World Health Organization

Protection From Aerial Attacks

Take Shelter

- There are a few places where you should seek shelter: underground, basements or subway tunnels. Preferably, stay near walls with no windows or glass, but do not lean against them. Avoid contact with a solid wall, because you may be injured by violent percussion or earth shock.
- If you are outside, head for the nearest building
- If you cannot find an underground shelter, take shelter in the lowest part of a building.
- Stay away from windows. Have windows covered with protective plastic sheeting and tape, if possible.

Taking Cover in the Open

If there are no buildings immediately accessible, find the lowest area of ground, e.g. ditch, and lay low. As splinters and shrapnel from an exploding bomb fly upwards, the zone of greatest safety is the lowest level of ground. Lie flat on your face and support your head in your arms.

Other Protective Measures

- Cover exposed skin with any non-flammable item during the bombardment, if possible. If such materials are not available, even a coat, jacket, or a newspaper may be able to protect your skin from a serious burn.
- Close your eyes - this prevents debris from entering your eyes.
- Keep your mouth slightly open to protect the lungs against injury from the blast.

DOs

- Identify the safest room in your house, e.g. if there is no basement, bathrooms are often the most solid and have few windows.
- Have plastic sheeting and masking tape (or some other pressure-sensitive adhesive tape) ready to put on your windows. This will help protect them from shattering due to the blast effect.
- Make an ad-hoc shelter out of a table, mattresses and books.
- Lie on the ground with your hands over your head and with your mouth slightly open.
- Ensure a supply of drinking water (e.g. fill bathtub with water) and food and turn off the electricity and the gas.

DO NOTs

- Look at the air raid.
- Go out and take photos of the air raid.
- Shelter near windows.
- Lean against a wall.
- Congregate in large groups, especially in the open.