



---

## Power cut

What to do before, during and after a power cut that lasts hours or days. Print it and keep it with your kit.

### Before (preparation)

---

- Keep a **torch** and a **battery or wind-up radio** somewhere fixed that everyone in the home knows about. Use a torch rather than candles.
- Store **spare batteries** (in date) for each device, and keep a **power bank** charged ready to go.
- Keep some **water** and **food that needs no cooking or fridge** (tinned food, nuts, cereal bars).
- Keep a little **cash in small notes**: with no power, card machines and cash machines may not work.
- Save the free number **105** to report a power cut, and the contact details for your network operator.
- If you or someone in your home is vulnerable, **register for the Priority Services Register** with your network operator and energy supplier in advance.
- Have **blankets** or warm clothing ready in case the cut happens in winter, as the heating will be off.

### During the power cut

---

1. **Check how far it reaches.** See whether it is only your home (check your fuse board and reset the trip switch) or the whole street (look at neighbours' windows and the street lights).
2. **Call 105 to report it and get updates.** It connects you free to your network operator wherever you are in Great Britain, and to the National Grid network for your area.
3. **Keep the fridge and freezer closed.** Shut, a fridge stays cold for about **4 hours** and a full freezer for around **24 to 48 hours**. Every time you open it, food warms up faster.
4. **Use a torch, not candles**, especially with children, pets or any chance of a gas leak. Candles are a fire risk.
5. **Switch off and unplug** sensitive equipment (TV, computer, router) to protect it from the surge when the power returns. Leave one light switched on so you know when it is back.
6. **Ration your mobile battery.** Use battery saver or flight mode and keep it for essentials.

### If it lasts

---

- Manage **food safety**: throw away anything that has been warm for hours, and do not risk doubtful meat, fish or dairy.
- Look after **warmth and water**: gather the family in one room to keep heat in, and use stored water for drinking.
- Check on vulnerable neighbours**: older people living alone, anyone relying on electrical medical equipment or with reduced mobility.
- Find out whether your council has opened a **support point** or rest centre, and follow gov.uk Prepare advice.
- In an emergency where there is danger to life, call **999**.

### After

---

- Replace what you used** from your kit: batteries, water, food and the power bank charge.
- Note what was missing** and what worked well, so you are better set up next time.
- Check the fridge, freezer, boiler and router are **working normally** once the power is back.

**Safety:** never run a petrol or diesel generator, barbecue or any fuel-burning appliance indoors or in an enclosed space such as a garage or porch. They give off carbon monoxide, a colourless, odourless gas that can cause serious or fatal poisoning.

### Get ready for the next power cut

The planner sizes your kit by people and days.

[emergencykitlab.co.uk/planner](https://emergencykitlab.co.uk/planner)