OFFLINE RESILIENCE GUIDE // UK EDITION

The UK 72-Hour Emergency Kit

A practical home kit for the first few days of a power cut, water outage or severe-weather disruption. Built from UK Government preparedness guidance rather than a product checklist.

8 MIN | UPDATED 25 SEP 2026 | UK FOCUS

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LAYER 1 // ACT

FIRST ACTIONS

Start here. Then read the conditions and exceptions below.

1. Keep the basics together where you can find them in the dark.
2. Plan drinking water for every person, plus extra for pets, medical needs and cooking.
3. Use torches rather than candles. Keep a charged power bank and a battery or wind-up radio.
4. Choose food that can be eaten without cooking and keep a manual tin opener.
5. Keep regular medication, paper contacts and device instructions easy to reach.

> **IMPORTANT**
> This is practical preparedness information, not emergency instruction. During an incident, follow current advice from emergency services, your utility provider and relevant public authorities.

Start with what fails first

An emergency kit is not a box of unusual gadgets. It is a small buffer against ordinary services being unavailable for a while. The Government Prepare campaign suggests thinking about supplies for an emergency lasting a few days. This site uses 72 hours as a simple planning baseline, not as a UK Government minimum.

Power, water, communications and normal shopping routines can fail together. A torch is useful because the lights are off. A radio is useful because broadband may be down. Bottled water matters because some incidents can disrupt the mains water supply. The kit should cover those dependencies first.

What belongs in the core kit

A sensible first layer is simple: a battery or wind-up torch, spare batteries, a power bank, a battery or wind-up radio, first-aid supplies, hand sanitiser or wipes, bottled water and food that does not need cooking. Add a manual tin opener if tins are part of the food plan.

Keep paper copies of important phone numbers, medication details and any instructions for medical equipment. If somebody in the household relies on powered medical equipment, the equipment plan matters more than a larger general-purpose battery. Speak to the care team or equipment provider about outage arrangements.

Water sets the size of the kit

UK Prepare cites a World Health Organization minimum survival reference of 2.5 to 3 litres of drinking water per person per day. It also notes that around 10 litres per person per day provides more room for basic cooking and hygiene. A household of four therefore needs at least 30 to 36 litres just for three days of drinking water, before pets or special requirements are counted.

Do not make filtration your only water plan. Stored, sealed drinking water is immediately usable. A filter or treatment product is a backup layer for a situation where the normal supply is unavailable and you have an appropriate alternative source.

Where to keep it

The best kit is one you can reach without hunting through cupboards in the dark. Keep the core items together, but do not create one heavy container that nobody can move. Water is usually better split into manageable containers.

Check the kit every few months. Recharge power banks, test torches and radios, rotate food you already eat, check battery dates and update paper contact details. This turns preparedness into maintenance rather than a one-off purchase.

Do not overbuy

Build the essential layer first. A large power station or solar panel can be useful later, but neither replaces water, light, food, warmth, information or a plan. Spend first on the things that solve common short outages and still have a normal household use.

Useful kit for this plan

Equipment should support the plan, not replace it. The commercial catalogue is kept on a separate page.

KIT IS KEPT SEPARATE
Named products and Amazon UK affiliate links are kept on the dedicated KIT page so this guide remains editorial. Use the kit only after the plan identifies a genuine equipment gap.

OPEN KIT →

Sources checked for this guide

We use public sources for the factual backbone and write the guide in our own words. Source pages can change, so the links below are the place to check current official advice.

PRIMARY / AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE

UK Government Prepare: Get prepared for emergencies

Household planning, emergency supplies, paper contacts, water, food, torches, power banks and radios.

https://prepare.campaign.gov.uk/get-prepared-for-emergencies/

PRIMARY / AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE

UK Government Prepare: Power cuts

Practical actions before and during a power cut, including 105 and communications planning.

https://prepare.campaign.gov.uk/be-informed-about-hazards/power-cuts/

PRIMARY / AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE

UK Government Prepare: Water supply interruptions

Preparing for a water outage, stored drinking water and support from water companies.

https://prepare.campaign.gov.uk/be-informed-about-hazards/water-supply-interruptions-or-outages/

Editorial review date: 25 September 2026. If an official source conflicts with this page, follow the official source.

INFORMATION CHECK✓ CURRENT REVIEW

REVIEWED	NEXT REVIEW DUE	OFFICIAL REFERENCES
25 Sep 2026	23 Jan 2027	3 primary sources

If an official source conflicts with this guide, follow the current official source.

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