ARE YOU READY FOR THE BIG ONE?

Protect Yourself During Earthquake Shaking

1. Drop, cover and hold on!
When an earthquake starts shaking, drop to the floor, take cover under a sturdy desk or table, and hold on to it firmly. Windows, facades and architectural details are often the first parts of a building to collapse. If you are not near a table, protect your head and neck with your arms.

2. Do not head for a doorway!
An enduring myth is that the door frame of a building will remain standing while the rest of the house collapses around it. In today’s homes, doorways are no stronger than any other part of the house. You are safer taking cover under a sturdy desk or table.
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What to Do in Specific Locations

If you are indoors
Drop, cover and hold on. Drop to the floor, take cover under a sturdy desk or table, and hold on firmly. Be prepared to move with it until the shaking stops. If you are not near a desk or table, drop to the floor against an interior wall and protect your head and neck with your arms. Avoid exterior walls, windows, hanging objects, mirrors, tall furniture, large appliances and kitchen cabinets with heavy objects or glass. Do not run outside. It's always best to take cover where you are rather than try to outrun an earthquake.

If you are in bed
Hold on and stay there, protecting your head with a pillow. You are less likely to be injured staying where you are until the shaking stops. Avoid hanging heavy pictures over your bed and keep a pair of shoes nearby.

If you are in a high-rise
Drop, cover and hold on. Avoid windows and other hazards. Do not use elevators. Don't be surprised if sprinkler systems or fire alarms activate. Be aware of and participate in your building’s emergency evacuation drills.

If you are outdoors
Move to a clear area if you can safely do so. Avoid power lines, trees, signs, buildings, vehicles and other hazards.

If you are driving
Pull over to the side of the road, stop and set the parking brake. Avoid overpasses, bridges, power lines, signs and other hazards. Stay inside the vehicle until the shaking is over. If a power line falls on the car, stay inside until a trained person removes the wire. If you are on a bridge or overpass, slow down, pull over, assess the situation and then proceed with caution. Turn your radio to a local station (or channel surf) for up-to-the-minute reports on the emergency, damage and road conditions.

If you are near the beach
Drop, cover and hold on until the shaking stops. If severe shaking lasts 20 seconds or more, move away from the water to higher ground immediately, as a tsunami might have been generated by the earthquake. Don't wait for officials to issue a warning.

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