# Your AC died in a heat wave.

This is more than uncomfortable — heat can get dangerous fast, and summer repairs can take days. Here's how to keep your household cool and safe while you wait.

READ FIRST

## If any of these happen, act first

! **Someone stops sweating, gets confused, or their skin turns hot and dry.**
That's heat stroke territory — call 911 now, move them somewhere cooler, and cool them with wet cloths while you wait. Per the CDC, minutes matter here.

! **A person or pet is in a parked car.**
Get them out immediately. A closed car can climb 20 degrees in 10 minutes, even with the windows cracked.

FREE, RIGHT NOW

## Start with these — they cost nothing

- [ ] Close blinds on the sunny side
  blocking direct sun keeps rooms noticeably cooler all day.
- [ ] Open windows after dark
  let the cooler night air in, then shut everything by morning to trap it.
- [ ] Move to the lowest floor
  heat rises, so the shadiest downstairs room will be the coolest spot.
- [ ] Drink before you feel thirsty
  sip water through the day and skip caffeine and alcohol, which dry you out.
- [ ] Cool your body directly
  a damp towel on the back of your neck and a cool shower bring your temperature down fast.

UNDER 12 HOURS

## Keep the heat out, watch your people

- [ ] Close every blind and curtain on the sunny side to block radiant heat.
- [ ] Run fans to move air across skin — that helps you cool even when the air is warm.
- [ ] Get everyone sipping water before they feel thirsty; skip caffeine and alcohol.
- [ ] Move to the lowest, shadiest floor and stay still during the hottest hours.
- [ ] Watch kids, older adults, and pets for dizziness, headache, confusion, or no sweating.
- [ ] Put a cool, damp cloth on the neck, wrists, and ankles to drop body temperature.


General guidance for household planning — not professional advice. In an emergency, follow your local authorities and call 911.

12–48 HOURS

## Find cooler air

- [ ] Spend the hottest part of the day somewhere with AC — a library, mall, theater, or cooling center.
- [ ] Check your city's website or call 211 for cooling-center locations and hours.
- [ ] Check on older neighbors and anyone living alone; offer a ride to cool air.
- [ ] Keep the fridge and freezer shut to protect food while the kitchen is hot.
- [ ] Take cool (not cold) showers a few times a day to reset your body temperature.
- [ ] Never leave a child or pet in a parked car, even for a minute — it heats to deadly fast.

48 HOURS AND BEYOND

## Make safe calls

- [ ] If the house won't drop below the low 80s at night, plan to stay somewhere cooler.
- [ ] Know the signs of heat stroke — hot skin, confusion, fainting — and call 911 if you see them.
- [ ] Never use a gas grill or stove indoors to cope; it adds heat and carbon monoxide.
- [ ] If the power's out too, a power station can run a fan or small AC unit safely indoors.
- [ ] Keep hydrating and resting — recovery from heat strain takes longer than people expect.

KNOW THE LINE

## When it’s more than an inconvenience

- **Call 911: Confusion, slurred words, or fainting in the heat.**
- **Call 911: Hot, dry skin after sweating stops — or a body temp over 103°F.**
- **Call 911: A seizure, or someone you can't wake up.**
- **Leave: The AC is out, the inside of your home keeps climbing, and someone vulnerable lives there — head to a cooling center, a library, or a friend's place with AC. Your county posts cooling center locations on hot days.**

WORTH KNOWING

## Easy mistakes to avoid

- **Trusting a fan to do an AC's job**
  Once indoor temps reach the mid-90s, a fan alone can't prevent heat illness — per the CDC. It moves hot air, it doesn't remove it. Cool showers and a cooler location beat a fan on the worst days.
- **“Hydrating” with beer or iced coffee**
  Alcohol and caffeine both work against you in the heat. Water and electrolytes are the job — boring, and correct.
- **Mowing the lawn at noon**
  Hard outdoor work belongs in the early morning during a heat wave. The chores will wait; heat stroke doesn't.
- **Forgetting the medicine cabinet**
  Some medications lose potency in the heat, and some make you more heat-sensitive — insulin is the classic one. Keep meds cool and ask your pharmacist which of yours matter.


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