

TAILGATE – Recommended Earthquake Safety Actions

You cannot tell from the initial shaking if an earthquake will suddenly become intense, so always Drop, Cover, and Hold On immediately! In MOST situations, you will reduce your chance of injury if you:

DROP where you are, onto your hands and knees. This position protects you from being knocked down and allows you to stay low and crawl to shelter if nearby.

COVER your head and neck with one arm and hand.

- If a sturdy table or desk is nearby, crawl underneath it for shelter
- If no shelter is nearby, crawl next to an interior wall (away from windows)
- Stay on your knees; bend over to protect vital organs



HOLD ON until the shaking stops.

- Under shelter: hold on to it with one hand; be ready to move with your shelter if it shifts
- No shelter: hold on to your head and neck with both arms and hands.

Do not move to another location or outside. Earthquakes occur without any warning and may be so violent that you cannot run or crawl. You are more likely to be injured if you try to move around during strong shaking. Read below to learn how to protect yourself in other situations and locations.

Indoors: Drop, Cover, and Hold On. Avoid exterior walls, windows, hanging objects, mirrors, tall furniture, large appliances. Do not try to move more than 5-7 feet before getting on the ground. Do not go outside during shaking! The area near the exterior walls of a building is the most dangerous place to be. Windows, and architectural details are often the first parts of the building to break away.

In bed: Do not get out of bed. Lie face down to protect vital organs, and Cover your head and neck with a pillow, keeping your arms as close to your head as possible, while you Hold On to your head and neck with both hands until shaking stops. You are less likely to be injured by fallen and broken objects by staying where you are.

In a high-rise: Drop, Cover, and Hold On. Avoid windows and other hazards. Do not use elevators. Do not be surprised if sprinkler systems or fire alarms activate.

In a classroom: Drop, Cover, and Hold On. Laboratories or other settings may require special considerations to ensure safety. Students should also be taught what to do at home or other locations.

In a stadium/theater: Drop to the ground in front of your seat or lean over as much as possible, then Cover your head with your arms (as best as possible) and Hold On to your neck with both hands until shaking stops. Then walk out slowly, watching for anything that could fall during aftershocks.

Outdoors: Move to a clear area if you can safely do so; avoid power lines, trees, signs, buildings, vehicles, and other hazards. Then Drop, Cover, and Hold On. This protects you from any objects that may be thrown from the side, even if nothing is directly above you.

Driving: Pull over to the side of the road, stop, and set the parking brake. Avoid overpasses, bridges, power lines, signs and other hazards. Stay inside the vehicle until the shaking stops. If a power line falls on the car, stay inside until a trained person removes the wire.

Near the shore: Follow instructions above for your location. Then as soon as shaking reduces such that you can stand, walk quickly to high ground or inland as a tsunami may arrive soon. Don't wait for officials to issue a warning. Walk, rather than drive, to avoid traffic, debris, and other hazards.

More information: <http://www.shakeout.org/dropcoverholdon>

MYTH – Head for the Doorway:

An enduring earthquake image of California is a collapsed adobe home with the doorframe as the only standing part. From this came our belief that a doorway is the safest place to be during an earthquake. We now understand that doorways are no stronger than any other part of the house, and do not provide protection from falling or flying objects. You are safer under a table.