning minor wounds	
Hydrocortisone 1% cream	Insect bites, mild skin irritation	Ask a pharmacist; not for the face
After-sun / aloe vera	Sunburn, minor burns after cooling	
Your prescription medicines	Long-term conditions	See below
Inhalers, EpiPens, insulin etc.	As prescribed	Note expiry dates and storage needs (insulin needs cool)

Prescription medicines: plan ahead, don't stretch them

- Ask your GP and pharmacist about keeping a small buffer (often a couple of weeks) and ordering repeats early before winter or a trip.
- Don't cut doses or skip tablets to make a supply last longer. That can make a condition flare up and is riskier than running short.
- If you're running low in an emergency, contact any pharmacy: pharmacists in Ireland can give up to 5 days' emergency supply of most medicines you've been prescribed before.
- Keep a written list of everyone's medicines, doses and allergies in the grab bag (Volume 10).

Medicine log

Name	Medicine	Dose & time	Spare until	Notes

Old medicines

Don't throw medicines in the bin or flush them. Return out-of-date medicines to your pharmacy for safe disposal.

Emergency numbers & the series

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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 7

Home Systems & Repairs

Shut-offs, leaks, storm damage, floods

Find and use your water, gas and electricity shut-offs
Burst and frozen pipes, storm damage, broken windows
Flooding: before, during and after



THE SERIES

0 Start Here	1 Just Add Water	2 Power Cuts & Storms	3 Water & Sanitation	4 Cooking & Warmth	5 First Aid	6 Symptoms & Home Care	7 Home Systems & Repairs
8 Fire Safety & Security	9 Communications	10 Grab Bags & Kits	11 Pantry & Stockpile	12 Outdoor Skills	13 Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	14 Offline Knowledge &	15 Other Emergencies

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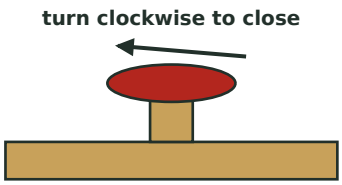
Emergency numbers & the series 7

The Ready At Home series 7

1. Know your house

In a burst pipe, gas leak or flood you have minutes. Find these now, label them with a tag, and fill in the map in Volume 0. Make sure every adult (and older children) knows where they are.

WATER STOPCOCK



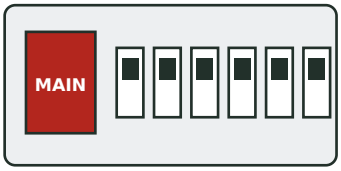
Usually under the kitchen sink. A second one is often outside at the boundary (a small cover in the footpath). If it's stiff, don't force it: try gently back and forth.

GAS METER VALVE



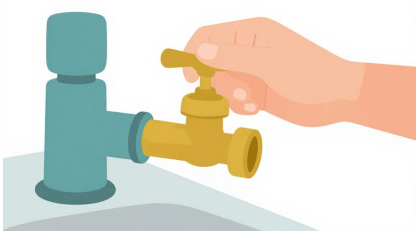
Handle in line with the pipe = ON. Turn it a quarter turn so it's across the pipe = OFF. Only turn back on if you can relight pilots safely; otherwise call a gas installer.

FUSE BOARD

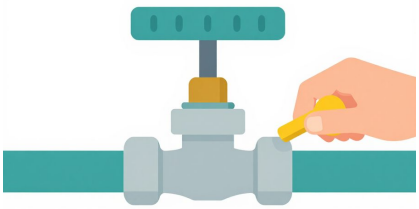


The main switch turns off everything. Trip switches (MCBs/RCDs) protect circuits. Dry hands, and stand on a dry floor. Never touch it if water is near the board.

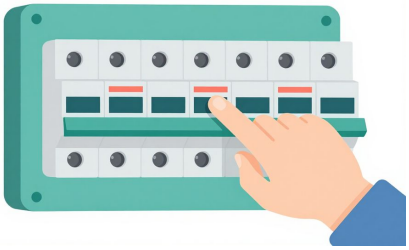
Figure 1. The three shut-offs every adult in the house should be able to use.



Water: turn the stopcock clockwise to close.



Gas: turn the lever a quarter turn so it's across the pipe.



Electricity: main switch down to OFF.

System	Where to look	Also know
Water	Under kitchen sink; where the pipe enters the house; outside boundary box	The attic tank's outlet valve; how to drain the system
Gas (mains)	Next to the meter (inside or in an outside box)	Gas Networks Ireland 1800 20 50 50
LPG / bottled gas	On top of the bottle or tank	Turn clockwise to close
Oil heating	Fire valve on the pipe from the tank	Check level before winter; theft risk
Electricity	Fuse board in hall, under stairs or utility room	ESB Networks 1800 372 999
Well pump	Pump house or under the house; pressure switch	Fuse/isolator for the pump
Septic tank	Garden	Don't overload it after a flood; get it checked

2. Leaks & burst pipes

1 Water off

Close the stopcock fully. If water's coming through a ceiling, also close the valve under the attic tank.

2 Electrics off

If water is near sockets, lights or the board, switch off at the main switch if it's dry to do so.

3 Drain down

Open all cold taps and flush toilets to empty the pipes. Turn off the boiler and immersion.

4 Contain it

Buckets, towels, move furniture. Pierce a bulging ceiling at the lowest point with a bucket under it.

5 Patch it

Pipe repair clamp or self-amalgamating tape over the split as a temporary fix.

6 Record & call

Photograph damage for the insurer. Call a plumber. Check the electrics are dry before use.

Figure 2. Burst pipe: first six steps.



A temporary pipe repair

1. Turn the water off and dry the pipe.
2. Wrap self-amalgamating tape tightly over the split, stretching it as you go, overlapping by half, 5 cm beyond each side.
3. Or fit a pipe repair clamp (15 mm or 22 mm, to match your pipe) centred on the split.
4. Turn the water back on slowly and check. Get a plumber to make a proper repair.

Preventing and thawing frozen pipes

DO

- Lag pipes in the attic, garage and outside walls
- Lag or cover outside taps
- Keep heating on low (about 12°C) if you're away in frost
- Open the attic hatch in a cold snap so some warmth gets up
- Thaw slowly with a hairdryer or hot-water towels, working from the tap end

DON'T

- Use a blowtorch or naked flame
- Leave a frozen pipe without turning off the water
- Pour boiling water on plastic pipes
- Ignore a tap with no flow in frost: it's often frozen

3. Storm damage

Problem	Temporary fix	Safety
Broken window	Tape cracked glass in an X. Board with plywood/OSB screwed into the frame, or heavy plastic sheeting and battens.	Thick gloves; sweep and vacuum glass; keep pets and children out
Slates or tiles off	Bucket any leaks inside. A tarp over the damaged area, weighted or battened.	Don't go on a roof in wind, rain or alone. Wait for a roofer if you're unsure
Fallen tree	Leave it if it's touching lines (ESB 1800 372 999). Small branches: clear by hand.	Chainsaws only with training and protective gear
Fence or shed down	Weigh down or tie loose panels so they can't blow about.	Wait until wind drops
Chimney damage	Don't light a fire until checked.	Keep clear of the area below
Water coming in	Find the source: roof, flashing, window, gutter. Clear blocked gutters when safe.	Turn off electrics in affected rooms



Boarding a broken window

1. Wear thick gloves and eye protection. Pick out loose glass from the frame, working from the top.
2. Cut plywood or OSB (12 mm or thicker) a little larger than the opening.
3. Screw it to the frame (not nails: screws come out without more damage) every 20-30 cm.
4. From inside, cover the gap with heavy plastic and tape to keep the draught out.

Tool and repair kit

☐ Adjustable spanner and pipe wrench	☐ Screwdrivers and a cordless drill + bits
☐ Pipe repair clamps (15 & 22 mm)	☐ Self-amalgamating tape
☐ Duct tape and gaffer tape	☐ Heavy tarp (4×6 m) and bungees
☐ Plywood/OSB sheets for windows	☐ Box of screws and nails
☐ Hammer, saw, utility knife	☐ Work gloves and safety glasses
☐ Buckets, mop, towels	☐ Stopcock key (for outside boundary box)
☐ Torch / headtorch	☐ Sandbags or flood sacks
☐ Wet & dry vacuum (if you have power)	☐ Contacts for plumber, electrician, roofer

4. Flooding

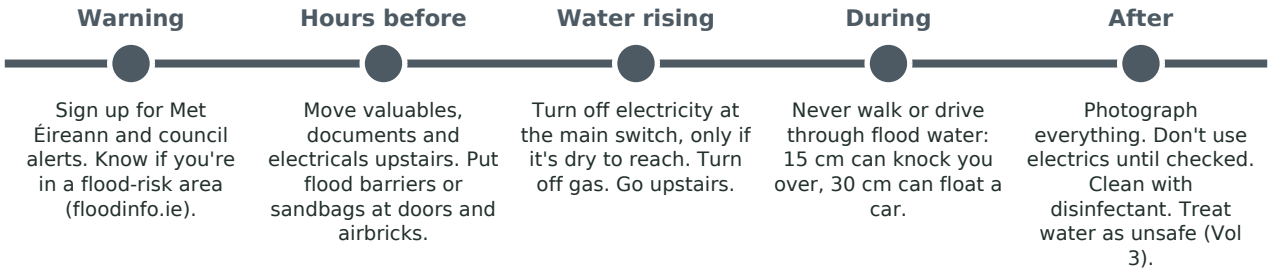
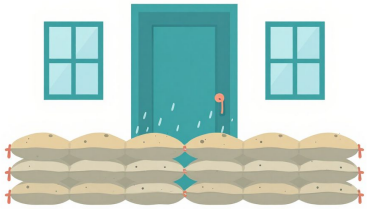


Figure 3. Flood timeline.



Keeping water out

- Sandbags (or self-inflating flood sacks, which store flat) across doorways, two layers, joints overlapping like bricks, with a plastic sheet behind them.
- Fit flood boards to doors and covers to airbricks if your house is at risk.
- Move valuables, documents and electricals upstairs early.
- Turn off electricity and gas before water reaches sockets or appliances.

Stay safe around flood water

- It can be contaminated with sewage, fuel and chemicals: wear gloves and boots, wash hands, cover cuts.
- Hidden hazards: open manholes, debris, live electrics.
- Don't let children play in it. Throw out food that's been touched by it, even sealed packets.

After a flood

1. Contact your insurer before throwing anything out. Photograph and list damaged items.
2. Have a registered electrician check the wiring before switching back on.
3. Get a gas installer to check boilers and appliances that were under water.
4. Pump out water gradually. Remove wet carpets, underlay and plasterboard.
5. Clean and disinfect all hard surfaces. Ventilate and use dehumidifiers to dry out (it can take weeks).
6. Watch for mould. Get help from your council's emergency line if you can't stay in the house.

5. Snow & ice

- Keep a bag of rock salt or grit and a snow shovel. Clear paths early, before snow is packed down.
- Don't use boiling water to clear steps: it refreezes as ice.
- Check gutters and roof valleys after heavy snow; large build-ups can damage gutters.
- Keep heating oil above a third in winter; deliveries may stop in bad weather.
- Stock up the pantry (Vol 11) when snow is forecast. Rural roads can be impassable for days.

Emergency numbers & the series

Service	Number	Use it for
Emergency services	**112 or 999**	Ambulance, Garda, fire, coast guard. Works from any phone, any network.
ESB Networks	1800 372 999	Power cuts, fallen or damaged lines (24/7)
Gas Networks Ireland	1800 20 50 50	Smell of gas (24/7). Call from outside the house.
Uisce Éireann (Irish Water)	1800 278 278	Water outages, burst mains, boil-water notices
HSELive	1800 700 700	Health service information
Public Poisons Line	01 809 2166	Advice if someone has swallowed or touched something harmful (8am-10pm daily)
Samaritans	116 123	Anyone struggling to cope (24/7)
Text About It	Text HELLO to 50808	Free text support (24/7)
Childline	1800 66 66 66	Children and young people up to 18 (24/7)
Your county council		Roads, flooding, local emergency centres
Met Éireann	met.ie / Met Éireann app	Weather warnings

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The Ready At Home series

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3	Water & Sanitation	Storing, treating, toilets
4	Cooking & Warmth	Without mains power
5	First Aid	Step-by-step emergency care
6	Symptoms & Home Care	Red flags, minor illness, medicines
7	**Home Systems & Repairs**	Shut-offs, leaks, storm damage, floods
8	Fire Safety & Security	Alarms, escape plans, extinguishers
9	Communications	Family plan, radios, signals
10	Grab Bags & Kits	72-hour, car, child & pet kits
11	Pantry & Stockpile	A 30-day food store you rotate
12	Outdoor Skills	Fire, shelter, knots, navigation
13	Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	Keeping people okay
14	Offline Knowledge & Media	Libraries, maps & media without internet
15	Other Emergencies	Radiation, chemicals, heat, illness, cut off

This series gives general preparedness guidance. It is not a substitute for professional medical, electrical, gas or structural advice, or for a certified first-aid course. In an emergency, call 112 or 999 and follow the call-taker's instructions.

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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 8

Fire Safety & Security

Alarms, escape plans, extinguishers

Smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms: where and how many
A family escape plan you've actually practised
Extinguishers, chip pan fires, batteries and home security



THE SERIES

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1. Alarms

House fires most often start at night while people are asleep, and smoke spreads much faster than flames. A working alarm wakes you early, which gives you time to get everyone out calmly.



- A smoke alarm on every floor, in the hall and landing, and in any room where someone sleeps with electrics on (TV, chargers).
- A heat alarm in the kitchen (smoke alarms there go off with toast).
- A carbon monoxide alarm in every room with a fuel-burning appliance and near bedrooms.
- Interlinked alarms (when one sounds, they all do) are best in two-storey houses.

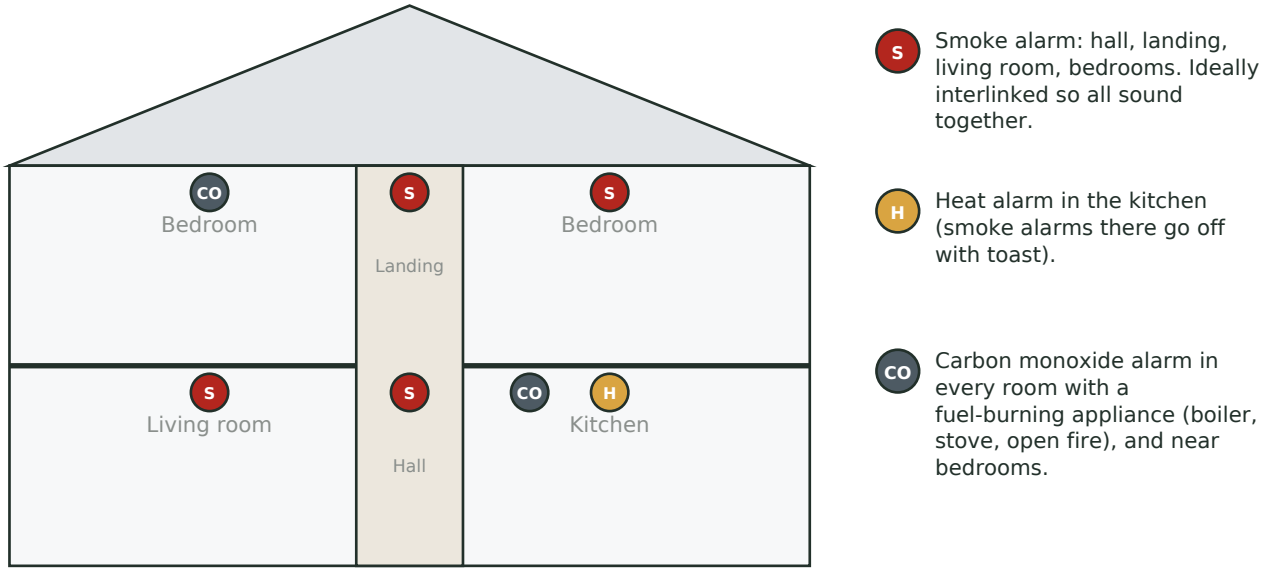
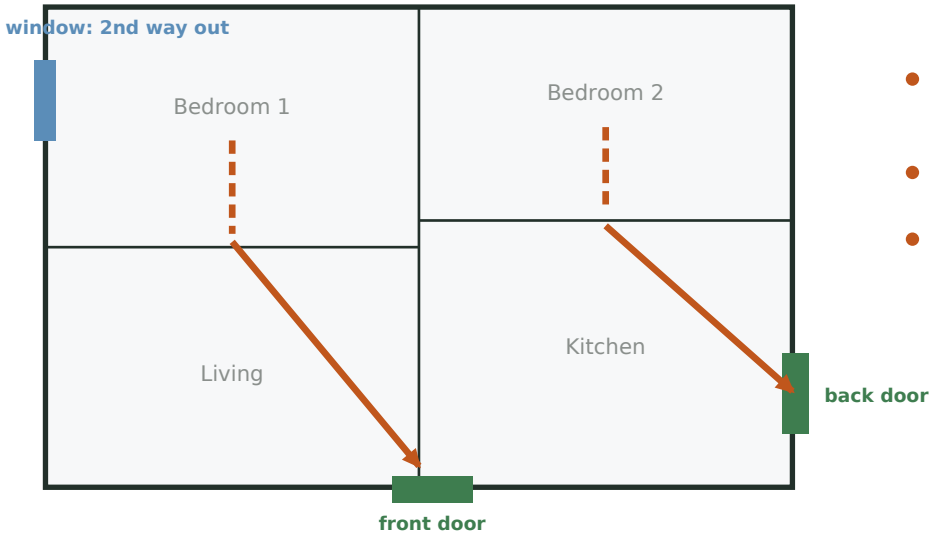


Figure 1. Where to fit alarms.

Job	How often
Press the test button on every alarm	Weekly or monthly
Vacuum dust out of alarm vents	Every 6 months
Replace 9 V batteries (if not sealed 10-year units)	Yearly
Replace the whole alarm	Every 10 years (date on the back); CO alarms per the label (often 7-10)

2. Escape plan



- Draw your own plan: two ways out of every room where possible.
- Keep keys for doors and window locks in the same place, near the door.
- Keep the escape route clear (no bikes or boxes in the hall).
- Practise twice a year, including at night with lights off.

Figure 2. Example escape plan. Draw your own on the grid at the end of this handbook.

1 Shout 'FIRE!'

Wake everyone. Don't stop to collect belongings or find the cause.

2 Feel the door

Back of the hand. If it's hot, don't open it: use your second way out.

3 Get low

Smoke rises. Crawl where the air is cleaner. Close doors behind you.

4 Get out, stay out

Go to the meeting point. Never go back in for anyone or anything.

5 Call 112

From outside. Tell them if anyone is still inside and where.

6 Trapped?

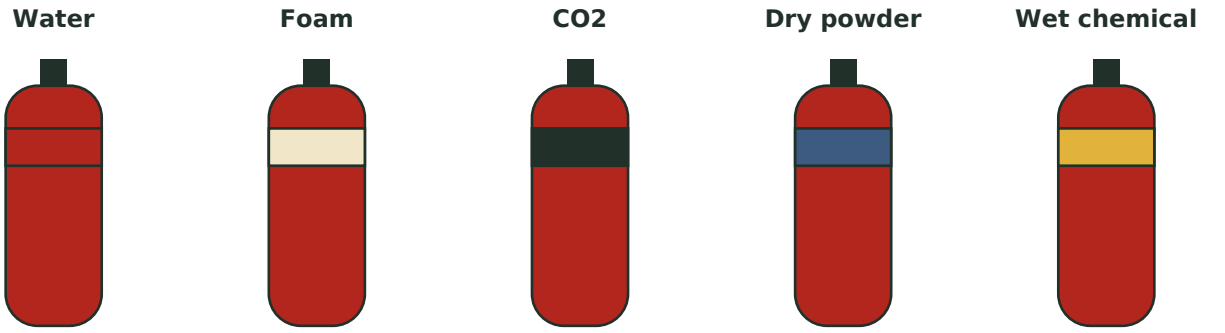
Close the door, put towels at the bottom, go to the window, call 112 and shout for help.

Figure 3. If the alarm goes off at night.

3. Fighting small fires

Only if it's safe

Only tackle a fire if it's small (smaller than a waste-paper bin), you've raised the alarm, your exit is behind you, and you have the right extinguisher. If in doubt, get out.



EU extinguishers are red with a coloured band showing the type.

Figure 4. Extinguisher types. Class A: wood, paper, fabric. B: flammable liquids. C: gases. F: cooking oil and fat.



Fire blanket: pull the tapes, hold it up to shield your hands, lay it over the pan.



Extinguisher: Pull, Aim at the base, Squeeze, Sweep.

For most homes

- A **fire blanket** in the kitchen (wall-mounted, away from the cooker).
- A **2 kg dry powder or foam extinguisher** in the hall or kitchen exit, and one in the garage, car or workshop.
- Learn **PASS**: Pull the pin, Aim at the base of the fire, Squeeze the handle, Sweep side to side.

Chip pan or oil fire

1. Turn off the heat, if you can do it safely.
2. Never move the pan.
3. Never throw water on it: the water turns to steam instantly and throws burning oil out of the pan.
4. Cover completely with a fire blanket or damp tea towel and leave for at least 30 minutes.
5. If it's out of control, get out, close the door and call 112.

4. Common causes

Risk	Prevention
Cooking	Never leave the hob unattended. Turn pan handles in. Keep tea towels away.
Heaters	Keep 1 m from curtains, furniture and drying clothes. Never cover them.
Candles	Stable holder, away from curtains, never left lit in an empty room. LED is safer.
Open fires & stoves	Sweep chimneys at least once a year. Use a fireguard. Let ash cool fully in a metal bucket outside.
Electrics	Don't overload sockets or daisy-chain extension leads. Unroll cable reels fully.
Lithium batteries (e-bikes, scooters, power tools)	Use the original charger. Charge while you're awake, on a hard surface, not in the hall or escape route. Stop using damaged or swollen batteries.
Smoking	Never in bed. Use heavy ashtrays; wet the butts before binning.

5. Home security

Lock up
Lock doors and windows when out and at night. Don't leave keys near the letterbox.

Light it
Motion-sensor lights at the front and back. Timers on lamps when away.

Cameras
Wired or local-recording cameras keep working if Wi-Fi is blocked.

Valuables
Photograph and mark them (postcode marker). A fixed safe for documents.

Look lived-in
Cancel deliveries when away; ask a neighbour to move the bins.

Community Alert
Join your local Community Alert or Text Alert scheme.

Report it
Suspicious activity: your local Garda station. Crime in progress: 112.

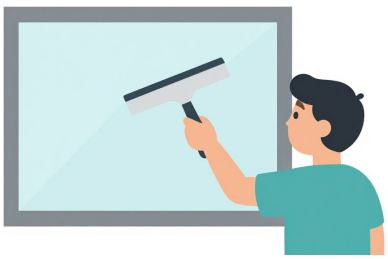
Personal alarms
Loud alarms on keys for anyone walking alone.

Figure 5. Simple security that works.

Simple upgrades



Key lockbox
A police-approved (Sold Secure or LPS 1175) key safe by the door lets a carer, neighbour or family get in if you're ill or locked out. Mount it out of view from the road and change the code from the default.



Window film and mesh
Clear security or anti-shatter film holds broken glass together after a storm or break-in. Security mesh or grilles suit ground-floor back windows and sheds; keep at least one window in each room openable for escape.

Personal alarms
Pocket alarms (130 dB, pull-pin) are cheap and loud. Clip one to keys for anyone walking alone, and keep one by the bed of an older relative so they can attract a neighbour.

Documents pack

Keep originals in a fire-resistant document bag or safe, with copies stored securely online or on an encrypted USB stick in your grab bag.

☐ Passports and driving licences	☐ Birth and marriage certificates
☐ PPS numbers	☐ Insurance policies (house, car, health)
☐ Property deeds / mortgage or tenancy documents	☐ Bank details and account contacts
☐ Prescriptions and medical summaries	☐ Vaccination records
☐ Vehicle registration (log book)	☐ Photos of valuables (for insurance)
☐ Wills and power of attorney	☐ Pet microchip and vet details

6. Our escape plan

Draw each floor, mark two ways out of every room, the meeting point, and where keys are kept. Practise it.

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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 9

Communications

Family plan, radios, signals

A family plan that works when phones don't
Radios to listen to, walkie-talkies and Meshtastic
Signalling for help: whistles, torches, window cards



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1. The family communication plan

In a real emergency, the problem usually isn't the radio: it's that nobody knows who to call, when, or where to go. Agree this now and put a copy in every grab bag and wallet.

Our plan

Out-of-area contact (everyone checks in with them) _____

Their phone numbers _____

Check-in times (e.g. 8am & 8pm) _____

Meeting point near home _____

Meeting point in town _____

Meeting point out of area _____

Who collects the children from school _____

Who checks on (neighbour / relative) _____

Walkie-talkie channel & code _____

Meshtastic channel name _____

Where we leave notes (e.g. inside porch) _____

Wallet card

Write the key numbers on a card for each person: phones may be dead or lost and few people know numbers by heart. Children should know your mobile number and their address.

Name	Mobile	Name	Mobile

2. Ways to communicate, best to last

1. Mobile call	Works most of the time. First thing to fail in a big outage as masts lose battery and networks overload.
2. Text / SMS	Gets through when calls won't. Keep them short. Send, then switch the phone off to save battery.
3. Messaging apps	Need data. WhatsApp, Signal etc. work on any Wi-Fi you can reach.
4. Walkie-talkies (PMR446)	Licence-free, no network needed. Good for the house, farm, street, or a few km in open country.
5. Meshtastic	Off-grid text messages over several km, relayed by other nodes. Needs a phone paired by Bluetooth.
6. Radio (listen only)	A battery or wind-up FM radio: RTÉ Radio 1 and local radio carry official updates.
7. Notes & meeting points	When nothing else works: a note on the door, and agreed places and times to meet.

Figure 1. Work down the list as each option fails.

Making phones last

- Low-power mode on, brightness down, Bluetooth and location off unless needed.
- Switch the phone off between check-ins if battery is low.
- Charge from a power bank, the car (engine running, outdoors), or a power station (Vol 2).
- Save offline maps and your contacts as a screenshot.

3. Listening for information

Source	What you get	How
RTÉ Radio 1 (FM)	National news, warnings, travel	Battery, wind-up or car radio
Local radio (e.g. Midwest Radio in Mayo)	Local roads, power, water, closures, community help	FM
Met Éireann	Weather warnings	met.ie, app, radio bulletins
ESB Networks PowerCheck	Outage areas and restoration times	esbnetworks.ie or app
Uisce Éireann	Water outages and notices	water.ie, 1800 278 278
Your county council	Flooding, roads, emergency rest centres	Website, social media, local radio

4. Walkie-talkies (PMR446)

PMR446 radios are licence-free across Europe and need no network. Range is a few hundred metres in town and several km across open country or from high ground. All PMR446 radios can talk to each other on the same channel and code.

Ch	Frequency (MHz)	Ch	Frequency (MHz)
1	446.00625	9	446.10625
2	446.01875	10	446.11875
3	446.03125	11	446.13125
4	446.04375	12	446.14375
5	446.05625	13	446.15625
6	446.06875	14	446.16875
7	446.08125	15	446.18125
8	446.09375	16	446.19375

Channel plan

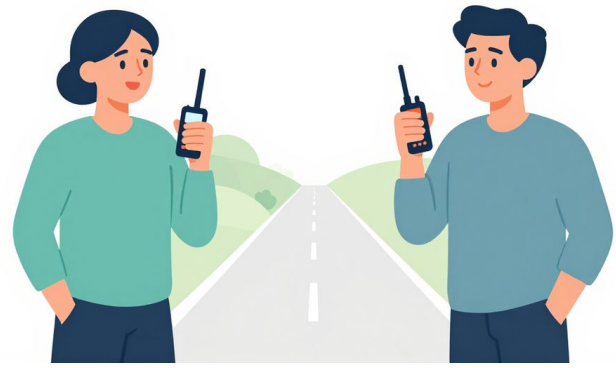
Main channel + privacy code _____

Backup channel _____

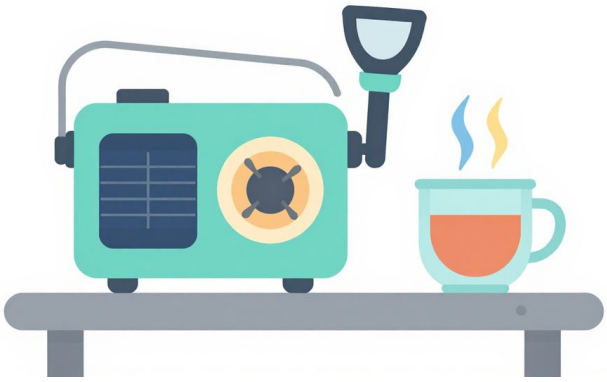
Listening schedule (e.g. first 5 minutes of each hour) _____

Call signs / names _____

Emergency word (means 'come now') _____



Licence-free PMR446 walkie-talkies: fixed aerial, 0.5 W.



A wind-up FM/DAB radio with a torch and USB charging.

Baofeng-type radios: what the rules actually say

- Radios like the Baofeng UV-5R or UV-16 are amateur (ham) radios. They can tune 433 and 446 MHz, but that doesn't make them licence-free.
- PMR446 is licence-free only for radios type-approved for it: a fixed aerial and no more than 0.5 W. A Baofeng has a removable aerial and up to 5-10 W, so transmitting on PMR446 with it isn't legal in Ireland.
- The 433 MHz band is licence-free only for very low-power (10 mW) approved devices, not handheld radios.
- Transmitting on amateur bands needs a ComReg amateur licence (an exam, then a small yearly fee). It's a rewarding hobby and local radio clubs help you get started.
- Listening is fine. Use your Baofeng to monitor PMR446, marine and amateur channels.

Two Baofengs that won't talk to each other?

Usually a settings mismatch, not range. Check both are on exactly the same frequency, with the same bandwidth (narrow/wide), the same CTCSS/DCS tone (or none), no repeater offset, and that the 'busy channel lockout' and power save are off. Short 'rubber duck' aerials and being indoors also cut range sharply.

Radios to listen to

Radio	Why	Look for
Wind-up FM/DAB radio	Works with no batteries or mains. Many charge a phone.	Hand crank + solar + USB, built-in torch, FM and DAB+
Battery FM/DAB radio	Better sound, long battery life	Runs on AA batteries you already stock
Car radio	Always there	Run the engine every so often to keep the battery up

Ireland plans to introduce mobile phone emergency alerts (cell broadcast) in 2027. Until then, local radio and RTÉ Radio 1 are the main way warnings reach people without internet.

5. Meshtastic (off-grid text messaging)

1. Buy a LoRa node for each household or person (e.g. Heltec V3, LilyGo T-Echo, RAK WisBlock).
2. Install the Meshtastic app on your phone and pair the node by Bluetooth.
3. Set the region to **EU_868** (required in Ireland).
4. Create a private channel and share it with family by QR code. Keep the public channel too, to reach neighbours.
5. Give each node a short name. Put one node high up (attic window, roof) as a relay.
6. Test it monthly. Keep nodes charged from a power bank or small solar panel.

6. Signalling for help

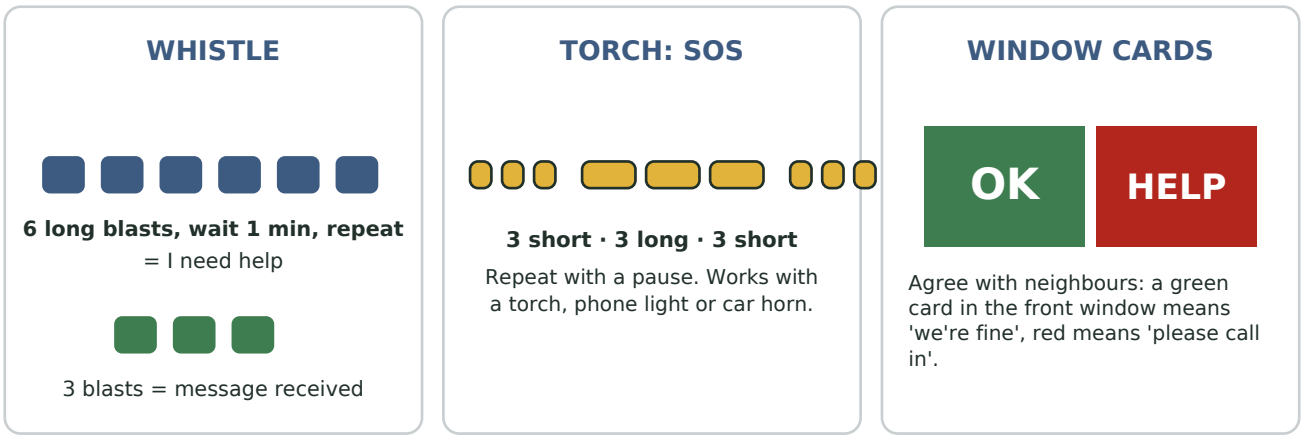


Figure 2. Signals anyone can use.

Checking on neighbours

List the people near you who might need help in a power cut or snow: older people living alone, people with medical needs, new parents. Agree how you'll check on them.

Name	Address	Phone	Needs	Who checks

Emergency numbers & the series

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Gas Networks Ireland	1800 20 50 50	Smell of gas (24/7). Call from outside the house.
Uisce Éireann (Irish Water)	1800 278 278	Water outages, burst mains, boil-water notices
HSELive	1800 700 700	Health service information
Public Poisons Line	01 809 2166	Advice if someone has swallowed or touched something harmful (8am-10pm daily)
Samaritans	116 123	Anyone struggling to cope (24/7)
Text About It	Text HELLO to 50808	Free text support (24/7)
Childline	1800 66 66 66	Children and young people up to 18 (24/7)
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7	Home Systems & Repairs	Shut-offs, leaks, storm damage, floods
8	Fire Safety & Security	Alarms, escape plans, extinguishers
9	**Communications**	Family plan, radios, signals
10	Grab Bags & Kits	72-hour, car, child & pet kits
11	Pantry & Stockpile	A 30-day food store you rotate
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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 10

Grab Bags & Kits

72-hour, car, child & pet kits

A 72-hour grab bag for every person
A low-key car bag, plus baby, child and pet kits
Emergency cash, packing, and keeping it all in date



THE SERIES

0 Start Here	1 Just Add Water	2 Power Cuts & Storms	3 Water & Sanitation	4 Cooking & Warmth	5 First Aid	6 Symptoms & Home Care	7 Home Systems & Repairs
8 Fire Safety & Security	9 Communications	10 Grab Bags & Kits	11 Pantry & Stockpile	12 Outdoor Skills	13 Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	14 Offline Knowledge &	15 Other Emergencies

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2. Adult 72-hour grab bag 3

3. A low-key car bag 4

4. Emergency cash 4

5. Children, babies & pets 4

Child's bag 4

Baby bag 5

Pet kit 5

6. Car kit 5

7. Keeping kits current 5

Emergency numbers & the series 6

The Ready At Home series 6

1. What a grab bag is for

A grab bag (sometimes called a bug-out bag) lets you leave home in minutes, because of fire, flooding, a gas leak, or being told to evacuate, and look after yourself for about three days. Keep one per person, near the door you'd leave by.

One each
Everyone carries their own. Children's bags are lighter.

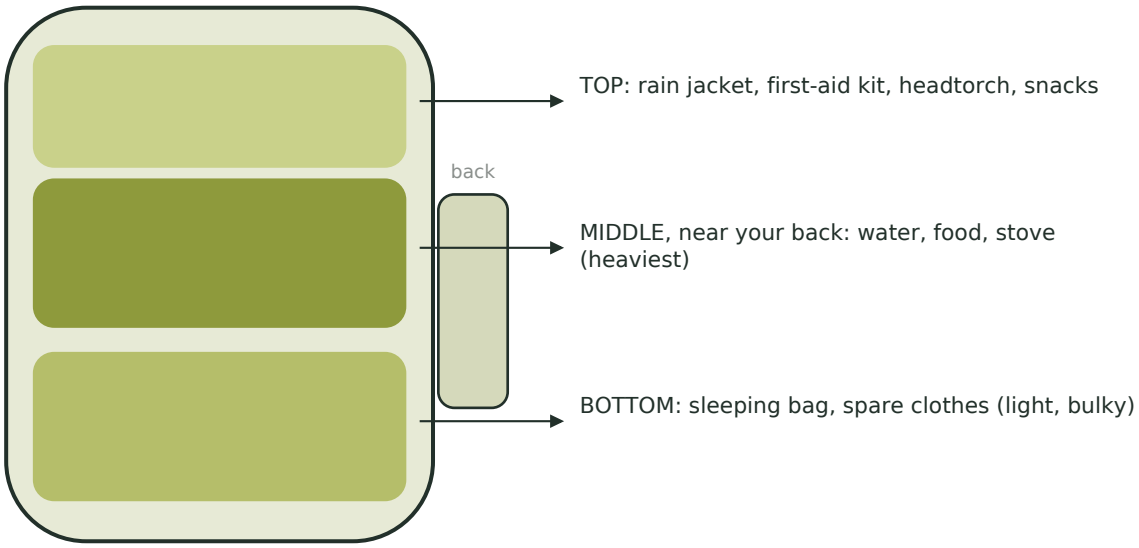
Grab in 2 min
Packed, near the exit, not buried in the attic.

Check quarterly
Clothes fit, food in date, batteries charged (Vol 0).

Plan inside
A copy of your household plan and contacts.

2. Adult 72-hour grab bag

☐ Water: 3 L (bottles) + filter (Sawyer/LifeStraw)	☐ Food: 3 days, no-cook (bars, nuts, meal bags)
☐ Headtorch + spare batteries	☐ Power bank (charged) + cables
☐ Wind-up or battery radio	☐ First-aid kit (Vol 5) + personal medicines (7 days)
☐ Copies of documents + contact card (Vol 9)	☐ Cash in small notes and coins (€100-200, Section 4)
☐ Warm layers, hat, gloves, spare socks & underwear	☐ Waterproof jacket
☐ Foil blanket / bivvy bag	☐ Multi-tool or knife
☐ Whistle	☐ Hand sanitiser, wipes, toilet roll
☐ Toothbrush, toothpaste, period products	☐ Face masks (a few)
☐ Spare glasses / contact lenses	☐ Lighter + ferro rod
☐ Duct tape (wrapped round a pen)	☐ Notebook and pencil
☐ Bin bags (rain cover, seat, toilet)	☐ Spare house and car keys
☐ Phone numbers written down	☐ Small sewing kit, safety pins



Aim for under 10-15% of body weight

Figure 1. Packing a backpack: heavy items close to your back and in the middle.

3. A low-key car bag



A plain sports holdall in the boot draws no attention and doesn't look like a 'survival kit' to anyone glancing into the car. It's the bag that gets you home if you're stranded or the roads close.

- Water (2 L) and a few energy bars, rotated every 6 months
- Warm layer, hat, gloves, spare socks, a cheap rain poncho
- Comfortable walking shoes if you drive in work shoes
- Headtorch, power bank and charging cable
- Small first-aid kit, personal medicines for 2-3 days
- Foil blanket, a few hand warmers
- €50-100 in small notes and coins, a paper map of your area
- Phone numbers written on a card

4. Emergency cash

Card machines and ATMs stop working in a power cut or network outage. Shops that stay open may only take cash. A small reserve covers fuel, food and a taxi or B&B; if you need to leave.

Where	How much	Tips
At home	€500-1,000 for a family	Mostly €5, €10 and €20 notes plus coins: nobody can change a €50 in an emergency. Keep it with your documents, in a fire-resistant bag or small safe, not in an obvious drawer.
Grab bags	€100-200 per adult	Split between bags so one loss doesn't take it all.
Car	€50-100	In the car bag, not the glovebox.
With trusted family elsewhere	A sealed envelope	If you have to leave home quickly, money is waiting where you're going. Note it in your plan (Volume 0).

A Faraday bag protects electronics (a spare phone, radio, USB stick with documents) from electrical surges. Cash doesn't need one: a waterproof, fire-resistant document bag is what protects money and paper.

5. Children, babies & pets



A child's own small bag, with a comfort toy and something to do.

Child's bag

- ☐ Their own small backpack
- ☐ Comfort toy or blanket
- ☐ Snacks they like + water bottle
- ☐ Change of clothes, warm layer
- ☐ Torch (fun one) + spare batteries
- ☐ Card with parent names, numbers, address
- ☐ Small games, colouring book, cards
- ☐ Medicines and allergy info
- ☐ Whistle on a lanyard

Baby bag

☐ Nappies (3 days, ~25) + wipes + bags	☐ Formula/ready-to-feed + sterile bottles
☐ Bottled water for formula	☐ Baby paracetamol/ibuprofen (check label)
☐ Spare clothes ×3, hat, blanket	☐ Sling or carrier
☐ Nappy cream, muslins	☐ Small toys, dummy (and spare)

Pet kit

☐ Food (3 days) + bowls	☐ Water (about 50 ml per kg per day for dogs)
☐ Lead, harness, muzzle if needed	☐ Carrier for cats/small pets
☐ Medicines + vet records	☐ Microchip number + photo of pet
☐ Poo bags / litter + tray	☐ Blanket and a favourite toy

6. Car kit

Rural roads can close fast in snow and floods. If you're stuck, it's usually safest to stay with the car. Clear snow from around the exhaust before running the engine, run it about 10 minutes an hour for heat, and open a window slightly while it runs.

☐ Ice scraper + de-icer	☐ Shovel (folding)
☐ Jump leads or jump starter	☐ High-vis vest for each seat
☐ Warning triangle	☐ Torch + batteries
☐ Blanket / sleeping bag	☐ Water + snacks
☐ Phone charger (12 V)	☐ First-aid kit
☐ Tow rope	☐ Tyre inflator / puncture kit
☐ Bag of grit or cat litter (grip)	☐ Wellies or boots
☐ Paper map	☐ Spare fuse set

7. Keeping kits current

Kit	Last checked	Food / water expires	Batteries	Notes

Tips

- Put a date sticker on every food, water and medicine item.
- Swap kids' clothes up a size every spring and autumn.
- Use lithium AA/AAA batteries in kits: they last up to 20 years in storage and work in the cold.
- Don't raid the grab bag for everyday use; if you do, replace it the same day.

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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 11

Pantry & Stockpile

A 30-day food store you rotate

A 30-day food store, built in 8 weeks for €15-20 a week
Batteries, electronics and household items worth stocking
Rotating, preserving and 6 store-cupboard recipes



THE SERIES

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3. Storing & rotating 4

4. Beyond food: what else to stock 5

5. Preserving food at home 6

6. Store-cupboard recipes 6

Emergency numbers & the series 8

The Ready At Home series 8

1. How much food?

An adult needs roughly 2,000-2,500 kcal a day, more in the cold or doing heavy work. Children need less. This list gives about 30 days for one adult. Multiply it for your household, and buy what you already eat: a store you don't like won't get rotated.

Group	30 days for 1 adult	Tesco examples	Shelf life
Grains & starch	8 kg	Rice, pasta, porridge oats, couscous, crackers, instant mash	1-2 years
Tinned protein	30 tins (about 1 a day)	Tuna, sardines, salmon, corned beef, chicken, mackerel	2-4 years
Beans & pulses	4 kg (or 20 tins)	Baked beans, kidney beans, chickpeas, red lentils	2+ years
Fruit & veg	30 tins	Tomatoes, sweetcorn, peas, carrots, peaches, pineapple	1-2 years
Dairy	8 L long-life milk or 1 kg powder	UHT milk, dried milk, hard cheese (short-term)	6-12 months
Fats	1 L oil + 1 kg peanut butter	Rapeseed/olive oil, peanut butter, nuts	6-12 months
Sugar & treats	2 kg	Sugar, honey, jam, chocolate, biscuits	1-2 years (honey: years)
Flavour	As needed	Stock cubes, salt, pepper, spices, soy sauce, curry paste	1-2 years
Drinks	-	Tea, coffee, hot chocolate, squash	1-2 years
Water	90 L (3 L/day)	See Volume 3	Rotate 6-12 months

Don't forget

- A manual can opener (two!).
- Baby formula and food, pet food, special diets (coeliac, allergies).
- Multivitamins: helpful if the diet is limited for a while.
- Fuel to cook it (Vol 4) and water to rehydrate it (Vol 3).

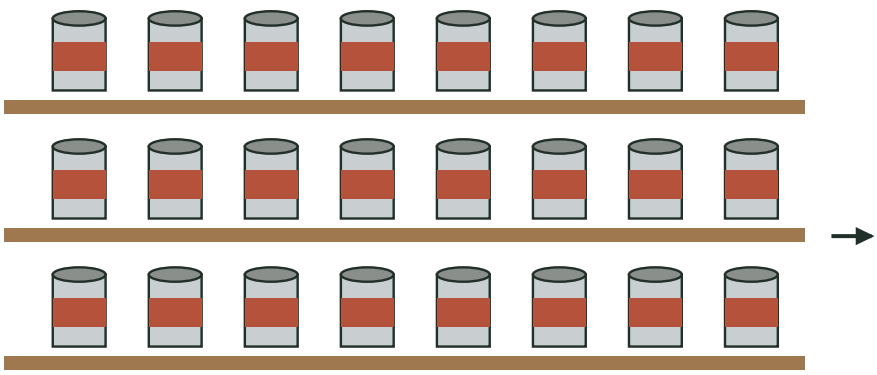
2. Building it without the big bill

Week 1	Water (24 × 2 L bottles), 2 kg rice, 2 kg pasta, 1 kg oats.
Week 2	6 tins tomatoes, 6 tins beans (baked, kidney, chickpeas), 2 jars pasta sauce.
Week 3	6 tins fish (tuna, sardines, salmon), 4 tins meat (corned beef, chicken), peanut butter.
Week 4	Long-life milk (6 L) or milk powder, cereal, crackers, jam, honey.
Week 5	Tinned fruit ×6, tinned veg ×6, instant mash ×3, soup ×6.
Week 6	Oil (1 L), sugar, salt, stock cubes, spices, tea and coffee.
Week 7	Snacks and morale: chocolate, biscuits, nuts, dried fruit, hot chocolate.
Week 8	Gaps: multivitamins, baby/pet food, special diets, gas canisters.

Figure 1. An 8-week build-up, adding about €15-20 to the weekly shop.

3. Storing & rotating





New shopping goes in at the BACK (or the top of a can rack).

Take from the FRONT. Oldest gets eaten first.

Write the best-before date in large marker on the lid of each tin.

Figure 2. First in, first out.

- Cool, dry and dark: a press, under the stairs, a spare room. Not a damp shed or a hot attic.
- Decant opened dry goods into airtight boxes or jars against mice and pantry moths.
- Check the store every 3 months: move anything near its date to the kitchen.
- Dented tins are usually fine; throw out tins that are bulging, leaking, badly rusted, or spurt when opened.
- Best-before dates are about quality, not safety: tinned and dry food is usually fine past them if the pack is intact. Use-by dates are about safety: don't eat past them.

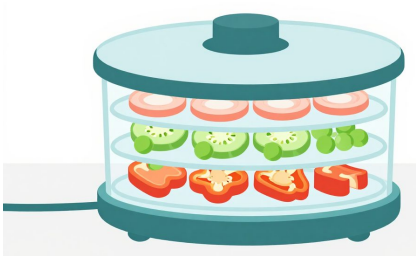
4. Beyond food: what else to stock

Shortages after storms are rarely about food; it's batteries, gas, medicines and the small things that run out. Build these up alongside the pantry.



Category	Stock	Notes
Light	A headtorch per person, 2 LED lanterns, glow sticks	Volume 2
Batteries	AA and AAA: 24 of each (lithium for kits, alkaline or rechargeable for daily use); 9 V for alarms; spare coin cells	Lithium keeps 10-20 years; check alkaline dates
Charging	2-3 power banks (20,000 mAh), a power station if you can (Volume 2), car USB adapter, spare cables	Recharge power banks every 3 months
Radio	Wind-up or battery FM/DAB radio	Volume 9
Cooking fuel	Butane cartridges: 1 per person per 3-4 days, plus spares; matches and lighters	Store upright, cool, out of the house
Heating fuel	Oil tank above a quarter, a few bags of smokeless fuel or seasoned logs	Volume 4
Medicines	Painkillers, rehydration sachets, antihistamines; your regular prescriptions with a small buffer arranged through your GP and pharmacist	Don't stretch doses; see Volume 6
Hygiene	Toilet roll, wet wipes, hand sanitiser, period products, nappies, bin bags, bleach	Bin bags double as toilet liners (Volume 3)
Repairs	Duct tape, cable ties, tarp, pipe repair tape, fuses	Volume 7
Comfort	Tea, coffee, treats, cards and games, a few new books	Morale matters (Volume 13)
Cash	Small notes and coins	Volume 10

5. Preserving food at home



Dehydrating: see Volume 1 for full recipes.



Mylar bags with oxygen absorbers, heat-sealed.



Water-bath canning for jams, pickles and tomatoes.

Method	Good for	Keep in mind
Dehydrating	Fruit, vegetables, lean cooked meat, complete meals	Volume 1 covers it step by step
Mylar + oxygen absorbers	Dried foods, rice, pasta, oats, flour	Only for food with very little moisture and fat; label and date
Water-bath canning	High-acid foods: jams, fruit, pickles, tomatoes with added lemon juice	Use tested recipes, new lids, and processing times for your jar size
Pressure canning	Low-acid foods: vegetables, beans, meat, soups	Needs a proper pressure **canner** with a gauge. A kitchen pressure cooker isn't safe for this: it can't hold the pressure precisely enough to destroy botulism spores
Freezing	Almost anything	Lost in a long power cut (Volume 2)

6. Store-cupboard recipes

Each serves 4 and uses only shelf-stable ingredients, one pot and a camping stove.

Chickpea & tomato curry

Ingredients	Method
• 2 tins chickpeas, drained • 1 tin chopped tomatoes • 1 tin coconut milk (or 4 tbsp milk powder + 300 ml water) • 2 tbsp curry powder • 1 stock cube • 300 g rice	Cook rice. In a second pot, warm the curry powder in 1 tbsp oil for 30 seconds, add tomatoes, coconut milk, crumbled stock cube and chickpeas. Simmer 10 minutes. Serve over rice.

Tuna & sweetcorn pasta

Ingredients	Method
• 400 g pasta • 2 tins tuna • 1 tin sweetcorn, drained • 1 jar pasta sauce • Black pepper	Boil pasta, drain, keeping a cup of water. Stir in sauce, tuna and sweetcorn. Heat through, loosen with pasta water.

Corned beef hash

Ingredients	Method
• 1 tin corned beef, diced • 1 packet instant mash (made up thick) • 1 tin peas or carrots • 1 tsp dried onion (or fresh) • Oil	Make up the mash with a little less water than the pack says. Fry the corned beef in oil until crispy, add the mash and veg, press flat and fry until a crust forms. Turn in sections.

Three-bean chilli

Ingredients	Method
• 1 tin kidney beans • 1 tin baked beans • 1 tin chickpeas or black beans • 1 tin chopped tomatoes • 2 tsp chilli powder, 1 tsp cumin • Rice or crackers	Drain the kidney beans and chickpeas. Put everything in a pot with the spices, simmer 15 minutes. Serve with rice or crackers.

Sardines on crackers & quick salsa

Ingredients	Method
• 2 tins sardines • 1 tin chopped tomatoes, drained • 1 tin sweetcorn • Crackers • Pinch of chilli, salt	No cooking. Mix tomatoes, sweetcorn and seasoning. Pile sardines and salsa on crackers.

Creamy rice pudding

Ingredients	Method
• 200 g pudding or short-grain rice • 1 L long-life milk (or 120 g powder + 1 L water) • 4 tbsp sugar • Tinned fruit or jam to serve	Simmer rice in milk with sugar for 25-30 minutes, stirring often, until thick. Or bring to the boil and haybox for an hour (Vol 4).

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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 12

Outdoor Skills

Fire, shelter, knots, navigation

Lighting fires: ferro rods, char cloth, a five-part fire kit
Cutting wood safely, tarp shelters and eight useful knots
Finding your way without a phone



THE SERIES

0 Start Here
1 Just Add Water
2 Power Cuts & Storms
3 Water & Sanitation
4 Cooking & Warmth
5 First Aid
6 Symptoms & Home Care
7 Home Systems & Repairs
8 Fire Safety & Security
9 Communications
10 Grab Bags & Kits
11 Pantry & Stockpile
12 Outdoor Skills
13 Kids, Morale & Wellbeing
14 Offline Knowledge &
15 Other Emergencies

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1. Fire

Fire safety & the law

- Only light fires where it's allowed and safe: a fire pit in your own garden, or a proper fireplace or stove. Never on peat or bogland: it can burn underground and flare up later.
- Clear a 2 m circle, keep water nearby, never leave it, and put it out completely: drown, stir, drown again.
- Burning vegetation (gorse, scrub) is illegal from 1 March to 31 August.

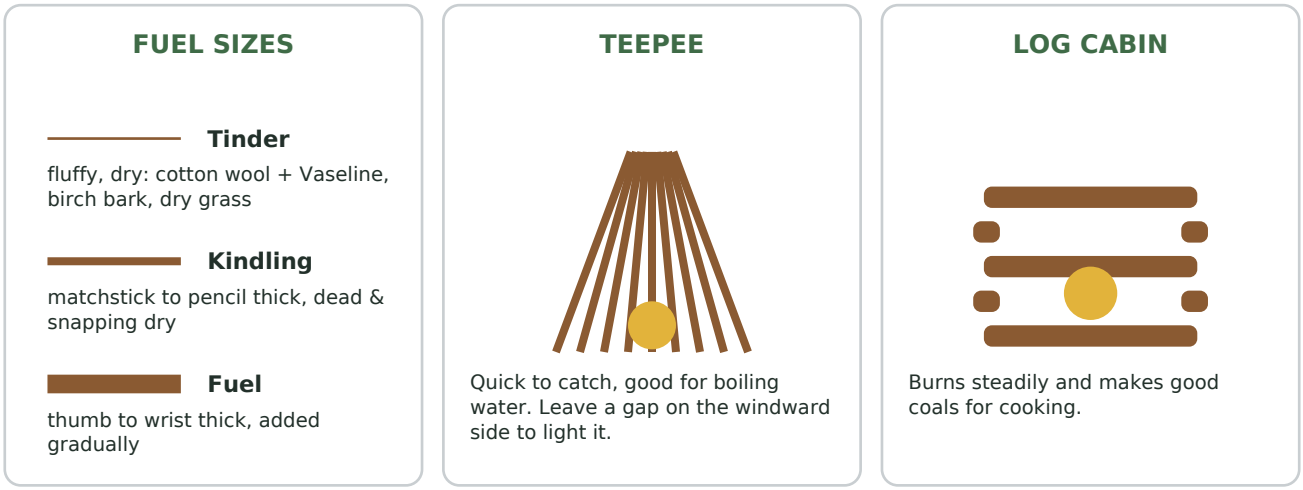


Figure 1. Gather everything before you strike a spark: twice as much kindling as you think you need.

Using a ferro rod



1. Make a fist-sized nest of tinder. A Vaseline cotton ball catches every time and burns for a minute or more.
2. Hold the rod's tip right in the tinder at about 45°.
3. Hold the striker still against the rod and pull the rod back sharply. This keeps you from knocking the tinder over.
4. When it catches, shield it and feed in the thinnest kindling, then bigger pieces.
5. Don't smother it: fire needs air. Blow gently at the base if it struggles.

Home-made fire starters



Vaseline cotton balls

Rub a blob of petroleum jelly into cotton wool balls until they're saturated but still fluffy inside. Pack 20 into an old pill tub or film canister. Pull one open to expose dry fibres before striking. Burns 2-3 minutes, works when damp.



Char cloth

Cut 100% cotton (old jeans or a T-shirt) into 5 cm squares. Put them in a small tin with a nail hole in the lid and set it in a fire or on a camping stove outdoors. Smoke and gas jet out of the hole; when it stops (5-10 min), take it off and let it cool fully before opening. The black squares catch a single spark and glow.



9 V battery and steel wool

Fine (0000 grade) steel wool fluffed out on a stone. Touch both terminals of a 9-volt battery to it and it glows instantly; blow gently into tinder. Keep the battery's cap on and store it apart from the steel wool so they can't touch in your kit.

Not with phone power banks or lithium batteries

You'll see videos using a lithium power bank or phone battery to light steel wool. Don't: shorting a lithium battery can make it overheat, vent toxic gas or catch fire, and you also lose the power bank you need for your phone. A cheap 9 V alkaline battery is the right tool.

A five-part fire kit in a tin



Put one in every grab bag and the car. Each part backs up another, so it still works if something gets wet or lost.

Part	What to pack
1. Flame	A cheap lighter and a box of matches in a sealed bag
2. Spark	Ferro rod and striker (works soaking wet, thousands of strikes)
3. Tinder	6-10 Vaseline cotton balls in a tube; a few squares of char cloth
4. Extender	A tea light or candle stub to hold a flame while kindling catches
5. Dry	A zip bag around everything, plus a little dry twine or birch bark

2. Cutting wood safely



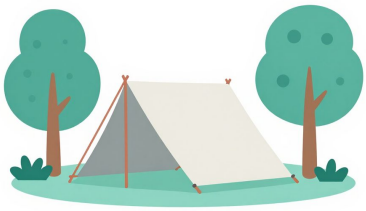
Saw on a sawhorse or log, at hip height, the cut just past the support.



Splitting: block on a chopping block, feet apart, axe swung down between them.

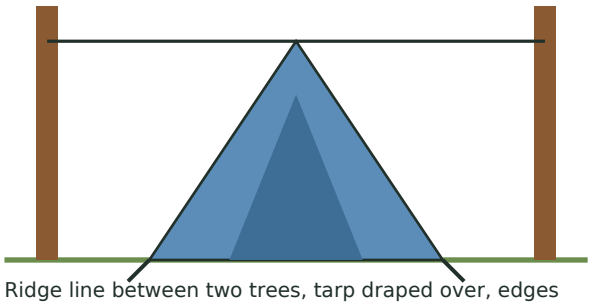
Do	Don't
Wear boots, gloves and safety glasses. Clear the area of people, pets and trip hazards	Cut with anyone within two axe-lengths of you, or with children nearby
Use a bow saw for logs: let the saw do the work with long, steady strokes	Hold small pieces in your hand while you cut or split them
Split on a solid chopping block so the axe ends in wood, not the ground or your leg	Swing an axe towards your feet or across your body
Keep blades sharp (blunt tools bounce) and guarded when not in use	Use a chainsaw without training and full protective gear, or cut trees touching power lines (call ESB Networks)
Stop when you're tired: most injuries happen at the end of a session	Leave tools lying in grass

3. Shelter



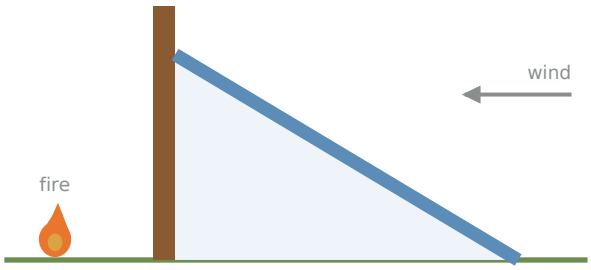
A tarp (3×3 m), 15 m of paracord and a few pegs give you a dry space to cook, wait out rain, or shelter in the garden if the house is unsafe.

A-FRAME (front view)



Ridge line between two trees, tarp draped over, edges pegged down. Best in wind and rain.

LEAN-TO (side view)

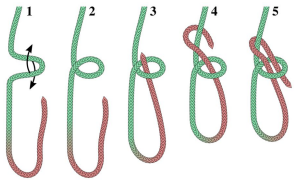


One edge tied high, the other pegged to the ground. Open side away from the wind; reflects a fire's heat.

Figure 2. Two simple tarp shelters.

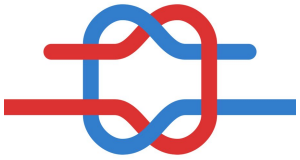
4. Eight useful knots

Knots are easiest to learn with a piece of string in your hands. Tie each one ten times and they'll stay with you.



Bowline

A fixed loop that won't slip or jam: round a tree, a rescue loop. Small loop, end up through it ('out of the hole'), round behind the standing part ('round the tree'), back down the hole. Pull tight.



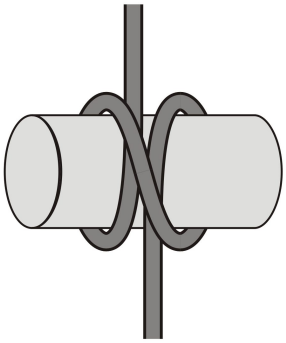
Reef (square) knot

Joining two ends of the same cord: bandages, bundles. Left over right and under, then right over left and under. Not for loads that matter.



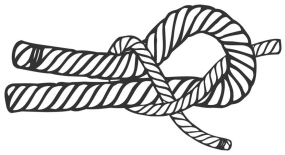
Figure-of-eight

A stopper so a rope can't pull through a hole or pulley. Loop the end round the standing part, then pass it down through the first loop.



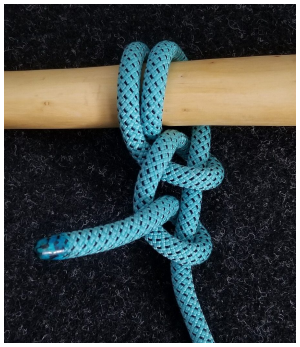
Clove hitch

Quickly tying to a post or pole. Two turns, the second crossing over the first, with the end tucked under the second turn.



Sheet bend

Joining two ropes of different thickness. Make a bight in the thick rope; pass the thin one up through it, round behind both strands, and under itself.



Round turn & two half hitches

Tying a line to a ring, rail or post so it holds under load. Two full turns round, then two half hitches round the standing part.



Taut-line hitch

Adjustable tension for tarp and tent guy lines. Round the peg, then two turns round the standing line inside the loop and one outside. Slide to tighten.



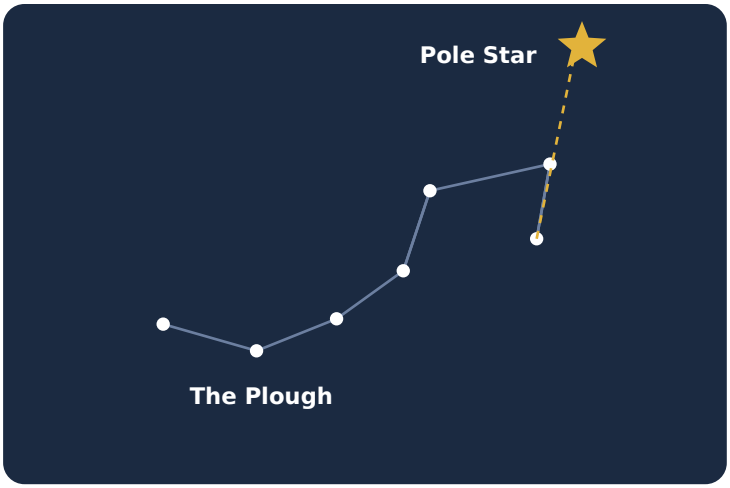
Trucker's hitch

Pulling a ridge line or load tie-down really tight. A loop in the line acts as a pulley; pull down hard and finish with two half hitches.

Knot images from Wikimedia Commons: bowline steps by Buz11 (CC BY-SA 4.0); reef knot by CountingPine (public domain); figure-of-eight and sheet bend by Lucasbosch (CC BY-SA 3.0); clove hitch by Hella/LittlePete/Warddr (CC BY-SA 3.0); round turn by Der Barbar (CC BY 4.0); taut-line and trucker's hitch by USCG PTC Developer (CC BY-SA 4.0).

5. Finding your way

- Keep paper maps for your area: Tailte Éireann (Ordnance Survey Ireland) Discovery Series 1:50,000.
- Download offline maps on your phone before you need them (Volume 14).
- Your phone's GPS works with no mobile signal; it's the map that needs downloading in advance.
- Note landmarks, junctions and distances on any walk, especially in fog on hills.



At night: find the Plough (the 'saucepan'). Follow the two stars at the end of the pan about five times their distance. That's the Pole Star, almost exactly north.

By day in Ireland: the sun rises roughly east, is due south around 12.30 pm in winter (1.30 pm in summer time), and sets roughly west.

Figure 3. Finding north without a compass.

Using a compass with a map



1. Lay the compass on the map with its edge joining where you are to where you're going.
2. Turn the dial until the orienting lines line up with the map's north-south grid lines (N at the top).
3. Lift the compass off. Turn your body until the red needle sits inside the red outline arrow.
4. Walk in the direction of the travel arrow. Pick a landmark on that line, walk to it, repeat.

6. Foraging: a word of caution

Only eat a wild plant or mushroom if you're completely sure what it is. Several poisonous plants grow in Ireland and look like edible ones (e.g. hemlock water dropwort, lords-and-ladies). Easy, well-known options are blackberries (late summer) and young nettle tops (cooked like spinach, picked with gloves). Leave wild mushrooms to experts.

Emergency numbers & the series

Service	Number	Use it for
Emergency services	**112 or 999**	Ambulance, Garda, fire, coast guard. Works from any phone, any network.
ESB Networks	1800 372 999	Power cuts, fallen or damaged lines (24/7)
Gas Networks Ireland	1800 20 50 50	Smell of gas (24/7). Call from outside the house.
Uisce Éireann (Irish Water)	1800 278 278	Water outages, burst mains, boil-water notices
HSELive	1800 700 700	Health service information
Public Poisons Line	01 809 2166	Advice if someone has swallowed or touched something harmful (8am-10pm daily)
Samaritans	116 123	Anyone struggling to cope (24/7)
Text About It	Text HELLO to 50808	Free text support (24/7)
Childline	1800 66 66 66	Children and young people up to 18 (24/7)
Your county council		Roads, flooding, local emergency centres
Met Éireann	met.ie / Met Éireann app	Weather warnings

Numbers checked November 2026. Write in your county council's number above, and your own local numbers (GP, out-of-hours doctor, pharmacy, vet, neighbours) in Volume 0.

The Ready At Home series

Vol	Title	What it covers
0	Start Here	Household plan & emergency numbers
1	Just Add Water	Home-dehydrated emergency meals
2	Power Cuts & Storms	Getting through long outages
3	Water & Sanitation	Storing, treating, toilets
4	Cooking & Warmth	Without mains power
5	First Aid	Step-by-step emergency care
6	Symptoms & Home Care	Red flags, minor illness, medicines
7	Home Systems & Repairs	Shut-offs, leaks, storm damage, floods
8	Fire Safety & Security	Alarms, escape plans, extinguishers
9	Communications	Family plan, radios, signals
10	Grab Bags & Kits	72-hour, car, child & pet kits
11	Pantry & Stockpile	A 30-day food store you rotate
12	**Outdoor Skills**	Fire, shelter, knots, navigation
13	Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	Keeping people okay
14	Offline Knowledge & Media	Libraries, maps & media without internet
15	Other Emergencies	Radiation, chemicals, heat, illness, cut off

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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 13

Kids, Morale & Wellbeing

Keeping people okay

Talking to children about emergencies
A daily routine, games for kids and fun for adults
Ten-minute exercises, stretches and calming practices



THE SERIES

0 Start Here	1 Just Add Water	2 Power Cuts & Storms	3 Water & Sanitation	4 Cooking & Warmth	5 First Aid	6 Symptoms & Home Care	7 Home Systems & Repairs
8 Fire Safety & Security	9 Communications	10 Grab Bags & Kits	11 Pantry & Stockpile	12 Outdoor Skills	13 Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	14 Offline Knowledge &	15 Other Emergencies

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1. Talking to children

Children cope best when they know what's happening, have something useful to do, and see adults who are calm. They notice far more than we think, so silence often worries them more than honest, simple words.

Age	What helps
Under 5	Short, simple explanations: 'The wind broke the power lines. Men are fixing them. We're safe here.' Cuddles, normal routines, a favourite toy, a night light.
5-11	Answer questions honestly without scary detail. Give them a job (torch keeper, water monitor, checking on the dog). Let them help pack their own grab bag.
12+	Include them in planning. Teach real skills: first aid, the shut-offs, using the stove. Respect their worries and let them talk to friends.

Things to say

- "You're safe. We have a plan and we know what to do."
- "It's okay to feel scared. I feel a bit worried too, and that's normal."
- "Here's what's going to happen next..."
- "What questions do you have?"

Watch for signs of stress

Clinginess, bed-wetting, nightmares, tummy aches, anger, going quiet, or acting younger than their age are common after a frightening event. Most settle in a few weeks with routine and reassurance. If they don't, talk to your GP.

2. A daily routine

Structure is one of the best things for morale, for adults as much as children. Keep normal times for getting up, eating and bed.

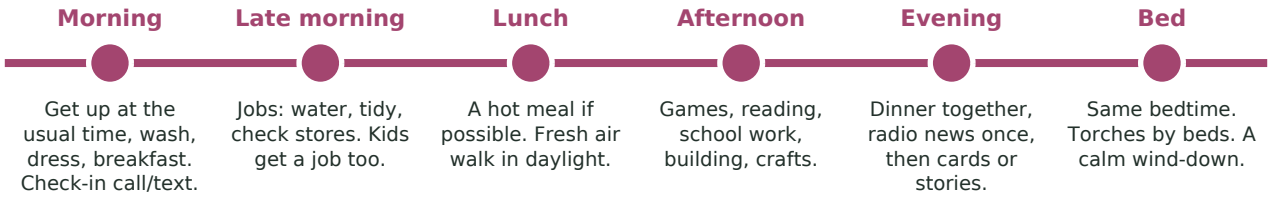


Figure 1. A simple day without power.

3. 30 things to do without power



Cards and board games by lantern light.



A blanket fort with torches and stories.

☐ Card games (snap, Go Fish, rummy, 25)	☐ Board games and jigsaws
☐ Build a blanket fort	☐ Torch shadow puppets
☐ Storytelling: everyone adds a sentence	☐ Write and act a play
☐ Draw a map of the house or garden	☐ Treasure hunt with clues
☐ I spy / 20 questions	☐ Learn three knots (Vol 12)
☐ Bake on the camping stove (pancakes)	☐ Read aloud by headtorch
☐ Make a 'storm diary' with drawings	☐ Paper aeroplanes competition
☐ Learn morse code (SOS)	☐ Stargazing on a clear night
☐ Indoor obstacle course	☐ Rock painting
☐ Origami	☐ Make a weather station (rain gauge)
☐ Sing-song / instruments	☐ Lego or building challenge
☐ Plant seeds on a windowsill	☐ Write letters to relatives
☐ Charades	☐ Puppet show with socks
☐ Make a family 'ready' poster	☐ Sort and check the grab bags together
☐ Hide and seek (lights on!)	☐ Draw the escape plan together (Vol 8)

Games that need nothing at all

Game	Ages	How to play
Twenty questions	5+	One thinks of something; the others ask yes/no questions to guess it in 20.
Story chain	4+	Each person adds one sentence to a story. Record it on a phone to listen back.
Simon says	3+	Do only the actions that start with 'Simon says'. Great for burning off energy indoors.
Shadow puppets	3+	One torch, a bare wall and your hands: rabbit, dog, bird, crocodile.
Sardines	5+	Reverse hide and seek: one hides, each finder squeezes in with them.
Categories	7+	Pick a letter and a list (animals, countries, foods); first to fill it wins.

For the grown-ups

- Card games: 25, 45, rummy, poker for matchsticks.
- Chess, draughts, Scrabble, a big jigsaw.
- A book club of two: read the same book and talk about it.
- Cook a 'store-cupboard challenge' meal for each other (Volume 11).
- Learn a skill: knots (Volume 12), first aid (Volume 5), a few chords on a guitar.

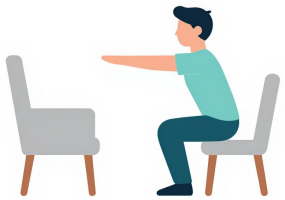
- Write letters to people you've been meaning to contact.
- Plan the next family day out, the garden, or a project for when it's over.

4. Moving every day

Ten minutes of gentle movement, morning and afternoon, keeps you warm, eases stiffness and lifts mood. Go at your own pace and stop if anything hurts; if you have a health condition, stick to what your doctor or physio has advised.



1. March on the spot
1 minute to warm up. Lift knees, swing arms.



2. Sit-to-stand
Stand up from a chair and sit back down slowly. 10 times.



3. Wall press-ups
Hands on the wall at shoulder height, bend elbows, push back. 10 times.



4. Supported lunges
Hold a chair, step one foot forward and bend both knees a little. 8 each side.



5. Plank
On forearms and knees (or toes), body straight. Hold 15-30 seconds.



6. Hamstring stretch
Sit, one leg straight, reach towards your toes. Hold 20 seconds each side.



7. Cat-cow
On hands and knees, slowly round then arch your back. 8 slow breaths.



8. Doorway chest stretch
Forearms on the door frame, lean gently through. Hold 20 seconds.

Build a 'no-power box'
One box with cards, games, a jigsaw, colouring books, crayons, puzzle books, a few new treats and glow sticks. Only open it during an outage: the novelty is half the fun.

5. Looking after your mind

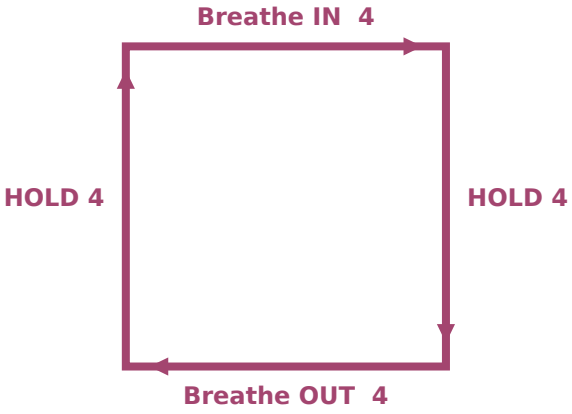


Figure 2. Box breathing.

Box breathing calms the body's stress response in a couple of minutes. Trace the square with a finger. Repeat 4-6 rounds.

For children: 'smell the flower' (breathe in through the nose), 'blow out the candle' (slowly out through the mouth). Five times.

Three more calming practices

Practice	How	When
5-4-3-2-1 grounding	Name 5 things you can see, 4 you can hear, 3 you can touch, 2 you can smell, 1 you can taste.	When thoughts are racing or panic is building
Body scan	Lying down, move your attention slowly from toes to head, noticing and relaxing each part.	At bedtime, to help sleep
Three good things	Each evening, everyone names three things that went well today, however small.	Around the dinner table; good for children too

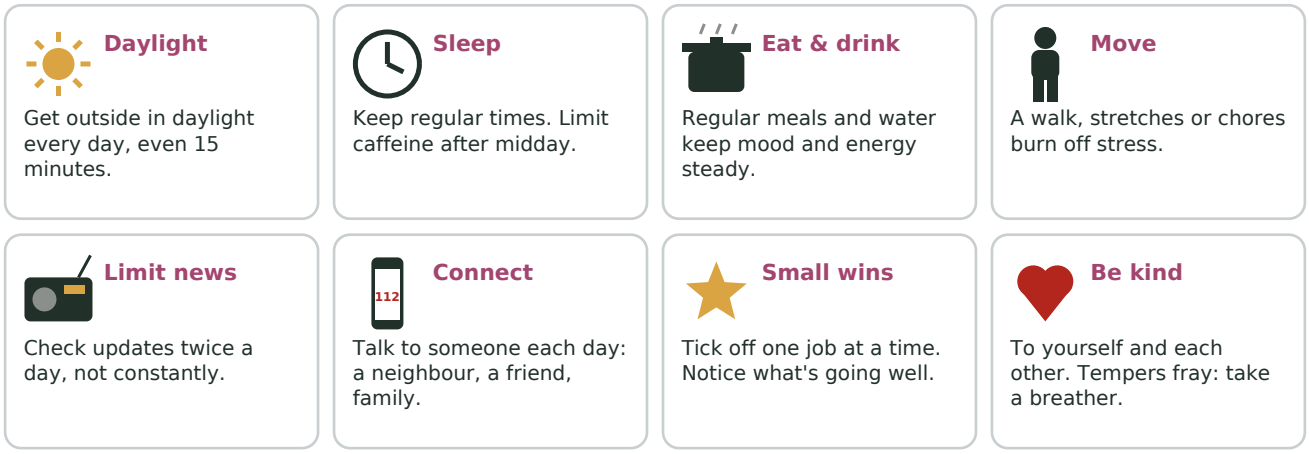


Figure 3. Eight things that keep people going.

Support lines (free, confidential)

Service	Contact	For
Samaritans	116 123 (24/7)	Anyone struggling to cope
Text About It	Text HELLO to 50808 (24/7)	Text support for any issue
Pieta	1800 247 247 or text HELP to 51444	Free crisis support, 24/7
Childline	1800 66 66 66 (24/7)	Children and young people under 18
HSE Your Mental Health line	1800 111 888 (24/7)	Information on mental health services
Emergency	112 or 999	If someone is in immediate danger

6. Community

The most resilient households aren't the ones with the most kit, they're the ones that know their neighbours. Swap numbers, agree who checks on whom (Vol 9), share a generator or a stove, and look out for people living alone. After the storm passes, a cup of tea together does more for morale than anything in this series.

Emergency numbers & the series

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Uisce Éireann (Irish Water)	1800 278 278	Water outages, burst mains, boil-water notices
HSELive	1800 700 700	Health service information
Public Poisons Line	01 809 2166	Advice if someone has swallowed or touched something harmful (8am-10pm daily)
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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 14

Offline Knowledge & Media

Libraries, maps & media without internet

Wikipedia, medical libraries and maps that work with no internet
Project NOMAD, Kiwix, offline maps and local AI
What to download now, and how to keep it powered



THE SERIES

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1 Just Add Water
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Do it while the internet works

Everything in this volume has to be downloaded in advance. Set an evening aside, start the big downloads overnight, and refresh them every six months or so.

1. What to back up

Category	Examples	Rough size
Your own documents	Scans of passports, certificates, insurance, prescriptions, the household plan (Volume 0)	Under 1 GB
Photos and videos	Family photos, especially ones that only exist on one phone	10-500 GB
This series	All 16 Ready at Home PDFs (readyathome.info)	About 100 MB
Reference libraries	Wikipedia, medical encyclopedias, how-to guides (Section 2)	2-100 GB
Maps	Your county, Ireland, and anywhere you might travel (Section 3)	0.2-2 GB
Learning	Khan Academy lessons, PhET science simulations, Wikibooks	1-200 GB
Books and audio	Project Gutenberg ebooks, LibriVox audiobooks (both free and out of copyright)	1-60 GB
Music and films	Your own collection, plus free music from Musopen or Free Music Archive	Varies
Faith texts	Public-domain Bible translations (KJV, World English Bible); the Quran text from Tanzil; your own prayer books	Under 100 MB

Keep two copies: one on a laptop or small server at home, and one on a USB drive or SSD stored somewhere else (a relative's house, or a fire-resistant bag). Encrypt the drive that holds personal documents.

2. Offline libraries with Kiwix

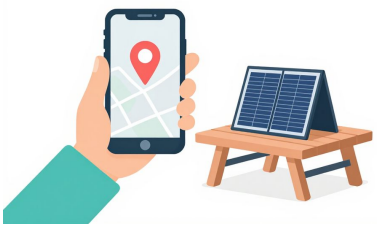
Kiwix is a free reader for 'ZIM' files: whole websites packed into a single file. It runs on Android, iPhone, Windows, Mac and Linux, and can serve the library to every device on your home Wi-Fi.

1. Install Kiwix (kiwix.org) on a phone, tablet or laptop.
2. Open the built-in library or browse library.kiwix.org and download the files you want.
3. Big files are best downloaded on a laptop and copied to an SD card or USB drive.
4. Test: switch to airplane mode and look something up.

Library (ZIM name)	What it is	Size*
Wikipedia (wikipedia_en_all)	All of English Wikipedia. 'nopic' versions skip images.	14-120 GB
MDWiki (mdwiki_en_all)	Medical encyclopedia written for the public (formerly WikiMed)	2-10 GB
MedlinePlus	US National Library of Medicine health topics and medicines	about 1.9 GB
NHS Medicines A to Z	Plain-English guide to common medicines	about 15 MB
Medical Library (zimgit-medicine)	Field and first-aid manuals collection	about 70 MB
Military Medicine (irp.fas.org)	US military field medical manuals	about 60 MB
iFixit	Repair guides for phones, appliances, cars, tools	about 3.4 GB
Home Improvement Q&A;	diy.stackexchange: plumbing, electrics, building	about 2 GB
Wikivoyage	Travel guide (Europe-only version is smaller)	0.1-1 GB
Gardening, Cooking Q&A;	Growing and cooking food	0.2-0.9 GB
Wikibooks, PhET	Textbooks and interactive science for children	0.1-4.5 GB
Learning Self-Reliance	Video library on self-sufficiency	about 3.8 GB

*Sizes from the Kiwix library, November 2026; they change with each update. The Merck/MSD Manual is not available as a free ZIM; MSD offers a free app, so check whether it stores content offline before relying on it. WHO and the Red Cross (IFRC) publish free first-aid and health guidance as PDFs you can save.

3. Offline maps



Your phone's GPS works without mobile signal or Wi-Fi; what you lose is the map. Download maps in advance and navigation keeps working.

App	Good for
Organic Maps (Android, iPhone)	Free, no ads, based on OpenStreetMap. Download by country or region; walking, cycling and driving directions offline.
OsmAnd (Android, iPhone)	More detail: contour lines, hiking trails, more settings.
Google Maps	'Offline maps' saves an area you draw; expires after a year unless updated.
Paper maps	Tailte Éireann Discovery Series 1:50,000. Never runs out of battery.

- Download all of Ireland (well under 1 GB in Organic Maps), plus anywhere you travel.
- Mark key places as favourites: family, meeting points, hospitals, pharmacies, water points.
- Update the maps every few months.

4. A home knowledge server: Project NOMAD



Project NOMAD (by Crosstalk Solutions, free and open source) turns an old laptop or a mini PC into an offline 'internet in a box' that every phone and laptop in the house can use over Wi-Fi.

- Kiwix libraries: Wikipedia, medical references, ebooks
- Offline maps for the regions you choose
- Kolibri with Khan Academy courses for children
- A local AI assistant (Ollama) that can answer questions about your saved documents
- Notes and other tools

	Minimum	Comfortable
Computer	Any 64-bit PC, 4 GB RAM (Debian or Ubuntu Linux)	Mini PC or laptop, 16-32 GB RAM; a graphics card helps the AI
Storage	10 GB for the system plus your libraries	A 1-2 TB SSD
Power	Mini PCs draw 10-30 W: a 1 kWh power station runs one for a day or more (Volume 2)	

Keep it private

NOMAD has no passwords. Use it on your home network only and never expose it to the internet.

5. AI that runs without internet

Small language models can now run on a laptop or recent phone with no connection. They're handy for explaining things, summarising your saved documents or helping children with homework.

Device	App	Suggested models
Laptop / PC	Ollama or LM Studio (free)	Llama 3.x 8B, Gemma 3 4B-12B, Qwen 3 4B-8B, Mistral 7B. 8 GB RAM minimum, 16 GB better.
Android / iPhone	PocketPal AI (free, open source); Google AI Edge Gallery on Android	1-4B models: Gemma 3 1B-4B, Llama 3.2 1B-3B, Qwen 3 1.7B-4B. Needs 6-8 GB of phone RAM.

Know the limits

- Offline AI can sound confident and still be wrong. Never use it to decide on medicines, doses or whether someone needs emergency care: use Volumes 5 and 6 and call 112.
- Download models while you have internet; they're 1-8 GB each.

6. Films, music and books

A media server keeps the household entertained in a long outage and runs happily on the same mini PC.

Tool	What it does	Notes
Jellyfin	Free, open-source media server: your films, TV, music and photos on any screen in the house	Works fully offline once set up
YAMS	An installer that sets up Jellyfin plus tools to organise and fetch media	Use only for media you own or that's free to share
Kiwix	TED talks and Project Gutenberg as ZIMs	Educational video and ebooks
Free collections	Musopen (classical, public domain), Free Music Archive (Creative Commons), LibriVox audiobooks	Download to a USB drive for the car too

Rip the DVDs and CDs you already own, and keep children's favourite films and audiobooks on a tablet that stays charged in the no-power box (Volume 13).

7. Keeping it all powered



- Phones and tablets: power banks and a small solar panel (Volume 2).
- Server or laptop: a power station; set the laptop to stop charging at 80% for battery life.
- A Wi-Fi router runs on 10-15 W, so the whole house can share the library from one battery.
- Store a spare copy of everything on a USB drive in a Faraday bag or metal tin. That protects the electronics from surges; a waterproof bag protects them from damp.

Emergency numbers & the series

Service	Number	Use it for
Emergency services	**112 or 999**	Ambulance, Garda, fire, coast guard. Works from any phone, any network.
ESB Networks	1800 372 999	Power cuts, fallen or damaged lines (24/7)
Gas Networks Ireland	1800 20 50 50	Smell of gas (24/7). Call from outside the house.
Uisce Éireann (Irish Water)	1800 278 278	Water outages, burst mains, boil-water notices
HSELive	1800 700 700	Health service information
Public Poisons Line	01 809 2166	Advice if someone has swallowed or touched something harmful (8am-10pm daily)
Samaritans	116 123	Anyone struggling to cope (24/7)
Text About It	Text HELLO to 50808	Free text support (24/7)
Childline	1800 66 66 66	Children and young people up to 18 (24/7)
Your county council	_____	Roads, flooding, local emergency centres
Met Éireann	met.ie / Met Éireann app	Weather warnings

Numbers checked November 2026. Write in your county council's number above, and your own local numbers (GP, out-of-hours doctor, pharmacy, vet, neighbours) in Volume 0.

The Ready At Home series

Vol	Title	What it covers
0	Start Here	Household plan & emergency numbers
1	Just Add Water	Home-dehydrated emergency meals
2	Power Cuts & Storms	Getting through long outages
3	Water & Sanitation	Storing, treating, toilets
4	Cooking & Warmth	Without mains power
5	First Aid	Step-by-step emergency care
6	Symptoms & Home Care	Red flags, minor illness, medicines
7	Home Systems & Repairs	Shut-offs, leaks, storm damage, floods
8	Fire Safety & Security	Alarms, escape plans, extinguishers
9	Communications	Family plan, radios, signals
10	Grab Bags & Kits	72-hour, car, child & pet kits
11	Pantry & Stockpile	A 30-day food store you rotate
12	Outdoor Skills	Fire, shelter, knots, navigation
13	Kids, Morale & Wellbeing	Keeping people okay
14	**Offline Knowledge & Media**	Libraries, maps & media without internet
15	Other Emergencies	Radiation, chemicals, heat, illness, cut off

This series gives general preparedness guidance. It is not a substitute for professional medical, electrical, gas or structural advice, or for a certified first-aid course. In an emergency, call 112 or 999 and follow the call-taker's instructions.

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READY AT HOME · VOLUME 15

Other Emergencies

Radiation, chemicals, heat, illness, cut off

A radiation incident abroad, and what Ireland's plan says
Chemical smoke and fumes nearby, heatwaves, cut off by snow or flood
Caring for someone with an infectious illness at home



THE SERIES

0 Start Here
1 Just Add Water
2 Power Cuts & Storms
3 Water & Sanitation
4 Cooking & Warmth
5 First Aid
6 Symptoms & Home Care
7 Home Systems & Repairs
8 Fire Safety & Security
9 Communications
10 Grab Bags & Kits
11 Pantry & Stockpile
12 Outdoor Skills
13 Kids, Morale & Wellbeing
14 Offline Knowledge &
15 Other Emergencies

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2. Smoke or chemical fumes nearby 3

3. Heatwaves 3

4. Cut off by snow or flooding 4

5. Infectious illness at home 4

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Emergency numbers & the series 5

The Ready At Home series 5

Most emergencies in Ireland are storms, floods and power cuts (Volumes 2-4). This volume covers the less likely ones calmly and briefly, so you know where to look and what official advice to expect.

1. A nuclear or radiological incident abroad



Ireland has no nuclear power stations. The concern is an accident at a plant in another country, with radioactive material carried here by the wind.

The Government's updated *National Plan for Nuclear and Radiological Emergency Exposures* (July 2026) states that no scenario is expected in which the public in Ireland would need to evacuate or shelter indoors, and that iodine tablets would not be necessary. The main protection is monitoring: the EPA and other agencies would test air, water, soil and food and, if needed, restrict certain foods.

What to do	Why
Follow RTÉ Radio 1, local radio, gov.ie and epa.ie	Official advice will tell you if any food or water precautions apply where you live
Don't buy or take iodine tablets from online sellers	They aren't advised under the plan and can cause side effects, particularly with thyroid conditions
Carry on with normal life unless told otherwise	The plan expects any effects in Ireland to be managed through food and water controls
Keep your usual stored food and water (Volumes 3 and 11)	Useful if any fresh produce is temporarily restricted

2. Smoke or chemical fumes nearby

A large fire at a factory, farm or warehouse, or a chemical leak from a lorry or train, can send smoke or fumes over nearby homes. The fire service or Gardaí will tell you what to do; usually it's to stay inside until it passes.

1. Go indoors and stay there unless you're told to leave.
2. Close windows and doors. Turn off extractor fans, ventilation systems and wood stoves.
3. Bring pets in. Don't go out to collect children from school: schools have their own plans.
4. Listen to local radio for updates.
5. If you're caught outside in smoke, move upwind and away from it.
6. If you feel unwell (sore eyes, coughing, breathlessness), call your GP or 112 if it's severe.

3. Heatwaves

Irish homes are built to keep heat in, so they can get uncomfortably hot in a heatwave. Older people, babies and people with heart or lung conditions feel it most.

Do	Watch for
Close curtains on sunny sides by day; open windows at night when it's cooler outside	Heat exhaustion: headache, dizziness, nausea, heavy sweating, cramps, fast pulse. Move somewhere cool, give water, loosen clothes
Drink water regularly, even if not thirsty; avoid alcohol in the heat	Heatstroke: hot dry skin, confusion, fainting, a temperature over 40°C. Call 112 and cool them while you wait
Avoid the sun between 11 am and 3 pm; use sunscreen, a hat and shade	
Check on older neighbours; never leave children or pets in a parked car	

4. Cut off by snow or flooding

Rural roads can be impassable for several days. With the stores in this series, being cut off is mostly a matter of patience.

☐ Fuel: oil tank above a quarter, logs or briquettes, gas cartridges	☐ Food for at least a week (Volume 11)
☐ Water stored, especially if you're on a well (Volume 3)	☐ Medicines: repeat prescriptions collected before the weather turns (Volume 6)
☐ Phones and power banks charged; a radio	☐ Grit or salt and a shovel
☐ A plan to check on neighbours by phone	☐ Pet food and animal feed, if you keep livestock

If someone needs medical help and roads are closed, call 112: the emergency services, Civil Defence and the Defence Forces have vehicles for these conditions.

5. Infectious illness at home

Flu, COVID-19, a stomach bug or another infection can spread through a household. These steps help protect everyone else while you care for the person who's ill.

Area	What helps
Room	Keep the sick person in one room if you can, door closed, window open a little. One carer where possible.
Hands	Wash with soap for 20 seconds after every contact; hand sanitiser by the door.
Surfaces	Clean handles, taps, toilets and phones daily with diluted bleach or a disinfectant.
Laundry and dishes	Wash at 60°C; dishwasher or hot soapy water.
Fluids	Small, frequent drinks; oral rehydration for vomiting and diarrhoea (Volume 6).
Masks	A well-fitting mask for the sick person and carer when in the same room.

When to get help

Use the red flags in Volume 6. Call 112 for difficulty breathing, chest pain, confusion, a rash that doesn't fade under a glass, or a person who is very hard to wake. Otherwise contact your GP or out-of-hours service.

6. Where official information comes from

Source	For
RTÉ Radio 1 and local radio	Live updates in any national or local emergency
gov.ie and winterready.ie	Government emergency information and the Be Winter Ready campaign
Met Éireann (met.ie)	Weather warnings
EPA (epa.ie)	Radiation monitoring, air quality, water
HSE (hse.ie)	Health advice and outbreaks
Your county council	Roads, flooding, local emergency centres
Mobile phone alerts	Ireland plans to begin emergency text alerts (cell broadcast) in 2027

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