

The Seven Steps to Earthquake Safety

Earthquakes and tsunamis are inevitable but the damage is not—even in a very large earthquake. Preparing for the next damaging earthquake can help you and your family to survive and recover.

The seven steps that follow include actions to keep you and your loved ones safe, reduce potential damage and recover quickly. These steps should also be followed in schools, workplaces, and other facilities. By following them, countless casualties can be avoided and millions of dollars saved.

Preparation is the key to surviving a disaster—that much is clear—but where should you start? Start by talking—talk to your family, friends, neighbors and co-workers about what you’ve learned in this handbook about earthquakes and tsunamis in Southern California. Then discuss what you have done to prepare and together plan your next steps.

Many people are overwhelmed by the mere prospect of a natural disaster and, as a result, don’t prepare at all. Do not fall into that trap. You can start today by following these seven steps.

PREPARE

before an earthquake or tsunami:

1. Secure your space (see illustration below and page 16)
2. Create a plan (page 18)
3. Prepare disaster kits (page 19)
4. Strengthen your home (page 20)

SURVIVE

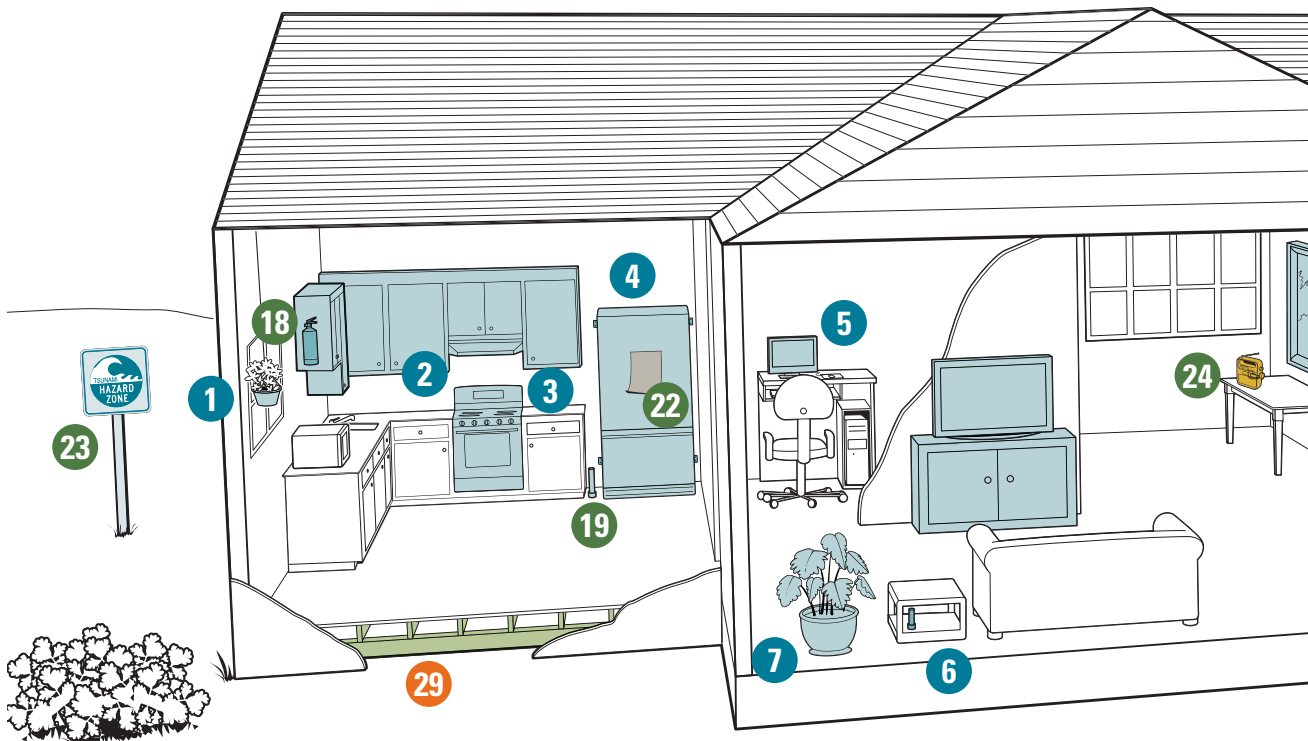
during an earthquake:

5. Drop, cover, and hold on (page 22)

RECOVER

after an earthquake or tsunami:

6. Check for injuries and damage (page 23)
7. Follow your plan (page 24)



STEP 1

Secure your space

- 1 Hang plants in lightweight pots with closed hooks, well secured to a joist or stud and far away from windows.
- 2 Install strong latches on kitchen cabinets.
- 3 Use flexible connections where gas lines meet appliances.
- 4 Remove or lock refrigerator wheels, secure to studs.
- 5 Secure valuable electronics items such as computers and televisions.
- 6 Keep breakables in low or secure cabinets with latches.
- 7 Move heavy plants and other large items to floor or low shelves.
- 8 Hang mirrors and pictures on closed hooks.
- 9 Secure free-standing woodstove or fireplace insert.
- 10 Keep heavy unstable objects away from doors and exit routes.
- 11 Place bed away from windows or items that may fall.
- 12 Secure knick knacks and other small valuables with museum putty.
- 13 Brace overhead light fixtures.
- 14 Place only light weight/soft items over bed.
- 15 Secure top-heavy furniture to studs.
- 16 Secure water heater with metal straps attached to studs.
- 17 Trim hazardous tree limbs.

STEP 2

Create a plan

- 18 Store fire extinguisher (type ABC) in easily accessible location.
- 19 Keep several flashlights in easily accessible places around the house.
- 20 Keep wrench or turn-off tool in water proof wrap near gas meter.
- 21 Know the location of your main electrical switch (fuse box or circuit breaker).
- 22 Have your emergency plan accessible and discuss with all family members.
- 23 Know whether you live, work or play in a tsunami hazard zone.
- 24 Obtain a NOAA Weather Radio with the Public Alert feature to notify you of tsunamis and other hazards.
- 25 Keep flashlight, slippers and gloves next to beds.
- 26 Keep gas tank at least half full.

STEP 3

Prepare disaster kits

- 27 Keep an emergency backpack with copies of important documents near the door to grab and go.
- 28 Store emergency food and water supplies in a dry accessible area. Include first aid kit, extra cash, portable radio, extra batteries, medications and other necessary supplies.

STEP 4

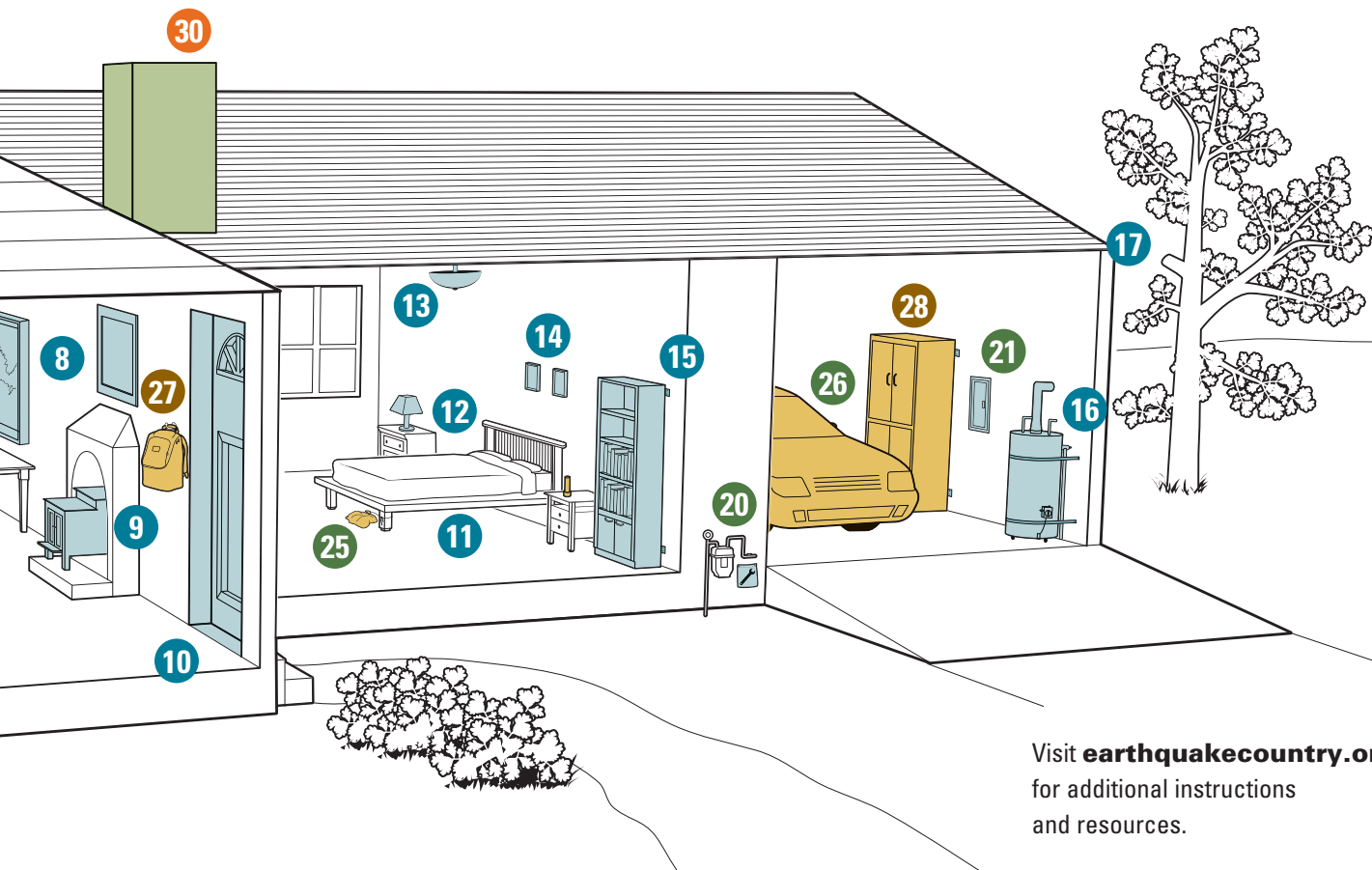
Strengthen your home

- 29 Use anchor bolts every 4 to 6 feet to secure home to foundation.
- 30 Reinforce brick chimneys

STEPS 5-7

During and after the earthquake

see pages 22–25



Visit earthquakecountry.org for additional instructions and resources.