

According to the National Weather Service (NWS), tornadoes are the number one severe weather-related killer in Georgia.

Tornadoes are violently rotating columns of air extending from a thunderstorm to the ground. Tornadoes can vary in shape, size, and intensity. Most tornadoes are weak, lasting a few minutes and producing winds of less than 100 mph. However, a few tornadoes are strong or even violent. These tornadoes can last from 20 minutes to more than an hour and can produce wind speeds higher than 166 mph.

The best thing to do to protect yourself and your family is to have a plan of action before a threatening tornado develops.



## Prepare a Home Tornado Plan

- Pick a place where family members could gather if a tornado is headed your way. It could be your basement or, if there is no basement, a windowless center hallway, bathroom, or closet on the lowest floor. Keep this place uncluttered.
- If you are in a high-rise building, you may not have enough time to go to the lowest floor. Pick a place in a hallway in the center of the building.

## Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit Containing

- First aid kit and essential medications
- Canned food and can opener
- At least three gallons of water per person per day
- Protective clothing, bedding or sleeping bags
- Battery-powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries
- Special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members
- Written instructions on how to turn off electricity, gas, and water if authorities advise you to do so (Remember, you'll need a professional to restore natural gas service.)

## Stay Tuned for Storm Warnings

- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio, local radio and television stations, or download the Ready Georgia mobile app for updated storm information.
- Know what a tornado WATCH and WARNING means:
  - A tornado WATCH means a tornado is possible in your area.
  - A tornado WARNING means a tornado has been sighted and may be headed for your area. Go to safety immediately.
- Tornado WATCHES and WARNINGS are issued by the National Weather Service.

## When a Tornado WATCH is Issued

- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio, local radio and television stations, or download the Ready Georgia app for further updates.
- Be alert to changing weather conditions. Blowing debris or the sound of an approaching tornado may alert you. Many people say it sounds like a freight train.

## When a Tornado WARNING is Issued

- The tornado may be approaching your area. If you are inside, go to the safe place you picked to protect yourself from glass and other flying objects.
- If you are outside, hurry to the basement of a nearby sturdy building. As a last resort, lie flat in a ditch or low-lying area.
- If you are in a car or mobile home, get out immediately and head for safety.

## After the Tornado Passes

- Watch out for fallen power lines and stay out of the damaged area.
- Listen to the radio for information and instructions.
- Use a flashlight to inspect your home for damage.
- Do not use candles at any time.

To help families prepare, Ready Georgia, a statewide emergency preparedness campaign established by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency/Homeland Security (GEMA) offers the tools needed to make an emergency supply kit, develop a communications plan, and stay informed about potential threats. For more information, visit [www.ready.ga.gov](http://www.ready.ga.gov).