



Use of and sheltering in civil defence shelters

This brochure helps you understand how to use civil defence shelters and how to take shelter in them.

There is currently no military threat to Finland. There is no need to activate civil defence shelters now. However, it is good to know the basics of civil defence shelters and sheltering in them. Under normal conditions, civil defence shelters are used as resident storages and recreational facilities.

What kinds of civil defence shelters are there?

Civil defence shelters are designed for wartime use. They are an important element in sheltering

the population. There are many sizes of shelters. They share a strong structure, their own ventilation equipment, emergency exit route and supplies.

Civil defence shelters are located in private properties, such as blocks of flats and terraced houses, shops, offices and industrial buildings, as well as in public buildings, such as schools and hospitals.

In addition, there are public civil defence shelters that provide shelter for people moving around the town. They typically complement the needs of civil defence shelters in large towns.

How civil defence shelters are activated

The owner of the building must plan in advance how the civil defence shelter will be activated. It is part of the property's rescue planning.

When will activation take place and who will do it?

Civil defence shelters will be activated within 72 hours of an order by an authority. The civil defence shelter is prepared for use by the residents of the property. After this, the shelter is left in standby mode so that it can be quickly accessed if necessary.

The use of a civil defence shelter is easy when it is planned in advance. You can jointly agree on which residents will be trained on the use of the civil defence shelter.

You can increase your competence by familiarising yourself with the instructions for the property.

Stages of activation:

- Empty the space from objects and dismantle extra structures. Clean the space.
- Mark the entrance route from the outside all the way to the civil defence shelter.
- Prepare the civil defence shelter supplies for use:
 - install the airlock tent or verify the operation of the airlock room
 - fill the reserve water tanks and build toilet booths
- Check the operation of the doors and hatches. Verify the shelter's communication connections.
- Verify the operation of the emergency exit route.
- Close the normal-conditions ventilation of the shelter.
- Verify the operation of ventilation and other devices.

More details:

suomi.fi/preparedness
pelastustoimi.fi/en/rescue-services/preparedness/civil-defence

This brochure is based on the Ministry of the Interior's guide on how to activate and use civil defence shelters. Always follow the instructions of the authorities.

How to shelter yourself in a civil defence shelter

Civil defence shelters are only used during war. The need for sheltering is announced by means of the public alarm system and an official emergency announcement, for example in the 112 mobile application. Sheltering rapidly is important because there may be a very short time between the warning and the hazard.

Where should I shelter?

- When the alarm comes, immediately move to the nearest civil defence shelter. Anyone who needs sheltering can shelter in a civil defence shelter if there is room in it.
- Civil defence shelters are marked with a symbol, which is a blue equilateral triangle on an orange background.
- If there is no civil defence shelter nearby, shelter indoors as close to strong structures as possible, for example in the middle of the building. Avoid roaming outdoors.



What should I take with me to the shelter?

Take your identity card, essential medicinal products, phone, a small amount of cash and something to drink with you.

When going to a civil defence shelter, take:

- food and drink that can be consumed without heating
- hygiene supplies
- headlamp with batteries and backup power for mobile phone charging
- entertainment (books, games, toys)
- if necessary, equipment for overnight stays (e.g. sleeping bag and mattress)

Take with you



Always with you



What to do in the shelter?

The devices of the shelter are used by the people in the shelter together. Larger shelters have separately trained users. It may be cramped and warm in the shelter, but it is safe to stay there. A shelter is usually used for a short time.

Follow the instructions. and take care of cleanliness together with others. Do not smoke or use devices that increase the risk of fire.

Working together, acting calmly and taking others into account make staying in the shelter smooth.