

# BE PREPARED FOR A TORNADO

**Tornadoes can  
destroy buildings,  
flip cars, and create  
deadly flying debris.**



**FEMA**

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**Tornadoes are  
violently rotating  
columns of air  
that extend from  
a thunderstorm  
to the ground.**



**Can happen anytime**



**Bring intense winds**



**Can happen anywhere**



**Look like funnels**

## IF YOU ARE UNDER A TORNADO WARNING, FIND SAFE SHELTER RIGHT AWAY

**Go to a safe room,  
basement, or storm cellar.**



**If you can safely get to a sturdy  
building, do so immediately.**

**If there is no basement,  
get to a small, interior room  
on the lowest level.**



**Do not get under an overpass or  
bridge. You're safer in a low, flat  
location.**

**Stay away from windows,  
doors, and outside walls.**



**Watch out for flying debris that  
can cause injury or death.**



**Use your arms to protect  
your head and neck.**

# HOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN A TORNADO THREATENS

## Prepare NOW

**Know your area's tornado risk.** In the U.S., the Midwest and the Southeast have a greater risk for tornadoes.

**Know the signs of a tornado,** including a rotating funnel-shaped cloud, an approaching cloud of debris, or a loud roar—similar to a freight train.

**Sign up for your community's warning system.** The Emergency Alert System (EAS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio also provide emergency alerts. If your community has sirens, become familiar with the warning tone.

**Pay attention to weather reports.** Meteorologists can predict when conditions might be right for a tornado.

**Identify and practice going to a safe shelter** for high winds, such as a safe room built using FEMA criteria or a storm shelter built to ICC 500 standards. The next best protection is a small, interior, windowless room in a sturdy building on the lowest level.

**Consider constructing a safe room** that meets FEMA or ICC 500 standards.

## Survive DURING

**Immediately go to a safe location** that you identified.

**Take additional cover** by shielding your head and neck with your arms and putting materials such as furniture and blankets around you.

**Listen to EAS, NOAA Weather Radio,** or local alerting systems for current emergency information and instructions.

**Do not try to outrun a tornado** in a vehicle.

**If you are in a car or outdoors** and cannot get to a building, cover your head and neck with your arms and cover your body with a coat or blanket, if possible.

## Be Safe AFTER

**Keep listening to EAS, NOAA Weather Radio,** and local authorities for updated information.

**If you are trapped, cover your mouth** with a cloth or mask to avoid breathing dust. Try to send a text, bang on a pipe or wall, or use a whistle instead of shouting.

**Stay clear of fallen power lines or broken utility lines.**

**Do not enter damaged buildings** until you are told that they are safe.

**Save your phone calls for emergencies.** Phone systems are often down or busy after a disaster. Use text messaging or social media to communicate with family and friends.

**Be careful during clean-up.** Wear thick-soled shoes, long pants, and work gloves.



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## Take an Active Role in Your Safety

Go to **ready.gov** and search for **tornado**. Download the **FEMA app** to get more information about preparing for a **tornado**.