
THE PREPAREDNESS REVIEW

Fall 2013

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From the Editor:

The 3rd Edition of The Preparedness Review is bigger (more pages) than the previous edition. I'm not doing that on purpose, I'm just getting some good stuff from preparedness authors from around the internet! This edition also seems to have a wider selection of topics, there is something for everyone.

Lately, when people have asked me about the type of articles that I'm looking for, I say, "If you couldn't get to the internet, for whatever reason, I want the articles in TPR to be the type that you would want to have in your survival/emergency binder, computer, laptop, tablet or even cellphone." I truly believe that all the articles in TPR3 fall into this category.

I also want to point out a "special gift" at the end of the review. Linda Loosli, of [Food Storage Moms](http://www.foodstoragemoms.com), has provided her printable emergency binder template to TPR for FREE! She normally sells this on her website for \$2.99. You can STILL get some things for FREE!

I would like to mention that if you want to purchase the printed inserts or the binder with the inserts, instead of printing them yourself, you can do so at her website - <http://www.foodstoragemoms.com/shop/emergency-binder-printables/> Linda is also offering FREE shipping in the US.

Lastly, things seem to be at a fever pitch out there in the world. If you feel it, you know what I'm talking about. There are a lot of "voices" you can listen to. But the most important are the ones of rational thinking, confidence, preparedness and faith. God's blessings to you.

Peace,
Todd

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The Preppers Guide to Better, Safer, Cheaper Cleaning Gaye Levy

One of the challenges of becoming self-sufficient is finding the space to store all of your food, water, supplies and gear. This is no small task given that a three, six or twelve month supply of anything takes up room. If you live in a large home with a full basement, no problem. On the other hand, if you live in an apartment, condo, mobile home, cottage or cabin you are out of luck. As much as you try to utilize every single hidey-hole, there is never enough room.



The lack of space is one of the best reasons I can think of for making sure that everything in the supply closet has multiple uses. This is especially true when it comes to cleaning products. There is simply no reason to take up valuable space with dozens of chemical laden products that perform a single cleaning function.

In this article I hope to convince you that making your own cleaning products will not only save you space, but will save you money and will remove toxic and harmful chemicals from your home. I call this better, safer and cheaper cleaning.

I will share with you the Do-It-Yourself cleaning supplies and gear that I believe should be in every prepper's survival closet. These are the recipes that I use and the equipment that gets the job done. Almost everything can already be found in your home or can be purchased inexpensively. Now who could ask for more?

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

To say that I have become obsessed with making my own DIY cleaning supplies is a bit of an understatement. Each week I am trying out something new – hoping to come up with the perfect cleaner.

It is not that I love cleaning – I just love the results. That said, over the years I have embraced the “good enough” method of house cleaning and household chores. Still, if there is a better way that happens to be better or cheaper, then I say “bring it on”.

You might be wondering why obsessing about a clean home environment is important.

Let me be clear. It is important because post crisis (disaster, collapse or what have you), maintaining a clean and sanitized environment will be key in avoiding sickness. Not only that, but a clean environment will smell better and will have a calming effect on stressed and frazzled nerves.

DIY CLEANING INGREDIENTS

Vinegar
Borax (such as Twenty Mule Team)
Washing Soda (such as Arm and Hammer)
Baking Soda
Bar Soap
(plain old bar with no moisturizers such as Ivory or castile soap such as Kirk's or Dr. Bronner's)
Vegetable Glycerin
Dawn Dish Soap (this is the best)
Rubbing Alcohol
Essential Oils (such as Peppermint or Tea Tree)
Dr. Bronner's Sal Suds or Liquid Castile Soap

DIY CLEANING GEAR

Microfiber Cloths aka Magic Rags
Old Toothbrushes
Scrubber Sponge
Refillable Spray Bottles
Refillable Pump Bottles
Refillable Juice or other Jugs
An Old Bucket
Hand Grater
Mobile Washer or Laundry Scrub Board
Disposable Gloves (latex or nitrile)
Lots of Good Old Fashioned Elbow Grease

DIY CLEANING RECIPES

A word about these recipes. These are the DIY cleaning concoctions that I use. They are not the only ones that will work but to me, they are uncomplicated and do the job just fine with a minimum of ingredients at a minimal cost.

Window, Floor, General Surface Cleaner aka "Peppermint Juice"

1/2	cup	White vinegar
32	oz.	Water (1 quart)
		Peppermint (or other) essential oil; optional

Make up a batch of Peppermint Juice in a repurposed juice jug. Fill your spray bottles from this master supply. If using essential oils, start with ¼ to ½ teaspoon, letting your nose be your guide.

Using different essential oils, you can make Tea Tree Juice, Lemon Juice or some other scent. I prefer peppermint oil or tea tree oil for their antibacterial and antiseptic qualities but there are many other essential oils with similar properties so use what you like or what you have on hand.

All Purpose Cleaner#1 aka “Sudsy Sal”

1	tbl.	Dr. Bronner’s Sal Suds
32	oz.	Water

This stuff is terrific. I use it everywhere around the house and simply love it. It works well on granite counters and it gets the greasy crud off sinks. One of my favorite uses is to use my Sudsy Sal instead of running water to clean my dishes before putting them in the dishwasher. Okay, post disaster we won’t have a dishwasher but trust me, you will use a lot less water if you spray, swish, then rinse.

This stuff even removes spots from stained clothing. I am still discovering new ways to use my “Sudsy Sal” and am ranking this cleaner right on up there with my beloved vinegar.

All Purpose Cleaner #2 aka Castile Wonderful

1	tbl.	Liquid Castile Soap
32	oz.	Water
		Essential Oils; optional

The thing with Castile Wonderful is that you can make it using your own DIY Liquid Castile soap for literally pennies. By adding your favorite essential oil, you can create Tea Tree Wonderful, Peppering Wonderful, Lemon Wonderful and so on. This will add antiseptic and anti-bacterial qualities to your cleaner, depending on your essential oil of choice.

Tip: Sudsy Sal is terrific stuff, no doubt about it. It is however, a detergent based whereas liquid castile soap is pure soap. This is an important distinction especially if you have allergies. I happen to use both products, somewhat interchangeably.

Disinfecting Spray Cleaner

1/4–1/2 cup	Rubbing Alcohol
32 oz. cups	Water (1 quart)

There are times when you may need to go the extra mile to insure that germs are destroyed. While not as pleasant to use as Peppermint Juice (with vinegar) or Sudsy Sal (with Sal Suds), cleaning with alcohol is the surefire way to take care of the nasties. It also will brighten things up (such as granite countertops and stainless steel) by removing any left-over film from other products.

“Dirt Cheap Soft Soap” or Body Wash

1	cup	Grated bar soap
10	cups	Water, preferably filtered
1	tbl.	Glycerin
1 to 2	tsp.	Essential oils, optional

Directions:

1. Grate the soap.
2. Place the grated soap flakes into a large pot and add the water and glycerin.
3. Put the pot on the stove and turn the burner up to a medium heat. Cook your until all of the soap flakes are completely dissolved.
4. Set your homemade soap aside to cool. Let it sit overnight or for a few hours at a minimum.
5. Pour your Dirt Cheap Soft Soap into containers.



Keep In mind that the type of bar soap that you use may determine just how much you will need. Some bar soaps produce a very thick soft soap while others are a bit runny. The secret is to let your batch sit for 24 to 48 hours and add an extra spoon full of soap flakes or an extra bit of water after-the-fact if needed. Most of the time though, it will be fine just as it is.

Tip: You can find more detail instructions for making Dirt Cheap Soft Soap can be found in the article [DIY Cleaning: Dirt Cheap Soft Soap](http://www.backdoorsurvival.com/how-to-make-dirt-cheap-soft-soap/) on Backdoor Survival (<http://www.backdoorsurvival.com/how-to-make-dirt-cheap-soft-soap/>).

Better Than Good Laundry Soap

- | | | |
|---|------|-------------------------------------|
| 3 | tbl. | Borax (such as Twenty Mule Team) |
| 3 | tbl. | Washing Soda (such as Arm & Hammer) |
| 2 | tbl. | Dawn Dish Soap |
| 8 | cups | Water, preferably filtered |

Directions:

Find yourself a 1/2 gallon container such as a clean juice bottle that has been repurposed. Get out a funnel and add the borax and washing soda followed by 2 cups of boiling water. Give it all a good shake until the powdered ingredients are dissolved.

Add the liquid dish soap and swish it around until the brew is well mixed.

Once that is done, add the remaining water which will pretty much fill the jug. Do not be surprised if there are bubbles coming out of the top – that is the dish soap doing its thing.

When it is time to do laundry, measure out 1/4 cup to 1/2 cup of your DIY laundry detergent and wash normally. This detergent will be thin and watery but don't worry, it will work just fine.

Tip: For detailed instructions on making your own batch of Better Than Good Laundry Soap, read the article [The No Mess No Fuss Method of Making DIY Laundry Detergent](http://www.backdoorsurvival.com/diy-laundry-detergent/) on Backdoor Survival(<http://www.backdoorsurvival.com/diy-laundry-detergent/>).

And as far as getting your laundry clean without a washing machine? Consider getting a [Mobile Washer](#). This is a hand operated washing device that works like a plunger only better. It uses a minimum of water and less soap than traditional hand laundry methods due to the agitation motion. Use it in a 5 or 6 gallon bucket, sink or tub. The best part is that it is less than \$15.

Drain Cleaner

1	cup	Baking soda
1	cup	White vinegar
		Hot or boiling water

Pour the baking soda and vinegar into the drain and let it sit for an hour with the stopper down. Remove the stopper and add a kettle of really hot water (or boiling water if you are careful) down the drain. If you do this every month or so, the drain will stay nice and clear.

This works great in bathroom sinks where hair, makeup and other particles can quickly create pesky clogs.

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

Baking Soda
Sudsy Sal or Peppermint Juice (see recipes above)

Empty the toilet bowl by turning off the water. Spray the bowl with Sudsy Sal then liberally sprinkle the bowl with baking soda. Let it sit for a few minutes then get out your scrubber sponge, and an old toothbrush and scrub away. Yes, you may need some elbow grease too but isn't this a lot better than a toxic chemical cocktail?

DIY Liquid Castile Soap (Bonus Recipe)

1	bar	Castile soap
2	quarts	Boiling water, preferably filtered

Directions:

Using your kitchen knife, slice and dice the bar of soap into small chunks. Or, if you are so inclined, grate it up with a vegetable grater instead. Castile soap is inherently soft so there is no reason to drag out the food processor or blender to do this.

Measure out your boiling water and pour it into your bowl or do as I do and use a large Pyrex measuring cup.



Add the chunks or flakes and walk away. Go do something else. Walk the dog. Catch up on Backdoor Survival. Just do something. When you come back in an hour or so, most if not all of the soap will be dissolved into a nice concentrated liquid.

Transfer your liquid castile soap to some mason jars, a squirt bottle or other container and you are ready to go.

Tip: For detailed instructions go to [f DIY Liquid Castile Soap “Wonderful” on Backdoor Survival](http://www.backdoorsurvival.com/diy-liquid-castile-soap-wonderful/) (<http://www.backdoorsurvival.com/diy-liquid-castile-soap-wonderful/>).

BUT WHAT ABOUT ??

I am sure that many of you have a favorite DIY cleaner recipe that I have not included. I even have a few additional recipes of my own that work just great but are a bit specialized and go beyond my goal of having all of my cleaning serve multiple purposes.

A case in point is DIY furniture polish. I can clean my wood furniture quite nicely with Sudsy Sal but who the heck will care if my furniture is polished up nice and shiny following a disaster or stuff hits the fan event?

Another example is citrus cleaner made from orange peels soaked in straight vinegar. Yes, it smells nice but it is still just plain vinegar. It seems wasteful to me to use straight vinegar when you can heavily dilute it with water and get the same or better results. Besides, you have to wait two weeks. Who has the time for that?

That said, if you have a tried and true DIY cleaning recipe, be sure to let me know by sending an email to **Gaye at BackdoorSurvival dot com**. Being obsessed with DIY cleaners, I will probably give it a try.

THE ULTIMATE CLEANING TOOL

Old toothbrushes are the ultimate cleaning tool. They are perfect for getting into all of those nooks and crannies including under the rim of the toilet bowl. Of course, the best thing is that they are 100% free.

Something else that I highly is a supply of microfiber cloths. They last for years and indeed, some of mine are over 14 years old and still go going strong albeit a bit stained. For a modest investment, you will give up using paper towels and old tee-shirts as rags forever. You can purchase a bundle of these microfiber clothes at Wal-Mart, Amazon, Costco and just about every other discount store.

Tip: I like to color code my cleaning cloths; yellow for general cleaning and green for glass and windows.

SUMMING IT ALL UP

You don't have to wait for a disaster or other emergency to begin making your own cleaning and laundry supplies. I encourage you to start with these tried and true recipes now and learn what works best for you. The money you save will be substantial and will certainly be enough to purchase something more useful than a toxic brew of chemicals pitched to you by Madison Avenue executives.

For a printable version of this article, click on this link: [The Preppers Guide to Better, Safer Cheaper Cleaning.](#)

About Gaye: Gaye Levy started Backdoor Survival so that she could share her angst and concern about our deteriorating economy and its impact on ordinary, middle-class folks. She also wanted to become a prepper of the highest order and to share her knowledge as she learned it along the way.

On Backdoor Survival you will find survival and preparedness tools and tips for creating a self-reliant lifestyle through thoughtful prepping and optimism.

To read more from Gaye, visit her website, [Backdoor Survival](#). You can also follow Gaye on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Pinterest](#).



SURVIVAL ANTIBIOTICS PRIMER, PART 1

By: Joe Alton M.D. - Dr. Bones

One of the most common questions that I am asked from prospective survival medics is “**What antibiotics should I stockpile** and how do I use them?” There isn’t a 60 second answer to this. Actually, there isn’t a 60 MINUTE answer to this, but anyone that is interested in preserving the health of their loved ones in a collapse will have to learn what antibiotics will work in a particular situation.

It’s important to start off by saying that you will not want to indiscriminately use antibiotics for every minor ailment that comes along. In a collapse, the medic is also a quartermaster of sorts; you will want to wisely dispense that limited and, yes, precious supply of life-saving drugs.

Liberal use of antibiotics is a poor strategy for a few reasons:

- Overuse can foster the spread of resistant bacteria. Antibiotics routinely given to turkeys recently caused a resistant strain of Salmonella that put over 100 people in the hospital. 36 million birds were destroyed.
- Potential allergic reactions may occur that could lead to anaphylactic shock.
- Making a diagnosis may be more difficult if you give antibiotics before you’re sure what medical problem you’re actually dealing with. The antibiotics might temporarily “mask” a symptom, which could cost you valuable time in determining the correct treatment.

You can see that judicious use of antibiotics, under your close supervision, is necessary to fully utilize their benefits. Discourage your group members from using these drugs without first consulting you. You should also know that antibiotics only work against bacteria. The common cold, influenza, and other infections caused by viruses. Don’t waste your precious supplies treating illnesses for which they will have no effect.

There are many antibiotics, but what antibiotics accessible to the average person would be **good additions to your medical storage**? Here are some common antibiotics (most available in veterinary form without a prescription) that you will want in your medical arsenal and their veterinary equivalent:

- Amoxicillin 250mg AND 500mg (FISH-MOX, FISH-MOX FORTE)
- Ciprofloxacin 250mg and 500mg(FISH-FLOX, FISH-FLOX FORTE)
- Cephalexin 250mg and 500mg (FISH-FLEX, FISH-FLEX FORTE)
- Metronidazole 250mg (FISH-ZOLE)
- Doxycycline 100mg (BIRD-BIOTIC)
- Ampicillin 250mg and 500mg (FISH-CILLIN, FISH-CILLIN FORTE)
- Clindamycin 300mg (FISH-CIN)
- Sulfamethoxazole 400mg/Trimethoprin 80mg (BIRD-SULFA)

There are various others that you can choose, but the selections above will give you the opportunity to treat many illnesses and have enough variety so that even those with Penicillin allergies will have options. Cephalexin, although not in the same drug family, has been quoted as having a 10% cross-reactivity rate with Penicillin.

Amoxicillin (Aquarium version: FISH-MOX, FISH-MOX FORTE, AQUA-MOX): comes in 250mg and 500mg doses, usually taken 3 times a day. Amoxicillin is the most popular antibiotic prescribed to children, usually in liquid form. More versatile and better absorbed than the older Pencillins, Amoxicillin may be used for the following diseases:

- Anthrax (Prevention or treatment of Cutaneous transmission)
- Chlamydia Infection (sexually transmitted)
- Urinary Tract Infection (bladder/kidney infections)
- Helicobacter pylori Infection (causes peptic ulcer)
- Lyme Disease (transmitted by ticks)
- Otitis Media (middle ear infection)
- Pneumonia (lung infection)
- Sinusitis
- Skin or Soft Tissue Infection (cellulitis, boils)
- Actinomycosis (causes abscesses in humans and livestock)
- Bronchitis
- Tonsillitis/Pharyngitis (Strep throat)

This is a lot of information, but how do you approach determining what dose and frequency would be appropriate for what individual? Let's take an example: Otitis Media is a common ear infection, especially in children. Amoxicillin is often the "drug of choice" for this condition.

First, you would want to determine that your patient is not allergic to **Amoxicillin**. The most common form of allergy would appear as a rash, but diarrhea, itchiness, and even respiratory difficulty could also manifest. If your patient is allergic, another antibiotic such as Sulfamethoxazole/Trimethoprin or Cephalexin could be a "second-line" solution.

Once you have identified Amoxicillin as your choice to treat your patient's ear infection, you will want to determine the dosage. As Otitis Media often occurs in children, you might have to break a tablet in half or open the capsule to separate out a portion that would be appropriate. For Amoxicillin, you would give 20-50mg per kilogram of body weight (20-30mg/kg for infants less than four months old). This would be useful if you have to give the drug to a toddler less than 30 pounds. A common child's dosage would be 250mg and a common maximum dosage for adults would be 500 mg. Take this orally 3 times a day for 10 to 14 days (twice a day for infants). Luckily, these dosages are exactly how the commercially-made medications come.

If your child is too small to swallow a pill whole, you could make a mixture with water (called a "suspension"). To make a liquid, crush a tablet or empty a capsule into a small glass of water and drink it; then, fill the glass again and drink that (particles may adhere to the walls of the glass). You can add some flavoring to make it more palatable. Do not chew or make a liquid out of time-released capsules of any medication, you will wind up losing some of the gradual release effect and perhaps get too much into your system at once. These medications should be plainly marked "Time-Released".

Anytime you, as medic, place a person on a new medication or supplement, they should be carefully watched for signs of allergy. If they develop a rash, itching, diarrhea, or other untoward symptoms, you should discontinue your treatment and look for other options.

You will probably see improvement within 3 days, but don't be tempted to stop the antibiotic therapy until you're done with the entire 10-14 days. Sometimes, you'll kill most of the bacteria but some colonies may persist and multiply if you prematurely end the treatment. In a collapse, however, you might be down to your last few pills and have to make some tough decisions.

Amoxicillin is certainly an important antibiotic for many purposes. What if you're allergic to medications in the Penicillin family, however? Consider Ciprofloxacin (aquarium equivalent: FISH-FLOX). Ciprofloxacin is an antibiotic in the fluoroquinolone family. It kills bacteria by inhibiting the reproduction of DNA and bacterial proteins. This drug usually comes in 250mg and 500mg doses.

Ciprofloxacin (brand name Cipro, veterinary equivalent Fish-Cin) can be used for the following conditions:

- Bladder or other urinary infections, especially in females
- Prostate infections
- some types of lower respiratory infections, such as pneumonia
- Acute sinusitis
- Skin infections (such as cellulitis)
- Bone and joint infections
- Infectious diarrhea
- Typhoid fever caused by Salmonella
- Inhalational Anthrax

In most cases, you should give 500mg twice a day for 7-14 days, with the exception of bone and joint infections (4-6 weeks) and Anthrax (60 days). You can get away with 250mg doses for 3 days for most mild urinary infections. Generally, you would want to continue the medication for 2 days after improvement is noted. Ciprofoxacin has not been approved for use in pregnancy. Among other side effects, Cipro has been reported to occasionally cause weakness in muscles and tendons. Look other risks and side effects up at drugs.com or rxlist.com.

Cipro may also cause joint and muscle complications in children, so it is restricted in pediatric use to the following:

- Urinary tract infections and pyelonephritis due to E. coli (the most common type)
- Inhalational anthrax

In children, the dosage is measured by multiplying 10mg by the weight in kilograms (1 kg = 2.2 lbs.) and the maximum dose should not exceed 400mg total twice a day, even if the child weighs more than 100 pounds. Ciprofloxacin should be taken with 8 ounces of water.

Another useful antibiotic in a collapse would be Doxycycline (veterinary equivalent: Bird-Biotic). Doxycycline is a member of the Tetracycline family, and is also acceptable in patients allergic to Penicillin. It inhibits the production of bacterial protein, which prevents reproduction. Doxycycline is marketed under various names, such as Vibramycin and Vibra-Tabs.

Indications for **Doxycycline** include the following:

- E. Coli, Shigella and Enterobacter infections (some diarrheal disease)
- Chlamydia (sexually transmitted disease)
- Lyme disease
- Rocky Mountain spotted fever
- Anthrax
- Cholera
- Plague (Yersinia)
- Gum disease (severe gingivitis, periodontitis)
- Folliculitis (boils)
- Acne and other inflammatory skin diseases, such as hidradenitis (armpits and groins)
- Some lower respiratory tract (pneumonia) and urinary tract infections
- Upper respiratory infections caused by Strep
- Methicillin-resistant Staph (MRSA) infections
- Malaria (prevention)
- Some parasitic worm infections (kills bacteria in their gut needed to survive)

In the case of Rocky Mountain spotted fever, doxycycline is indicated even for use in children for this illness. Otherwise, doxycycline is not indicated for use in children under the age of eight years. It has not been approved for use during pregnancy.

Although antibiotics may be helpful in diarrheal disease, always start with hydration and symptomatic relief. Prolonged diarrhea, high fevers, and bleeding are reasons to consider their use. The risk is that one of the side effects of antibiotics is....diarrhea!

The recommended Doxycycline dosage for most types of bacterial infections in adults is 100 mg to 200 mg per day for 7-14 days. For chronic (long-term) or more serious infections, treatment can be carried out for a longer time. Children will receive 1-2mg per pound of body weight per day. For Anthrax, the treatment should be prolonged to 60 days. To prevent malaria, adults should use 100mg per day.

A working knowledge of antibiotic use is important for anyone that will serve as the medic for their survival group. Antibiotics are a weapon in your medical arsenal; use them wisely and frugally. Consider investing in a book called the Physician's Desk Reference. It will have all this information (and more) on just about any medication manufactured today. Listed are indications, dosages, side effects, risks, and even how the drug works in the body. Online sources such as drugs.com or rxlist.com are also useful, but you are going to want a hard copy for your library. You never know when we might not have a functioning internet.

*Joe and Amy Alton are the authors of the #1 Amazon Bestseller "[The Survival Medicine Handbook](#)". See their articles in *Backwoods Home*, *Survivalist*, *Self Reliance Illustrated*, and *Survival Quarterly* magazines, and at their website at www.doomandbloom.net • Twitter: [@preppershow](#)
Facebook: [drbonesand nurseamy](#) • *Doom and Bloom Hour* Podcast:
<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/survivalmedicine>*

The One Hour Bug-out

By: Joe Nobody

Consider this scenario...

7:20 a.m. – Two enterprising, young jihadists calmly roll up their prayer mats, satisfied with their final words to Allah. They stroll to a warehouse, rolling up the oversized freight door just as the first light of day debuts in the eastern sky. The elder man tosses two heavy boxes into an already stuffed cargo hold of the truck they've been preparing for days. He turns to his friend and remarks in Farsi, "The special sauce." Both men chuckle nervously.

8:20 a.m. – The next-day parcel delivery truck rolls down the off-ramp; the early morning shadows of the downtown skyscrapers accenting the driver's melancholy mood. Dressed in a counterfeit, brown uniform that is so detailed it apparently sports nationally branded logos, the driver parks the van outside of a towering office building and rushes inside carrying a small package. A police patrol car rolls by, paying no attention to the truck. Such vehicles deliver packages at this time of the morning every day.

8:21 a.m. – The driver exits the opposite side of the office building where his friend is idling in an old sedan. When the two have traveled about five blocks, the passenger opens his parcel and pulls out a cell phone. He presses one key. Another cell phone inside the still idling delivery van answers the former driver's call. Instead of sending a ring tone to the speaker, the electrical current has been rewired to a detonator. Over one ton of high-grade explosives erupt, launching a blast wave that travels at the speed of sound, tearing through the downtown streets and rush hour traffic. The explosion is felt over 20 miles away and is so violent that a mushroom cloud forms over the devastated area.

8:35 a.m. – The first fire department trucks arrive on the scene. It's already clear to the police officers and other first responders that a bomb has exploded. Protocol, established by the Department of Homeland Security, calls for nuclear, biological, and chemical testing of the atmosphere.

The two boxes of "special sauce" added to the truck's deadly cargo contained waste product from nuclear-based medical treatments, gathered by the older terrorist during the months he worked at a local hospital. Harmless, the radioactivity still accomplished its mission, sending the Geiger counter held by a nearby fireman into the warning zone.

8:37 a.m. – A news reporter, standing behind the firefighter, notices the instrument's reaction. He then hears the man broadcast over his radio, "Captain, I'm getting radioactive readings over here. I think we might have just been hit with a dirty bomb."

The newshound dials his cell phone. Before his editor answers, every police and fire radio within 20 miles carries the frantic orders, "Get back... everyone pull back from the blast zone. Pull back!"

8:38 a.m. – A local news channel interrupts its already frantic coverage, the announcer's voice filled with nervous energy. "I've just been informed that first responders are being pulled back from the area of the blast, reports of radioactive air samples coming from our reporter on the scene."

You can guess the rest of the story. Weather forecasts indicate a wind direction that will carry the cloud of supposedly deadly air directly to your suburban home. The news report hits the internet and immediately goes viral, blowing the entire story out of proportion. Cable news is having a field day.

Within minutes, panic and paranoia begin feeding on each other, propagating exaggerations, false reports and terror-based reactions from both the public and law enforcement. You've seen it before... The Washington Navy yard massacre – three men with AR15s. The Boston Marathon bombing... Newtown... 9-11... and so on and so forth. You don't want to believe it; your mind calling BS as the hyperboles build. Yet, you and your family remain glued to the television, bombarded by news clips of Chernobyl, Fukushima, and Three-mile Island.

Then the dreaded map is broadcast all across your beloved flat screen. The evacuation zone. Your castle is now directly in the path of what is being described as a “poison cloud of deadly radiation.” Some jerk in the newsroom even found a skull and crossbones icon to display in the middle of your neighborhood.

You have one hour to get out. Already, there is a police car moving up and down your street, blaring the order to get the hell out of Dodge. Six-zero minutes.

Can you do it?

Sitting here surfing the internet, you lean back in your chair and say, “Sure, Joe. I'm a prepper, and I have a bug-out bag all packed and ready.”

You may also be cynical over the odds of a dirty bomb impacting your home. I fall into this category as well, but what about floods? Forest fires? Tornados? Hurricanes that change direction at the last minute?

All of these disasters can lead to hasty departures. Many of these events occur with little or no warning. Really think about it. Keep reminding yourself, “I have to leave in one hour, and I may never be able to come back.”

Do you still believe you're ready?

Going back to my fictional scenario, your mind would become your worst foe. Most likely, you would start having visions of those Japanese towns where the citizens had to leave with dinner still on their plates, never to return - those communities where the residents still haven't been allowed back. Or perhaps your mind-movie would flash the video of the recent Oklahoma tornados, where in some cases, residents had about an hour's warning.

And that's where the problems start.

What do you take? How long are you going to be gone? Are the roads going to be grid-locked, like Houston during hurricane Rita? I was there. It was absolute chaos.

During your brief stint of analysis paralysis, you recall the Katrina survivors and the conditions at the sports stadiums. You don't trust the government, and even if you did, that's not for you and your family. You fully understand the difference between a refugee and a transplant is nothing more than assets. You're a prepper!

But... seriously... *are you really ready?*

I thought I was. After all, I'm Joe Nobody – right? I write books and articles on the subject. I do broadcasts and consulting on the topic. I'm an expert in some people's opinion. If anybody should be prepared, it's me.

So I did this test, ran this gauntlet myself. I didn't even include the wife and kids, just a solo exercise to see if I could get out in one hour. Let me tell you, friend – I was not nearly as prepared as I thought I was, and that failure led to several changes in my plans and equipment.

At one hour, I wasn't even close to mobile. The yard, next to the driveway where the bug-out buggy is parked, was littered with boxes, bags and rifle cases. To add insult to injury, many of the containers were unpacked on the spot checking for critical pieces of gear I was *pretty* sure was included. No doubt my neighbors had a good laugh. If a real radioactive fog had been heading my way, archeologists would have found my bones 10,000 years from now. I can just picture them, chuckling heartily at the dig site over the prepper who died surrounded by all that gear but couldn't manage to get out.

What follows is a brief list of tips and techniques that enabled me to be perpetually prepared for an emergency.

Six Tips to Get Out Faster

Store your bug-out ammo in magazines.

The most efficient method of storing ammunition that I have found is in loaded magazines, especially for those who want to take both items. While internet debates have raged for years over the wisdom of using this method for long-term storage, there is no way to beat the space savings. The concern by some folks is the negative affect on the pill-box's internal springs. Opinions vary. I've spoken with factory reps at trade shows, and even they can't agree.

So, after failing the 60 minute evacuation trial, I've taken to keeping some number of rounds for each bug-out weapon (pistols and rifles) in magazines, stored in a water-resistant, plastic box. To hedge against degrading the springs, I cycle through these a few times per year.



In the picture (previous page), I have an \$8.00 watertight plastic unit I picked up on sale at a local sporting goods outlet. In it, I can store:

- 18 AR15 magazines @ 28 rounds each = 504 rounds
- 7 AR10 (.308 Win) mags @ 20 rounds each = 140 rounds
- 12 1911A (.45) mags @ 8 rounds each – 96 rounds

Two of these stackable boxes are now primed and ready to go. They don't scream "AMMO!" to anyone who might catch a glimpse, and they are lockable, although it wouldn't take long to defeat the plastic.

Mark your storage containers.

When I did my evac-drill, it dawned on me that I might not know where to take my family. If harm is barreling down on the homestead, that might not seem like a big deal. You would probably be focusing on just getting out of town with as much as you can carry.

But for me, a mystery destination caused a time-burning pause. If my family and I were heading west, into the Texas desert, then I needed different clothing, ammunition, and equipment than if we were going to be forced into the Great Piney Woods in eastern Texas. If you live somewhere with more pronounced change of seasons than we do in the Lone Star state, the destination and time of year should be taken into consideration as well.

During my rush around the house, I had to unpack the bug-out bags (backpacks) to see which kit had which clothing. The same with the plastic storage bins (see below), as Mrs. Nobody uses them for non-bug-out items as well. Accidentally packing two cases of diet soda would be a poor substitute for the container of dehydrated meals when we finally reached our destination.

Now, everything is labeled and inventoried, including my magazines. You'll notice in the picture above, my mags are different colors. This can help, but in addition, each is numbered with paint. I have a small notebook that tells me what type of round is loaded via this index. If I need long range pills, then I can find them. If I need anti-personnel projectiles, I don't have to guess in a stressful situation.

Store your bug-out food in boxes.



Most preppers have a pantry, or other location where their cache of food is stored. The Nobody family is no exception. Now this arrangement is fine and dandy for a shelter-in-place strategy, but in the above example, I found myself searching for a container and spending precious minutes packing. We had boxes, but I couldn't tell what was inside of each without opening the lid.

Most department stores sell plastic storage boxes, and they're not expensive. Pick a number of days, figure out your calories and fill up a box or two with your favorite prepper foods. If shelf life is a concern, mark the outside of the box and cycle through the contents as needed, just like the ammo discussed before.

Make sure your containers will fit in the trunk, hatch or bed of the bug-out buggy. Mrs. Nobody and I searched for a few days before we found these examples, which can be stacked two deep in the bed of my truck. Space and time may be critical. Four of them will feed my family for about 20 days.

Always keep a spare case of water.

This is not a huge expense and is just plain old common sense. I, like many of you, have large storage cans for water, rain catches and other sources – but it's just not the same during a panicked exodus. Most cases contain 24 to 32 plastic bottles, enough for a family of four to survive 4-7 days depending on the environment.

They can also be separated, stored in nooks and crannies and used for barter. Grabbing the plastic wrapped case off the shelf is much quicker than filling a five-gallon storage container and toting it to the trunk. Finding room for such a large, single container may be an issue as well.

Keep important documents in one place.

In a full, grid-down collapse of society, having identification probably won't be a necessity. In the scenarios described above, it could become critical.

Most of us have our driver's licenses in our wallets or purses, but what about the kids' official papers? Social Security cards are normally the primary identification for children. Also, many of us collect marriage license(s), insurance papers, CHLs, and numerous important documents during the course of our lifetime and want to keep them safe.



Given flood, tornado, radiation, or forest fire, you may need some of these documents.

We have a small, locking, fireproof box. It's a smart idea to store official papers inside of a protective container regardless of your perceived need to bug out. My suggestion here is to purchase a size that is portable, and keep it current. Rummaging around for Mark and Sally's Social Security cards at the last minute isn't a wise use of time.

You can also just store documents in an envelope and keep them in the gun safe. Before the purchase pictured above, that was where my critical papers resided.

The Ageless Duffel Makes Bug-out Quick and Easy



Want a cheap, robust, large capacity bug-out bag? One that is anonymous and can be carried on your back if necessary? Head to your local army surplus store and grab a couple of duffels. They come in all sizes and can handle just about anything you need on a bug-out.

I keep my body armor, load vest, Camelbak, holster and spare MOLLE pouches in one. This is kit I may not want to unpack at the campground or shelter, but necessary from my perspective.

In reality, you could keep food, ammo, clothing... whatever you want... in one of these tried and true haulers. I prefer some of the solutions listed above due to transparency (food boxes) and separation (ammo and papers), but for a few bucks each, it's hard to beat a surplus duffel.

Unlike inexpensive, soft-sided luggage, duffels typically come with shoulder straps. This might be handy if you have to abandon your vehicle and head out on foot.

What Slowed Me Down the Most

In my drill, deciding what to take was the most difficult part. As an example, I hesitated on which of my weapons to pack. I have always had a fixed list of rifles to take, but a recent purchase was nosing ahead of one of the old standbys. In addition, the thought of leaving any of my precious weapons behind was gut wrenching, to say the least.

The same brain freeze occurred with clothing, food, and medicines. My mind continued in the worthless, time-consuming cycle in this scenario. I kept repeating, "I can never come back."

By the time I was actually carrying things out to the truck, I began to worry I'd forgotten something critical. *Did I grab the pistol mags? What about the medications?* It was maddening.

All the while, my mind was working against me. *The flashlight on my shotgun needs a new battery, and it is an odd size – did I pack batteries?* My much-boasted-about bug-out backpacks are hanging on the hooks, ready to go. Or are they? The contents of my daughter's bag are spread out on the closet floor, a victim of her retrieving a sleeping bag for a recent overnight event.

Oh, Mrs. Nobody and I had a list, but it was outdated. I got caught red-handed right in the middle of a hurt-matrix comprised of new equipment, replacements and experimental gear.

Making matters worse is the fact that we constantly use our stuff. Camping, training, classes and just going plinking for fun are all common activities around the Nobody household. We were slack in keeping everything on the edge or ready. Had we really needed to get out in one hour, I would have paid the price for this lack of discipline. Now, I'm more conscious of making sure things are put away in the right place after normal usage.

Then there was the actual loading. A long time ago, everything had fit just fine in the bed of the pickup. I had tested it. But I had bought new stuff, acquired different boxes and rearranged bags. There wasn't time to do a practice load, like our typical vacation. Don't fall into the same trap; make sure everything will fit in the bug-out express.

So now I have an inventory list attached to the strap of my BOB, which is always the first item to be packed. Now I can check off the contents as they are loaded in the truck, just like a professional freight hauler uses a bill of lading.

I've learned several lessons from this little pretend drill, and I'm glad I invested the time now, rather than suffer later.

The threat of becoming a victim of the "special sauce," is real, be it weather, a manmade disaster, or a terrorist's attack. Practically every month you hear of people having to abandon their homes due to such a scenario. Be ready.

Joe Nobody is the bestselling author of a dozen self-reliance books and numerous articles. You can find out more at www.holdingyourground.com.





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Step By Step: How to Build a Rocket Stove By: Jamie Black-Smith

Everytime I've done an [emergency fair](#), the most popular thing by far has been the Rocket Stove! Out of all the 5 or so methods I demonstrate, people LOVE this one, including me! It's immediately shot to the top of my FAVORITE's list and something I recommend EVERYONE should add to their emergency supplies! Also, for all you single ladies this is a total guy magnet. As soon as you throw a few twigs in it and light it up, guys immediately see a chance for danger and run to it, or maybe it was just to eat my samples. Anyways, who cares, it's AWESOME and it's one Rocket that will ROCK YOUR WORLD!!!

How? Because...

A handful of twigs can cook an ENTIRE MEAL!

And if you use the design below it fits anywhere, only weighs about 1 lb, very portable, easy to use, practically free, great for camping,.... Shall I go on? No... lets just go ahead and make one!

Grab Some Scraps and Make a ROCKET STOVE!

A huge thanks to Brock, who is an [Organic Wellness Doctor](#) by day, and a [Rocket Stove](#) engineer by night. I got my first Rocket Stove from him, because lets face it, I was **NEVER** going to get around to making one. He was nice enough to let me invite myself over to his workshop and be totally obnoxious with my picture-taking. So make sure to check out his **Website** – [PREMIER ROCKET STOVES](#), and send him a HUGE THANKS :)



SUPPLIES:

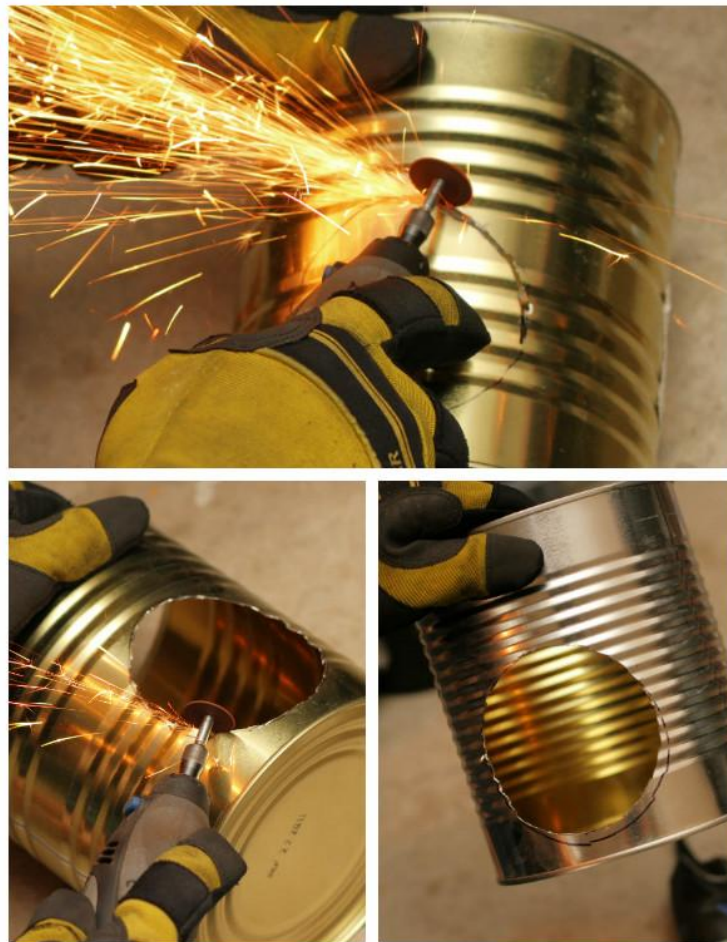
- **#10 CAN W/ LID** - Recycle one or get one from the **cannery**.
- **2 LARGE 28oz CANS** - Eat lots of beans tonight :)
- **INSULATION** - Grab some from the attic.
- **TIN SNIPS** - or anything that can cut metal!
- **HEAVY-DUTY GLOVES** - So you don't cut too many fingers off!
- **MARKER** – To mark where to cut on the can.

1- Mark & Cut Center Hole!

With the large #10 can , use a lid from the small can and trace a circle.



Once you get something that could pass as a circle, get to cutting! This is where you get to use your Tin Snips! But if you want live on the edge, pull out a mini saw, don't wear any safety goggles, use your toes to cut everything, and go to town!!!

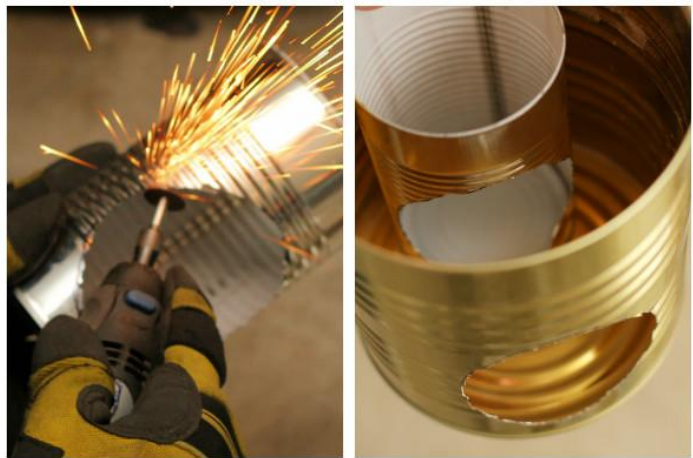


Check your tracing skills by seeing if the can fits through the hole you just made.



2- Mark & Cut a Hole on the Inside Can

- Now do the same thing. but this time measure and cut the can that will be going **INSIDE** the #10 can.
- Using the piece you just cut out of the #10 can, place it on top of the smaller can and trace!
- Once you're ready, let some more sparks fly!



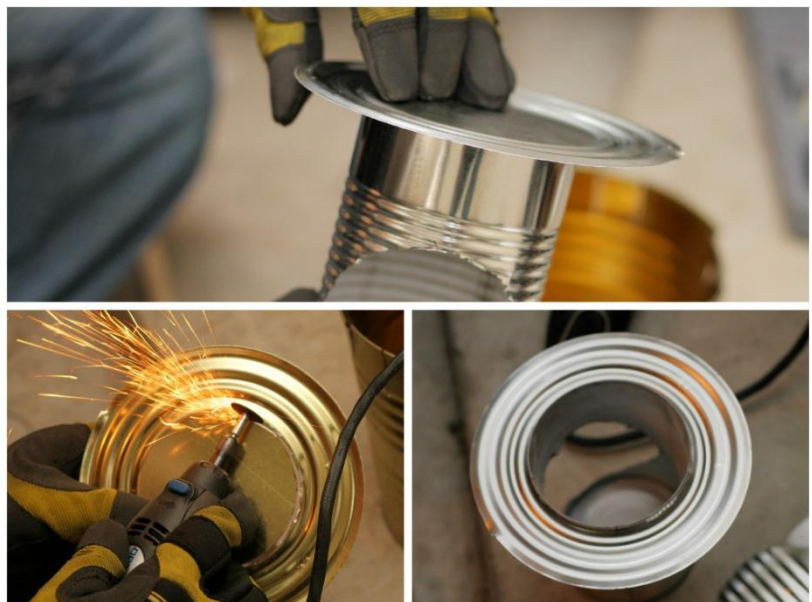
4- Cut and Insert the Last Can

- With the can you haven't touched yet, cut off the rim first.
- Then make about 1.5 inch tabs around the can. (see picture if I'm not making any sense :)
- Squeeze, smash, squish and do whatever it takes to get it through both cans.
- Fold some of the tabs up to make a snug fit.



5- Cut Lid

- With the top lid, trace a circle in the middle of it using one of the smaller cans.
- Then yes, cut it out.



6-Fill With Insulation!

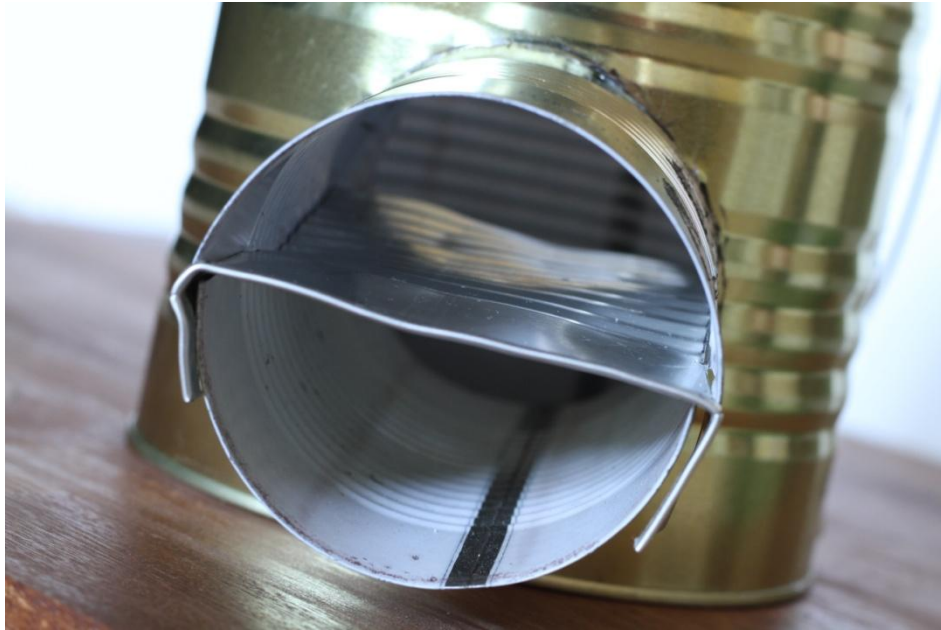
- First cut tabs around the large can. We cut 8 total, but look below to see approximate spacing.
- Insulate with whatever you want that won't catch on fire, I just grabbed some insulation from the attic for mine :)
- Pack it in until you can't fit anymore!
- Fold down 4 tabs, use a hammer if you need to help flatten them.
- Place the lid with the circle cut into it, on top.
- Hammer the remaining 4 tabs on top to secure the lid in place.



7-Add a Shelf!

Almost done! Not sure where my pictures disappeared to for this step (maybe the same place as the I-Pad), but you basically use some of the scrap metal and make a shelf!

- Cut a rectangle metal piece with flaps that will fit inside.
- Hammer the metal to make it flat if necessary.
- Cut about an inch on each side of the can.
- Slide the shelf into place.
- Fold down flaps.



8- You're DONE! Time to Launch!

I usually just cut up some of the scrap wood we have lying around, but use whatever you have that will fit and burn!

- Put some small pieces of wood on the shelf (not under, it needs to breathe)
- Throw some dryer lint in (Save this amazing stuff if you aren't already :)
- Light it!
- **And Poof!** It will be up in flames before you know it!



9- Now COOK with it!

Keep feeding in wood to keep the fire going for as long as you need!

This is sure to WOW anyone you show. So bust it out in your front yard, take it to work, or give it as a teachers' gift (maybe they can use it to burn some of that ugly apple decor they always get)! My favorite is to send the kids outside with it and tell them not to come back in until they've made dinner.



Jamie is a God-fearing, gun-toting, mother of 4. She's passionate about [emergency preparedness](http://www.Prepared-Housewives.com), food storage & survival skills and blogs about it at www.Prepared-Housewives.com. It gives her another reason to procrastinate her chores and write posts about being prepared instead.

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Herbs For Sleeplessness and Anxiety

By: Silvia Britton

I've never been a nervous person but about 10 years ago I started noticing that I'd get flustered and drop things when I was working and someone would start talking to me. And I noticed a feeling of irritability throughout the day that wasn't even around people. Welcome to the beginning of peri-menopause. It gets worse before it gets better but that is a post for another day.

Today I'd like to share with you some herbs that are very helpful for irritability, nervousness, anxiety and even insomnia. I have tried all of these herbs in the ways that I will describe for you. But first.....

Do not ever take herbs if you are pregnant or nursing unless they are prescribed by your Naturopathic Doctor or Midwife. Do not take these particular herbs if you are taking ANY other prescription medicines.

Herbal Medicine is no joke, it's not as simple as drinking a cup of tea in the morning and then your troubles vanish away. Herbs take time to work and herbs are Medicine. Drugs.

Now that you are warned and aware, let's talk about these herbs that are so helpful for all those symptoms I listed.....



Chamomile ~ Chamomile is one of those herbs that is very mild, usually good for adults and small children alike (but the warning still goes if you are pregnant or nursing), and very helpful for relaxing and calming

If you have seasonal allergies, you might want to lay off the Chamomile. It is part of the asteracea family of plants like common Ragweed.

If you aren't allergic however, you can make a cup of tea using a heaping Tablespoon of Chamomile per 8 ounces of water. Cover the cup and let the tea steep for 5 minutes. Its important to cover the cup because Chamomile's calming oils will be lost to you if you leave it uncovered. Sweeten with honey to taste. You can take Chamomile as often as you like, but it is especially helpful in the evening before bed or before any stressful event.

Passionflower ~ My husband collects passion flower on country roadsides and in fields. He finds it on old fence rows abundantly. He dries the leaves and flowers together for making tea. Passionflower has been found to work as well as the benzodiazepine (valium) class of sedatives. One study has shown it to be effective as an anti-spasmodic when used as a tincture. I use it in a tea with some peppermint to help me sleep in the evening. I use 1 Tablespoon Passionflower, 1 tsp peppermint and steep for 5 minutes, covered. Sweeten with honey if desired.





Hops ~ No, I'm not recommending beer for insomnia. But hops, which is used to give a bitter taste to beer is a natural Growsedative. Hops is extremely bitter so just use a pinch in your tea to give you a sedative effect. Do not combine hops with prescription sleep aids, it has an additive effect. An additive effect according to the Medical dictionary online is: An effect in which two substances or actions used in combination produce a total effect the same as the sum of the individual effects. I pick hops at my uncle's house, dry it, store it in a jar and then when I use it I just pull out one of the blossoms and crumble it into a cup with some chamomile and peppermint to cover up the bitter taste. I Pour boiling water over it, steep for about 5 minutes then I sweeten it with honey.

I have also made a calming Sleep Pillow for some of my children over the years. Its helpful when the child is ill and is having problems sleeping. I put 1 cup hops, 1 cup lavender blossoms and 1 cup of flax seeds (to give the pillow a little heft) into a little sack, sew up the end and put it in the child's bed near his or her pillow. The fragrance of the lavender and hops is pleasant and helpful for relaxing so its easier for the child to go to sleep naturally. If the pillow happens to tear open, the ingredients won't harm the child, even if she ingests some of them, but I wouldn't use this for an infant because of the potential for the pillow to be torn apart, I just use it for older children.

Lemon Balm ~ *Melissa officianalis* should not be used by persons who have hypothyroidism as it inhibits the action of the thyroid gland. Right now we only have a big pot of Lemon Balm and I hope to grow it in the herb garden proper this year. I cut off stems and leaves and pack them in a mason jar, then pour cheap vodka over it. I let this soak in a cool, dark place for about 3 weeks then I strain out the plant material and bottle up the lemon balm vodka. This tincture can be used for anxiety. Just put about 1/2 teaspoon in a small glass of water and drink it a couple of times a day as needed. You can also make a tea with lemon balm. It takes pretty good so just use about a tablespoon of dried herb and sweeten with honey.



Valerian ~ This herb stinks so bad. I can hardly bear to take it or drink a tea with it. I really think it would work better for me if it was in tincture form but right now all I have is the organic root. If you take too much of this herb you get a Valerian-RootValerian hangover, a groggy, sleepy feeling that you can't shake the next day so be very careful when using it. Its a great pain reliever though and worth the stink if you are in serious pain. Some people use it for chronic pain and for that you'd need to take a daily therapeutic dose , I recommend you talk to a naturopath about that.

We don't grow or collect Valerian root, I buy it at www.mountainroseherbs.com

If you simply need it for pain you should start with a small amount, a 1/2 teaspoon or so, in a cup with other strongly flavored herbs like peppermint and chamomile. If that doesn't give you the relief you need, use a teaspoon next time. Watch your morning-after symptoms. Honestly, you'll have to experiment with taste. I can only use it with peppermint, lots of peppermint. But it helps so much with a bad headache, that I use it whenever I need it.



Catnip ~ Not just for cats. Its a wonderfully mild sedative that can be used for children, as long as you check with your catnipchild's doctor or naturopath first. Make a cup using 1 Tablespoon of the catnip herb and boiling water, let steep 5 minutes, sweeten with honey.

Catnip looks a lot like Lemon Balm and all the other mints. If you are gathering in the wild, be sure you know what you are getting. Otherwise, just buy it at a nursery and grow it, well identified with a marker or buy it already dried.

There are several other herbs used for anxiety, sleeplessness and pain, but these are the ones I use and that I use for my family. They're also the herbs that I'm very familiar with how they work and they're easy to grow. I encourage you to do some more research on herbs for sleeplessness and anxiety and then start slowly adding a few of these herbs to your daily routine if you need help getting to sleep at night or staying asleep.

Sylvia Britton is the owner of the Christian HomeKeeper Network website and ministry. She and her husband Mark live in Tennessee. They are the parents of 5 children and grandparents to two so far. They have homeschooled since 1990. Sylvia is a Christian and enjoys mentoring women, writing articles for several magazines, gardening, hosting a weekly radio show and teaching old fashioned homemaking and homesteading skills. <http://christianhomekeeper.org>

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How to Cut Up a Squirrel for Cooking

By: Hank Shaw



Photo by Hank Shaw

Squirrel season is upon us here in California, so I reckon it's time to offer up to you how I cut up a squirrel for eating. As with any sort of butchery, different people do it different ways. Some people simmer them whole. The Hmong hunters I know actually scald their squirrels and scrape off the hair — or just toss them into the fire to burn off the hair. I need to try that scalding sometime to see if squirrel skin is any good.

Until then, I skin and cut up my boreal rodents. If you've never done it, skinning a squirrel is harder than you might think. Squirrels have a thick, dense hide, whereas rabbits, their woodland colleagues, have more of a light pelt. Skinning a rabbit takes seconds. Skinning a squirrel takes minutes.

To skin, gut and break down a squirrel properly, you will want to have handy:

- Water
- A cutting board
- A small, sharp knife, such as a pocket knife or small paring knife
- Kitchen shears
- A trash bin
- A platter or tray to put the finished squirrel pieces on

Start by snipping off Mr. Squirrel's feet and tail with the shears. Use the bone-cutting notch at the base of the shears. I do the same thing with the head, but it a) requires some hand strength and b) deprives you of that Appalachian delicacy, squirrel brains. I am not a fan, so I toss them. If you happen to be a squirrel brain enthusiast, by all means skin and split the skull in your own way.

You are now left with a sad-looking, tailless, headless squirrel. Take your knife in one hand, and with the other pinch up the loose skin at the center of the squirrel's back: Use the knife to make an incision perpendicular to the squirrel's backbone about 2 inches long.

To skin the squirrel, work the fingers of each hand under the skin through the incision you just made. Now pull – I mean really *pull!* — and the skin will come off in either direction. You'll get it most of the way, but the skin will hang up under the legs and at the center of the belly. Poke your finger through under the legs to free the skin off them. Use the knife to carefully start the belly skin going, then pull it, too. It takes a little practice, but it's not rocket science.

To gut Mr. Squirrel, use the knife with the blade facing away from the guts to open up the wee beastie. His guts will spill out. Reach with your fingers upwards toward the heart and lungs and wrench them out. Save the heart. If you want, save the liver and kidneys, too. They're tasty. Use the kitchen shears to split the pelvis so you can get the remaining bits of poop chute out.

Wash the squirrel under lots of clean, cold water and you are ready to break him down.



Photo by Hank Shaw

I start by removing the legs. The front legs of most mammals are completely free of the rest of the skeleton. Trippy, eh? But not you and me — we have a collar bone. So does Mr. Squirrel. He's the only game animal I know of with one. Even so, use your knife to slice down to the ribcage behind the front leg, then slice along the bones toward the squirrel's neck until you free the foreleg; you will have to slice through a skinny little collar bone at the end. Do this on both forelegs.

The hind legs on pretty much everything, including us, are attached with a ball-and-socket joint. So too with Mr. Squirrel. Use your knife to slice the meat on the inside of the squirrel's leg where it attaches to the body until you can see the ball joint. Bend the leg backwards until you pop that joint out. Slice around it to free the legs. Do this with both sides.



Photo by Hank Shaw

You're almost done. You are left with the torso and belly flaps. I slice off the belly flaps and save them for either stock or for stir-fries. That leaves the ribs and backstraps.

Use kitchen shears to snip off the ribs. Save for stock. Now you want to portion out the backstrap. A big squirrel might give you two pieces, but most are just one. You can either use your shears for this, although it requires a bit of strength, or you can use a cleaver and whack it into pieces. One thing you definitely want to do is chop off the hips and the neck portions, as there is not much meat there; again, save these bits for stock.



Photo by Hank Shaw

When you're done, it should look like this:



Photo by Hank Shaw

Don't sweat it if you mess up the first couple times, or if it takes you a while. You'll get the hang of it, and when you do, this process can be done in less than 10 minutes per squirrel.

Hank Shaw is an avid forager, angler and hunter who runs the award-winning website [Hunter Angler Gardener Cook](#).

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DAN'S PLAN FOR GETTING PREPARED

Bugging Out vs. Hunkering Down

By: MD Creekmore

The very idea of leaving the security of your home to “bug out” to the woods has never sat well with me – In nearly every instance it’s better to hunker down or “bug in” than to bug out. I mean, why leave the safety and familiar surroundings of your home, for the open and unforgiving wilderness.

For many people this is their first line of preparation against disaster, unfortunately, most will end up joining the multitude of other refugees freezing in a cave and eventually end up dead or wards of whatever government is still functioning.

I live in a fairly safe area and have prepared to survive at home and can conceive of only a few scenarios that would force me to leave. Even then, I would go to an out-of-state relatives house with whom, I have a pre-arranged agreement, where if need be he can come to my place or I to his after a disaster.

I know what you’re thinking “what about an end of the world as we know it” type event, well if such an event were to take place, there would be no 100% safe place for most of us, and really do you think you would be better of making a go of it in the open wilderness as opposed to hunkering down at home.

Don’t get me wrong, I’m not saying we should never bug out to the wilderness; we should indeed keep all our options open, what I am saying is that there are better ways to survive most disasters than heading into the bush.

You need to weigh the risks of bugging out vs. hunkering down and make your final decision based on logic and type of threat. That’s the way decisions should be made, unfortunately many people when making plans for survival side with emotion (that emotion being to run and hide) instead of the more tried and true form of decision-making known as logic.

Relying on emotion instead of logic can make for some interesting adventures; however without sound planning beforehand those adventures are likely to be sort lived. For example, I recently asked a fellow in his late 30’s what he would do if disaster struck his area.

He thought for a moment and said he would gather his family and all the food, guns and ammunition he could find and head for the mountains that lay some seventy-five miles to the north of his home.

Depending on the type of disaster, his “plan” might work short term for a lone survivor or a small group of individuals in good physical condition with proper gear and mind-set. But he is a new father and his wife is one of those that think missing an appointment at the nail-salon is the end of the world as she knows it.

Making matters worse he has no outdoor survival training or skills other than watching reruns of [Less Stroud’s “Survivorman”](#) and camping at a national park campground with all the utilities and hookups. Why he thinks he can survive off the wilderness while dragging his family along, I don’t know. He isn’t thinking logically.

His decision was based on emotion and as a result if he ever has to put his plan to the test in the real world his family will likely suffer or die because of his decision and “[Red Dawn](#)” thinking. Unfortunately, this batman in the boondocks mentality is and will continue to be the chosen survival plan for many who haven’t thought it through.

When making [survival plans](#) for your family you have to honestly weigh the risks of your decision based on logic. In almost every disaster scenario, it is better to stay put (bugging in) or head to a pre-arranged safe place at an out-of-town relatives or friends house than it is to head to the woods to eat twigs and pine bark.

For most people an evacuation bag is a better choice than a [bug out bag](#). An evacuation bag should contain the gear necessary to get you from point A to point B, whereas a bug out bag (in most cases) is geared more toward [wilderness survival](#). I have both, but admittedly my bug out bag is an option of last resort.

Knowing when to go is much more important than the contents of your [survival pack](#) or even where you will go. You don't want to jump and run before you need too, but you don't want to wait too long or you may never reach your destination.

If you wait for the authorities to give the order to evacuate it may already be too late. The roads leading to safety could be blocked and impassable by motor vehicle and walking to your destination may be impossible or too dangerous to attempt.

On the other hand if you jump and run in response to every potential disaster you'll soon deplete your resources and the patience of your family, school and employers. For example, say you live in an area prone to tornadoes like Texas and you evacuate to Arkansas every time the clouds turn dark or the wind shakes the leaves. You would literally stay on the road. But waiting until the twister is at your door will put you at an unnecessary risk.

There are no easy answers; all you can do is weigh the dangers of bugging out vs. hunkering down depending on the situation and logic. You have to consider the nature of the threat and ask yourself which gives the best chance of survival with regards to the type of disaster you are facing.

Then, there are times when evacuation is a no brainer, say you live on the Florida coast and a category 5 hurricane has been predicted to hit that coast within twenty-four hours, in that case you would be stupid not to go now, even if you have no prearranged bug out location...

On the other hand let's say there is snow storm heading your way and you have food, water, heat and a way to cook even if the power goes out for an extended amount of time then you are probably better off to hunker down where you are.

In my opinion the bugging out vs. hunkering down debate is moot because it all comes down to the type of threat, your personal situation and preparedness level – in the end you'll have to make that decision based on that knowledge and common sense.

M.D. Creekmore [[send him mail](#)] is a full-time blogger and preparedness consultant. He is the author of [31 Days to Survival](#) and [The Dirt Cheap Survival Retreat](#) both published by Paladin Press. To connect with M.D. Creekmore please visit his [Survival Blog](#).

Wilderness / TEOTWAWKI Survival Trapping : Basic powered trap (non-baited)

By: Survivor Don (Guest Post on SurvivalistBlog.Net)

Before we begin with a discussion of the construction of the most basic primitive/minimal* tension trap; a quick look at the ethics of primitive trapping.

Modern trap use is legal as long as you obey the local laws, licensing, seasons, limits, etc.

Primitive trapping is illegal in most places and definitely in my neck of the woods...er...desert. Exigent circumstances may negate that illegality.

It is to be used in an extreme emergency survival situation only. It is only for keeping you and yours alive in an all out emergency survival situation. Even practicing setting your traps may run you afoul of the law. Last year I took Mrs. Survivordan into a national forest and taught her to make a variety of traps. I had her cut the pieces of stick we would need in advance from private property with permission. Any saplings we used in the National Forest for tension were not stripped of ancillary branches and leaves. In other words we left everything the way we found it.

All traps were sprung after completion, then disassembled and re-bagged. Nothing in that riparian area was disturbed. Still could have ended up having to do some fast talking with the local game warden or ranger. So be careful where you practice these techniques. And pre-cut whatever devices you need for your traps. Even simply chopping and/or slashing greenery in a state park, National Park or National Forest may land you in a more modern trap. The local hoosegow. The lock-up. Jail. So obey the law and when walking that fine line betwixt legal and illegal while practicing primitive trap building, be law abiding.....and discreet.

SurvivorDan's pre-trapping strategy:

First, I rig up a shelter and build a small fire and put on some water. I dig a little slit trench. Then I sit down and prepare a cup of coffee or tea or some chow. I listen and observe while I work. Usually while my food or java is heating I walk around the area and reconnoiter a bit. Look for critters and sign. Then I go back to the campsite and eat and drink. Gives me a chance to think about the lay of the land. Did I spy any critters? Where were the game trails? Did I see any scat? Rub marks and wallows and such? Tracks down by the water (if any water)? If I determined there's game and what kind, for instance rabbits, then I decide what kind of traps I am going to make and where I might put them.

For rabbits I usually make a giant crossbow thingy that fires a great big eight foot spear capped by a massive trident with exploding tips made from .357 magnum shells.....

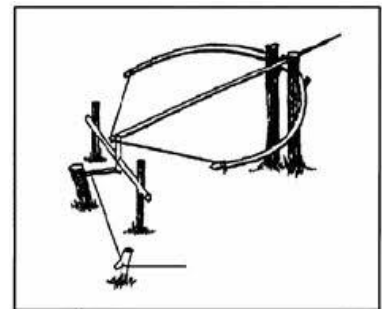


Figure 8-14. Bow trap.

I'm just kiddin'! The rabbits will get fixed snares (if I have wire) and tension snares on the ground. In this article I am mainly dealing with traps constructed with string, vines or paracord. Assuming primitive/at-hand materials – no wire. If you do have wire....wire is good. I go where I figure the rabbits ain't and cut the pieces of stick I'll be needing. When I've got them whittled up and partially rigged with cord, I usually try to rinse them off with water or wipe some dirt and such on them to get some of my scent off. But I'm getting ahead of myself.....

Trigger stick:

Cut a small simple cylinder of wood, about 5 – 6" long and 1 1/2" – 2" thick. This is the simple trigger for many traps. This is a fundamental piece that you need to learn to make. It is very simple to fabricate. As is the second part of our first trap, the anchor which looks and functions much like a tent stake. That and some cord and we can build our first spring or tension snare.



Back to the trigger.....cut a small 5 – 6" length of wood 1 1/2" to 2" thick and about a third of the way from an end, score it about 1/8" deep all the way around with your camp saw or drywall saw. (You can do all this with a knife but why? Cruder but easier with the camp saw. Either way, watch out that you keep all your fingers so you don't have to practice one-handed first aid.) That will be a good place to anchor your paracord or other line that goes up to your tension pole. Tie it on good 'cuz if anything pulls loose you have no dinner and something may smack you in the face while you are setting your trap. But first let's cut another notch.

At approximately a third of the way from the other end of the stick you need to make a mark across it. Cut straight down at that center line mark and alternately shave from the middle of the stick towards the mark until you have a nice 1/2 to 3/4" deep flat surfaced notch. That is where you will catch your trigger stick on its anchor stick. Sounds more complicated than it is. It's easy.

Anchor stick:

Find a spot where a branch forks off and cut a stick roughly shaped like this longish stick pictured above. Twelve inches to the fork would be good. If your trap will be set in soft marshy ground in a riparian area, then make it a bit longer. You want a long strong piece as it will be pounded into the ground. Leave a couple of inches above the forked area as that will be the head of your 'nail' when you pound it into position. The fork that you cut off has to be shaped to match up to your trigger so bear that in mind when you cut it originally as it can save you some sawing and filing. Anyway, this ain't about mil specs. When you set your trap you can make last-minute adjustments to the interlocking surfaces of the trigger and anchor sticks. Line up the trigger and anchor sticks. It is simpler than it sounds.





Power pole:

The power pole should be very close to the actual noose placement. It can be a sapling or a large overhanging branch. If saplings and such are not located where you want to site a trap then you can cut a strong branch and place it vertically in a hole and brace it with rocks. You could even throw a line over a big overhanging branch and tie it securely to a good size rock or log for your power source. Hoist the rock up and set your tension on your trigger. It's a fairly simple concept so I will assume common sense will guide you to figure out what to use for a power source.

Once on site, find a good tension pole (rooted sapling or branch) that bends down to about a foot from your trap site with enough tension (power) to hoist your dinner aloft. Bend the tip of the power pole down to where you want to site the trap. Line it up. Pound your anchor stick in with a rock or small log.

Out of respect for the environment and fear of the law I would not strip the ancillary branches and leaves but in exigent circumstances (ie: you are hopelessly lost and hungry) you can strip the sapling, reducing the weight, and thus increase its power. (For these photos I am using a fishing pole for a power source) You will tie a paracord (Use green, tan or camo cord.- I used this multi-color easy-to-see cord for illustration purposes) to the end of the sapling and allow a foot or so of free cord until you fasten it securely to your trigger stick.

If you can't tie a basic knot then get on Google and learn as there are all kinds of knot loving sites. Climbers and sailors I reckon. I can only tie about 6 knots and they serve me well. I couldn't tell you the difference between a reef knot and the Flemish eight. But I got my little arsenal of idiot proof knots and they work. Get yours.

Noose:

Assuming you only have the paracord or other strong line and no pre-made wire nooses then you must form a noose from your line. Pretty straight forward. Tie a little loop in the end of a 3-5 foot piece of cord and feed the end of the line thru it (Don't make the loop too tight so, when sprung, the noose cinches up quickly without binding). Now you have a nice snare loop (make it 6 – 8 inches across) you can position it horizontally atop of 3-4 small forked twigs, so your future dinner guest steps in it. Or you can prop it up vertically so your bunny or what-have-you walks into the loop. For bunnies have the bottom of the loop about 3-4 inches off the ground. In my experience, vertical orientation tends to be more productive.



Note: I don't like set (non-powered) snares with cordage as the critter is likely to chew off the line before expiring or may suffer for a prolonged period of time. There are examples of set snares (no power pole) that are reasonably efficient even with cordage and I may address them in the future. Modern snares have a one way device that continually constricts as the animal pulls to get loose and are more likely to effectuate a 'clean' kill. Herein I am only addressing primitive powered snares using cordage or vines.

Powering the snare:

DANGER! CAUTION! First you need to tie the free end of the noose to the trigger stick and set it under power. Now you need to set your loop vertically or horizontally but very gingerly, very carefully so you don't lose an eye or some teeth if you inadvertently trigger the trap while setting the noose. Sounds a bit scary but I have never been hurt though I have experienced premature triggering (No jokes please. I'm sensitive.) of my traps while setting them. Keep your head back and your hands free of the noose while setting. I was wearing safety goggles while setting this trap. You need to have a healthy respect for all traps you set.

Trap site:

Assuming you are a natural-born trap builder and can extrapolate the basic design into a dozen different sure-fire can't miss critter-killer primitive traps, that doesn't mean you are going to eat! You could put up 50 traps hither and thither and get nary a bunny for your efforts. The cardinal rule that applies to retail locations, restaurant sites, hotels, survivalist retreats, gas stations, hunting camps and just about everything else you could want to build or locate somewhere consists of three principles, "Location. Location. Location." You have to place your traps along the routes between where the animals eat, sleep and drink.

Where do they sleep? Well a lot of little critters sleep in dens. Holes in the ground (don't reach in and feel around...ya might find claws, fangs and maybe even some venom), hollowed out logs and tree trunks, nests in the trees (squirrels), etc. Larger game like deer, elk and horses tend to bed down in grass when they can get it. You will notice large flattened out areas in the bush. These are not your trapping sites. Wild pigs tend to bed down deep into a thicket and will have scraped away the ground cover down to the dirt, in fact if you can stand and see their bedding area you are not looking at their bedding area. You would usually have to crawl back into it and you do not want to meet a feral hog in that position. It would get ugly.



Of course the type of trap in this article is not designed to take out a large animal. But by understanding the signs for large animals you will not waste your tension trap there. Your target critter is most likely going to be a bunny. Typically you can find bunnies in many environments. They will den in holes, usually inter-connected to form warrens so watch out as there will be more than one way in and out. You can locate a few holes and place a snare at each one. You should look for runs which are the flattened out paths through the bush that the rabbits use to get from their dens to their feeding and watering areas.

The rabbit runs often exhibit sign like bits of grass clipped off and rabbit 'pellets' (scat/poop) scattered along the run.



If the run is very large and you see large hoof prints then you are probably looking at a pig run and need to build a bigger trap! I suggest that if you are a new survivor trapper, you should stick to bunnies, chipmunks, squirrels and such until you get a bit more confident and a bigger repertoire of traps. Besides, you need snare wire and cable for the big critters like feral hogs. Back to the bunnies some species of rabbits sleep in the dense thickets and thorns rather than underground.

You will set traps for all types of rabbits on their runs and catch them coming and going. {By the way, if you've got a slingshot or smoke pole you might just lurk somewhere and pop off a bunny around sunset or dawn when they're on the move along one a them rabbit runs. I'm just saying that two layers of critter harvesting is better than one.} Be aware that rabbits don't stray to far from where they den up as they have many enemies.

If you have had little luck finding the rabbit's runs for some reason and you have located a water source such as a small stream or a pond you will need to backtrack from there. Many critters doubtless come to that water to drink eventually. If there is small game in the area you will find runs and bigger game trails leading to and from the water. Pick the ones that seem to have your target critter using them (meaning if there are huge hoofprints or paw prints and you can't discern any little tracks, find another game trail or run) and set your traps.

Remember...look for tracks and scat (poop). Site your traps in the narrowest part of the runs. You may need to place some sticks or brambles in such a way as to funnel the rabbits to your noose. While you are doing that and when you are setting your traps try to avoid leaving too much human scent on everything. At least don't be wearing any deodorant, cologne, hair spray/gel, soap residue, hand lotion, bug spray.....well, you get the picture.

Try not to stink up the bunnies world cuz they will know something is not right. If setting your snare or noose vertically then you want the bottom end only 3-4 inches from the ground. We are aiming for the bunnies head. Speaking of his head, bring a big stick when you go to check your traps. Cordage snares don't always dispatch your critters. Make it quick. And on that note, check your traps often (every 5-6 hours) . You don't want the little critters to suffer and you don't want a coyote to steal 'em neither.

Those of you more sensitive to killing and field dressing an animal, I want you to know that I am not a natural-born hunter. Some of my friends enjoy the kill. I really don't. It's for meat. To survive. It's a necessary task in order to keep yourself and comrades fed. You don't have to enjoy it. Just do what you have to do.

Get your hands dirty:

You think you've got all this down? You can do it when you need to? Photographic (eidetic) memory? Practice now when you don't need this skill. When you need to do it for real it will seem so natural and you will build your traps easily and correctly so they are effective. Lives may depend on it. You don't want on-the-job training and have your dinner get loose from a defectively constructed tension trap.

So cut some sticks. Make a couple of basic traps until you are comfortable and confident building them. Securely prop up a fishing pole in the back yard and use it for a power source (wear safety glasses) to practice your trap building skills. (In my backyard I buried a 14" PVC pipe with a removable cap to put my power stick in for teaching purposes) You will come to realize that you could fashion a half-dozen such traps in an hour and set them in another hour or two.

Trigger your practice traps immediately so you don't snare/kill Fluffy. Don't run to get Momma to show her your neat-to new trap cuz, for sure and for certain, that's when Fluffy will find it! Anyway that's 6 traps out there working for you 24/7. Think about that. Much more productive than chasing fast-moving rabbits with your tire iron in hand. Smarter too. Good trapping!

Practice your trapping skills. Be a survivor.

* As we are utilizing manufactured cordage one could argue these traps are not truly 'primitive' traps. For instructional purposes and simplicity here we will designate such traps as primitive as opposed to 'humane' modern manufactured traps.

You've Been Warned: Why You Need to Be Ready for Total Grid Failure

By: Daisy Luther

If you haven't been in a bubble cut off from all forms of media lately, it would be impossible to have missed all of the warnings being issued about the impending loss of our electrical grid.

This isn't just coming from so-called "gloom and doom" sites or from alternative media. Major mainstream media sources such as ABC News, the Washington Post, the New York Times, and CBS News have all issued the alerts. Unfortunately, the hordes seem to be brushing these warnings off as something that cannot happen, because the reality is too unpleasant to even contemplate. Many seem to think that they are far better to stick their heads in the sand and be assured it can never happen than to prepare ahead of time.

Who Is Ringing the Warning Bell?

In case you've missed it, here are some of the warnings over the past few months that most people are ignoring.

When Janet Napolitano stepped down from her role as head of the DHS she released an open letter to her successor. One chilling tidbit she passed on was this.

The outgoing Homeland Security Secretary has a warning for her successor: A massive and "serious" cyber attack on the U.S. homeland is coming, and a natural disaster — the likes of which the nation has never seen — is also likely on its way. ([source](#))

Read more on Napolitano's warning [HERE](#).

But there's more. Big Sis isn't the only one warning us about the possibility of a grid-down scenario.

Former North Dakota Senator Byron Dorgan has [co-authored a book about the topic](#) with David Hagberg — his novel Gridlock is a fictional account of a very real threat.

"Our power system is very vulnerable. You could see a shutdown by hackers in cyber terror. You could see it shutdown for days, weeks or months, crippling this country and causing enormous havoc." ([source](#))

Rep. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) also actively agrees with the threat assessment. He released a report last May that said our power infrastructure was "highly vulnerable to attacks from Iran and North Korea" and as well as to natural threats such as geomagnetic storms from solar activity.

"With one well-placed keystroke, Americans could be plunged into darkness and chaos through the damage to our electric grid. Foreign enemies are employing Web warriors to attack our way of life, and it's time that our actions respond to the potential threat."
([source](#))

Other people in the know have attempted to make the public aware of the potential for apocalyptic disaster, but few seem to be taking them seriously.

We are only one act of madness away from a social cataclysm unlike anything our country has ever known.

-Congressman Trent Franks (R-AZ), Senior Member House Armed Service Committee

EMP is one of the small number of threats that could hold at risk the continued existence of U.S. civil society.

-Dr. Robert Hermann, Commissioner US Congress EMP Commission

Just one violent active region on the sun can cause continent-wide, perhaps even planetary-scale impacts to our critical infrastructure.

-John Kappenman, Principal Investigator US Congress EMP Commission

The Likelihood of a severe geo-magnetic event capable of crippling our electric grid is 100%.

-Congresswoman Yvette Clarke (D-NY), Senior Member House Homeland Security Committee ([source](#))

Former Congressman [Roscoe Bartlett has been preaching](#) the dangers of EMP, whether deliberate or natural, for many years:

We could have events in the future where the power grid will go down and it's not, in any reasonable time, coming back up. For instance, if when the power grid went down some of our large transformers were destroyed, damaged beyond use, we don't make any of those in this country. They're made overseas and you order one and 18 months to two years later they will deliver it. Our power grid is very vulnerable. It's very much on edge. Our military knows that.

There are a number of events that could create a situation in the cities where civil unrest would be a very high probability.

I think that those who can, and those who understand, need to take advantage of the opportunity when these winds of strife are not blowing to move their families out of the city. ([source](#))

Don't forget the veiled warnings implicit in predictive programming entertainment. One of last year's biggest television hits was the show "[Revolution](#)", which portrayed life 15 years after a deliberate takedown of the power grid.

GridEx Drill in November

And finally, if all of these warnings aren't enough to alert your Spidey senses, here is one that is undeniable.

The United States, Mexico, and Canada intend to participate in a drill in November that will simulate the takedown of the grid.

An electrical grid joint drill simulation is being planned in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Thousands of utility workers, FBI agents, anti-terrorism experts, governmental agencies, and more than 150 private businesses are involved in the November [power grid drill](#).

The downed [power grid](#) simulation will reportedly focus on both physical and cyber attacks. The antiquated electrical system in the United States has been one of the most neglected pieces of integral infrastructure.

The disaster drill is being described as a crisis practice unlike anything the real power grid has ever experienced. The [GridEX II](#) drill Nov. 13-14 will focus primarily on how governments will react if the electrical grid fails and, for instance, the food supply chain collapses.

American utility companies are responsible for running approximately 5,800 power plants and about 450,000 high-voltage transmission lines, controlled by various devices which have been put into place over the past decades. Some of the utility companies which oversee the power grid reportedly use “antique computer protocols” which are “probably” safe from cyber hackers,” The New York Times reported.

“If an adversary lands a knockout blow, [experts] fear, it could black out vast areas of the continent for weeks; interrupt supplies of water, gasoline, diesel fuel and fresh food; shut down communications; and create disruptions of a scale that was only hinted at by Hurricane Sandy and the attacks of Sept. 11,” The Times said.

If the power grid fails, a lack of electricity and food delivery are only the first wave of troubles facing the American people. Police could face major problems with civil unrest. Of course, there also would not be any electric heating or cooling, which easily could lead to many deaths depending on the season. ([source](#))

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The most alarming thing about this drill is the trend of suspected false flag events in America that have corresponded with “drills”. Whether or not this will coincide in a real take-down of the grid remains to be seen, but one only needs to think back to events such as the Boston Marathon Bombing, the 9/11 attacks, and the Oklahoma City Bombing to see that there is a possibility that when “drills” occur, often the players are simply being moved into place right under the nose of the public.

What Can You Do to Be Ready?

It doesn't honestly matter HOW the grid goes down. Whether it is an enemy attack, as in the novel *One Second After*, a government false flag in order to institute martial law, or a natural act that is the result of a solar flare, a long-term grid collapse will result in an extremely high death toll.

If you are already of the preparedness mindset, you'll fare better than the average North American. However, many people have never contemplated the following questions:

- **How will you get food if the grocery stores are closed?**
- **How will you cook food if you are able to acquire it?**
- **What will happen to the perishable food in your refrigerator and freezer?**
- **How will you heat and cool your home if you are in an area subject to extreme temperatures?**
- **What will you use for light once the scented candle that sits on your coffee table is gone?**
- **How will you transport yourself if a) your vehicle doesn't run because the computers are fried or b) it runs but you can't get gas because the pumps at the station run on electricity?**
- **What will you drink and wash with if the municipal water facilities are no longer providing water or if the pump on your well runs on electricity?**

Find as many solutions as possible for the issues you would face if [going for weeks \(or longer\) without power](#). You must stay warm, eat, and drink. Everything else is a bonus. You can live without the television, the video game console, the microwave in the kitchen, and the laptop.

Some people like to give arguments as to why they can't resolve these issues. They live in an apartment, they rent, they have a limited budget...the list is as long as indefinite detention. The fact is, by realizing these things are necessary and refusing to face them and find solutions for your particular situation, you are setting your family up to suffer, and possibly even die, when it could be avoided.

A recent article encouraged readers who were new to prepping to start out by [getting ready for a two week power outage](#). Apply the following information to create your own preparedness plan for the grid failure that is sure to come. Modify the suggestions to adapt them to your particular home, family, and climate.

Water

Everyone knows that clean drinking water is something you can't live without. In the event of a disaster, the water may not run from the taps, and if it does, it might not be safe to drink, depending on the situation. If there is a boil order in place, remember that if the power is out, boiling your water may not be as easy as turning on your stove.

Each family should store a two week supply of water. The rule of thumb for drinking water is 1 gallon per day, per person. Don't forget to stock water for your pets, also.

You can create your water supply very inexpensively. Many people use clean 2 liter soda pop bottles to store tap water. Others purchase the large 5 gallon jugs of filtered water from the grocery store. Consider a gravity fed water filtration device and water purification tablets as well.

Food and a Way to Prepare It

There are two schools of thought regarding food during a power outage. One: you need a cooking method that does not require the grid to be functioning. Two: you can store food that doesn't require cooking.

If you opt for a secondary cooking method, be sure that you have enough fuel for two weeks. Store foods that do not require long cooking times – for example, dried beans would use a great deal of fuel, but canned beans could be warmed up, or even eaten cold.

Click [HERE](#) for a short term food storage list

Click [HERE](#) to find a list of foods that require no cooking.

Heat (Depending on Your Climate)

If your power outage takes place in the winter and you live in a colder climate, heat is another necessity. During the first 24 hours after a power outage, you can stay fairly warm if you block off one room of the house for everyone to group together in. Keep the door closed and keep a towel or blanket folded along the bottom of the door to conserve warmth. You can safely burn a couple of candles also, and in the enclosed space, your body heat will keep it relatively warm. As well, dress in layers and keep everything covered – wear a hat, gloves (fingerless ones allow you to still function), and a scarf.

Click [HERE](#) to learn how to stay warm with less heat.

However, after about 48 hours, that's not going to be enough in very cold weather. You will require back-up heat at this point in certain climates. If you are lucky enough to have a source of heat like a fireplace or woodstove, you'll be just fine as long as you have a supply of wood.

Consider a portable propane heater (and propane) or an oil heater. You have to be very careful what type of backup heat you plan on using, as many of them can cause carbon monoxide poisoning if used in a poorly ventilated area.

Learn more about off-grid heat options [HERE](#).

Sanitation Needs

A common cause of illness, and even death, during a down-grid situation is lack of sanitation. We've discussed the importance of clean drinking water, but you won't want to use your drinking water to keep things clean or to flush the toilet.

For cleaning, reduce your need to wash things. Stock up on paper plates, paper towels, and disposable cups and flatware. Keep some disinfecting cleaning wipes and sprays (I don't recommend using antibacterial products on a regular basis, however in the event of an emergency they can help to keep you healthy.) Use hand sanitizer after using the bathroom and before handing food or beverages – there may be a lot more germs afoot in a disaster.

Look at your options for sanitation. Does your toilet still flush when the electricity is out? Many people discovered the hard way that the toilets didn't work when the sewage backed up in the highrises in New York City in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. At our cabin, the toilet won't flush without power because the pump is electric.

If you are on a septic system, with no risk of the toilet backing up into the house, simply store some water for flushing in the bathroom. (At the first sign of a storm, we always fill the bathtub for this purpose.) Add the water to the tank so that you can flush.

If this is not an option, another solution is to stock up on extremely heavy duty garbage bags (like the kind that contractors use at construction sites) and kitty litter. Place a bag either in your drained toilet or in a bucket. Sprinkle some kitty litter in the bottom of the bag. Each time someone uses the bathroom, add another handful of litter. Be very careful that the bag doesn't get too heavy for you to handle it. Tie it up very securely and store it outside until services are restored.

Light

Lighting is absolutely vital, especially if there are children in the house. Nothing is more frightening than being completely in the dark during a stressful situation. Fortunately, it's one of the easiest things to plan for, as well as one of the least expensive.

Some lighting solutions are:

- Garden stake solar lights
- Candles
- Kerosene lamps
- Flashlights (don't forget batteries)
- Hand crank camping lantern
- Don't forget matches or lighters

Tools and Supplies

Some basic items will make your life much easier during an emergency. Here are some things that are essential in the event of a power outage:

- Lighter/waterproof matches
- Batteries in various sizes
- Manual can opener
- Basic tools: Pliers, screwdriver, wrench, hammer
- Duct tape
- Crazy glue
- Sewing supplies
- Bungee cords

If you'd like to expand on the basic supplies, a more detailed list of tools and hardware can be found [HERE](#).

First Aid Kit

It's important to have a basic first aid kit on hand at all times, but particularly in the event of an emergency. Your kit should include basic wound care items like bandages, antibiotic ointments, and sprays. As well, if you use them, keep on hand a supply of basic over-the-counter medications, like pain relief capsules, cold medicine, cough syrup, anti-nausea pills, and allergy medication. Particularly important if sanitation is a problem are anti-diarheal medications.

If you want to put together a more advanced medical kit, you can find a list [HERE](#).

Special Needs

This is something that will be unique to every family. Consider the things that are needed on a daily basis in your household. It might be prescription medications, diapers, or special foods. If you have pets, you'll need supplies for them too. The best way to figure out what you need is to jot things down as you use them over the course of a week or so.

Get Started Today

You can start right now – this very minute – all you have to do is grab a pad of paper and a pen.

1. Begin by personalizing the suggestions above to fit your family's needs and make a list of your requirements.
2. Next, do a quick inventory – as I mentioned above, you may be surprised to see that you already have quite a few of the supplies that are recommended.
3. Make a shopping list and acquire the rest of the items you need. If you can't afford everything right now, prioritize the most important things first.
4. Organize your supplies so that they are easily accessible when you need them. It's hard to find seldom-used items in the dark.

When the lights go out, don't be left to the not-so-tender mercies of those who would place themselves in charge. Maintain your independence by strengthening the position of your family. Take steps towards preparedness and self-sufficiency so that you won't need the government's assistance to weather the storm.

If you must comply to survive, your freedom is just an illusion. You've been warned – what you do with the information is up to you.

Daisy Luther is a freelance writer and editor. Her website, [The Organic Prepper](#), offers information on healthy prepping, including premium nutritional choices, general wellness and non-tech solutions. You can follow Daisy on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and you can email her at daisy@theorganicprepper.ca.

How to Make Homemade Yeast

By: Erich

When I first started prepping, one of the first things I started to store were buckets of wheat given that they are relatively cheap and have a shelf life of 30+ years.

Overall it's a fantastic storage food – especially if you like baking bread like I do.

The only problem that I found though was with yeast.

Although you can store your wheat for 30+ years, yeast's shelf life will only last about a year before it starts to die off and become ineffective. And unless you enjoy eating unleavened Matzah bread, you'll be forced to eat a lot of bread bricks during a SHTF situation.

This realization led me on a journey to find out how to make homemade yeast. For years I had looked around but could never figure it out until I stumbled upon an awesome blog called originalyeast.blogspot.com. In it, the author (I believe her name is Wao) learned how to make natural yeast while over in Japan.

These last couple of weeks I've been playing around with making natural yeast and have had some great success which I hope to share with you.

In this article, I go into detail on how you can make your own homemade yeast using common foods found in your home or in the wild.

How to Make Homemade Yeast

What's surprising is that yeast occurs naturally on the skins most fruits (dried or fresh), vegetables, even herbs found in the wild (like Mint) and can be easily cultivated the same way using the following procedure:



Step 1: Fill a glass jar up to a quarter to a half full with your sliced fruit, vegetable, or herb (I used apples from my apple tree). If you are using fruits (apples or grapes are both excellent to try first) or vegetables be sure that the skin is not peeled off.



Step 2: Fill the rest of the jar up with water until you are about 3/4 of the way full.



Step 3: Close the jar and leave in a warm area (in the sun or by a stove) for around 3 days or until a good amount of bubbles start forming (the bubbles indicate that the yeast is reacting with the carbohydrates in your fruit, veggie etc).



Here's a close-up view of the finished yeast water.



Step 4: Use your yeast water in place of the water called for in your bread recipe.



Step 5: Knead your bread as usual and let it sit...



Step 6: Until it rises — just like you were using commercial yeast!

Step 7: Bake and enjoy!



Erich is the owner/editor of tacticalintelligence.net and prepperacademy.com. For Erich, having grown up in a Mormon household, prepping has always been a "normal" part of life which has continued into his adulthood with his own family. Erich is also passionate about wilderness-survival, hunting, tracking and all things firearms. Feel free to reach out to him via his blog TacticalIntelligence.Net.

WROL – Protecting Your Family When the Bad Guys Come Down Your Street

By: Pat Henry

I have been thinking about security a lot lately. I am not sure why, but this is the latest thing that has been an ever present thought as I go through my daily activities. I suppose it is a logical extension of prepping after food and water sources are shored up that your mind would turn to security. I started to analyze our defensive options at our home since we have chosen to shelter in place should any type of disaster scenario happen. This carried me down several paths that I hope to discuss with you and they all focus around steps you can take to keep your family safe, or provide some additional protection in your home if things get really bad. This article will discuss situations you may be faced with in a WROL (Without Rule of Law) society. This is a worst case scenario but I believe that exercising your mind by thinking about issues like this could prepare you better for less catastrophic emergencies. Honestly, I hope to never be in a situation that requires these plans and methods, but I think it is valid to discuss them in terms of preparing your family.

Step 1 – Gathering intelligence

First things first. Before you even consider how you would begin the planning process of defending your home it helps to know what is around you. By that I mean understanding what is in the area immediately surrounding your home and expanding outward from there, further out. I recommend periodically conducting what I call the [neighborhood RECON](#) to familiarize yourself with what is going on in your neighborhood. I don't mean simply knowing your neighbors although that is very important; what I mean is knowing how to get to your house by methods other than the surface roads. What are the landscape features that may help or work to your advantage? Knowing who has certain resources that may become targets will give you information that the looter who is driving through won't have. This can be as simple as taking walks through your neighborhood, but the key is to pay attention to details.

Having area maps is another step you can take in planning defenses and even exit strategies if the need arises. You can go online and order very detailed [Topographical Maps from the USGS store](#). Knowing this information before you need it can show you paths of likely drift and avenues you can use to escape.

Once you know what is around you, another prerequisite to any defensive strategy is intelligence. The first and perhaps most important piece of intelligence is knowing who is in the area. It is important to know as far in advance as possible when someone is headed to your position before they are actually at your door. For a lot of people, this would be difficult without a large group and training. If you live in an apartment complex, this article might not work for you. On the other hand, you may be able to use the other people in your apartment complex to form a network that can take turns watching activity and alerting anyone of an advancing threat. If you have a typical home you do still have neighbors unless they have bugged out already. A security network would be even more advantageous in this situation but I will discuss how that might be set up in another post. For this discussion, let's pretend you are mostly on your own.

If we think about defense in rings around your home where the first ring would be your home itself. Going out from there would be your yard and then going out from there maybe 2 houses or 200 feet in either direction. These rings would indicate where you have different methods of identifying and stopping the threats. Ideally, you would want to know that someone is coming as early as possible so the outermost ring would demonstrate that distance. How would you be able to tell if someone was a few houses away and headed to your position or who at a minimum was worthy of additional scrutiny?

Assuming again that you are on your own, that you don't have an squad of marines or a checkpoint at your disposal you would optimally have a method of knowing what is going on all around your property. This usually requires an position that is elevated so you can see over houses and bushes. Without having to have a guard tower installed one option could be a tree climbing stand or my personal favorite, a kids tree house. These can give you the ability to gain an advantage and see a larger piece of the surrounding area. This may not be practical or possible so your advance notice will need to be adjusted to the defensive ring that you can see. If you can only see your yard then you greatly reduce the amount of head start notice you can have for this type of situation. It may also be that you must stay inside for quarantine or weather issues.



A simple way to be alerted to approaching people is wireless Motion detectors. Motion detectors outside can alert you to someone who shouldn't be there. Assuming that we are talking about a real crisis here, there is a high probability that the power won't be working. This is when [having your own backup power](#) would be extremely helpful but there are other, low-tech options you can deploy that work as well. If you have power and motion detectors at the perimeter you will have advance warning of someone who is entering your yard. Using this you can run to where the threat is coming from and address it or at the very least be ready to address it when they reach your home. Dakota alert has systems designed for this exact purpose.

There are also small trip wire devices that will pull a pin that triggers a .22 blank cartridge. These can easily be set up (provided you have blank .22 shells) and can alert you audibly. You can set the wires up in the places that someone would most likely travel to make it to your home and when they go off, you would have advance warning that someone is approaching.

There are other low-tech options too like setting up a string of cans on the porch that can make noise once the line holding them has been disturbed or crushing a light bulb so that you hear the glass breaking as someone walks on it. These are less ideal and probably work better in the movies in situations with complete darkness, but can work in some cases. The perfect system alerts you well in advance of when someone is near your home, but you do have to be able to hear it.

Step 2 – Preventing access



Knowing when someone is approaching is only half of the problem. The real challenge is to keep them away as far as possible. If you have a group of people, this may mean meeting whoever is approaching far away from your property and dealing with any threats there as opposed to your front door. If this isn't possible and you are forced to retreat, then your next best bet would be to not let them have an easy way into your house.

Starting with the driveway and your yard, if you can, move your car further away from the house to block access. Provided the bad guys don't drive through your yard, this would prevent them from rolling up close to your house very quickly. Every yard is different of course, but these are just ideas. In a true collapse scenario it may be necessary to block the road entirely. Of course, this only matters if cars are still functioning, but let's assume they are. This is something you would want to discuss with your neighbors naturally, but could be an effective way of blocking or slowing vehicle traffic. Blocking access to your neighborhood can be done a lot of ways and could provide a first line of defense against anyone who isn't supposed to be there gaining access easily.

No matter what the roadblock is, unless you have a high wall guarded by a moat with crocodiles, even if they have to walk a little, they will eventually make it to your home. I started thinking about the preparations that homeowners make before a hurricane and this seems perfectly logical to apply to this situation. During a hurricane, windows and doors are boarded up to protect your home from a vicious assault by Mother Nature. The same could be done with your home to great effect. There was actually even an episode of Domsday Preppers where one of the featured preppers, Jay Blevins already had this idea.

With some planning now while everything is relatively normal, you could acquire sheets of plywood and have them cut to fit over your window openings. This of course could be done later I guess, but it would be quicker to have them pre-cut and numbered for easy installation. Jay's plan was to cover all of the ground floor windows and doors to prevent people from entering while leaving the second story windows open. This seems like a great idea too because he could coordinate fire on the people below if they really started trying to get in with axes or chain saws. The plywood boards themselves are attached via long bolts to a horizontal board going over the window opening inside so there are no nails or screws that can be pried out. That is pretty smart.



The weather is a consideration too because if it is hot outside you likely aren't going to want to board up all of your windows and doors. Even drilling vent holes in the windows won't help much and could weaken the strength of the board.

Even if you have everything boarded up, you will likely still need to get into and out of your home unless your supplies of food and sanitation can keep you comfortably confined for a while. An exterior door with protected access would need to be your way out, but you could have this barricaded with items that can be moved later.

Slowing access

Maybe you don't have the time or money to have every window and door around your house fitted with heavy-duty plywood. You can still board up windows and doors. This is another [reason to keep scrap wood and lumber around](#) because if you can't keep someone out permanently, at least you should be able to slow them down. Couches and refrigerators in front of doors will slow people down. Implements like the Bar-Ricade bar or something like the Master Lock Door Security Bar will reinforce your entry doors and should slow an attacker down. The Armor Concepts door jamb hardware kit is simple to install and will reinforce your doors so they can't be easily kicked open. Will they stop a big police style battering ram? I don't know but they are better than nothing.

Reaction Plan

If you have some level of difficulty set up on your exterior entrance points, there will undoubtedly be noise associated with someone trying to get in. You may have a dog that is warning you also and I would say pound for pound they would make the best intrusion detection system unless your dog was like ours and got a little too sleepy after steak night. That's my fault though.

You should prepare well in advance for situations where someone is trying to get into your house. Several methods can be deployed to try and fool you into thinking the attack is coming from one direction when actually it is coming from two or three. Once you have been alerted to someone trying to gain access, the key is to move quickly. Knowing ahead of time who is going to the front and who is going to the rear will give you two sets of eyes instead of one and hopefully you have some [firearms for self defense](#) so you will have two means of defending yourself and your home also. This may be easier said than done if the members of your party are wounded, sick or tired from guarding against assault all night. Depending on your defenses, the people attacking if they are smart will come at you from more than one location. This is so that if they can get you to focus on the front door while another one of them sneaks in the back they can attack you from two sides.

Plan for distractions

If the people attacking you are a small group they will likely try to distract you with noise or commotion in one area while they sneak in another. If possible have one person deal with the commotion in the front and position another in the back. This will give you the ability to at least deal with someone from either direction. If this isn't possible you may have to fall back into a hallway or some other narrow spot so that you can concentrate fire if they do enter your house.

Take the high ground



If you have a second floor, your fallback position might be the second floor. If this happens, and they have gotten into your house you have to block their access to you at all costs. Stairways can be deadly if you are the person at the top firing down on the intruders. Obstacles on the stairs can slow them down; even throwing items at them while they are trying to navigate the stairs can slow an advance. This might sound a little too much like Home Alone, but we aren't all Navy Seals (even the bad guys) so fight with everything you have. It may be your bowling ball, but if you crush a skull of someone who was trying to kill you who is going to care that you saw it on a movie?

Make a backdoor escape

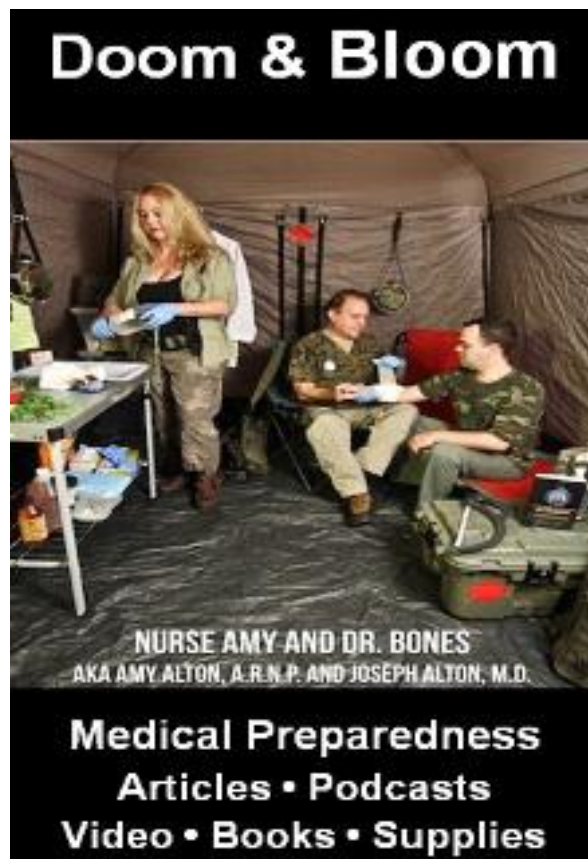
If you are forced to retreat into the second floor, having a way out may be your last hope. This could be a window ladder down to the first floor or attic access to a point that you could escape. If this is really your last stand barricade the doors again to give you more time to exit and run if possible. Our attic gives me access to a door over the garage and I can escape through there and out into the yard. If I had to I would punch a hole in the wall to gain access to the attic and then try to escape while the bad guys were trying to get into the room on the second floor. Whatever you do you have to try and fight to survive.

If you are forced to flee, [you should have a rally point](#) already defined to meet everyone at in times like this. Hopefully everyone makes it there and you could have [supplies stashed in a hidden cache](#) so that you aren't completely out of options for continuing to survive.

Live to fight another day

Hopefully, if things have gotten so bad that you have to employ any of the suggestions above just to stay alive you were able to defend yourself before you had to run away from the house. However, it may not work that way. You may have to run away to live and I think running and living in some cases is better than standing and dying. Now, I wouldn't say this if I didn't have everyone in my group with me, but I think you get the point.

Pat Henry is the editor of theprepperjournal.com, a daily blog devoted to providing people with the information they need to help begin their own journey to becoming more prepared. Whether you are just starting out or are already living on your secluded, booby-trapped, 100 acre underground compound, thePrepperJournal.com shares information that can help anyone take steps now to protect their family and loved ones in case the world goes sideways on us.



Preparing Yourself and Your Family for the Use of Violence

By: Chris Ray

If asked, most people who carry a firearm for self-defense would say that they are willing to use force to protect themselves or their family. However, in his book “On Killing”, Lt. Col. Dave Grossman stated that research has shown that in all wars prior to Vietnam, only 20% of soldiers actually fired at the enemy, even if it meant losing their own life. The other 80% either kept busy with other tasks or purposely missed. Law enforcement studies have also shown that a third of the law enforcement officers who’ve been killed did not defend themselves.

The reason for this is that, except for the 4% of the population that are sociopaths, people have an innate aversion to hurting or killing another human being. Someone might say that an aversion to violence is a good thing and that Jesus said, “Those who live by the sword, die by the sword”. I would agree with Him, but He did not say we should never use the sword. In fact, I believe that if we willingly decide not to act in our own defense or in the defense of another innocent person, we have sinned. We now bare blood guilt and are accountable for all of the future acts of violence our attacker commits. We also bare the guilt of all the good that we or the person we did not defend would have done.

If only 20% of members in the military during all wars leading up to Vietnam, and 1/3 of police fail to defend themselves, logic dictates that even larger numbers of citizens might freeze when faced with real violence.

If those who were trained to kill; our military men in the midst of past wars and 1/3 of police, who know that each traffic stop could turn violent, could not or did not use force to defend themselves, what can the average person do to increase their chances that if faced with the need to use deadly force, will?

There are some things that you can do to increase the odds that when faced with the need to use force, you will. They are:

- Make the hard decision now
- Real world firearms training
- Use realistic targets
- Visualization of multiple different scenarios
- Stress Inoculation

Make the Hard Decision Now

The very first thing you can and should do to prepare yourself for using force is to really think about it. Sure you might be willing to use force if a big man kicks in your door with a knife and threatens your family. But what if it’s a fourteen year old at the mall? Here are just three questions you should ask yourself.

- Are you willing to use deadly force to stop a threat against your life or the life of another?
- Do your moral and ethical beliefs allow you to take the life of another in self-defense?
- Are you prepared to face the possible criminal and civil legal consequences?

Real World Firearm's Training

The only training most people get is what they receive at their carry permit class or from a friend or loved one. Simply put, that is not enough! Knowing how to efficiently stand, draw, aim, pull the trigger, clear malfunctions, change magazines and scan for multiple threats, among other things, are all needed. Once you learn these skills you'll need to practice them, so that if you ever need to act, your brain doesn't have to take time to think about these actions, you can just act. Good training can be expensive, but so are coffins. Training can give you the edge in a critical incident, insuring that you're the one who goes home to your family.

Use Realistic Targets

Using realistic targets with either an image of a man or a silhouette of one has been proven to increase the rate that people will actually fire on a real person. Realistic targets are more expensive but you should train yourself to shoot at something that looks like a human and not just a bull's eye. DHS purchased (and got some flak for) some realistic targets for just this reason.

Visualization of Multiple Different Scenarios

Visualization is a very important part of defensive training. Imagine yourself and your response from the initial encounter; you're moving from condition yellow to orange (from the [Cooper Color Code](#)), giving verbal commands and making your mental line in the sand. The attacker crossing that line and you enacting your plan.

In the book "The Survivors Club", author Ben Sherwood explains why people freeze during a plane crash. He describes something called 'behavioral inaction';

"The current theory of behavioral inaction goes like this: As your frontal lobes process the site of an airplane wing on fire, they seek to match the information with memories of similar situations in the past. If you have no stored experience of a plane crash, your brain can't find a match and gets stuck in a loop trying and failing to come up with the right response. Hence: immobility."

One of the main reasons visualization is so important is because behavioral inaction or "brain lock" can happen any time your brain tries to latch on to a reference point and there is none.

Visualizing different scenarios is one way to be able to avoid "brain lock", allowing your mind to have something to pull forward. Another way to build this skill is by mentally placing yourself in situations you see in movies or in the news and then thinking about what you might have done differently in these defensive situations. Here are just a few situations for you to think about.

What will you do if:

- Someone knocks on your door at 2:00 AM?
- You come home to find your front door has been kicked open?
- You stop for gas and while you're pumping another car pulls up and the driver then draws a knife?
- At a restaurant, a husband and wife are having an argument in the parking lot when the husband suddenly punches his wife and then shoots her?

When you're at the range, visualize the target as being various threats. Visualize the entire engagement, from what caused you to draw, to them falling, and end with you scanning for additional threats.

By mentally preparing your mind for situations where violence is an acceptable response, you are overriding the natural aversion to violence. This is something that should be done on an ongoing basis, much like weight lifting to build and keep strength.

Stress Inoculation

Stress inoculation is placing yourself in stressful life-like situations under safe conditions. Some of the ways to undergo stress inoculation are shoot/don't shoot video systems and force on force training with either airsoft or paint ball guns. Probably the best way to undergo stress inoculation is with paint bullets. They shoot through your gun and while they sting when hit, are not life threatening. There are training companies that set up scenarios and have trained actors who take the roles of bystanders and Joe Dirtbag. Joe Dirtbag does whatever the scenario calls for him to do and you must respond.

I have personally used a FATS (Fire Arm Training System) that my local police stations uses. They recorded their own scenarios using real officers, some acting as the officers in the video and others acting as Joe Dirtbag. They also filmed in local areas, so there was a real sense of familiarity. There were some scenarios that required deadly force, where Joe Dirtbag went for a gun in one version, and in another version he may have pulled out his smokes.

While these things are obviously less stressful than a real critical incident, they are stressful and will help you learn not only critical thinking under stress but also how to override the innate aversion to using force when it is called for.

Preparing Your Family for the Use of Violence

If you carry a firearm for self-defense, have you prepared your family for what they should do if you have to use it to protect them or yourself? I don't know about you, but to me, having to use deadly force is definitely a version of the stuff hitting the fan. Making sure your loved ones know what to do before, during and after can protect them from many negative impacts. Here are some general thoughts on how to prepare your family.

Before the Use of Force

When we go out to eat, I sit facing the door. This way I can stay in condition yellow (from the [Cooper Color Code](#)) and be aware of who is coming in. If we sit on the same side in a booth, I sit on the outside just in case I need to act. This is our security plan.

If I ever need to use our security plan, there are a couple different companies that offer a type of “carry insurance” that can aid in legal and other expense incurred from the need to use deadly force. There may be others, but the two I am aware of are, [US Concealed Carry Association \(USCCA\)](#) and [Armed Citizens’ Legal Defense Network, Inc.](#) I’m not endorsing either one but simply making you aware of available options. I had USCCA coverage for a while but, for financial reasons, no longer carry it. When I am better able to afford it, I’ll look at both options again. I note this here because a legal defense could be a bank-breaking financial burden.

Our home security plan has modified over the years as the kids have gotten older but the core is essentially the same. My wife arms herself and calls police while I lock, load, watch and listen. If the kids need me, I fight to them. Otherwise, everyone stays put and we wait for police. The oldest child isn’t old enough for a firearm, so he has kept a bat by his bedside for years. This helps him feel safer and better prepared, just like a firearm at my side does for me.

During the Use of Force

I am right handed, so I try to keep my wife on my left side. If I need to draw my firearm, I can do so and she won’t be in the way. I can also use my left hand to tuck her behind me to protect her if needed. That way she can look for cover while I engage the threat. We have talked to the kids as well and they understood that if either of us ever had to use force, they were to immediately get to cover and concealment as safely as possible. I explained what cover and concealment are to them, and gave them examples of each in some of the places we go.

After the Use of Force

If you are away from home and have to use force, after you have called 911, call your family to let them know you’re alright. Tell them that if the police want to search your home, they must have a warrant. Also tell them not to say anything about the shooting to anyone without an attorney. This also means they should not mention anything about it on any social media.

The entire family might go through a rollercoaster of emotions after a critical incident. There is nothing wrong with seeking counseling for the entire family to help you all process what has happened.

Final Thoughts

Some might think I’m instilling fear in the kids but I disagree. As was mentioned above, when the brain cannot pull a memory forward that tells it how to act, people often freeze. Children don’t have the life experience adults do, so by knowing that bad things happen and teaching them how they can and should respond, they are empowered, more inoculated and better prepared should, God forbid, any of these things actually ever happen.

Chris Ray is the owner of <http://preparedchristian.net>, a preparedness blog with a Christian worldview. He explores scripture to show that preparedness is biblical. He also covers a wide range of preparedness topics.

6 Trees Every Survivalist Should Know & Why

By: Creek Stewart

Now is a good time to go out and flag the following six trees before the leaves drop (except the pine).

Revisit them in the winter and learn how to ID them by the bark alone. Then again in the Spring with the buds and new leaves.

White birch (paper birch)



White birch is easy to identify with its distinctive, white, papery bark. The sycamore tree also has white bark, but it does not sluff off in thin, paper-like furls like the white birch. The sycamore also has large hand-shaped leaves versus the white birch's smaller, oval-shaped leaves with a pointed tip. The birch leaf is also irregularly toothed. These grow almost exclusively in northern climates.



White birch survival uses:

- Sweet drinkable sap that does not need purification
- Containers can be fashioned from the bark (and even canoes – hence the name “canoe birch”)
- It’s papery bark makes some of the finest fire starting tinder on the planet, which will light even when damp because of its resinous quality
- A fine tea can be made from the small twigs at the end of a branch or by shaving the bark from new growth. Toss a palmful of these elements into boiling water for a fresh, wintergreen-flavored tea
- The tinder fungus (chaga) grows almost exclusively on the white birch tree. The fungus is one of the only natural materials I know of that will take the spark from flint and steel. A piece of tinder fungus along with flint and pyrite to create sparks were even found on Otzi, the “iceman” who was uncovered in the Austrian Alps several years ago.
- Pine tar can be extracted from the bark of the white birch by heating it over a fire. Pine tar makes an excellent natural adhesive which natives used for all kinds of purposes including securing stone points on arrows.

American Basswood

The American basswood (also called American linden) is a very common tree especially in the Eastern U.S. It prefers moist soil and is often found by creeks, streams and ponds. It likes to grow several shoots from the base so it’s not uncommon to see the basswood growing in what appears to be clumps. Basswood trees have large, heart-shaped, coarsely toothed leaves and dark red young leaf buds. One of the most distinctive features of the basswood is what I call the “tongue.” A tongue-shaped leaf grows at the base of the regular heart-shaped leaves on mature trees. Hard, little, nut-like fruits dangle from the center of this “tongue” leaf throughout the summer.



Basswood survival uses:

- Delicious edible leaves – especially in spring
- “Bass” comes from the word “bast,” which is an old word for rope. The inner fibers from the Basswood make some of the best natural cordage on the planet. In my last course, 2 adult men could not break a 1/2” thick strip of basswood bark.
- Basswood is my favorite wood to use in fire by friction sets. It is soft and makes a perfect friction fire wood for bow drill spindles and hearthboards and for hand drill hearthboards.
- Basswood is preferred by most wood carvers and chainsaw carvers because of how easy it is to work and carve
- Inner bark layer is edible and can be scraped off with the edge of your knife. It has a very sweet flavor.



White Pine

The leaves of the White Pine grow in batches of 5 needles. Every fall the white pine loses all of its needles except those that grew that year. Pine is an evergreen. Evergreen trees keep some green leaves year-round, unlike deciduous trees, and have needle-like leaves. They also produce cones (pine cones) instead of flowers.

White pine survival uses:

- Resin can be used a fire extender when mixed with tinder material
- Resin can be heated and mixed with crushed charcoal to make a natural epoxy
- Resin-rich joints and stump pieces make incredible fire kindling
- Make pine-needle tea from the green pine needles – very rich in Vitamin C
- Inner bark layers are edible
- Harvest pine nuts from the pine cones
- Pine needles make excellent fire tinder
- Pine needles make excellent natural insulation material for debris huts and survival shelters
- Green pine boughs are perfect for lean-to shelter roofs
- Green pine boughs are great for making a ‘pine bough bed’ to protect from the cold ground or snow
- The lower, dry, dead branches of the pine tree (squaw wood) is often some of the driest fire kindling available. It is exposed to the wind and also protected from the elements by the year-round needle canopy above, I’ve also used these branches for making bow drill fire friction sets.
- Very effective candles and lamps can be made from pine resin
- Pine resin can be used to waterproof seams in clothing or crude containers
- The very pliable surface layer roots make excellent (and strong) natural cordage. Use as a whole or split into smaller pieces.



White Oak (and all oaks in general)



White oaks have rounded leaf lobes instead of pointed ones like red oaks. Contrary to popular belief, acorns are edible. I like white oak acorns better because it seems they are less bitter and it takes less effort to leach out the tannic acid (which causes this bitterness) to become more palatable. An abundance of acorns in mid-summer makes the oak family almost impossible to misidentify. Oaks are some of the largest trees in the forest. I have many white oaks at Willow Haven that are over 100 feet tall and easily 3-4 feet in diameter.

White oak survival uses:

- Acorns (after leaching out the tannic acid) can be ground and used as flour to make acorn bread
- Tannic acid (which can be extracted by boiling or leaching acorns and/or inner oak bark and twigs) is anti-bacterial. I've used it as an antiseptic wash before and have heard of it being used to quell diarrhea.
- Acorns can be used a trap bait for squirrel and other small game animals
- Can tan leather using the tannic acid found in bark, acorns and wood
- Oak is a very hard wood that is good for ax handles, digging sticks and shelter frameworks
- When dried, the white oak flowers make suitable tinder bundles and can be found in great abundance certain times of the year

Sugar Maple (and pretty much all maples)

The sugar maple is one of my favorite trees and probably one of the most popular in the Eastern woodlands. Its beauty is on full display when the leaves change each fall into bursts of red, orange and yellow. The leaves usually have five lobes, and the tips are pointed. Young maples have smooth silvery bark. The unmistakable, “winged helicopter” seeds are a tell-tale maple tree indicator. Sugar maple the source for maple syrup. This tree is preferred because its sap has high sugar content. It takes 40 gallons of sugar maple sap to make 1 gallon of maple syrup.



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Sugar maple survival uses:

- In later winter/early spring when the sap is running, the sugar maple is an excellent source of drinkable water (sap) that needs no purification. Maple Sap is nature’s version an energy drink – rich in sugar and nutrients. I’ve filled a 1-liter canteen in as few as 15 minutes before. Maples don’t have fully developed (or any) leaves during this time of year – hence the important of 4 season identification.
- The seeds inside the little helicopters are edible, just like edamame. I just boil them and lightly salt. They can also be fried or added to stews. Remove the outer helicopter.
- I almost always use maple branches for wilderness cooking. Whether it’s a spit roast, a hot dog stick or utensils, I can always find a maple branch suitable for the task. Maple branches naturally have a lot of forks, which is great for pot holders and other wilderness kitchen uses. I also use the leaves to wrap fish or other small game animals when cooling in an earth oven.
- Young maple leaves are also edible. Toss them into a salad or boil them down with other spring greens. They get bitter and rough as they mature.



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Willow Tree



There are tons of different willow varieties. Every willow I've seen has a similar leaf shape. The leaves are narrow, lance-shaped and grow in great numbers along the branches. Willows must be in moist areas to survive. If you've found a willow, then there is a water source nearby.

Willow survival uses:

- Willow bark contains a chemical called salicin, which is similar to aspirin. I can personally attest to its effectiveness in relieving headaches and inflammation. Just chew on a few small green twigs and swallow the juices.
- In spring and summer, willow bark will peel away from the wood and makes excellent cordage that can be used for a huge variety of tasks.
- Young willow branches and saplings are very flexible and can be used to weave a variety of different baskets and funnel traps.
- I've used dried willow wood on many occasions for friction fire sets – both hand drill and bow drill
- Willow saplings make excellent frog and fish gigs. Just split the base into 4 equal sections, press a rock to the bottom of the splits and sharpen the tines.

Remember, it's not IF, but WHEN.

Creek Stewart is the Owner and Lead Instructor at Willow Haven Outdoor - a leading Survival and Preparedness Training Facility located on 21-acres in Central Indiana. For more information on Survival Courses and Clinics offered at WHO, visit <http://www.willowhavenoutdoor.com>. You can contact Creek directly at creek@willowhavenoutdoor.com.

Natural Remedies for a Cold: Which Ones are Study-Proven to Really Work?

by James Hubbard, MD, MPH

No one wants to deal with cold symptoms during a disaster—actually during any time, now that I think of it. But being in close quarters with others, like in a shelter, will put you at increased risk for getting sick. Even if you're a loner, the stress will lower your immune system.

So what can you do? If you've stored antibiotics, they won't help. A cold is a virus, not a bacteria. In fact, treating a cold is one of those times when natural solutions may be the only solution.

Last summer, the journal *American Family Physician* published the article "Treatment of the Common Cold in Children and Adults." There's still no cure for the cold, but this article cites proven methods to prevent one and to shorten the course if you have one. Some things work better on children than adults and vice versa.

Proven Methods to Treat Colds in Children

First, here's what studies have shown **prevent** colds in children:

- **Chizukit.** This commercial solution is a mixture of 50 mg per ml of echinacea, 50 mg per ml of propolis (a product from beehives), and 10 mg per ml of vitamin C. Children ages 1 to 3: Take 1 teaspoon twice a day. Children ages 4 to 5: Take 1 ½ teaspoons twice a day. You can order Chizukit online.
- **Nasal irrigation** with saline in children 6 years and older: Irrigate with ½ to 2 teaspoons per nostril three times a day. (Hope you have a cooperative kid for this one. If you don't know how to irrigate, look up instructions ahead of time.) To negate the risk of your child getting an infection from the saline, you should either boil the water for three to five minutes (cool before using), use distilled or sterile water you buy at a store, or put the water through a filter with a pore size of 1 micron or smaller.
- **Probiotics** containing *Lactobacillus acidophilus*. (You can get this in pharmacies or grocery stores. Use as directed.)
- **Vitamin C.** (Use as directed.)
- **Zinc sulfate.** Children 1 to 10 years old: Take 1 tablespoon daily. Children 11 and older: Take one tablet (10 mg) daily. (Available from pharmacies and health-food stores.)

If your child gets a cold anyway, these treatments **soothe** the symptoms:

- **Buckwheat honey**, which helps stop coughing. Ages 2 to 5: ½ teaspoon at bedtime. Ages 6 to 11: 1 teaspoon at bedtime. Ages 12 to 18: 2 teaspoons at bedtime. Don't give honey to babies since it can have a few botulism spores. Because of their small size, some babies have actually died from this. There aren't enough spores to harm older children or adults.
- **Vapor rub.** Apply about a teaspoon to the chest and neck for ages 2 to 5, or apply about 2 teaspoons for children 6 and up. (My mother has been proven right once again.)

Finally, these treatments can **shorten** the duration of a cold in children:

- **Nasal irrigation** with saline for anyone 6 and over. Use ½ to 2 teaspoons per nostril three times a day. (For babies, I've often recommended a saline drop or two in the nose followed by immediate bulb-syringe suction.)
- **Umcka ColdCare** (geranium extract, from health-food stores) in children 1 to 18: 10 to 30 drops depending on age. (See the label.) Use for seven days.
- **Zinc sulfate syrup**, available from pharmacies and health-food stores. Take as directed. Start within 24 hours of the first cold symptoms. You can give it for up to 10 days.

Proven Methods to Treat Colds in Adults

No fair if your child doesn't get a cold but you do. Here's how to help **prevent** one in yourself:

- **Garlic**, or one supplement containing 180 mg of the garlic extract allicin per day.
- **Vitamin C**: 0.25 to 2 grams daily.
- Good old frequent and thorough **hand washing** with soap and water. This remains the best method to avoid getting a cold. The waterless hand cleaners work also.
- **Avoiding stress**. It's not mentioned in the article, but recent studies prove that stress increases your risk for colds. Regular exercise, meditation, and prayer have been shown to decrease your risk.

If your prevention attempts are a major fail and you get a cold anyway, the following treatments may **shorten** its duration. You can get them all at health-food stores.

- **AP-Bio** (the herb *Andrographis paniculata*): 200 mg per day for five days.
- **Echinacea purpurea** (herbal extract): 4 ml (a little less than a teaspoonful) twice a day, or 20 drops every two hours on day one followed by 20 drops three times a day for up to 10 days.
- **Umcka ColdCare**: 30 drops three times a day for up to 10 days.

Over-the-counter decongestants, with or without antihistamines, won't shorten a cold's duration, but they will make you feel better.

Treatments Proven Not to Work

The same *American Family Physician* article that named study-proven common-cold treatments also listed treatments proven not to work. If you've tried these and they work for you, be my guest. Except for one: **Over-the-counter cough medicines** are a no-no for children ages 4 and under. These medicines are in the top-20 causes of death. The wrong dosage can be fatal in this group.

Even in older kids, no **antihistamine or decongestant** has been found to work on a cough caused by a cold. For example, Benadryl, DayQuil Cough, and PediaCare, along with a lot of other medicines, contain either dextromethorphan or diphenhydramine. Those two ingredients have been shown ineffective in kids. (Remember, we're talking colds here, not allergies.)

Another cold treatment that doesn't work for children, at least according to the majority of studies, is the popular herb **echinacea**. Proponents use it to rev up the immune system to fight colds.

In adults, the most surprising finding to me is **codeine** is no more effective than placebo for a cough.

Nasal irrigation has also been found not to work in adults after you get a cold. Remember, it does seem to help in children. And, again, we're talking colds here, not allergies.

Now none of these remedies are anywhere close to 100 percent effective, but for now, they're the best we've got—at least the best we've got that are study-proven.

The bottom line is, a healthy lifestyle, avoiding people with colds, and washing your hands frequently still can't be beat.

For more home remedies, check out Dr. Hubbard's website TheSurvivalDoctor.com, the number-one survival-medicine blog. Dr. Hubbard is also the author of the best-selling e-books [The Survival Doctor's Guide to Wounds](#) and [The Survival Doctor's Guide to Burns](#).

Disclaimer: This article is for general information only. Consult your doctor for personal advice. These remedies may have side effects or interactions and may not be safe for everyone.



10 Survival Skills Every 12 Year Old Should Know

By: Jane - Mom with a Prep



If your twelve year old was lost and alone, would he or she be able to take care of themselves and siblings/friends until they could get to help, or until help reached them? Would your idea of survival skills be different if you lived in an urban area versus living on a homestead in the middle of nowhere?

I'll admit - my skills are probably skewed to my kids. We live in a highly developed suburban area so the kids are familiar with where they are. There aren't wild spaces to explore. We don't travel a lot, so the likelihood of crashing a plane into a remote backwoods lake is pretty slim. HOWEVER, those incidents can happen close to home - where they are involved in a car accident, they get lost on a field trip, they are left home alone for an extended time, they are separated from us because

of a natural disaster, etc. So the list is developed for our particular concerns for our kids, but can translate to kids everywhere. We're also assuming they already know how to ride a bike, how to dial 9-11, how to swim, and know their emergency phone numbers. Surviving in the environment they are in is a more likely situation than being lost in the Appalachian mountains, alone. And for us, some life skills are important because they are valid survival skills. So remember, it's our list based off our circumstances and life experiences, your list will probably be a bit different.

Does Your Twelve Year Old Know How To:

Not Panic?

One of the most basic of survival skills is not to panic. In panic-mode, we make big mistakes, we get confused, we get scared, we do stupid things. Think how much more scared a child would be - do they know how to control that panic and make good decisions?

Be Aware?

If ever your child is caught in an active shooter situation, a mob experience or being chased by the neighborhood bully or bad guy, does your child know how to decide if they should run, hide or fightback? Does she spend all of her time on her phone texting her friends instead of paying attention to what's going on around her? Does your son pay attention to where you are driving, especially in areas he's not familiar with, so he has some sense of where he is if he had to go bring help? Do they understand the places that are dangerous for them to go, the things that are dangerous for them to do, the people that are dangerous to be with? At some point, every child needs to understand that what happens in his or her surroundings has a direct impact on them - they can't continually act as if nothing bad ever happens. Bad stuff happens, and they need to become aware of how to handle it.

Give First Aid?

Can your child stop bleeding, perform CPR, use a splint, treat a burn? This might be the time to enroll them in a [Red Cross CPR/First Aid class](#), grab the [Boy Scout Book for First Aid](#) or other ways to make sure that they can perform these most basic of First Aid skills by the time they are twelve.

Handle a Fire Arm?

Whether for self-defense, hunting, or sensible gun safety, by the age of twelve, all kids should know how to handle a firearm. I'm sure many will balk at that who are anti-gun, but in my mind, a child who knows how to use a gun safely is actually a child who is less likely to be accidentally shot, less likely to shoot someone else because he or she is messing around, and less likely to be blindsided if ever the need did arise to defend his family or provide food if the time came. If you don't have the ability to do this, you can enroll in [4H](#) or take an [Appleseed](#) course!

Feed Himself ?

Can your daughter open a can of food from the pantry without an electric can opener ([bonus if they can do this!](#)) ? Does he know how to work the stove and oven? Do they know how to prepare a basic cut of meat safely? Know safe, basic knife skills? Do they know how to harvest (and plant) from the garden and prepare a dish - fish and prepare - hunt? Do they understand what water is safe to drink ?

Defend Herself?

Does your child understand how to defend themselves if attacked? Can they use basic defense moves against an adult to try to save themselves? Do they understand when it's time to fight and when it's time to run? Have they taken any self-defense classes or taken martial arts training?

Find Their Way Home?

Does your child know how to find out where they are? Can they get themselves home if they ride a little too far on their bike? Do they understand the basic principles of using a compass or reading a map? Do they understand how to find their location at night by the stars....or tell their location during the day by shadows? Can they find their way home from church without a GPS? And respectively - do they understand how to use the GPS on your phone? Do they know the major streets where they live, major arteries near their house, major landmarks in their area?

Work with Tools?

Does your 12yo know how to use a knife? a hammer? a screw driver? a saw? Understand putting a basic structure together?

Stay Warm?


Building a shelter from nothing, using clothes to bundle up, blocking off entrances with blankets, starting a fire - does your child understand the basics of doing these things and why staying warm and dry so important?

Get Help?

Besides knowing who to ask in a situation where they are lost - and look for the community helpers and moms, do your children know how to leave clues if they are lost and trying to find their way home, do they know how to signal for help?

And importantly - do YOU know how to do all of these things? Have you taught your child? Make that a priority with the coming summer...learn a new skill a week...practice them together - BE PREPARED!

About [MomwithaPrep](#): I'm really just a Mom who is trying to help prepare her family for whatever emergency hits our proverbial fan. I'm married to the biggest geek in the world and am raising + homeschooling two fine young men (if I do say so myself!). I focus on family preparedness, including tons on preparing your children. You can join me on our journey at [Mom with a Prep](#) or follow me on [Facebook](#) and join in on my obsession at [Pinterest](#).

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TODD SEPULVEDA	

The Prepper's Conundrum: Bugging In By: Tess Pennington

Disasters can have long lasting impacts on local areas – the grid goes down, local infrastructures are damaged, supply trucks are unable to make it into the disaster area due to debris in the road – the list goes on and on. That said, there are times when disasters make it impossible to bug out and hunkering down is our only option.

Such events could be:

- A sudden onset of natural disasters (earthquakes, tornadoes, flash flooding, wildfires).
- An event that causes immediate widespread chaos and fleeing your home would put you in harm's way.
- Sudden unplanned disasters such as a chemical leak or worse, a widespread power blackout, a terrorist or nuclear attack will make it impossible to evacuate.

Any of these reasons justify having supplies in place to lessen the stress and help you remain in place until the recovery period begins.

Another reason one would decide to bug in is if you or a loved one has physical limitations such as a debilitating illness or handicap that makes it impossible for you to bug out. Factors such as these and those listed in [part 1 of this series](#) ([part 3](#)) create a set of unique challenges that we must prepare for.

Because disasters bring an air of uncertainty and chaos, we need to prepare ahead of time. The more time you can prepare and plan, the more prepared you will be.

Do You Have What It Takes To Bug In Place?

The single greatest advantage to bugging in compared to bugging out is all of your preps are organized and in place for a sudden emergency. In the midst of others in the community frantically deciding what to take and what to leave behind, all the while running to the store to gather last minute supplies, yours are already in place. And, because you have already made plans well in advance, you can concentrate on fortifying your home.



It All Starts With a Plan

I'm sure you have read plenty of preparedness websites that emphasize creating [a disaster plan](#) – but it's the truth. It keeps you organized, on task and helps to ensure that all of your bases are covered. Before a disaster is imminent, do a risk assessment to weigh your pros and cons of bugging in or out.

- What are the potential threats that you may face? How likely they are? What consequences they might have on you?
- Is your home in immediate danger?
- Do you live in a flood plain? Is it located above sea level?
- Is your home built upon solid ground and could withstand natural threats such as high winds, hail, flooding, etc.?
- How long do you plan to bug in for?
- What events could cause you to bug out?

One more point I would like to make is there is a chance that you may not be in your home when a disaster strikes, therefore have a [get home bag](#) in your car and a sturdy [pair of hiking boots](#) in your car at all times. You never know if you will have to walk to get to your bug in location.

Put Thought Into Your Preps

It helps to have an emergency menu planned or [shelf stable meals](#) prepared to ensure that you have enough food to feed your family. Use a [food calculator](#) to find out how much supplies your family will need. Further, inventory your short term supplies to ensure you have enough food, water, fuel, batteries, medical supplies, etc., to make it through.

Put thought into your immediate survival needs when planning your bug in supplies and have them ready before a disaster is imminent. At the *very least*, you need a two week supply of preps. However, disasters have a mind of their own and to be on the safe side you should plan to be off grid for a longer period of time.

Shelter - Hunkering down in your home environment is less chaotic simply because you are most familiar with your home's strengths, its weaknesses, your neighbors and community, land characteristics, etc. But in order to shelter in place, you need to safeguard your home.

Prepare your home's exterior for facing the brunt storms and prevent further home damage by following this [checklist](#). To go an extra step and take more [extreme measures](#) on your home to iron clad it against looters and vandals.

Water – Victims of previous disasters say the suggested water amount provided by disaster organizations is simply not enough to get through a disaster. Think about it, you need water to drink, to prepare food and for sanitation purposes. If we go by the suggestion from emergency organizations and have 1 gallon per person per day, a family of 5 will need 35 gallons of water per week – *for drinking only*.

There are a variety of storage containers on the market you can purchase to get a head start on your water storage. Here are [5 ways to store water](#) for short-term emergencies. Further, it would be ideal to have some tools to treat water such as a portable filtration system, chemical treatment tablets, etc., as well as a portable filtration system for your [bug out bags](#). To learn the different methods of purifying water, [click here](#).

Note: As a backup plan, consider investing in manual water pumps, tarps, rain gutters for the home to collect rain water and condensation from the ground, trees and bushes. This could save your life!

Food - The foods we store may make all the difference in the world in terms of maintaining energy levels, decreasing stress levels and providing nutrition. The best approach to ensuring you have enough food is to [calculate](#) how much supplies you will need for a given period of time. Then, sit down and create an emergency menu based on your family's food preferences and map out the nutritional needs that the chosen foods provide. This will help you stay organized for the disaster and will also help you create a well-rounded shopping list for your food supply. An example of a [first time shopping list](#) for your supply is listed here.

Your menu should be realistic in the sense that it will provide your body with the [necessary energy needs](#). This [chart](#) can help in researching caloric needs based on gender and ages. At the very least, plan for 1200 calories per meal. Keep healthy whole grains in mind when adding carbohydrates to your larder. If you haven't started stockpiling shelf stable foods, consider reading [The Pantry Primer](#) series.

Sanitation - When a disaster creates a situation where the water sources are compromised, the lack of sanitation in the given area will be a disaster in and of itself. When sanitary conditions are not up to par, there is an increase of diseases such as cholera, typhoid and diphtheria.

Typically, women and children are the most affected by poor sanitary conditions. [Women's personal hygiene](#) is essential to her health and should be considered a priority in your sanitation preparedness measures. Taking proper precautions and stocking up on sanitary items will help eliminate most issues regarding poor sanitation.

At the very least, educate yourself on the effects on unsanitary conditions and create a [basic sanitation kit](#) and prepare for the fact that toilets won't flush, trash won't be collected and you will be on your own.

Health - During short term disasters, medical situations are unplanned and they can be complicated. It is imperative that you prepare for them if you want to keep your loved ones and yourself healthy. Have [medical response kits](#) made ahead of time to help you act quickly. [Create a medical supply](#) based on the most likely medical emergencies.

Having medical supplies that could assist in these common medical emergencies would be proactive on your part.

- Children Fever
- Childhood Earaches
- Various injuries such as sprains, strains, broken bones
- Chest Pain
- Abdominal Pain
- Back Pain
- Shortness of Breath

Source- 2006 Emergency Department Summary

During an emergency, medical issues may arise from contaminated water, infected skin abrasions, and dehydration. Have supplies that will reflect these types of emergencies as well. Consider some [unconventional items](#) to add to your medical supplies.

When buying medical supplies, keep in mind family members who have preexisting conditions, allergies, or are accident prone. It is within your best interest to ensure that you have any and all necessary medications that require prescriptions before an emergency happens. Further, consider those who are under a doctor's care, or have medical issues. If you will be bugging in and living in an off grid environment, those that are dependent on medical equipment to stay alive could suffer.

Power - Disasters of any kind cause [grid down](#) scenarios that have the capacity to create severe damage to necessary infrastructure such as transportation, electricity, the access to fuel, heating, banking and other systems that we rely on daily. We realize our dependency on these only when we are without them. Moreover, our modern appliances are hooked into the grid in order to run and we must plan to be without them during times of disasters. Generally, short term disasters cause [off grid environments](#) that span 2 weeks or more, so take this into account when making preparations. Learn how to protect your [perishable food sources](#) during off grid events and know which [disaster items are the first to disappear](#) so that you can purchase them ahead of time.

Look into [alternative means of power](#) and invest in rechargeable batteries, solar battery chargers, generators, ample supplies of fuel and even a siphon for fuel. As well, if cold weather threatens the area where you live, have ample firewood and matches or a way to start a fire.

Further, because of the likelihood of you being off grid for an extended amount of time means that you should have hard copies of your preparedness information. Having books, eBooks, manuals, etc., within arm's reach will help you survive the odds better.

Communication – You can't cut yourself off from the world, especially in a disaster. Our normal forms of communication – television, cell phones, land lines may not be available following a disaster. Therefore, you will need [alternative forms of communication](#) to communicate with neighbors, loved ones or to learn what is happening in your community. Having police scanners, radios, Ham radios to communicate to the outside world will give you a huge advantage in survival and security.

Security – Never underestimate the desperation of those who are unprepared or ill-equipped to survive. When one's needs are not met, there is nothing they won't do. Bugging in will require more planning and security on your part. Although living in an urban center may be the most difficult in terms of survival, those that live on the city's outskirts and suburban areas will not be without their own set of challenges.

Considering that the majority of the U.S. population is [centered in 146 of the country's 3000 counties](#), chances are most of us live in urban areas, and special attention must be placed on security. We've read enough survival stories to know that drug addicts, released prisoners, those with mental illnesses and the unprepared will be the ones looting and pillaging. Those that live in densely populated areas will be the most vulnerable to this. To curtail this, amp up your security endeavors and preps.

- Blackout curtains to ensure that your well lit house doesn't become a beacon lighting the way for looters to come. Windows are weak links in homes and can easily be broken to gain access.
- Shatterproof window film would be a good investment to decrease this vulnerability.
- Diamond plate sheets can also be fastened to windows and an added benefit is they are bulletproof.

Further, beef up your [security layers](#) in and around your home, work with your [community](#) or other neighbors who are sheltering in place to create a secure perimeter.

Another consideration for bugging in place is due to a possibility of widespread crime and looting, you must assume that martial law will be activated and prepare for the fact that your firearms will be confiscated. If you are unable to protect what is yours, it could be taken by force. Looters will feel very confident invading homes to steal from you especially since the threat of firearms are gone.

Planning for the Unexpected

No matter how extensive your bug in plans may be, everything could go wrong and there may be events beyond your control that could force you and your family to evacuate or bug out. Plan for change! There may be situations that present themselves where your life may be in danger and the only contingency is to bug out. If your immediate needs can no longer be met, then it's time to fall back to Plan B. To avoid the turmoil of last minute evacuation plans, get your bug out plans in place early. Bugging out will be discussed in further detail in the next section of this series.

To conclude, although the majority of the United States population lives in highly populated areas, urban preppers understand the dangers that go with it. Moreover, you realize that disasters are real and could pose a threat to your survival. Be prepared, be ready and have your preps in place before a disaster is upon you.

Tess Pennington is the author of [The Prepper's Cookbook: 300 Recipes to Turn Your Emergency Food into Nutritious, Delicious, Life-Saving Meals](#). When a catastrophic collapse cripples society, grocery store shelves will empty within days. But if you follow this book's plan for stocking, organizing and maintaining a proper emergency food supply, your family will have plenty to eat for weeks, months or even years. Visit her web site at [ReadyNutrition.com](#).





EMERGENCY GRAB AND GO BINDER

Food Storage Moms “Emergency Grab and Go Binder” has proven to be a valuable tool for gathering our most important documents into one place. We have seen the natural disasters going on around the world and in our own hometowns. That’s why we designed a convenient place to store documents such as, insurance information, titles, passports, small bills (cash), account numbers, emergency contact information and more!



Food Storage Moms Emergency Binder Instructions

Tab#1: "Emergency Contact Information" is a section we designed to collect home and cell phone numbers of family members, friends, etc. These are numbers we might not remember in a real disaster or emergency. We are so used to having the numbers stored in our cell phones or emails stored on our laptops, etc. What if we can't use our cell phones, then what? What if we can't use our laptops, then what? This is why we need these numbers or emails in "Food Storage Moms Emergency Binder".

Photo Pockets: It's a good idea to have two pictures of your family members or friends in case you get separated in an emergency. This way you keep one picture and you post another picture of someone on a wall should you get separated.

Tab#2: "Bank and Investment Accounts" is a section we designed to fill in your Bank names, Bank Account numbers, Bank Phone numbers, Bank Addresses or Emails. If you need to dash out the door in a real disaster or emergency you might need these numbers if you can't return to your home. We suggest you take copies of all of your credit and/or debit cards. If you lose or have your wallet/purse stolen you have the card numbers and the phone numbers to reach the credit/debit card companies to report your loss. (Include Binder Pocket)

Tab#3: "Birth Certificates, Marriage Certificates, Religious Documents, School Graduation Papers, etc." This is where you will place your original or copies if you prefer, and they are ready to grab and take should you need to leave your home in a short amount of time. They are all together in this binder-just grab and go. (Include Binder Pocket)

Tab#4: "Zippered Bag" is for your Original Passports, Copies of your Driver's Licenses, Concealed Weapon Permits, Social Security Cards, Medicare Cards, etc.

Tab#5: "Medical/Dental Information" and "Insurance Information". If we need to leave our homes unexpectedly we might be glad we have our Doctor's, Dentist's, and Pharmacy names, addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, etc. We can include medical issues we have, medications and dosages we take. We might need the drug's name, dosage and how often to take it. Please write down any allergies you or a family member might have. We might need our insurance policy numbers, agent's phone numbers and addresses. We might need our Medicare coverage documents. If we have this in our binder we are good to grab and go.

Tab#6: "Accounts/Website Access Codes" is a section that needs to be kept in a safe place as well as all of the documents listed above in all the tab areas. This section would be important if someone in the family is hurt and the other family member has no idea how to gain access to your joint accounts. If you need to check your accounts and you can't go back to your house you will at least have these facts to "carry on" with your everyday family matters. (Include Binder Pocket)

Tab#7: "Zippered Bag" is available to start collecting one and five dollar bills. If we lose power the ATM machines will NOT work. The GAS PUMPS will NOT work. You will need small bills to pay for things. The stores, gas stations, etc. will not have change for a \$20.00 bill. Period! Please start putting small bills in this zippered bag. You will be glad you did.

Tab#8: "Titles" is a section where you will want to place your Titles to Cars, Boats, etc. (Include Binder Pocket)

Tab#9: "Wills/Family Trust" is where you could place the most important sections (copies at least) of your trust or wills. (Include Binder Pocket)

Tab#10: We left this section empty so you can put anything that you need or want should you have to leave your home ASAP. We have also included our 72 Hour Kit ideas in this section.

***Put a "tag" on your 72 hour kits/bug out bags with the words:
Grab the Binder, Grab the Prescriptions, Grab the Pet Care.
This will remind us to grab our binder, our prescriptions
and our pet care items if we have a pet(s).



1	Emergency Contact Information Photos
2	Bank & Investment Accounts Copies of Debit/Credit Cards
3	Birth Certificates Marriage Certificates School Graduation & Religious Documents
4	Driver's License Copies Original Passports Concealed Weapon Permits Social Security Cards & Medicare Cards
5	Medical & Dental Information Insurance Information Insurance Card
6	Accounts/ Website Access Codes
7	Cash (Small Bills)
8	Titles To Cars/Boats, Etc. Deeds To Homes, Etc.
9	Wills/Family Trusts
10	Website: www.foodstoragemoms.com Email: foodstoragemoms@yahoo.com

Please keep in secure place where it is safe and easily accessible.
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EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME	PHONE NUMBER(S)	ADDRESS and/or EMAIL ADDRESS
FIRST CONTACT: Relationship:		
Other Contact: Relationship:		
Other Contact: Relationship:		
Other Contact: Relationship:		
Other Contact: Relationship:		
Other Contact: Relationship:		
Other Contact: Relationship:		
WORK CONTACT:		
NEIGHBOR:		
DOCTOR:		
POLICE:	Emergency: Non-Emergency:	
FIRE DEPARTMENT:	Emergency: Non-Emergency:	
AMBULANCE:	Emergency: Non-Emergency:	
GAS COMPANY:	Emergency: Non-Emergency:	
ELECTRIC COMPANY:	Emergency: Non-Emergency:	
WATER COMPANY:	Emergency: Non-Emergency:	
POISON CONTROL:		

BANKING CONTACT INFORMATION

BANK NAME	ACCOUNT NUMBER	PHONE NUMBER and/or EMAIL	BUSINESS ADDRESS

MEDICAL INFORMATION

PATIENT INFORMATION		
Name:	Date of Birth:	SS#:
		Home: Cell:
Name:	Date of Birth:	SS#:
		Cell:
Name:	Date of Birth:	SS#:
		Cell:
Name:	Date of Birth:	SS#:
		Cell:
Name:	Date of Birth:	SS#:
		Cell:
Name:	Date of Birth:	SS#:
		Cell:
Name:	Date of Birth:	SS#:
		Cell:
DOCTOR	DOCTOR'S PHONE NUMBER	
DENTIST	DENTIST'S PHONE NUMBER	
PHARMACY	PHARMACY PHONE NUMBER	

NAME	MEDICAL CONDITIONS/ ALLERGIES TO MEDICATIONS/FOODS		
NAME	MEDICATION	DOSAGE AMOUNTS	FREQUENCY
NAME	PREVIOUS SURGERIES	DATE OF SURGERY	

INSURANCE CONTACT INFORMATION

COMPANY INFORMATION	PHONE NUMBER	POLICY NUMBER
Health Insurance: Agent:		
Health Insurance: Agent:		
Dental Insurance: Agent:		
Eye Insurance: Agent:		
Life Insurance: Agent:		
Life Insurance: Agent:		
Life Insurance: Agent:		
Auto Insurance: Agent:		
Auto Insurance: Agent:		
Long-Term Care Insurance: Agent:		
Home Insurance: Agent:		

MEDICARE INFORMATION

MEDICARE INSURANCE TYPE
Medicare A
Medicare B
Medicare C
Medicare D

ACCOUNT/WEBSITE ACCESS INFORMATION
Store this information in a secure location!

ACCOUNT/WEBSITE NAME	WEBSITE ADDRESS	USER NAME	PASSCODE

72 HOURS OF A TRUE DISASTER/EMERGENCY

During the first 72 hours of an emergency, this is usually what happens:

- First 24 hours (lights/power goes out) we check to see if our neighbor's power is out, worry if we'll get power before our favorite show comes on in an hour, and knock on neighbors doors to see if they know what's going on. We worry because there is no cell phone service or other forms of communication.
- The next 24 hours is when we realize there is a big problem, but we don't know what it is because there is no TV, radio, newspapers, or internet. Without power, our heaters or air conditioners don't work, the refrigerator and freezer are barely keeping things cold, the ATM's aren't dispensing cash, and the gas pumps can't pump gas (unless the manual pump is working or available.) Without available cash, we can't purchase gas, groceries, and water. The grocery store has long lines and the shelves could potentially be empty in three hours. Some merchants start raising their prices sky-high. We try to figure out how to get out of town to family or friends. We start looking for a neighbor who might have a ham radio so we can know what is happening in the world and we're wishing we'd bought batteries so we could turn on the battery-operated radio.
- At 72 hours the panic and/or riots will start. The roads out of the cities will be bombarded and traffic will be at a standstill. People will become desperate for food and water for their families. Emotions are high. Panic is everywhere.
- By having at least 72 hours worth of food and emergency supplies, you and your family can stay home and avoid being in the middle of riots or panic-induced situations.



72-Hour Kit (Adults)

Every emergency agency in the country recommends having a 72-hour kit available to grab-and-go in an emergency. Be sure to update your kit every six months to a year, depending on the items you have in it. Include food you know you will eat and items that can keep you busy during times of inactivity. Be mindful of storing items that might leak, melt, or affect other items in your bag if they leak or break open (Ziploc bags might help with this problem.) Attach a tag to the kit or bag with your name, phone number(s), a tag to remind you to grab your prescriptions/medicines, and a tag to grab your emergency binder. Depending on the needs of you and/or your family, items you could include in your kit:

- Water for at least three days (1-4 gallons per day), water purifiers and water purifier bottles (like Berkey Sport Bottles)
- Food to last for at least three days: MRE's (Meals ready to eat); hot and cold ready to eat food packages; freeze dried fruits and vegetables; and candy, gum, jerky, fruit snacks, raisins, fruit leather, granola bars, peanuts, crackers, etc.
- Aspirin, Aleve, Ibuprofen, Vitamin C, cold remedies, Essential Oils, etc., antacids (for upset stomachs)
- Axe/shovel combo
- Baggies (all sizes)
- Batteries (all sizes-rotate yearly)
- Bible/Scriptures
- Bee sting & bite kit
- Blanket--solar is thinner
- Pillow
- Bleach (household chlorine--nonscented)
- Books
- Bung wrench/Gas shut off wrench
- CASH-small bills/coins (if we lose power, ATM's won't work; credit/debit cards won't work)
- Can opener (non-electric)
- Canned stove
- Candles/glow sticks
- Cards or small games to play
- Chapstick/lip balm
- Chargers in case we have electricity
- Coats/Jackets/Sweaters/Extra Clothes & Shoes
- Coffee Pot, pitcher, container
- Cooking pot, griddle or fry pan
- Cooking stove of some kind/fuel/fire starter/striker
- Compass
- Contact lenses & supplies
- Cotton Swabs/Kleenex Tissues
- Disinfectant
- Duct tape
- Emergency sewing kit
- Fingernail clippers/nail file
- Fire extinguisher
- First Aid Kit
- Hand Warmers
- Flashlights (preferably solar or crank); don't forget batteries (store batteries outside the flashlights to keep them fresh)
- Garbage Bags
- Glasses (extra pair of eye glasses)
- Gloves/latex or non-latex
- Hair brushes/combs
- Hats, gloves/scarves
- Headlamp
- Hearing Aid, plus batteries
- Imodium/Anti-Diarrhea medicine
- Instant milk (chocolate would be good as well)

- Ipecac (check with poison control if possible)
- Hot pads, dish towels/rags/dish soap
- Lanterns/compact lights
- Latex/Non-latex gloves
- Masks N-95 minimum
- Matches (waterproofed)
- Mess Kits
- Mirror
- Scissors
- All Purpose Knife
- Mosquito Spray
- Personal Hygiene (tampons , pads, feminine supplies, etc.)
- Post It Notes/pencils/pens/crayons
- Radio/crank and or battery type (pack batteries)
- Rain Poncho
- Rope
- Safety pins, several sizes
- Shaving cream, shavers (disposable)
- Solar lights
- Sunglasses
- Temporary toilet and bags
- Thermal Underwear
- Thermometer
- Toilet Paper, shampoo, hand soap, baby wipes and hand sanitizer, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, tweezers
- Tools
- Tent(s)
- Umbrella
- Utensils, plates, cups, silverware to cook and eat with
- Vaseline
- Wet wipes-lots...they might be our only shower
- Whistles, Walkie Talkies, (test before you need them for distance) like Motorola Talkabout 2-Way Radios #MR350R/

FRS/GMRS Radio (22 channels, 121 privacy codes, 2662 Combinations)

- NOAA Weather radio
- Work Gloves

REMEMBER, you would need a truck to "haul" all of these items, so check off one item at a time and pick the items that meet you and/or your family's needs. These are IDEAS...just start collecting a little at a time.

Put all the things that need to be rotated together in baggies. This way you just GRAB a bag and switch out the outdated items.



72-Hour Kit (Children)

Children need their own 72-hour kit to meet their dietary needs, hygiene, and comfort items to keep them occupied during long stretches of time during emergencies. When preparing a backpack or bag for them, attach a tag to the kit with the child's name. If your child takes special medications or prescriptions, also add a tag as a reminder to grab those medicines. Items that could be included in the kit (be sure to rotate perishable items yearly):

- Family picture(s) with names and phone numbers/email addresses (in case they get separated from you or if you have a child who can't verbalize who they are)
- Water (enough for three days)
- Food that is age appropriate or that your child will eat: MRE's (Meals Ready To Eat—just add water), food that is ready to eat without water, freeze dried veggies, freeze dried fruit, freeze dried yogurt bites, snacks, graham crackers, peanut butter crackers, cereal, raisins, fruit leather, fruit snacks, etc.
- Candy (such as suckers)
- Juice boxes
- Cup, plate, bowl & silverware/child mess kit
- Reading books
- Colored pencils/non-electric pencil sharpener or markers, crayons (not for car or garage—they'd melt)
- Paper, tablets, coloring books
- Puzzles, games, small activities
- Medications: Motrin/Tylenol, Cough syrup (rotate yearly)
- Any medication you use occasionally: antibiotic ointment, Vaseline, saline spray, etc.
- Baby wipes/diapers/formula/baby food/baby food grinder/pacifiers
- Solar or small blankets
- Small pillow
- Hand sanitizer
- First Aid Kit (child size Band-Aids)
- Extra clothes/jacket/sweater (sweat suits are ideal for storage, because you can cut the sleeves and legs off if the weather is too warm or wear them as is in cold weather)
- Child size N-95 masks--practice with these BEFORE you need to use them
- Bible/Scriptures, etc.



72-Hour Kit (Pets)

Don't forget to prepare for your animals! They will be hungry, thirsty, and upset with a sudden change of environment, so make sure you have what's necessary to keep them comfortable in an emergency. If you've got animals, reptiles, or other types of pets that aren't dogs and/or cats, you'll need to consider their needs when planning a 72-hour kit for them. For dogs and/or cat needs, considering adding these items to a backpack or other container:

- Water/food dish
- Photo of the dog (to be circulated in case they get separated from you)
- Complete medical records
- Chip ID information
- Leash/harness/collar
- Sweater
- Toys
- Blanket
- Brush/comb
- Cat or Dog food (enough for at least three days)
- Water (enough for at least three days)
- Pet First Aid Book
- Vet wrap 2" and 4"/trauma pad
- Gauze bandage rolls (2", 4", and 6")
- Adhesive tape
- Tweezers/scissors/surgical soap
- Thermometer/mineral oil
- Disinfectant solution
- Styptic powder/cornstarch
- Benadryl/triple antibiotic ointment
- Eye wash
- Saline
- Medication, 5-day supply
- Tick-Flea Meds
- Paper towels/plastic bags/zip lock bags
- Dog and/or cat carrier(s)
- Cat litter box/litter

****Remember The Red Cross will NOT accept our pets; they only allow service animals to assist people at the Red Cross Centers.



Vehicle Emergency Kit

Emergencies or disasters/events can strike at anytime, so having certain items in your vehicle can be lifesaving. Place items in a backpack, gym bag, or other container. Be careful about storing items that may be damaged or compromised in extreme heat situations. Items to consider adding:

- Names and phone numbers of who to contact in an emergency
- Battery/crank powered portable radio/extra batteries
- Flashlight/preferably one with solar/crank/LED
- Compass and maps; not everyone has GPS in car and on phones
- Can of motor oil
- Fire Extinguisher(5 pound ABC type)
- Flares and/or orange cones
- Jumper cables
- Rags/paper towels
- Shovel
- Pocketknife
- Tire gauge
- Tool box
- Window scraper for ice

Necessities for survival:

- Water
- Blankets
- Jackets/sweaters
- Emergency cash: approximately \$50.00 in small bills
- First Aid Kit
- Baby Wipes
- Hand Sanitizer
- Scissors/pens/pencils (not crayons-they melt)
- Emergency snack food and/or MRE meals (items may need to be replaced more frequently if stored in extreme heat conditions)
- Whistles
- Umbrella
- Hand warmers
- Extra blankets