

THE BEEREADY HOME

It'll Probably Be Fine.

The BeeReady guide to getting your hive ready anyway



Power cut on the street.

One home is ready.



BeeReady

beeready.uk

The BeeReady guide to getting your hive ready anyway: a calm, practical guide for UK families to the first three days of disruption. Companion to the BeeReady app at beeready.uk.

Read this first

BeeReady is an independent planner. It is not a UK government service, is not part of or endorsed by the UK government's Be Ready campaign, and does not send emergency alerts. This book is general guidance, not a substitute for instructions from the emergency services or your local authority.

In an emergency, call 999 (112 also works). If life is in danger, or there is a fire or a crime in progress, do not read on. Call.

Need	Number
Life in danger, fire, crime in progress	999 (or 112)
Urgent medical help, not life-threatening	111
Police, non-emergency	101
Power cut (free)	105 (Northern Ireland: 03457 643 643)
Gas emergency or suspected carbon monoxide	0800 111 999 (Northern Ireland: 0800 002 001)
Floodline	0345 988 1188

How to use this book

This book is built to work alongside the BeeReady app. Read a chapter, then act on it in the app, so that your home becomes a hive that is ready for whatever comes.

Every chapter ends with three levels of action, shown with hexagons, matching the app:

-  **Basics.** The essentials. Do these first. Most take under an hour.

- **Well prepared.** The extras that make three days comfortable rather than just survivable.
- **Fully prepared.** The finishing touches for households that want to go further.

Look out for these boxes:

- **In the app:** where to find the matching tool on beeready.uk, such as Kit → Water or Plan → If you're separated.
- **Adapt it:** how to change the advice if your household differs from our example family. That includes babies under one, teenagers, older relatives, disabilities, pets and renters.
- **Safety:** things that can hurt you if done wrong.

Meet the Hartleys

To keep the advice concrete, every worked example in this book follows one fictional household: the Hartleys.

- **David and Samantha**, two adults
- **Maya**, aged 3
- **Ben**, aged 10

This mix covers a wide range of needs: a toddler who needs nappies, familiar food and comfort, and a ten-year-old who can understand the plan and take a real part in it. Wherever your own household is different, an Adapt it box will show you how.

In the app: set up the Hartleys on the Plan page as 2 adults, then Any children? Yes, with 1 in Toddlers and pre-schoolers (1 to 4) and 1 in Primary school age (5 to 10).

Chapter 1: Why three days?

The idea in one minute

Most of what keeps modern life running arrives through a wire, a pipe or a signal: electricity, gas, water, phone and internet, card payments. When one of those fails, you notice quickly. When several fail together, you are suddenly managing on your own.

The point of preparing for 72 hours is simple. Three days is long enough for the first wave of a disruption to pass, and short enough that a modest kit at home can see you through it. It is not about surviving a collapse. It is about being comfortable, safe and calm for a long weekend without services, while help goes first to the people who need it most.

Where the three days comes from

On 22 October 2026 the UK government, through the Cabinet Office, launched Be Ready: a three-year campaign asking every household to be ready to look after itself for three days in an emergency. The Minister for Security told Parliament that only 13% of people in the UK feel prepared for an emergency that could cut them off from the services they rely on, and that 84% want the government to do more to share the steps they can take.

The campaign has two key actions:

1. Sign up to the Priority Services Register, if you are eligible. It is free, and it tells energy and water companies who needs extra help in an outage.
2. Keep three days of bottled water and non-perishable food at home.

The three-day figure brings the UK into line with many European countries, which put the same message at the heart of their own campaigns. The logic is that emergency services and utility companies need that time to reach the most vulnerable people first, and a prepared household takes pressure off them.

The government's Household Emergency Plan lists the supplies: 3 litres of bottled water per person per day for at least three days, non-perishable food that needs no cooking or fridge (with a tin opener), hand sanitiser, wet wipes and hygiene products, a torch and spare batteries, blankets and warm clothing, a battery or wind-up FM radio, a power bank, cash in coins and notes, copies of important documents, a first aid kit, essential medication, and baby and pet products where needed. This book takes those headings and shows you how to turn them into a kit and a plan that fit your actual household.

What could actually go wrong

Preparing for everything is impossible. Preparing for the common failures is easy, because most emergencies take away the same few things. Here are the five you will feel first.

1. **Heat and light.** A power cut also stops many gas boilers, which need electricity to run, as well as electric heating, cooking, the fridge and lights.
2. **Water.** A burst main, contamination or a power failure at a pumping station can stop or restrict your tap water.
3. **Communication.** Mobile networks and broadband can fail or become overloaded. Phones run flat, and many cordless home phones stop working in a power cut.
4. **Money.** If card readers or cash machines are down, shops may only take cash, or may not be able to trade at all.

5. **Shops and travel.** Roads can be blocked by flooding, snow or fallen trees. Shelves empty fast when people panic-buy.

The chapters that follow deal with each of these, and with the emergencies that cause them: power cuts, flooding, storms, heatwaves, cold and snow, loss of water supply, gas and carbon monoxide, fire, phone and internet outages, disease outbreaks, and major incidents.

What three days feels like: the Hartleys' story

Here is the same event seen twice, once unprepared and once prepared: a severe winter storm brings down power lines across the Hartleys' area on a Friday afternoon.

The unprepared Friday

Hour 0 to 6. The lights go out at 4pm. Samantha searches for a torch and finds one with flat batteries. Phones are at 30 per cent. Maya is frightened of the dark. Dinner is a problem: the electric hob is dead and the shops are closing.

Hour 6 to 24. The house is getting cold. The boiler will not fire. David tries to buy supplies the next morning, but the card machines at the local shop are down and the cash machine is empty. Phone batteries are nearly flat, and nobody knows when power will return.

Hour 24 to 72. Tempers fray. The family sleeps in one room. Ben is bored and anxious. They rely on a neighbour for a phone charge and a hot drink.

The prepared Friday

Hour 0 to 6. The lights go out. David picks up the torches from the kit, which is kept in one place, and puts a head torch on Maya as a game. Ben fetches the radio, as agreed in the family plan, and finds

the local BBC station. They eat cold, ready-to-eat food. Phones go onto power-saving mode.

Hour 6 to 24. The family gathers in the best-insulated room, with blankets and warm layers from the kit. They have cash for the shop, and water is stored. Ben is in charge of the radio and enjoys the responsibility.

Hour 24 to 72. Samantha checks on Mrs Patel next door, using the numbers they swapped months ago. Power is restored on day two. The family is tired but fine, and they restock the kit the following weekend.

The storm was the same. The difference was an afternoon of preparation.

What the official figures mean for a family of four

The official figure is 3 litres of bottled water per person per day, for at least three days: 9 litres per person. For the Hartleys:

Person	Litres per day	Litres for 3 days
David	3	9
Samantha	3	9
Maya (aged 3)	3	9
Ben (aged 10)	3	9
Household total	12	36

That covers drinking. Chapter 10 explains how to add water for cooking and washing, hot weather and illness, and how to store more than the minimum.

In the app: Kit → Bottled drinking water works this out for you. Set up the Hartleys and it shows 36 litres.

Adapt it: babies who are formula-fed are best served by ready-to-feed formula, which needs no water or heating. We cover this in Chapter 12. If you have pets, add their water to the total.

What this book is not

It is not a guide to stockpiling for months, and it is not meant to frighten you. The campaign itself asks people to be ready, not alarmed, and that is the tone here. The aim is a sensible, affordable kit, a short household plan, and a few free habits that make your home calmer in a crisis.

Your first 10 minutes

You do not need to buy anything today. Try these free first steps:

1. **Check your phone's emergency alerts are switched on.** The UK Emergency Alerts system sends alerts to compatible phones in the affected area. Look in your phone's notification or alert settings.
2. **Learn the two first steps.** For an emergency outside: go in, stay in, tune in. For an emergency inside: get out, stay out, call 999.
3. **Find your stopcock, gas valve and electricity main switch,** and make sure every adult knows where they are.
4. **Choose two meeting places:** one near home and one further away, in case you cannot get back.
5. **Write the key numbers on paper.** A flat phone cannot show you a contact list.
6. **Check the Priority Services Register** if anyone at home is older, disabled, has a long-term health condition or relies on powered medical equipment.

7. **Tell Ben the plan.** A ten-year-old who understands what to do is a real asset, and a child who feels involved is less frightened.

In the app: Plan → If you're separated, Plan → Turning things off, and Plan → Emergency sheet to print it all on one page.

Safety notes for this chapter

- **Never use a barbecue, camping stove, generator or any fuel-burning appliance indoors,** or in a garage or porch. They can produce deadly carbon monoxide. Chapter 8 covers this in detail.
- **Use torches, not candles.** A battery torch or lantern is far safer, especially with a toddler in the house.
- **Only turn off the gas if it is safe.** You can turn water and electricity back on yourself, but gas must only be turned back on by a qualified engineer.
- **If you have medical equipment that needs power, do not wait.** Register with the Priority Services Register now. We cover this in Chapter 14.

Chapter 1 action list

◆ Basics

- Switch on emergency alerts on every adult's phone.
- Find the stopcock, gas valve and electricity main switch.
- Agree two meeting places.
- Write down 999, 111, 105 and your key family contacts on paper.
- Check whether anyone at home is eligible for the Priority Services Register.

◆◆ Well prepared

- Set up your household in the BeeReady app so it works out what you need.

- Walk through the plan with every family member, including the children.
- Swap numbers with two neighbours.

🐝🐝🐝 Fully prepared

- Run a one-hour “lights out” evening: no electricity, torches and radio only. Note what you wished you had.
- Join your local community group or neighbourhood network.
- Book a date, six months from now, to check the kit.

Coming next: Chapter 2: Know your risks.

That’s the end of the free sample. The full book has 20 chapters: power cuts, flooding, storms, heatwaves, water, food, children, pets, medical needs and more. Find out when it’s out at **beeready.uk/book**.