



An Extended Guide · No. 1834

A Grab-and-Go Evacuation Bag

Ready by the door, just in case

Tech Made Simple — Service Made Personal

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! Read this first — the real outage dangers are quiet ones

When the power goes out, most of the real danger doesn't come from the dark — it comes from how we try to get by without it. Every year people are harmed by carbon monoxide from a generator, grill, or camp stove brought indoors or into a garage, and by fires from candles and unvented heaters. So three rules run through this whole guide. First, never burn anything indoors that is meant for outdoors — no generator, grill, charcoal, or camp stove in the house, garage, or on a porch, not even with a window open. Second, reach for a flashlight or a battery lantern instead of a candle. Third, keep working smoke and carbon-monoxide alarms on every level, with battery backup, and never ignore one. If an alarm sounds, or anyone feels dizzy, sick, or sleepy, get everyone to fresh air first and call 911. Sometimes the safest thing is to leave — for a fire, a gas leak, or an evacuation order. A grab-and-go bag means you can go quickly and safely when that moment comes.

Let's pack a grab-and-go bag

Most outages you ride out at home. But now and then you have to leave in a hurry — and a bag packed and waiting by the door turns a frightening scramble into a calm walk out.

I'm Bill, and this is the piece of prep folks most often skip, right up until the moment they wish they hadn't. A go-bag holds the essentials you'd need for a day or two away from home, so if you ever have to evacuate, everything's ready in one grab.

We'll cover when you'd need it, exactly what goes in, keeping it light enough to carry, and having a simple plan for where you'd go. It's an afternoon's work that could matter enormously one day.

★ I'll help you pack one

If you'd like help putting together a go-bag for yourself or a loved one, I'm glad to help. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

Your go-bag, on one page

The essentials, if you remember nothing else.

- ☐ Pack a bag with a day or two of essentials, one per person.
- ☐ Water, snacks, and any medicines with a list.
- ☐ Copies of key documents and some cash, in a pouch.
- ☐ A flashlight, a phone charger and power bank, first-aid.
- ☐ A change of clothes and weather-appropriate gear.
- ☐ Basic hygiene items and comfort items.
- ☐ Keep it light enough to carry, by the door.
- ☐ Know your exits, your route, and where you'd go.

✓ Packed and waiting is the whole point

A go-bag only helps if it's already packed. The value is having it ready so you never have to gather anything in an emergency.

When you'd need to leave fast

A go-bag is for the times staying isn't the safe choice.

Most of the time, an outage means sheltering at home. But some situations call for leaving quickly: a house fire, a gas leak, flooding, a dangerously cold or hot house you can't fix, or an official evacuation order. In those moments, you may have only minutes, and there's no time to hunt for supplies.

That's what the go-bag is for. It lets you leave right away with everything you'd need for a day or two, calmly and safely, instead of leaving important things behind in the rush.

✓ Leaving is sometimes the brave, smart choice

There's no failure in evacuating when it's the safe thing to do. A packed bag makes that choice easy to act on the moment it's needed.

What goes in a go-bag

Enough to see one person through a day or two away from home.

- Water and a few non-perishable, no-cook snacks.
- A few days of any medicines, with a written medicine list.
- Copies of key documents and some cash, in a pouch.
- A flashlight, spare batteries, a phone charger, and a power bank.
- A small first-aid kit.
- A change of clothes and weather-appropriate gear.
- Toiletries, hand sanitizer, and any personal hygiene items.
- A comfort item, and glasses or other daily aids.

Keep it to the true essentials so the bag stays light. You're packing for a short stay somewhere safe, not for every possibility.

✓ Pack for a day or two, not forever

A go-bag is a bridge to somewhere safe, not a whole household. Keep it lean — the lighter it is, the easier it is to grab and carry.

Choosing the bag

The right container makes the bag easy to grab and carry.

A backpack is ideal — it keeps your hands free and rides comfortably. A duffel works too. Choose something sturdy and not too big, so it stays light. Give each person their own bag, sized to what they can comfortably carry, and keep it somewhere you can grab on your way out the door.

✓ A backpack keeps your hands free

Hands-free matters when you're leaving quickly — for a railing, a door, a child's hand, or a pet's leash. A backpack is usually the best choice.

Documents and cash in the bag

A small pouch of copies and cash makes leaving far less stressful.

Include a waterproof pouch with copies of your ID, insurance, medicine list, and key contacts, plus some cash in small bills. If you have to leave, you'll want proof of who you are and a way to buy necessities when card readers may be down. Our documents-and-cash guide covers exactly what to copy and how to keep it secure.

✓ The pouch does double duty

The same document-and-cash pouch from your documents plan lives in the go-bag. Keep it sealed and secure, and it's ready whether you stay or go.

Medicines and health in the bag

Health needs come first in any go-bag.

Include a few days of any regular medicines and a written medicine list, so a quick departure doesn't leave anyone without what they need. For medicines that need refrigeration, plan a small cooler you can grab alongside the bag. Keep glasses, hearing aids, and other daily aids close so they come too. Our first-aid guide covers the medicine side in full.

! Don't forget the daily medicines

In a hurried departure, daily medicines are the easiest thing to leave behind and the hardest to do without. Keep a few days' worth ready to grab with the bag.

Clothes, weather gear, and comfort

A little comfort makes an unexpected night away far easier.

Pack a change of clothes, sturdy shoes, and gear for the season — a warm layer and rain protection, or lighter clothes and sun protection. Add a small comfort item, especially for children: a favorite toy, a book, a familiar snack. These small touches ease the stress of leaving home suddenly.

✓ Comfort items matter for kids

A familiar toy or blanket in a child's go-bag brings real comfort during the upset of an evacuation. Don't overlook the little morale-boosters.

A bag for everyone — and the pets

Each person carries their own, sized to them.

Give every family member their own go-bag with their own essentials, sized to what they can carry — a lighter one for a child or an older adult. Don't forget a go-bag for your pets, too, with their food, water, medicines, and a leash or carrier, as our pets guide describes. When everyone has their own, leaving is quick and nothing essential is forgotten.

✓ Size each bag to the carrier

A go-bag someone can't lift isn't much help. Keep each person's bag light enough for them to carry comfortably on their own.

Two kinds of homes, two sets of needs

A go-bag is smart everywhere, but a longer trip to shelter makes it even more valuable in the country.

If you live in town or the suburbs

In town, a shelter, a relative, or a motel is usually close, so a go-bag mainly needs to bridge a short trip to safety.

- A safe place to go is usually a short drive away.
- Shorter evacuations mean a lighter bag is fine.
- Help and supplies are close once you've relocated.
- Still keep a bag ready — fires and gas leaks give no warning.

If you are out in the country on a well

In the country, the nearest shelter or town may be farther, and roads may be blocked, so plan for a longer, more self-reliant trip.

- Pack a bit more, since the trip to safety may be longer.
- Know several routes out, in case one is blocked by the storm.
- Keep the car fueled — see our car guide — for the longer drive.
- Plan farther-off destinations: a relative, a town shelter.

★ Let's get your go-bag ready

Town or country, I'll help you pack a go-bag and plan where you'd go. Call (330) 200-8042.

Where to keep it, and knowing your exits

A go-bag by the door and a clear way out make leaving quick and safe.

Keep go-bags somewhere you'll pass on the way out — a hall closet, by the front door, or in the car. Make sure everyone knows where they are. And know your exits: at least two ways out of the house, and how you'd help anyone with mobility needs get out. In a real emergency, seconds count, so the bag and the exits should need no thinking.

✓ By the door, and two ways out

Keep the bags where you'll grab them on your way out, and make sure every room has a way out. Practiced exits and a ready bag save precious time.

Go-bags for special needs

Tailor the bag and the plan to anyone who needs extra help leaving.

For an older adult or anyone with mobility or medical needs, think through how they'd get out and what they'd need: a lighter bag, mobility aids ready to grab, extra medicines, and a helper assigned to assist them. For powered medical equipment, include batteries and a plan, per our medical-device guide. The go-bag should fit the real person who'll carry it.

★ Let's plan for everyone getting out

If someone in your home would need help evacuating, let's make a plan and a bag that works for them. Call (330) 200-8042.

Don't forget a go-bag for pets

If you evacuate, your animals come with you — so they need a bag too.

Pack a pet go-bag with a few days of food, water, a bowl, medicines, waste supplies, a leash or carrier, and copies of their records. Never leave pets behind in an evacuation — if it's not safe for you, it's not safe for them. Our pets guide covers this and finding a pet-friendly place to go.

✓ Pets evacuate too

A ready pet go-bag means your animals leave with you smoothly. Keep it right beside the family bags.

Keeping the bag light and grab-able

The best go-bag is the one you can actually pick up and carry out.

It's tempting to overpack, but a bag too heavy to carry defeats the purpose. Stick to a day or two of true essentials, choose compact versions where you can, and test that you can comfortably carry it. If it's too heavy, take something out. Light and ready beats thorough and immovable.

✓ If you can't carry it, lighten it

Lift the packed bag. If it's a struggle, pull out the least essential things. A go-bag has to be grab-and-go, not drag-and-strain.

A simple plan for leaving

The bag is half of it; knowing where you'd go is the other half.

Decide ahead of time where you'd evacuate to — a relative's home, a friend's, a shelter — and how you'd get there, including a backup route in case roads are blocked. Tie this to your family communication plan so everyone knows the destination and can meet there. Keep the car fueled, and leave early rather than waiting until roads are dangerous.

✓ Leave early, not late

If an evacuation looks likely, going early — before roads jam or conditions worsen — is far safer than waiting until you have no good choice. A ready bag makes an early exit easy.

Keeping the go-bag fresh

A go-bag packed once and forgotten slowly goes stale.

- Rotate the water and snacks before they expire.
- Refresh medicines and check their dates.
- Swap the clothes for the season, twice a year.
- Update the documents and contact copies.
- Recharge the power bank and check the flashlight.

✓ Refresh at the clock changes

Give the go-bag the same twice-a-year check as the rest of your kit. Fresh water and food, current medicines, seasonal clothes.

Getting the car ready to evacuate

If you evacuate by car, a little readiness makes the trip safer.

Keep the tank at least half full in storm season so you're never stuck without fuel, and keep your car emergency kit stocked — our car-as-backup guide covers both. Know your routes, keep your phone charged for navigation, and load the go-bags and pets efficiently so you can leave without delay.

✓ A full tank is half the evacuation plan

Stations may be closed or jammed when you need to leave. Keeping the tank full through storm season means the car is always ready to go.

A go-bag for very little

Most of a go-bag is things you already own, in a bag you already have.

Repurpose an old backpack, fill it with water, snacks, a flashlight, and copies you already made, and add a few days of medicines and a change of clothes. The document copies and the plan are free. A complete go-bag can come together with almost no new spending.

✓ Start with an old backpack

Grab a backpack you're not using and start filling it today with essentials from around the house. That's a go-bag, built for next to nothing.

When you're told to evacuate

If an order comes or danger is clear, here's the quick sequence.

- ❑ Grab the go-bags and any last medicines and the pet bag.
- ❑ Take your phone, charger, and the car keys.
- ❑ Turn off utilities if instructed, and secure the house.
- ❑ Follow your planned route to your destination.
- ❑ Check in with your out-of-town contact that you've left.
- ❑ Leave early and drive carefully — don't wait for it to worsen.

! Follow official evacuation orders

If officials tell you to leave, leave — they're seeing the bigger picture. A packed go-bag means you can act on the order right away, safely.

Your printable go-bag checklist

Everything for a ready go-bag, in one place.

- ☐ A backpack or duffel for each person, kept light.
- ☐ Water, no-cook snacks, and a few days of medicines with a list.
- ☐ A document-and-cash pouch, sealed and secure.
- ☐ A flashlight, charger, power bank, and first-aid kit.
- ☐ A change of clothes, weather gear, and comfort items.
- ☐ Hygiene items and any daily aids like glasses.
- ☐ A pet go-bag, and bags sized for kids and seniors.
- ☐ Kept by the door, with a plan for where you'd go.

★ Want help packing yours?

I'll help you build go-bags for the whole household and make a simple leave plan. A first visit is a flat \$99. Call (330) 200-8042.

Common Questions

The questions I hear most about go-bags.

Q: What is a grab-and-go bag for?

It holds a day or two of essentials so you can leave home quickly and safely if you must — for a fire, gas leak, flooding, or an evacuation order. Packed and waiting by the door, it turns a scramble into a calm exit.

Q: What should go in it?

Water and no-cook snacks, a few days of medicines with a list, a document-and-cash pouch, a flashlight, a charger and power bank, a first-aid kit, a change of clothes and weather gear, hygiene items, and a comfort item — kept light.

Q: How many bags do we need?

One per person, sized to what each can comfortably carry, plus a go-bag for your pets. Lighter bags for children and older adults, and a helper assigned for anyone who'd need assistance leaving.

Q: Where should I keep the go-bag?

Somewhere you'll grab on the way out — a hall closet, by the front door, or in the car — and make sure everyone knows where it is. Know at least two ways out of the house, too.

Q: How do I keep it from going stale?

Rotate the water and snacks, refresh medicines, swap clothes for the season, update documents, and recharge the power bank — all part of your twice-a-year kit check at the clock changes.

★ Let's get you ready to go

A ready go-bag is real peace of mind. Call or text (330) 200-8042 and I'll help you pack one for everyone and plan where you'd go.

You don't have to do this alone

You just have to remember that a friendly, patient person is one call away.

I hope this guide made packing a grab-and-go evacuation bag feel a little less daunting and a lot more doable. Keep it in a drawer with your other home papers, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything.

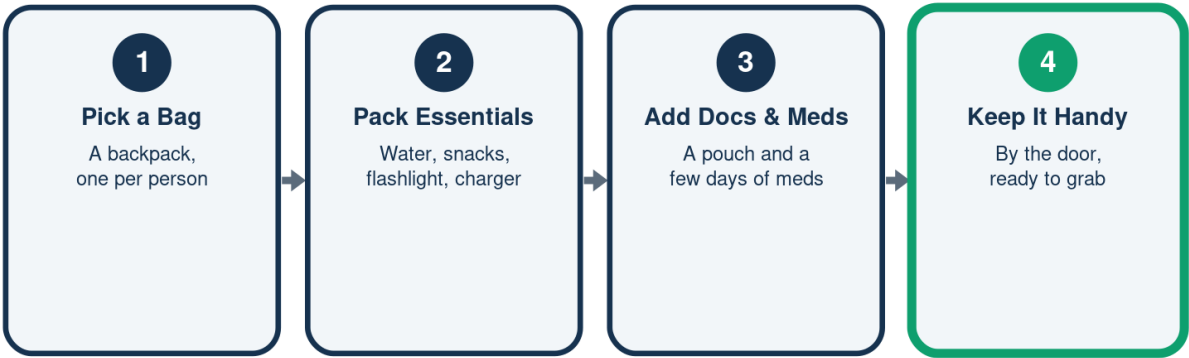
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Build a Grab-and-Go Bag

Four steps to a bag that's ready



A go-bag only helps if it's packed and waiting.

What Goes in the Bag

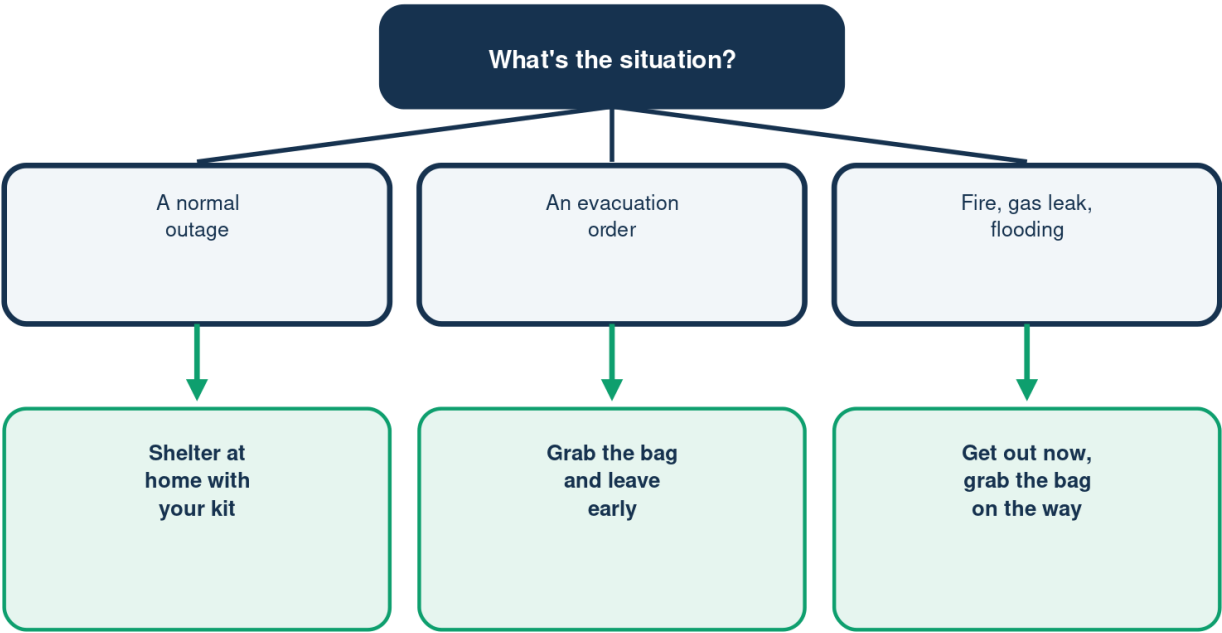
A day or two of true essentials

The short version	
Food & water	No-cook snacks, water
Health	Meds, list, first-aid
Papers	Doc pouch and cash
Power	Flashlight, charger, bank
Comfort	Clothes, weather gear

Keep it light — the lighter it is, the easier to grab.

Is It Time to Grab the Bag?

Know when to stay and when to go



If officials say evacuate, go — a ready bag lets you act fast.

Illustration - a schematic, not to scale. Your setup may differ.

One Bag per Person

Sized to who carries it

Pack for them	
Adults	A day or two, full kit
Children	Lighter, plus a comfort item
Seniors	Light, meds and aids ready
Pets	Food, water, leash, records

If someone can't carry their bag, lighten it.



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Prefer help without a visit?

Bill can screen-share and fix many things remotely — a flat \$49, free for Support Plan members.



A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill.

I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that comes from using these guides. Thanks for reading, and stay safe out there.

— *Bill*



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