



# Storm Safety

The word 'storm' may sound very vague, but it can encapsulate many types of severe weather. They can damage property and even potentially harm lives, with winter storms being some of the most dangerous due to potentially freezing temperatures and the added danger of snow or ice.

## How to prepare for a storm

- Sign up for severe weather warnings at [metoffice.gov.uk](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk) or keep up-to-date with the latest weather news using local TV or radio stations
- Arrange for any bushes or trees that could damage windows in high winds to be trimmed back
- Ensure the property is properly maintained throughout the year. Particular attention should be paid to areas most likely to bear the brunt of any storm such as the roof
- Secure loose objects in the garden or grounds - such as ladders, furniture, benches or anything else that could be blown into windows and other glazing.
- Close and securely fasten doors and windows, particularly those on the windward side of the building and especially large doors such as those on garages
- Park vehicles in a garage, if available; otherwise keep them clear of buildings, trees, walls and fences
- Close and secure loft trapdoors with bolts, particularly if roof pitch is less than 30°
- If your building is fitted with storm shutters over the windows then ensure that these are closed and fastened.

## What to do during a storm

- If you have to go into a building during a storm, enter and leave through doors in the sheltered side, closing them behind you.
- Stay indoors as much as possible
- If you do go out, try not to walk or shelter close to buildings and trees
- Keep away from the sheltered side of boundary walls and fences — if these structures fail, they will collapse on this side
- Do not go outside or into a building to repair damage while the storm is in progress
- Open internal doors only as needed, and close them behind you
- Do not drive unless your journey is really necessary
- Take care when driving on exposed routes such as bridges, or high open roads, delay your journey or find alternative routes if possible
- Slow down and be aware of side winds, particular care should be taken if you are towing or if you're driving a high sided vehicle
- Do not park cars near any seafront area as damage by waves and shingle blown from a beach can cause significant damage
- Do not stand too near any seafront areas. The large waves are a danger.

## After the storm

- Be careful not to touch any electrical/telephone cables that have been blown down or are still hanging
- Do not walk too close to walls, buildings and trees as they could have been weakened
- Contact reputable contractors to make safe items such as fallen trees and walls.
- Do not try to move objects that have fallen or blown down, as they could dislodge other objects and cause further damage.
- Do not climb onto any roofs to inspect damage, be sure to call an expert.

### If you need to make a claim

If you have any damage that needs urgent repair, there are temporary measures you can take, providing there is no danger of injury or worse. Plastic sheeting can be used to cover doorways where doors have been blown off or low level roofs have been damaged. If possible, please try to get an estimate from a reputable contractor before calling in with a claim. We aim to keep you claim free, so please do try to follow all of the advice in this guide. However, if you should need to claim, our teams will be with you every step of the way.