



Tsukuba!

No. 9

June 2026

English



Topic: Preparing for Natural Disasters

【災害への備えについて】

※All QR codes featured in this guide link to Japanese pages. To view them in other languages, please use an automatic translation service.

Japan is frequently affected by natural disasters such as earthquakes, typhoons, and heavy rainfall. It is important to prepare in advance so that you are ready when a disaster occurs.

When a major earthquake strikes, buildings can suffer severe damage and roads may become impassable. Earthquakes can also trigger tsunamis, which may sweep away buildings in coastal areas.



Earthquakes and Tsunamis



Flooding

When there is heavy rainfall, rivers can overflow and water can back up from drainage pipes, causing buildings and roads to become submerged.

When a typhoon strikes, heavy rainfall can cause roads to flood, and strong winds can send objects flying through the air.



Typhoons



Landslides

Heavy rain and earthquakes can cause cliffs to collapse suddenly or slopes to slide down over a wide area.

When a volcano erupts, extremely hot lava can flow out, and rocks and ash can scatter over a wide area.



Volcanic Eruptions



Heavy Snow

When there is heavy snowfall, roads can become impassable and buildings may collapse under the weight.

【Disasters risks to be aware of in Tsukuba City】

Earthquakes: Earthquakes occur frequently in the southern Ibaraki prefecture.

When major earthquakes struck in the past, the city experienced power outages and water service disruptions lasting several days.

Flooding: Inundation damage is expected in areas near large rivers.

Typhoons and Lightning Strikes: In addition to damage from strong winds and lightning strikes, power outages occur frequently.

Landslides: Landslides are expected in areas near cliffs and slopes, particularly around Mount Tsukuba and Mount Hokyō.

【Preparing for Major Earthquakes】

Government seismic assessments indicate a high likelihood of major earthquakes occurring in two separate areas along Japan's Pacific coast; the Hokkaido-Tohoku region and the Kanto-Kyushu region. Some estimates suggest that the damage could exceed that caused by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. In addition, major earthquakes can occur anywhere in Japan and at any time. It is essential to be prepared for disasters at all times.

【Confirming Evacuation Options and Routes】

Staying at home is the preferred option when it is safe to do so. However, if it is unsafe to remain at home — for example, if your home has been damaged or is located within a hazard zone — you should evacuate to an appropriate location depending on the situation, such as the home of a friend or relative, a hotel, or a designated evacuation shelter. Be sure to identify evacuation options that are accessible from your home, workplace, or school in advance.

Once you have identified your evacuation options, think about the routes you would use to reach them. Choose routes that avoid areas at risk of flooding or falling objects. If possible, check these routes in person to identify any potentially hazardous sections before a disaster occurs.

【About Hazard Maps】

Hazard maps show areas at risk from disasters such as flooding and landslides, as well as the locations of evacuation shelters and other emergency facilities. Use the hazard map to check whether your home, workplace, or school is located in a risk area, and to identify nearby evacuation options. The latest version of the hazard map is available on the Tsukuba City official website.

Tsukuba City
Website



<https://www.city.tsukuba.lg.jp/soshikikarasagasu/shichokoshitsukikikanrika/gyomuannai/1/2/1003890.html>

Tsukuba City
Website



<https://www.city.tsukuba.lg.jp/kurashi/anshin/bousai/1000602.html>

Reference: Roads Previously Closed Due to Flooding

Tsukuba City's official website lists locations within the city where roads were flooded and closed to traffic on September 8, 2019, due to typhoon-related flooding. This information is not comprehensive and may not include all areas affected by temporary flooding, unrecorded flooding, or other past disasters. Please use this as reference information only when planning for emergencies and preparing for future disasters.

During heavy rain, avoid unnecessary and non-urgent travel. If evacuation becomes necessary, check current traffic and weather conditions and follow the latest official information.

Tsukuba City
Website



<https://www.city.tsukuba.lg.jp/kurashi/anshin/bousai/25434.html>

【Discuss Emergency Plans with Your Family】

If a disaster occurs while family members are in different locations, discuss in advance how you will confirm one another's safety and stay in contact. Make sure the following information is shared among all family members:

- Contact information such as phone numbers
- Contact details for schools, workplaces, and other locations
- Designated evacuation shelters and meeting places
- Evacuation routes and routes for returning home



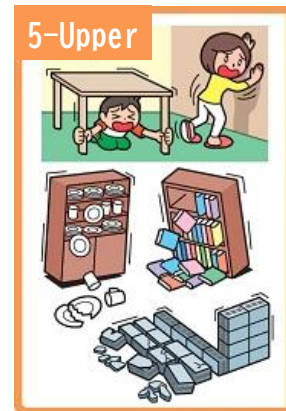
【About Seismic Intensity Scales】

In Japan, earthquake shaking is measured on a 10-level seismic intensity (*shindo*) scale*. The following examples show the effects typically associated with each level. (Source: Japan Meteorological Agency)

* 10-level seismic intensity (*shindo*) scale: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5-lower, 5-upper, 6-lower, 6-upper, 7

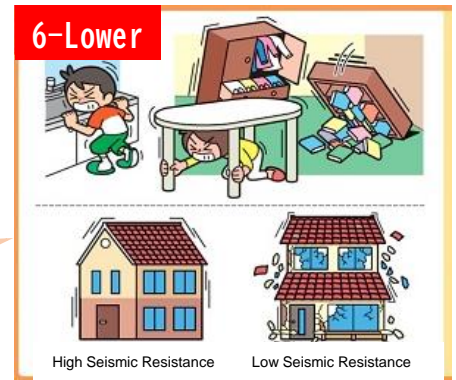
<Seismic Intensity 5-Upper>

- Walking without holding onto something becomes difficult.
- Many dishes and books fall from shelves.
- Unsecured furniture may tip over.
- Unreinforced concrete block walls may collapse.



<Seismic Intensity 6-Lower>

- Standing upright becomes difficult.
- Most unsecured furniture moves, and some pieces may tip over.
- Doors may become difficult or impossible to open.
- Wall tiles and windowpanes may crack and fall.
- In wooden buildings with poor earthquake resistance, roof tiles may fall and buildings may lean. Some buildings may collapse.



On March 11, 2011, during the Great East Japan Earthquake, the maximum seismic intensity recorded in Tsukuba City was 6-Lower.

Created using data from the Japan Meteorological Agency
<https://www.jma.go.jp/jma/kishou/known/shindo/index.html>

【Preventing Furniture from Tipping Over】

Even if a building remains intact during a major earthquake, there is a risk of injury from furniture tipping over or objects falling. Make sure to secure furniture properly as part of your everyday earthquake preparedness.

It is also important to pay attention to furniture placement. Check whether furniture could block an exit if it tips over, or fall onto areas where you or your family sleep.

<Tips for Preventing Furniture from Tipping Over>

- Place heavy furniture and appliances as low as possible.
- Secure bookshelves, wardrobes, and other tall furniture using tension poles or similar fixtures.
- Place a board under the front of furniture to tilt it slightly toward the wall.
- Store heavy items on lower shelves and lighter items on upper shelves to lower the center of gravity.
- Place televisions in a low position and secure them using anti-slip mats or similar devices.



Tension poles are an effective way to secure furniture. Please watch the video below to learn how to use them.

Tsukuba City Official
 YouTube Channel
<https://youtu.be/fRGWF684Zcl>



【Stockpiling Supplies at Home】

When a large-scale disaster occurs, electricity, water, and gas services may become unavailable. Roads may also become impassable, preventing deliveries and making it difficult to obtain food and daily necessities. In past large-scale disasters, it has often taken more than a week for utility services to be restored. Stock up on at least three days' worth of food and water, and ideally enough supplies for a full week. Having disposable tableware and a portable gas stove on hand can also be useful.

When water service is unavailable, showers and toilets may no longer be usable. Be sure to stock up on dry shampoo and emergency toilet bags as well.

In addition, stock up on other everyday items you regularly use, such as toilet paper, facial tissues, garbage bags, plastic wrap, and any necessary medications.



The Tokyo Metropolitan Government provides an online tool that recommends the amount of emergency supplies to stockpile based on your answers to a few simple questions. Please use it as a guide.

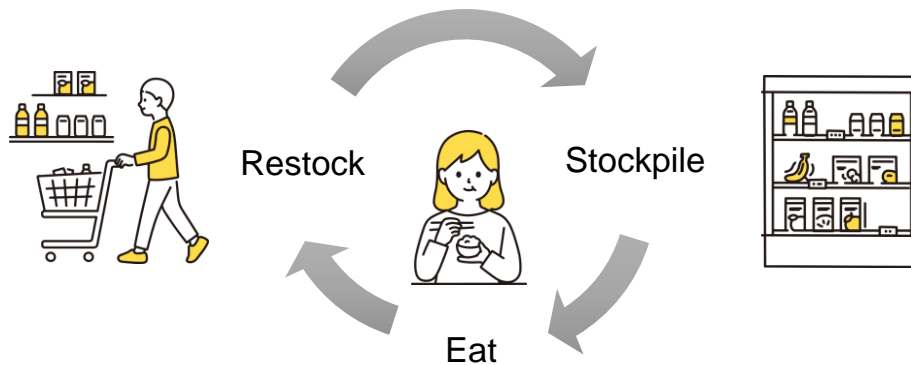
Tokyo Metropolitan
Government Official
Website



<https://www.bichiku.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/>

<An Example of Emergency Supply Stockpiling>

A practical way to maintain an emergency supply of food and beverages is to use a stock rotation system. Simply buy a little extra of the foods and drinks you regularly consume, such as bottled water, instant noodles, canned foods, retort-pouch meals. Use the items with the nearest expiration date first and replace them as you use them. This method is easy to start and can be applied not only to food and beverages, but also to everyday necessities such as toilet paper.



Note from Translator / 翻訳者から一言

Summer is just getting started, and the heat will only intensify from here. Please take good care of yourselves in the days ahead. Japan has a wonderful range of cooling products — from instant cooling sprays to “ice towels” — so make the most of them and get through this summer in good shape.

今年の夏も、これから本格的な暑さが続きます。熱中症には十分ご注意ください。日本には冷却スプレーや冷感グッズなど、暑さを和らげるアイテムが豊富に揃っています。ぜひ上手に活用して、この夏を乗り越えてください。