

Japan is a country with many earthquakes.



Be prepared for earthquakes

Protect yourself from large earthquakes

Earthquakes (natural phenomena that cause the ground to shake) occur frequently in Japan. In the event of an earthquake, houses and other buildings may collapse and people may get injured.

This material includes important points to protect you and your family from the damage caused by an earthquake.



What is an earthquake?

- (1) Earthquakes are natural phenomena that cause the ground to shake.
- (2) Earthquakes can occur suddenly, with no warning.
- (3) An earthquake may be followed by other disasters described below.
 - A tsunami (large sea wave) rushes toward the land.
 - A landslide occurs on a mountain. Buildings and roads collapse.
 - Electricity, gas, and water supply are cut off.
 - There is no network connection for mobile phones.

What is a tsunami?

- (1) A tsunami is an extremely fast, large and dangerous sea wave that may occur after an earthquake.
- (2) An earthquake that occurs near the sea may be followed by a tsunami, even in the case of a small earthquake.
 - If you spend time at the coast, check for a safe place to run to, and plan your escape route in the event of a tsunami.
 - If you feel an earthquake, immediately head to higher ground. Do not run to your car.
 - The tsunami may strike again and again. It is extremely dangerous to return to the seashore after the first wave recedes.

Term	Meaning
Intensity of earthquake	Scale of earthquake
Afterquakes (Aftershocks)	Earthquakes after a large earthquake
Landslide	A mountain collapses. A large amount of soil and rocks fall from the mountain.
Blackout	Lights cannot be used because the electricity is cut off.
Water outage	There is no running water because it is cut off.
Evacuation	Run to somewhere safe to escape from the danger.
Preparation for evacuation	Be prepared to run to somewhere safe. (Elderly people, etc. should start escaping.)

You can learn a lot about earthquakes and tsunamis by browsing the following apps.

① Safety Tips, Japan Tourism Agency


Search the App Store or Google Play.

Safety Tips 

This app provides information about earthquake early warnings,¹⁾ tsunami warnings,²⁾ and evacuation action to be taken.³⁾ Five languages: English, Chinese (simplified and traditional), Korean, and Japanese.

② Disaster Preparedness Tokyo, Tokyo Metropolitan Government

Search the App Store or Google Play.

東京都防災アプリ 

This app provides basic information about earthquakes and being prepared as well as helpful information in the event of an earthquake. Five languages: English, Chinese (simplified and traditional), Korean and Japanese.

③ CLAIR Multilingual Life Information

Search the App Store or Google Play.

多言語生活情報 

This app provides basic information about earthquakes and other living information necessary for foreigners in Japan, such as the preparation of stockpiles and evacuation methods. There are 17 categories in total, written in 14 languages.

④ NHK World (TV)

Search the App Store or Google Play.

NHK World TV 

Provides various 24-hour news in English, including earthquake/tsunami information and breaking news.

Term	Meaning
Evacuation order	Run to somewhere safe.
Evacuation instructions	Immediately run to somewhere safe.
Evacuation center	Place to stay for people whose homes were destroyed and for other people seeking shelter. For example, community halls and school gymnasiums.
Higher ground	Place higher than the surrounding area
Evacuation site (evacuation area)	When an earthquake occurs, run to this place first. It is a large space, such as a park or school playground.
Safety confirmation	To check whether someone is alive or injured in the case of a disaster such as an earthquake.

The following websites also provide information about earthquakes and tsunamis.

Information provider	URL	Language
NHK World (Radio)	https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/ja/radio/	18 languages
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism	http://www.mlit.go.jp/river/bousai/olympic/index.html	Japanese, English Korean, Chinese (simplified and traditional)
Japan Meteorological Agency	http://www.jma.go.jp/jma/index.html http://www.jma.go.jp/jma/indexe.html	Japanese English
Fire and Disaster Management Agency, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications	http://www.fdma.go.jp/ http://www.fdma.go.jp/en/	Japanese English
Disaster Prevention / Crisis Management e-College	http://open.fdma.go.jp/e-college/ http://www.fdma.go.jp/en/	Japanese English
Council of Local Authorities for International Relations	Multilingual Life Information http://www.clair.or.jp/tagengo/index.html	13 languages

To protect yourself from earthquakes: Part 2 Be prepared in advance

(1) Is your neighborhood safe?

Read the following items and if applicable, check the box.

- Close to the sea ⇒ Earthquake may cause a tsunami.
- Close to a mountain ⇒ Earthquake may cause a landslide.

If you checked either of the boxes, look for a safe place near your house where you can run (evacuate) to in the event of an earthquake.

Check the disaster-prevention map (map for evacuation sites) for your area to learn more about the safety situation and evacuation sites near your house.

You can check the hazard maps prepared by local governments in Japan on the following website (in Japanese only).



- Our town's hazard map: Getting the hazard map for your area
Geospatial Information Authority of Japan : <https://disaportal.gsi.go.jp/hazardmap/>

(2) Is your house resistant to earthquakes?

In past earthquakes, many of the older wooden houses collapsed and many people died in their homes. If you live in a house that was built many years ago, it's important to obtain a seismic evaluation and have the necessary repair work done.

- I have checked the earthquake resistance of my house.

[Reference] Simplified Seismic Evaluation of Wooden Houses for Homeowners and Residents (The Japan Building Disaster Prevention Association)

<http://www.kenchiku-bosai.or.jp/english/> (English site)

(3) Is it safe inside your house?

When an earthquake occurs, dangerous conditions might result, such as the furniture falls over, objects on the shelf drop, and glass breaks.

Therefore, check your home for anything that could become dangerous during an earthquake and take measures beforehand as shown in the following examples.

- Devices are installed to prevent the furniture from moving.
- Heavy objects are not placed on the furniture.
- Shatterproof film is applied on the glass windows.
- There are no objects in the doorways or passages.

(4) Things to always have prepared

When a large earthquake occurs, the electricity, gas, and water supply in your house may get cut off.

It is important to be prepared in advance so that you can live without anyone's help for at least a week until support from the government arrives.

Therefore, always have the following (example) items prepared.

Example of emergency stockpile

Food	Biscuits, canned food, instant ramen, candy, and other food that can be eaten without difficulty.
Beverages	3 liters per person per day
Houseware	Everyday goods, such as: Portable gas stove, gas canister, matches, candles, lighters, paper plates, disposable chopsticks, spoons, forks, towelettes, toilet paper, portable toilet, flashlights, dry-cell batteries, blankets, sleeping bags

When there is an infant in the house	Milk, baby food, diapers, towels
When there is a person who needs nursing care	Diapers, medicine, etc.

(5) Get to know your neighbors

When a disaster occurs, it is important to help each other. Participate in local activities and get to know your neighbors. This will help everyone in an earthquake.

To protect yourself from earthquakes: Part 3 Earthquake precautions

In the event of an earthquake, try not to panic. Stay calm and take the appropriate action to minimize the damage.

Whereabouts at the time of an earthquake	Notes
If you are at home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Furniture and objects fall during an earthquake. If you feel the ground shaking, hide in a place where things do not fall, collapse, or move. ● When the shaking stops, turn off any cookers and stoves. ● Open the door, because you cannot escape if the door is broken.
If you are at school or work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Move away from bookshelves and windows and hide in a place where things do not fall, collapse, or move.
If you are in an elevator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Push all the buttons. When the door opens, get off immediately. ● If you are caught in the elevator, push the intercom.
If you are in a car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Park the car on the left side of the road and stop the engine. ● Get out of the car after the earthquake stops. ● Leave the car keys in the car. ● Do not lock the door.
If you are near the sea or a river	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Get away from the sea or river and run to higher ground because there may be a tsunami.

Safety confirmation at the time of disaster message board service

Normal telephones cannot be connected as usual at the time of a major disaster. By using the following emergency message board services, you can play back and listen to the safety information recorded by your family and friends. The service is free of charge at the time of a disaster.

Type	How to use the service and website URLs	
NTT Disaster Emergency Message Dial (171)	Leave a message: Call 171 → 1 → your telephone number → leave a message	
	Listen to a message: Call 171 → 2 → telephone number of the person you want to make contact with → listen to the message	
Mobile phone emergency message board services	NTT docomo	http://dengon.docomo.ne.jp/top.cgi
	au	http://dengon.ezweb.ne.jp/
	SoftBank	http://dengon.softbank.ne.jp/J
	Y!mobile	http://dengon.ymobile.jp/info/
Emergency Broadband message board	NTT	https://www.web171.jp/

Disaster prevention memo

Your name	
Home country	
Blood type	
Passport number	
Residence card number	
Address in Japan	



Fire Department:

119



Police Department:

110



Disaster Emergency Message Dial:

171

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