

# Heatwave checklist

## Before a heatwave

### Keep informed, stay alert



Listen carefully for updates on the weather, and take heatwave warnings seriously.



Plan ahead to reduce the risk of ill health from the heat (e.g. stock up on high-protection sun creams).



Make sure you have plenty of bottled watersomewhere handy in case of problems with the water supply.



Make sure people you know who may be particularly vulnerable in a heatwave (e.g. grandparents, older neighbours, etc.) are aware of the heatwave and know what to do to stay safe and look after themselves.



Be aware of what actions you can take to help yourself as well as others, e.g. by downloading the British Red Cross app and seeing how to help someone you suspect has heat exhaustion or heatstroke.



Ensure you have your medication. For example, if you have asthma, make sure you take your inhaler(s) wherever you go.

## During a heatwave

### Stay cool, keep well



Drink plenty of fluids and avoid excess alcohol.



Slow down when it is hot, avoiding too much physical activity. If you can't avoid strenuous outdoor activity, such as sport, DIY or gardening, reduce it to cooler parts of the day – in the morning or evening.



If it's not possible to completely avoid being outside in direct sun, wear sun cream and ensure you take regular breaks indoors or in a shaded place to cool down.



If you do get hot, it is important to give your body a break from the heat, for example by having a cold bath or shower.



Wear light-coloured, loose-fitting clothes – preferably cotton or linen as they are natural fabrics that will allow your skin to breathe.

### Keep your home cooler



Cover windows exposed to sunlight - external shutters or shades are particularly effective.



Open windows when the air feels cooler outside than inside, for example at night.



Check your central heating is off, as well as lights and electrical equipment that aren't in use.



Remember that it may be cooler outside in the shade or in a public building (such as places of worship, local libraries or supermarkets); consider a visit as a way of cooling down.



If you have concerns about an uncomfortably hot home that is affecting your health or someone else's health, seek medical advice.

**1 in 5 homes in England are likely to overheat so it's important you know how to keep your home cool in hot weather.**<sup>113</sup>

### Watch out and take action



Look out for neighbours, family or friends who may be at risk of harm from heat, isolated or unable to care for themselves during a heatwave. Check if they are coping with the heat, know how to adapt their home and make sure they have everything they need.



If you have a chronic illness, for example a heart, lung or kidney problem, be aware that it may get worse in hot weather.

Get Help. Call NHS 111 or in an emergency 999.



To sign up to heat alerts, visit: [metoffice.gov.uk](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk)

Visit the British Red Cross's [educational resources on heatwaves](#)

Download the British Red Cross's [First Aid app](#)

For latest public health advice in England visit: [www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

You can use the following resource to find out if your home is at risk of overheating and what further action you can take: [Beat the heat: keep cool at home checklist](#) ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk))