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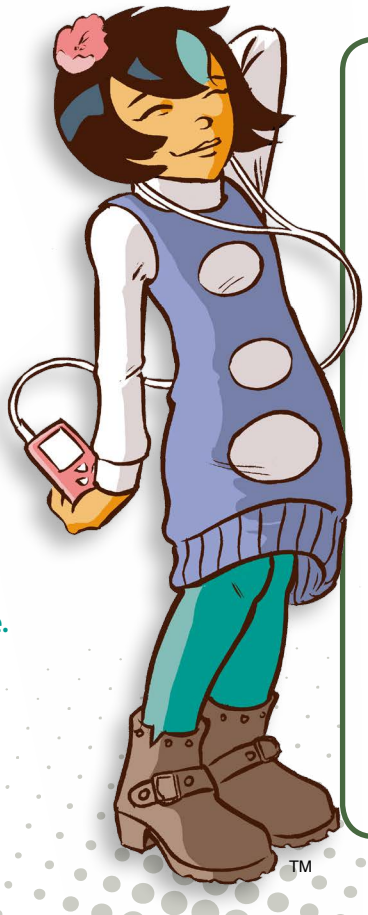
FEMA

# Tornadoes

Tornadoes are nature's most violent storms. They come from powerful thunderstorms. They appear as a funnel- or cone-shaped cloud with winds that can reach up to 300 miles per hour. They cause damage when they touch down on the ground. They can damage an area one mile wide and 50 miles long. Before tornadoes hit, the wind may die down, and the air may become very still. They may also strike quickly, with little or no warning.

## Am I at risk?

**Tornadoes are most common between March and August, but they can occur at any time. They can happen anywhere but are most common in Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Texas - an area commonly called "Tornado Alley." They are also more likely to occur between 3pm and 9pm but can occur at any time.**



## FACT CHECK

1. Where is the safest place in a home? _____
_____
_____

2. **True or False?** If you see a funnel cloud, seek shelter immediately.

3. Which of the following weather signs mean a tornado may be approaching?
   **a.** A dark or green-colored sky.
   **b.** A large, dark, low-lying cloud.
   **c.** A rainbow.
   **d.** Large hail.
   **e.** A loud roar that sounds like a freight train.

ANSWERS
**(1)** The interior part of a basement. If there is no basement, go to an inside room, without windows, on the lowest floor. This can be a hallway, bathroom, or closet.
**(2)** True! Do not watch it or try to outrun it. Tornadoes are unpredictable and can move in any direction.
**(3)** All except for C (a rainbow) can be signs for a tornado.

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**For more facts and info on tornadoes visit**
**http://www.ready.gov/kids/know-the-facts/tornadoes**
**http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/tornadoes/index.asp**

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# Be Prepared

## BEFORE

- ✔ Build an emergency kit.
- ✔ Make a family communications plan.
- ✔ Look for the following danger signs: — dark, greenish sky — large hail — large, dark, low-lying cloud — loud roar, like a freight train

## DURING

### *If you are in a building:*

- ✔ Go to a safe room such as a basement, cellar, or the lowest building level.
- ✔ If there is no basement, go to an inside room like a closet or hallway.
- ✔ Stay away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls.
- ✔ Do not open windows.
- ✔ Put on sturdy shoes.
- ✔ Protect your head.

### *If you are in a trailer or mobile home:*

- ✔ Get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy nearby building or storm shelter.

### *If you are outside with no shelter nearby:*

- ✔ Get into a vehicle and buckle your seatbelt. Put your head down below the windows and cover your head with your hands and a blanket, coat, or other cushion.
- ✔ If there is no car or shelter, try to find a ditch or area lower than the ground and lie down. You are safer in a low, flat location than under a bridge or highway overpass.

## AFTER

- ✔ Wear sturdy shoes or boots. There may be broken glass or nails on the ground that could hurt you if you stepped on it.
- ✔ Never go near or touch dangling or loose power lines. They could electrocute you.
- ✔ Text, don't talk. Unless there's a life-threatening situation, if you have a cell phone, send a text so that you don't tie up phone lines needed by emergency workers. Plus, texting may work even if cell service is down.

### WORDS TO KNOW

***Funnel*** A long shape that is wider at the top and skinny on the bottom, like an ice cream cone

***Hail*** Frozen rain

***Storm Shelter*** A room or space built below ground level and without windows that is a safer place to be during a tornado

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