Unofficial instructions for strong earthquake response

0. Scenarios covered by this manual:

1) When the shaking is so intense that your instincts tell you it is dangerous.
2) When a power outage occurs following the shaking.
   According to my experience, power outage is the most reliable indication of serosity.

1. Immediate actions (in order of priority):

1) Open doors and secure them in an open position (to ensure an exit route)
2) If you are wearing your shoes with the heels crushed down, put them on properly.
3) Look up (to check for falling objects) and look around (to identify potential hazards like unstable shelving or windows that might shatter).
4) Gather your personal essentials: keys to your residence, mobile phone, and outerwear (particularly in winter).
5) Once the shaking begins, hold on firmly to something stable. Stay close to structural elements near an exit.

2. Evacuation Outdoors

1) Areas between buildings, connecting walkways, and locations near large glass surfaces are more dangerous than being inside a building.
2) Near entrances and exits, be cautious of falling objects, such as pieces of exterior wall that may have come loose.
3) Official evacuation places are gymnasium and the parking lot on the north side of Area 3, but don't expect any support from the university there.

3. Actions After Evacuation

1) You may consult with a faculty member nearby, but it is not required. Again, don't expect any support from the university.
2) Inform as many friends as possible about your situation, prioritize your safety as you head home, and remain at home once you arrive. If possible, travel in a group. Keep in mind that streetlights may be out, leaving areas in complete darkness at night, traffic signals may not be functioning, and roads could be buckled or have developed sinkholes.
3) Once home, prepare for potential water and power outages (e.g., store water while it is still running; have flashlights and other supplies ready).

Supplementary Notes

The document titled "Procedures in the Event of an Earthquake," distributed by the university, states the following:

- *When an earthquake occurs, stay calm and prioritize your personal safety, for example, by taking cover under a desk.*
- *Once the shaking has stopped, calmly evacuate to an outdoor area.*

However, if you rely on a manual as vague as this, you could end up dead. If you wish to survive, you must think for yourself and take appropriate action.

Trying to "stay calm" is pointless; if a major earthquake strikes, anyone will fall into a panic. What matters is that you might panic. However, if you can recognize that you are in a state of panic, you will be able to find yourself with the least time.

The idea of "hiding under a desk" can often be a misguided decision. Seeking shelter under a desk is only effective when there is a risk of the ceiling or light fixtures collapsing. In the absence of such a risk, it is safer to move away from heavy objects that could tip over (such as tall shelving units or laboratory equipment) and from windows that might shatter; instead, position yourself near a structural element, like a column, close to an exit and wait for the intense shaking to subside.

Immediate actions

1) Keep doors open

This is the top priority. You should be prepared in advance to prop doors open using items such as chairs or fire extinguishers. If possible, ensure that not only the door to the room but also the main exit from the building remains open.

2) Put on your shoes

People often overlook the importance of protecting their feet. During the Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, many individuals suffered foot injuries after fleeing outdoors barefoot, which hindered their subsequent evacuation.

3) Look up (are objects at risk of falling?) **and look around** (are there shelves that might tip over or windows that could shatter?). What is appropriate depends on where you are.

4) Keep your keys, smartphone, and outerwear (in winter) with you

During the East Japan Earthquake, many staff members and students rushed outdoors as soon as the shaking stopped, without giving it a second thought. However, once you are outside, you may not be able to re-enter the building for some time. Could you manage to survive without your keys (for your bicycle or home) or your smartphone? Whenever time permits, ensure you have the essentials you will need after evacuating, such as your keys, smartphone, and a jacket or coat.

Evacuation Outdoors

The shortest route to an evacuation site is not necessarily the best one. For instance, in the case of the laboratory in Obataya, the most direct path to the evacuation site leads through narrow alleyways between buildings or across connecting walkways; yet, during the East Japan Earthquake, these areas were littered with fallen exterior wall tiles and chunks of concrete. In such a situation, it is safer to move through a seismically reinforced building rather than traveling outdoors. Always be mindful of how you would evacuate from your current location.

Actions After Evacuation

Expect that you may be unable to communicate with one another for some time. Once you have reached an evacuation site, call out to those around you and let as many people as possible know that you were there. During the East Japan Earthquake, both telephone and email services were unavailable for an extended period. Repeatedly attempting to connect to a network that is down only wastes your battery: you never know when you might next be able to recharge it.

During the East Japan Earthquake, the earthquake struck in the evening, causing traffic lights and streetlights to go out. In such a situation, you must depart before it gets dark to ensure a safe journey home. Do not wait for instructions from the university; instead, make your own decision. If it is already night, it is safer to remain in a secure facility on campus (such as a gymnasium) rather than attempting to return home.

In the event of a major earthquake, if people head home separately, it becomes difficult to maintain contact. To prepare for a scenario where your residence or home might collapse, leaving you with nowhere to go, it is advisable to establish "emergency meeting points" in advance, such as: ① a safe building on campus, ② the home of a friend or faculty member, or ③ a nearby park.

Actions After Returning Home

In the event of a major earthquake, it is clear that regular classes and events will be canceled or postponed. Unless you receive specific instructions, there is no need to come to campus. Unnecessary travel or attempts to reach the university can lead to secondary disasters. Once communication services are restored, ensure you know in advance whom to contact and what information to provide. Specifically, even without waiting for explicit instructions, please share as much information as possible with relevant faculty members, including your own safety status, your current whereabouts, plans to return to your family home, the situation at your family home, and the status of any friends.