CIVILIAN SURVIVAL HANDBOOK · UK FIELD GUIDE

When the Lights Go Out

The first hour of a power cut, then the rest of the night — 105, the freezer, cooking, cash and a radio. Written for UK homes, including flats with induction hobs and combi boilers. Fill it in for this household, walk through the likely evenings, and keep the cards where you can find them in the dark.

POWER CUT AND BLACKOUT PLAN · SITUATION GUIDE · £4.99
PREPARED, NOT PANICKED. · IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 999
EMPORIFY GLOBAL LTD · CIVILIAN SURVIVAL HANDBOOK

01 · DO THIS FIRST

The first hour

DO THIS FIRST

1. If anyone is in immediate danger, call 999.
2. Check it is not just your home: look at the street, and neighbours if it is safe.
3. Keep the fridge and freezer doors shut. Every opening lets the cold out.
4. Switch off induction hobs and anything you do not want coming back on unattended.
5. Get a torch, not a candle if you can help it. Official Be Ready wording: torches are safer than candles. Find the radio and your household plan.
6. Call 105 in England, Scotland or Wales to report a cut. In Northern Ireland call 03457 643643. (GOV.UK Prepare, read 19 November 2026.)

Tune in on a battery or wind-up FM radio. Official guidance asks you to write down the frequencies you use for news, and to keep a charged power bank for phones or compatible medical devices. Have cash (coins and notes) as well as cards, because electronic payments and ATMs can fail. (Be Ready checklist, 19 November 2026.)

If someone in this home uses a medical device that needs power, get their backup running if you have one, and use the paper instructions you keep with the device. Official Prepare guidance is to keep those instructions and a compatible charged backup if you have one, and to be on the Priority Services Register so suppliers know you need extra support (thepsr.co.uk in England, Scotland and Wales; Customer Care Registers in Northern Ireland).

02 · DECISION TREE

What kind of cut is this?

Work down the list. The official first steps above still come first.

IF THIS IS TRUE	THEN
Someone is hurt, trapped, or in immediate danger	Call 999. Do not wait to diagnose the cut.
You can smell gas, or a carbon monoxide alarm is sounding	Get out and stay out. Call the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999 (24 hours). If someone is finding it hard to breathe, has suddenly become confused, has lost consciousness, feels weak, or has chest or muscle pain after exposure, call 999 or go to A&E — do not drive yourself. (NHS carbon monoxide poisoning, 19 November 2026.)
Only this home is dark, and neighbours still have power	Check your consumer unit (fuse box) if it is safe and dry to do so. If a switch has tripped, follow the label on the unit or your supplier's instructions. If you cannot reset it safely, call 105 (or 03457 643643 in Northern Ireland) and treat it as a fault in this home.
The street, the block, or a wide area is dark	Treat it as a network cut. Call 105 / the NI number, keep fridge and freezer shut, and follow the rest of this plan.
Someone here relies on powered medical equipment and the backup will not last	Use the device's own instructions. Contact the service or clinic written on your plan. If it is an emergency, call 999. Tell 105 / your network operator that someone on the Priority Services Register is affected, if you are registered.
The home is getting dangerously cold, or you cannot stay safely (for example you cannot get water, or a lift is out and someone cannot use the stairs)	If anyone is in immediate danger, call 999. Otherwise follow official advice on the radio or at gov.uk, and use the "if we cannot stay" box later in this file. Do not improvise heat with a barbecue or camping stove indoors or in a tent. (NHS, 19 November 2026.)
You can stay, and nobody is in danger	Stay put. Work through the first-hour list, then the rest of this plan.

IN THIS HOME, THE CONSUMER UNIT (FUSE BOX) IS

Only touch it if it is safe and dry. If you are standing in water, do not touch electrical switches. (Same rule as official flood guidance on GOV.UK, 19 November 2026.)