



Earthquakes are sudden rolling or shaking events caused by movement under the earth's surface. Earthquakes happen along cracks in the earth's surface, called fault lines, and can be felt over large areas, although they usually last less than one minute. Earthquakes cannot be predicted — although scientists are working on it!

If you are inside a building:

- ✚ Stay where you are until the shaking stops. Do not run outside. Do not get in a doorway as this does not provide protection from falling or flying objects, and you may not be able to remain standing.
- ✚ Drop down onto your hands and knees so the earthquake doesn't knock you down. Drop to the ground (before the earthquake drops you!)
- ✚ Cover your head and neck with your arms to protect yourself from falling debris.
- ✚ If you are in danger from falling objects, and you can move safely, crawl for additional cover under a sturdy desk or table.
- ✚ If there is low furniture or an interior wall or corner nearby, and the path is clear, these may also provide some additional cover.
- ✚ Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls, and anything that could fall, such as light fixtures or furniture.
- ✚ Hold on to any sturdy covering so you can move with it until the shaking stops. Stay where you are until the shaking stops.

If getting safely to the floor to take cover won't be possible:

- ✚ Identify an inside corner of the room away from windows and objects that could fall on you. The Earthquake Country Alliance advises getting as low as possible to the floor. People who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices should lock their wheels and remain seated until the shaking stops. Protect your head and neck with your arms, a pillow, a book, or whatever is available.

If you are in bed when you feel the shaking:

- ✚ If you are in bed: Stay there and Cover your head and neck with a pillow. At night, hazards and debris are difficult to see and avoid; attempts to move in the dark result in more injuries than remaining in bed.

If you are outside when you feel the shaking:

- ✚ If you are outdoors when the shaking starts, move away from buildings, streetlights, and utility wires. Once in the open, "Drop, Cover, and Hold On." Stay there until the shaking stops. This might not be possible in a city, so you may need to duck inside a building to avoid falling debris.

If you are in a moving vehicle when you feel the shaking:

- ✚ If you are in a moving vehicle, stop as quickly and safely as possible and stay in the vehicle. Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses, and utility wires. Proceed cautiously once the earthquake has stopped. Avoid roads, bridges, or ramps that the earthquake may have damaged.



Find additional information on how to plan and prepare for an earthquake and learn about available resources by visiting the following websites: [America's PrepareAthon!](#) [The Great ShakeOut](#) [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#) [U.S. Geological Survey Earthquake Hazards Program](#) [Earthquake Country Alliance](#) [National Science Foundation](#) [National Institute of Standards and Technology](#)