

## How to document your personal belongings

Documenting your belongings is an essential step in preparing for emergencies such as natural disasters, fires, or theft.

Here's a quick guide on how to do this effectively:

### **Begin with a Room-by-Room Approach:**

-Start with essential rooms like the living room, bedroom, and kitchen to manage the process efficiently and avoid overwhelm.

### **Create a Comprehensive Home Inventory Checklist:**

-List all possessions, categorizing items by room for organization.

### **Gather Necessary Documentation:**

-Collect receipts, warranties, and appraisals for high-value items to support insurance claims and ownership.

### **Capture Visual Documentation:**

-Use a digital camera or smartphone to take multiple photos/videos of each item from various angles to accurately depict their condition.

### **Record Detailed Descriptions:**

-Include make, model, serial numbers, purchase dates, and prices alongside each item on your inventory list.

### **Securely Store Documentation:**

-Keep physical copies of important documents in a secure, fireproof, and waterproof safe or off-site location. Store digital copies on a cloud platform or portable storage device for easy access.

### **Regularly Update Inventory:**

-Review and update your home inventory annually or after significant changes in belongings to maintain accuracy.

### **Share Information with Trusted Individuals:**

-Share inventory documentation with trusted family, friends, or insurance agents, ensuring they know how to access it during emergencies.

### **Review Insurance Coverage:**

-Regularly review insurance policies to ensure sufficient coverage for your belongings, adjusting limits as needed.

### **Plan for Emergencies:**

-Use your home inventory documentation to facilitate insurance claims and recovery efforts during emergencies. Keep a copy of your inventory checklist in your emergency preparedness kit for quick reference.

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### Extra Tips!

- Conduct a thorough inventory of all drawers, cabinets, closets, and other storage spaces, documenting their contents.
- Remember to include items stored outdoors or off-site, such as in your garage, sheds, or storage units, in your documentation.
- Open and document the contents of boxes stored in your home, such as mementos or holiday decorations.
- Use red tape to mark boxes intended for emergency retrieval, ensuring quick identification during crises.
- Ensure all medications are accounted for and documented, including saving prescriptions digitally for easy access.
- Keep a list of emergency contacts handy, including your insurance agents, utility companies, and local authorities, for easy access during emergencies.
- Furthermore, ensure to include documentation of your home's structure or engineering. In case of a fire or earthquake, insurers may find it difficult to ascertain pre-existing damage to your property.
- Start documenting your belongings immediately; don't wait for a perfectly tidy house. Preparedness is crucial, so begin now