GO BAG CHECKLIST

A go bag is a pre-packed backpack or small duffel with essential supplies you can grab quickly in an emergency. It should support you for **at least 72 hours (3 days)** without outside help.

Having a go bag ready is one of the simplest ways you can protect yourself and your loved ones when disaster strikes. Being prepared means you can act quickly, stay safe, and focus on what matters most in a difficult moment.

Step 1: Choose the Right Bag

Pick a bag that is:

- Easy to carry (a backpack helps keep your hands free)
- Durable and water-resistant
- Comfortable (look for padded straps if possible)
- Not too large. Aim for something you can carry long distances if needed

Step 2: Documents and Essentials

Keep photocopies of all documents in a waterproof folder or zip top bag. You can also store encrypted digital copies on a password-protected USB drive.

- [ ] ID (driver's license, passport)
- [ ] Insurance policies (home, health, auto)
- [ ] Medical records and prescriptions
- [ ] Emergency contact list
- [ ] Bank account info (or contact info, do not include full sensitive numbers)

Also include essentials like:

- [ ] A small amount of cash, in small bills and some coins
- [ ] Copies of keys (house, car)
- [ ] A notepook and pen, for taking notes. Keep these in a zip top bag or find waterproof options.
- [ ] Recent photos of family and pets
- [ ] Entertainment like a book, cards, or crossword puzzles

Step 3: Communication and Navigation

- [ ] Fully charged backup phone battery or power bank
- [ ] Chargers and adapters for cell phones and other electronics in your go bag
- [ ] Spare cell phone and sim card
- [ ] Written list of important phone numbers (like contact numbers for your insurance company, etc.)
- [ ] Local map (in case GPS isn't available)
- [ ] Battery-powered or hand-crank radio

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Step 4: Basic Survival Supplies

Water and Food

- [ ] **Water:** At least 3 liters per person, or bring a water filter and reusable bottles/carrying jugs
- [ ] **Food:** Non-perishable items like:
  - [ ] Canned food (look for cans with pull tabs, otherwise remember to pack a manual can opener)
  - [ ] Protein bars
  - [ ] Trail mix
  - [ ] Jerky

Health and Safety

- [ ] First aid kit (bandages, antiseptic, pain relievers)
- [ ] Prescription medications (at least 3–7 days supply)
- [ ] Face masks (N95 or similar)
- [ ] Hand sanitizer
- [ ] Personal hygiene items like a toothbrush, wipes, toilet paper, feminine products

Tools and Equipment

- [ ] Flashlight (LED, with extra batteries)
- [ ] Small, rapid-drying towel
- [ ] Multi-tool or Swiss Army knife
- [ ] Emergency whistle
- [ ] Duct tape
- [ ] Lighter or waterproof matches

Clothing and Shelter

- [ ] For each family member, pack:
- [ ] At least one change of clothes
- [ ] Extra socks and underwear
- [ ] Pair of pyjamas
- [ ] Weather-appropriate jacket
- [ ] Compact emergency blanket (space blanket)
- [ ] Small tarp or poncho (rain protection)
- [ ] Extra pair of glasses or contacts (if needed)

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Step 5: Customize for your Household

If you have children:

- [ ] Diapers, formula, bottles
- [ ] Comfort items, like small toys or blankets

If you have pets:

- [ ] Pet food and water
- [ ] Leashes, collars, harnesses, and/or pet carriers
- [ ] Vet records and documentation

If you have special needs:

- [ ] Mobility aids
- [ ] Medical devices and backups

Step 6: Check your go bag every 6 months to keep it updated

- Replace expired food and medications
- Update documents and contact lists
- Adjust clothing for the season
- Recharge batteries

Bonus Tips

- Keep shoes nearby, in case you need to leave quickly
- Practice a quick “grab-and-go” drill with your household

Having a go bag gives you a sense of control in uncertain situations, and can make a critical difference in the hours or days following an emergency.

But for millions of people around the world, disasters don’t just disrupt daily life – they take everything. Families often lose their homes, belongings, and access to basic necessities.

ShelterBox Canada works alongside vulnerable, disaster-affected communities to provide shelter, essential supplies, and training to help people begin rebuilding their lives.

While preparedness helps protect us here at home, many people around the world rely on humanitarian aid to meet even their most basic needs after disaster. Together, we can can make a difference and help the people who need it most.

Learn more and support our work at www.shelterboxcanada.org