



Heatwave

What to do before, during and after several days of extreme heat. Print it and keep it with your kit.

Before (preparation)

1. **Watch the Met Office forecast and heat-health alerts.** Check the outlook a day or two ahead so a hot spell does not catch you out.
2. **Get the home ready to stay cool.** Plan to keep curtains and blinds closed on the sunny side during the day, and open windows to ventilate at night and early morning when it is cooler.
3. **Stock up on water.** Keep plenty to drink, and have a way to keep some cool. Avoid relying on fizzy or very sugary drinks.
4. **Identify the coolest room** in your home — usually one that gets the least direct sun — to spend the hottest hours of the day in.
5. **Think about vulnerable people nearby:** older neighbours living alone, babies and anyone with a long-term illness. Agree how you will check on them.

During the heatwave

- Drink water regularly** through the day, even before you feel thirsty, and go easy on alcohol and caffeine.
- Keep the home cool:** curtains and blinds closed during the day, ventilate at night, and switch off lights and equipment you are not using.
- Avoid the midday sun.** Stay out of direct heat between roughly 11am and 3pm; if you go out, use shade, a hat and sun cream.
- Dress light** in loose, cool clothing, and cool your skin with a damp cloth, a cool shower or a fan.
- Check on older neighbours,** young children and anyone unwell at least once a day — they feel the heat first.
- Never leave anyone** — a child, an older person or a pet — in a parked car, even briefly.

Spot heat exhaustion and heatstroke

- Heat exhaustion** can include tiredness, dizziness, headache, feeling sick, heavy sweating and cramps. Move the person somewhere cool, get them to drink water and cool their skin. They should feel better within 30 minutes.
- Heatstroke is a medical emergency.** If they are still unwell after 30 minutes, are confused, stop sweating, have a very high temperature or lose consciousness, **call 999** and cool them while you wait.
- Follow **NHS** advice on heat exhaustion and heatstroke, and the Met Office heat-health alerts.

After

- Keep drinking water and resting until the **cooler weather settles in** — the effects of heat can linger.
 - Check again on **vulnerable neighbours** to make sure they came through it well.
 - Top up your water supplies** and note anything you would do differently next time.
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Safety: a hot, stuffy room with no airflow can be dangerous for babies, older people and anyone unwell. Keep checking on them, keep air moving and seek medical help early — call **999** if you suspect heatstroke.

Get ready for the next hot spell

The planner sizes your kit by people and days.

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