Preparedness checklist

Telecommunications

Use this to help you prepare for the impacts of a severe disruption to your telecommunication services.
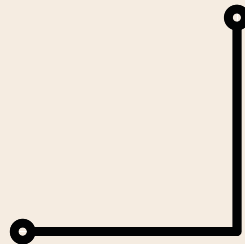
What's in here?

Learn more about how to build personal, household and community resilience & preparedness at www.minimax.studio

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When unexpected disruptions such as power outages occur, our reliance on electricity, information and communication technology (ICT), and information networks is put to the test. As we've grown accustomed to immediate access to information, the absence of it can feel disorienting and make a difficult situation feel even more challenging.

Being able to communicate in emergency situations is not just a convenience, it's a critical part of being safe and prepared.

Essential tools and back-ups

To ensure you stay connected during an emergency, consider getting together some essential tools and backups :

● Documents   ● Navigation   ● Visibility   ● Information   ● Communication   ● Energy supply

Tools and back-ups	Description	✔
List of emergency contact numbers	Printed lists of local emergency numbers, family, friends, and neighbours, as well as utility companies.	
Emergency contact cards	Carry a card with emergency contact information and any essential personal information.	
Waterproof document holder	Keep important documents, like insurance policies and identification, safe and accessible.	
Physical maps	In case GPS services are unavailable, it's useful to have paper maps of your local area and beyond.	

Tools and back-ups	Description	✔
Flashlights with extra batteries	Useful for signaling at night and for general visibility during power outages.	
Emergency whistle	A simple tool for signaling help in a situation where you might be trapped or unable to call out.	
Fire starters	Waterproof matches or a fire starter can be used to signal in emergencies.	
Reflective vest	For visibility and signaling if you are in need of help in low-light conditions.	
Pen and paper	For leaving messages or keeping a log of events when digital devices are not an option.	
Ham radio	Amateur radio equipment for long-range communication that can operate independently of the internet and phone systems.	
Battery-powered or wind-up radio	An essential for receiving broadcasts when the power is down.	

Tools and back-ups	Description	✔
Mobile phone with extra batteries / charged power banks	Multiple power banks or a solar-powered charger can keep your devices running longer.	
Satellite phone	For extreme situations where local networks are down, a satellite phone can be a vital link to the outside world.	
Two-way radios	These can be used for short-range communication, and are especially useful if mobile networks are congested or down.	
Landline phone	Traditional corded phones do not require electricity and may work when the power is out if they are connected to traditional landlines.	
Portable generator	Having a generator can provide temporary power to important devices, though it requires fuel and proper ventilation.	
Car charger for devices	Your vehicle can be a valuable resource for charging devices if the power is out at home.	
Hand-crank USB charger	Devices that allow you to charge phones or radios with manual power can be invaluable.	

Finding reliable information

Knowing where to get accurate and reliable information during a crisis is essential. Here's where you can look.

Online sources : If telecommunication networks are still operational, government websites, news outlets, and social media channels can provide you with updates. Save the URLs of your local council, the UK Environment Agency, and the Met Office for quick access.

Public radio : In the event of widespread network issues, local and national radio stations will broadcast essential information. Stations like BBC Radio 4, BBC Radio 5 Live, and

local BBC radio stations are key sources of such information.

Official communication channels : Trusted information can be obtained from official sources such as the UK government's website, local council announcements, and updates from utility providers.

Emergency services app : Download the UK's emergency services app to your mobile phone. This app can send alerts and information specific to your location. Ensure your device's location services are activated to receive these updates.

Being prepared with these communication tools and knowing where to find reliable information can significantly enhance your resilience during emergencies.

In the UK, staying connected means being proactive about your communication strategy. In a situation where every second counts, being informed is your first line of defence.
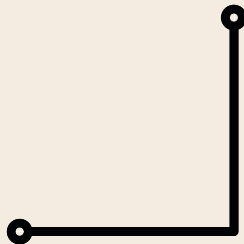
Evaluating information during emergencies

Discerning accurate and reliable information is very important, and you should approach all sources, including mainstream media, with a critical eye.

// The best way to shield against false information is source criticism

Fact vs opinion : Determine whether the information is factual or an opinion. This applies to all content, whether it's in mainstream media or alternative news sources.

Evaluate the source : Consider the source's credibility and track record. Whether it's the BBC, The Guardian, or newer media outlets, look at their history of accuracy and fairness.

Expertise of the author : Investigate whether the author or organisation is recognised within the UK as an authority on the subject matter and has a reputation for integrity.

Purpose of information : Analyse the intent behind the information. Is it to inform, persuade, or sell a particular narrative? Be cautious of content that seems more focused on driving a narrative than presenting facts.

Cross-verification : Confirm the information through multiple channels, including official UK sources.

// What can you do?

Seek multiple sources : Use a variety of sources, including established UK-based news services, independent journalism, fact-checking organisations, and official statements to form a well-rounded view.

Avoid spreading rumours : Apply a critical mindset to all information, and if in doubt, refrain from sharing it further.

// How can you be sure photos and videos are authentic?

Source and context verification : Scrutinize the authenticity of photos or videos and check if they are consistent with other reporting on the issue.

Digital footprint : Use image verification tools like Google's reverse image search to track the origin of an image or video.

// You may be targeted by different information operations

Disinformation and fake content : Whether on social media or in mainstream media, be alert to content that may be fabricated or distorted and report suspicious content to platform moderators.

Targeted influence operations : Recognise that some information campaigns, even those with professional polish, may be designed to manipulate public opinion in the UK.

Foreign interference : Stay informed about the potential for foreign interference, which may include misleading narratives aimed at the UK public. The government and intelligence agencies work to mitigate these threats.

## // How can you protect against them?

Selective source choice : Use trusted sources but maintain a healthy scepticism. No source is infallible, and each may have its biases.

Awareness of emotional manipulation : Be conscious of how information affects you

emotionally and recognise when content might be playing on those emotions to generate a particular response.

Smart social media use : Limit exposure to platforms known for misinformation and understand that even reputable sources can sometimes present content in a biased manner.

Focus on action : Concentrate on practical measures, such as updating your emergency plans and aiding community preparedness, rather than engaging with potentially divisive content.
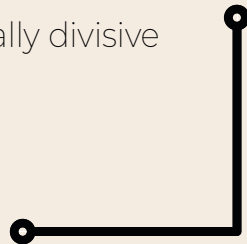
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Developed by miniMAX studio.