

**SURVIVAL GUIDE
FOR THE
MODERN WORLD**

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The Ultimate Guide to Survival in the 21st Century

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Introduction

The world has become an unrecognizable place for all of us. All that we held safe and sacred no longer exists. The family unit has broken down, corruption is rife, morals and values in decay, the weather patterns are more extreme with each passing season and not even our precious children are safe anymore.

As a human race, we will need to fight for our survival. We will need to adapt to our new environment. We will have to be prepared for a new world where danger and risk is around every corner. The world is at war. Mankind has shown that it cannot get along and live together in peace and harmony. And no matter what your religious affiliation may be, you cannot doubt the signs that some believe God has sent us. For those religious skeptics, the scientific evidence that change is upon us is irrefutable.

Warning signs in the form of natural disasters, like Hurricane Sandy, tsunamis in Asia, floods and earthquakes are becoming more and more frequent and powerful.

There have been continued acts of terrorism by religious extremists, domestic and foreign by religious and social extremists, holding the world in fear.

There are wars raging around the globe with no end in sight. The current, continued destruction of the world economy shows us just how afraid the world's community has become. Their fear has dictated the plummet of world markets. Asia's growth is stalling, Europe is in an economic free fall and not even the United States has found a way out of this economic black hole.

Panic has taken a tight stranglehold on everyday people. Everyday people who are still struggling to find jobs and even those with jobs cannot make ends meet because greedy companies refuse to pay them a decent wage. Politicians continue to argue about raising the minimum wage as if it's a political game, not realizing that their decision effect the lives of real people.

Diseases and plagues that we thought we had once defeated have somehow managed to return. Tuberculosis is an old enemy that has resurfaced. The Norovirus in the UK has infected one million people. We have seen new strains like SARS, the West Nile Virus and Morgellons Disease become the latest threats to mankind. And more recently, the Swine Flu epidemic has caused worldwide panic with widespread cases of sickness and deaths. The Norovirus has a stranglehold on England and is spreading throughout the region. Is nature developing a super bug? Is nature developing a super bug?

Conspiracy theorists have always blamed government science experimentation as the reason we have incurable diseases, but is nature trying to find a way to exterminate us? We have inhabited the planet for millions of years and the damage our lifestyle has caused is irreversible. Is the planet preparing to eliminate us?

Life is a cycle. Organisms on earth evolve as their environment changes. The strong ones live and the weak ones die. After any cataclysmic event a species' resolve will be tested. The recent meteor shower in Russia shows us that a species

ending event like the one that eliminated the dinosaurs is capable of occurring again. Will you be ready? Not for what may happen say six months from now. What would you do right now, *this instant*, in the event of a major emergency situation? If you're not quite equipped for the unpredictable, that's okay and that's probably why you're reading this. Congratulations for taking a proactive first step – you've given yourself a head start.

I don't know a single person who wants to see or be involved in a disaster or emergency. Even the fire, rescue and safety personnel I know hope and pray they are never called upon. Historically, rarely a generation goes by that has not survived some kind of emergency or disaster. In fact, statistically, most of us will experience some sort of crisis situation in our lifetimes.

As the world population spirals towards forgetting how to live on what we have, rather than on credit to get what we want and we all become "commercial driven" to use and toss, many of us have started to "sense" the self-destructive nature of our ways. We collectively start to fear the unknown and that leads us to prepare for the worst case scenario our minds can conjure up. We logically know that if we survive and how well we survive depends on how prepared we and those around us are. We're here to lead you in the right direction, to prepare you for whatever may come your way. Now let's get ready to plan your survival.

Part 1: Should I Stay or Should I Go?

Disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, chemical leaks, societal breakdowns and terrorist attacks can cause some of the biggest evacuation complications. One of the largest concerns during a disaster situation is the question of if or when to leave.

We all have a strong desire to protect what is ours. Regardless of whether you own the grandest mansion in the suburbs or rent a rundown apartment in the city, home is where the heart is. It is our safe haven, our shelter, simply ours. And as much as you may not want to leave it behind, your life may depend on it.

You will need to logically weigh the risks of evacuating your home into the wilderness or other safe place versus hunkering down and standing your ground inside your home. Your final decision must be based on logic and the type of threat that you face.

Knowing when to go is much more important than the contents of your survival pack or even where you will go. You do not want to jump and run before you need to, but you also do not 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 will 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 trees. This is completely impractical. But on the contrary, waiting until the twister is at your door will put you at an unnecessary risk as well.

Most people are more inclined to stay put and refuse to leave their home and their possessions behind. 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. In this scenario, you are probably better off to hunker down where you are and ride it out. But no matter how much you wish to stay at home, there are times when evacuation is the only choice. If a nuclear, chemical or biological event or any impending disaster is likely to destroy your home, obviously you must leave. If the warning sirens on the nearby chemical plant sound off at 3 a.m., you have no choice but to don your gas mask, grab your Bug Out Bag and drive the opposite direction as quickly as possible. If you live right on the Florida coast and a category 5 hurricane has been predicted to hit that coast within 24 hours, you would be stupid not to go now, even if you have no prearranged bug out location. Similarly the time you spend in your backyard, garden hose in hand, trying to fend off a raging fire that has already burned down your eight of your neighbors' homes, you might be better spent salvaging your valuables and items with sentimental value and getting out of Dodge.

Of course there are no easy answers as every situation is different. All you can do is weigh the dangers of bugging out versus hunkering down depending on the situation and logic. You have to consider the nature of the threat and ask yourself which position gives you the best chance of survival.

In order to determine if you should shelter in place or evacuate, you will need to answer a series of questions. To effectively ask those questions, you will need to be aware of what is happening around you – locally, state-wide, nationally and internationally. You will need to have a plan already in place to account for each possible scenario that may occur in your area.

Also keep in mind that if a government entity suggests or orders an evacuation, then they have most likely waited until the last possible moment to issue the order – and oftentimes, this is too late. You, the evacuee, are solely responsible to pack and go, not your employer (even if they tell you to stay), not the government and not your neighbor or in-laws – you alone are responsible for you and yours.

In fact studies have shown that in times of crisis about 30-45% of the police, fire, rescue and military personnel will go home and take care of their own families first, especially if they are nearby.

If you decide not to evacuate and you later need help, keep in mind these same police, fire, rescue and military personnel will first go to the areas that were not ordered to evacuate before they come to help people in areas that were previously ordered to leave.

You cannot count on any government or emergency agency to come to your rescue in a timely fashion. You can only count on yourself (physically emotionally and spiritually), your knowledge, your skills and the supplies and tools you have on hand – at that very moment.

Have regular practice exercises where you have only 30 minutes to an hour to pack and go. Time yourself and make the drill fun with rewards should you meet or beat your goal time.

Be Aware

Knowledge is essential in any type of disaster or evacuation scenario. The sooner you can determine the answers to the questions below, the less the people around you will be running around like chickens with their heads cut off getting in your way and the less the traffic on the roads if evacuation is ordered.

Which choice gives you the best chance of survival for the scenario at hand?

How well prepared are you to shelter in place?

What exactly are you prepared for? (a forest fire is far different from local rioting)

Have evacuation orders been given or suggested?

What is the nature and probable duration of the threat?

Will staying put change anything as far as “saving your home?”

Where will you go and how will you get there?

Do you own a bug out location or have double up plans or no place to go at all?

Will you be able to help your community if you stay?

What will the impact of staying or going be on your family, can they handle what you can?

What can you take with you and what must you leave behind?

If you leave, what exactly is waiting for you at your destination?

Take advantage of every possible type of communication type in your area. Newspapers, TV, Radio, Ham Radio, CB, Scanners, internet, weather alerts and the like. The more sources of information, the faster you will be able to determine if you can stay put or if you must bug out. Be on the lookout for things around you that offer cues as to how others are preparing or reacting to the crisis. The better you can “read the signs” around you, the better off you will be.

Signs to look for include:

A rush or long lines at banks, gas stations or grocery and home improvement stores

An increase in police, fire, rescue and military personnel

Lines at sporting, camping and gun stores

There is more traffic leaving your area than approaching it

Hearing news sources talking about a possible threat

An increase in barrel & barricade trucks and or military, fire and law enforcement vehicles

Ambulances and medical personnel are flocking to the hospitals

If you have been monitoring your communication and news sources then you will know if this how dire the situation is and what you must do to survive it.

The Government

According to the Disaster Evacuation and Displacement Policy the government has the right to force someone out of their home:

“Dependent upon state and local law, [the local executive] has extraordinary powers to suspend local laws and ordinances, such as to establish curfew, direct evacuations, and, in coordination with the local health authority, to order quarantine.”

For details see: Disaster Evacuation and Displacement Policy for Congress at:

<http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/permalink/meta-crs-7643:1>

When you plan for these questions, remember that depending on the crisis the following could play a role in your answer to stay or go.

Civil Upheaval/Crime

Lasting Health Issues

Lasting Supply Issues

Remember Hurricane Katrina – it's not if – it's when

There are also some Pro's and Con's you must consider when making your decision whether to stay put or to evacuate your home.

Pro's to Hunkering Down

The food in your refrigerator and pantry can supplement your survival stash

You can boil your own water and know you're not drinking from a contaminated source

If you lose power, you can quickly cook much of your food and monitor the temperature of your freezer (frozen food will usually keep at least 24 hours)

You'll have more time to improve your home's chances of survival (move items to high ground, put plywood over windows, etc.)

Your home offers shelter against most elements

You'll have access to all your clothing, bedding and other comforts

You won't suffer from boredom as much as you might in a shelter (unless your retreat is well stocked)

You possibly can protect your property from looters

You have more room to store emergency supplies

Con's to Hunkering Down

If you decide to evacuate later, it may be too late. Traffic, clogged roads, roadblocks, etc will be a hindrance

Without heat, electricity, hot water or other services, home just isn't the same, unless you have backup energy

There is no sense of community, unless other neighbors or members of your local survival group stay home, too. You may feel cut off and alone

If a mandatory evacuation has been ordered, you may be prosecuted by local authorities (although this rarely happens); at the very least your area will be the last place to receive aid or search and rescue

You and yours may become a liability to search and rescue

Remember that the needs and agendas of the government are different than that of its citizens. The choice to go or stay is yours alone and only you can determine the ultimate consequences of bugging out or hunkering down.

Part 2: Bugging Out

Should a major disaster or crisis occur, having an evacuation plan in place will put you one step ahead of the masses. The situation that you should prepare for includes the difficult notion that you may be forced to leave your home because of some kind of natural or man-made disaster. I recommend you create a risk assessment and check for possible threats in your local proximity that could force you to take this kind of action. Such threats can include hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, flooding, dam break, war, nuclear power plant meltdown or other environmental disaster.

By escaping your home and relocating to a safe place, you are essentially doing what is called “bugging out.” Bugging out simply means you are getting out from where you are and moving to where you need to be in order to protect yourself and your family from the threat. So what should you plan for and where should you bug out to? First off, be sure to have a quantity of cash on hand, so that during the time immediately following a disaster, and in the event that electronic transactions are not functioning, you will have a way to exchange payment for services and supplies, including possible hotel or motel stays. A good habit to begin now is to save cash in your home somewhere (fridge, closet) and add to that stash each week. It'll begin to become second nature to put away a little bit of money for that rainy day in this credit driven world.

Upon evacuation, the key will be to get to a location far enough away from the big city or metropolis or wherever the threat is at its height, so that you stand a better chance of avoiding the resulting chaos. The main concern however will be that most of your belongings are back at home. How will you get along and how will you feed and supply yourself and your family if you have to bug out?

If you have relatives or friends that live in a potentially safer area away from densely populated regions, you may want to ask if they would be willing to have you show up at their door in the event of a mass emergency. Showing up unannounced may work with some extended families and friends, but you shouldn't rely on that idea as your presence means more mouths to feed and supplies will most likely be very limited. Be sure that you have enough fuel for your vehicle to get wherever you plan to go. Always keep your gas tank nearly topped off. Keep extra fuel stored safely at home, so that you could bring it with you should you ever need to hit the road. Have several hotel or motel choices picked out, well away from the city, and have physical maps at the ready.

If you are going to be bugging out keep in mind that there is a chance that usual means of travel such as cars or buses will not function like normal due to heavy traffic and you will be forced to make your escape by foot. Plan ahead and check possible getaway routes on maps. Different disaster scenarios will affect your route, roads may be under water due to flooding or dam breaks. Earthquakes may cripple bridges and tunnels.

If you have to leave by foot you will have to carry all of your equipment, this will not be an easy task for an untrained individual. Get in shape by training at least three

times a week and take walks while wearing a heavy backpack to train the muscles in your back. Also start wearing you the shoes you will wear during your evacuation before you actually have to use them to get your feet accustomed to the feel and to prevent blisters. If you have never been camping or hiking, take time to do it now. There is no better way to learn what you really need and should do if you had to fend for yourself in the wilderness.

You will need to prepare a Bug Out Bag – or BOB – a bag that contains all of the equipment that you need to survive for a few days on your own, once you have left your homestead. A BOB is also referred to as a 72 hour bag/kit, Go Bag, Get Out Of Dodge (GOOD) Bag or I'm Never Coming Home (INCH) Bag. A fully equipped Bug Out Bag can allow you to better cope with a number of potential threats. If for some reason help or security cannot be reached after a few days of travel, you will have access to vital necessities. During a large scale disaster it will be difficult for government agencies to supply a large number of people with basic rations and supplies. In this case you will have to make do with what you have. However keep in mind that a fully equipped Bug Out Bag will carry a heavy weight that will surely slow down the pace during an evacuation by foot compared to a low weight evacuation kit which is why you must be well-trained in order to carry it over long distances.

Here is a list of what I recommend you include in your BOB:

Clothing

Long sleeve base layer shirt (I recommend Merino Wool)

Short sleeve base layer shirt

Change of underwear

Hat or Watch cap

Gloves

Buff, Scarf or Shemag

Shell Jacket (Waterproof and Wind Proof)

Warm long sleeve shirt

Heavy Duty Pants

Poncho, Rain Clothing, Bivi-Poncho, Bivanorak or Fjellduk

Hiking Boots

2 pair of Extra socks

Watch with a button compass on the wrist band

Backpack

If you are going to carry a heavy load for a distance, you are going to need a pack with stability. Choose a backpack with a steel or aluminum frame. Whether the frame is internal or external is a question of what you prefer, both have advantages and disadvantages. Backpacks with external frames are generally stronger and can be used to carry heavier items than your bag, such as a wounded person or a heavy tank of water. Packs with an internal frame are often lighter and have a more slim design. Pack your items in waterproof bags and use different colors so that you know what is inside each one. A waterproof backpack cover can also help to keep your equipment dry. Cell phones and other electronic equipment are vulnerable to dirt and water, so store them in a waterproof bag or container. Pack important equipment like your first aid kit in a location that is easily accessible should you need it. Always put the same items in the same location in your bag so you do not waste time searching for your items when seconds and minutes really count. This also makes it easier to see if something is missing from your pack. Always carry at least one knife and a pocket survival kit (details listed below or you can purchase these at REI, WalMart or Amazon) on your person in case you might lose your backpack.

Shelter

Sleeping bag – Sleeping bag liners helps to extend the lifetime of your sleeping bag

Sleeping mattress, Hammock or Hennessy Hammock

Tarp, Tent, Bivanorak, Bivi-Poncho, Fjellduk or Bivi-Bag

Light

Flashlight or/and Headlamp (LED)

Extra batteries (Lithium)

Fire

Matches in Waterproof Container

Lighter

Fire Steel

Tinder

Survival Knives

Fixed Blade Knife

Back Up Knife – a Folding Knife, Compact Fixed Blade Knife, Multi Tool or Swiss Army Knife

Sharpener

Pocket Survival Kit

Matches

Fire Steel

Snare Wire

Wire Saw

Sewing Kit

Button Compass

Safety Pins

Whistle

Candle

Compact LED lamp

Compact Knife or Razor Blade

Fishing kit

Pencil

Water Purification Tablets

Painkillers

Anti Diarrhea Tablets

Antihistamines

Antibiotics

Condom or Alok Sak

Water

One or Two Water Bottles – Nalgene, Klean Kanteen, Camelback or SIGG

Water Bladder for your backpack – Camelback, Nalgene or similar system

Water Purification Tablets

Water Purification Filter

Food

Freeze Dried Rations or Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) – Minimum 6 meals for 72 hours

Powerbars, Flapjack, Beef jerky, Trail mix or other snacks

Tea, Coffee, Sugar and Powdered milk

Salt and Pepper

Stove – Multi Fuel Stove, Kelly Kettle, Trangia, Ebsit, Optimus Crux Lite or Jetboil

Fuel for your Stove

Cooking Vessels

Spork (or Knife, Fork and Spoon)

Cup

Steel Wool, Mop and Washing Up Liquid

P-38 Can Opener

Map

Waterproof container for map

Compass

Cash or Gold/Silver

Passport and Immunization Record Card

Notebook and Pen

Kwikpoint

Hygiene

Roll of Toilet Paper (in waterproof bag)

Soap

Toothbrush, Toothpaste and Dental Floss

Razor

Hand Disinfectant

Insect Repellant

Sun Block or Skin Care Lotion

550 Paracord

First Aid Kit

Blister Kit

Sunglasses

There is other equipment that can be extremely useful depending on the disaster scenario, but it will be impossible to bring all of these things that you may want or need during a survival situation. Choices must be made.

Additional helpful equipment may include:

A compact radio or scanner which may allow you to receive news, weather reports and listen to how government agencies are responding to the event.

An axe, compact shovel, kukri, machete, folding saw or parang which can be useful tools for collecting firewood and constructing shelter.

Binoculars which help in scouting terrain and spotting potential threats and problems.

A Speedy Stitcher should you have to sew in thick nylon fabrics like backpacks or leather boots.

A global positioning system (GPS) device with topographic maps is an extremely useful tool, especially when navigating into unknown terrain or low visibility conditions.

A signal mirror, chemical light sticks, SPOT or Emergency flares can help you be located by rescuers.

Spare parts and repair kits for your stove, tents and sleeping mattress can be useful especially under long lasting emergencies.

An extra pair of shoes in addition to your hiking boots such as a pair of running shoes, lightweight hiking shoes (Five Fingers or Merrell Barefoot Trail Glove) can be an extremely smart addition if your boots get wet.

A pair of trekking poles can be an important aid for keeping balance when going through rough terrain, especially when wearing a heavy pack. For people with bad knees or a sprained ankle, these are vital.

Other personal needs may be medications or an extra pair of glasses. A compact survival handbook or memory cards may also be useful additions during an emergency.

Be sure you test all of your equipment and learn how to use it before you might actually need it.

A fully equipped Bug Out Bag contains all of the equipment that makes it possible for you to survive with very little to no external assistance. The major disadvantage is the heavy weight that must be carried should you decide to evacuate on foot. If a vehicle is available and an escape plan is viable via automobile, the weight should not be a concern, however. If you decide to build a Bug Out Bag, try it out for other activities such as hiking, camping and hunting so that you get familiar and comfortable with the equipment. You should also take advantage of this time to learn how to build fires, create shelter, navigate, prepare food and employ other survival skills as these are more important skills than any equipment you choose to carry with you.

Part 3: Practice, practice, practice

One of the smartest ways to prepare for an emergency that requires evacuation is to simulate an emergency. In May of 2011, all Japanese citizens within a 12 mile radius of the Fukushima nuclear power plant were given two hours to leave their homes. This situation could happen in any one of the 100+ American cities which have a functional nuclear power plant, waste dump, or missile silo; such as Los Alamos, N.M. In June of 2011, more than 12,000 people were evacuated from Los Alamos due to a 61,000-acre wildfire which threatened the nuclear facility located there. Also in June of 2011, the entire town of 40,000 in Minot, North Dakota was forced to evacuate immediately due to flooding of the Souris River.

Evacuations due to flood have also occurred many times in the past in towns located along the Mississippi and other rivers. Hurricane threats often inspire mass evacuations along the south/southeast coastlines as well. A day may come when an earthquake could result in massive evacuations too, for a full 39 of the 50 states have moderate to high seismic hazard risks. Hundreds of thousands of people can be subject to mandatory evacuations at virtually any time. Are you “really” prepared for an evacuation? There is only one way to find out. Put your plans to the test!

To make an evacuation drill more enjoyable as a learning experience I would suggest a camping trip during a three-day weekend. After all, both an evacuation drill and a camping trip involve many of the same activities such as packing the car, a road trip, and living elsewhere in temporary housing. The difference is the amount of planning involved, for virtually no amount of planning time is allowed for an evacuation drill, whereas a camping trip is usually planned weeks in advance.

The evacuation drill I recommend has only a few simple rules: There can be a set date and time for the drill (especially important if family members will be joining you), but there cannot be any special planning, packing, or preparation for it. Of course, participants will be thinking about it in advance, but that mental exercise is good training. When the drill begins everyone involved has only a short time to pack (e.g. 1 hour maximum).

The “safe zone” destination of your choice has to be more than 60 miles from home and the primary goal is to get there as quickly and safely as possible. Conducting the evacuation drill during a major holiday weekend such as the Fourth of July can add a bit more realism (e.g. more traffic jams, fewer lodging vacancies).

Nothing can be purchased from retailers along the way, although buying from stores is acceptable after travelling to a “safe zone” which is more than 60 miles from home. After all, everyone else in town will be emptying shelves and lining up at every gas station, grocery, and retail store in the event of an actual crisis. During a real evacuation we would do well to avoid wasting time, as well as to stay away from places where desperate and unruly mobs can become violent looters or dangerous rioters. Expect to stay in the “safe zone” for at least two nights.

Think 60: 60 minutes of packing, 60 miles of traveling, and 60 hours of camping. That's a good starting point, but it would be a great accomplishment to hit the road in 15 minutes or less. Winter drills can offer additional challenges as can week-long drills in any season, but I would recommend a warm-weather drill during a three-day weekend to start.

Understand the value of having a clean and fueled vehicle at all times. There is nothing more frustrating than having to clean out miscellaneous junk from a car at a time when you're supposed to be packing it in a hurry. Just as irritating is having a car that is running on fumes at a time when you need to be travelling far and fast while avoiding long lines at fueling stations. Keep all vehicles in ready-to-go condition at all times and never let the fuel tank level fall below three quarters full.

Keep your home neat and organized. If you wish to take fishing gear, for example, you won't have time during an evacuation order to detangle a knotted mess of fishing line from a dozen separated two-piece rods which were carelessly stacked in a basement corner. And where did you store your tackle box after last using it two years ago? Keep important gear and supplies readily accessible, not in hard-to-reach attics or buried deep in the back of a messy storage room. Being highly organized can reduce the amount of time you need to pack food from the pantry, clothes from the closet, supplies from the medicine cabinet, and gear from the garage or basement. That time savings can get you on the road faster as you head towards safety.

Ensure your Bug Out Bag is complete and ready to go. Have a few Rubbermaid tubs, coolers, and/or sturdy moving boxes to transport food and supplies in a hurry. Containers for storing and transporting water are just as important to have on hand. Load the big items into the vehicle first and fill in the surrounding spaces with smaller items. Secure items to the roof of the vehicle as well, if practical. However, do not overload the vehicle to the point it becomes unsafe to operate or your vision is severely obstructed. A breakdown or traffic accident is the last thing you need to deal with during an evacuation (even if it is only a drill).

If in doubt about whether to take an item or leave it behind, remember your priorities: Material possessions can be replaced, lives cannot. If the item in question has no legitimate survival purpose, chances are you should not take it with you, but do be reasonable. One does not really need shoes to survive, but having a few pairs of sensible shoes is desirable whereas packing a dozen pairs is a waste of vehicular storage space. As space allows, permit reasonable exceptions for each person to bring a few personal items. Giving in to some minor demands at this point in time can spare some major disruptions of the family peace later on.

While on the road take breaks and help others learn how to use a compass and read maps to improve their navigation skills. Teach them how to find north using a variety of natural means involving the stars and shadows from the sun. Show them how some man-made objects can help orient a compass bearing, such as satellite dishes which almost always point towards the south/southwest.

When conducting evacuation drills, your intended destination, such as a commercial campground, may already be full. Of course, you will not have made a reservation, as

this is part of the drill. You may have to drive several miles to locate a National Forest or other suitable place for camping. You may even have to sleep in the vehicle, so be prepared for minor setbacks and have backup routes and destinations planned in advance. GPS devices are great, but paper maps will always be useful.

After you arrive at your campsite, the evacuation drill takes on a new form, one having deeper roots in true survival skills. It is a great time to practice building a fire, experiment with various fishing or hunting strategies, prepare dinner without having the luxury of a stove or microwave, etc. Yes, this time can be fun and relaxing too, but remember it is supposed to be a learning experience above all.

Keep in mind that you will likely use more water when camping than you originally estimated. During hot summer months most people live fairly comfortably in their homes with air conditioning units, fans, roofs which provide shade, tap water, bath tubs, swimming pools, etc. Because they keep cool in various ways they consume less water. However, camping outdoors subjects a person to constant exposure to the sun and sometimes high humidity too. As a result, stored water is not only used for cooking, personal hygiene, and cleaning; but also in greater amounts for drinking and cooling off our skin.

Unfortunately, that stored water will also become hot from the sun unless you make some effort to keep it cool by natural means. Ice in the cooler won't last long, but burying a two-liter bottle of water a few feet deep in the earth or submerging it at the bottom of a deep lake can keep that water cool and refreshing. Just remember where you stored it and ensure you can retrieve it quickly and easily. This drill is also an excellent time to practice purification techniques using water collected from rain fall, lakes, streams, and other sources.

Speaking of the summer heat, little else will tire a person faster than being exposed to constant sun and humidity. As if that were not exhausting enough a camper will also be required to perform more physical labor than usual, such as hiking everywhere, fishing for dinner, gathering firewood, hauling water, etc. Sleeping in such hot conditions on hard ground is not truly restful either and an exhausted body can quickly become vulnerable to various accidents, injuries, ailments, and illnesses. Further, nature can inflict other bodily damage through sun burn, allergies, and various plant or insect toxins such as poison ivy and mosquitoes. Take care to plan for the prevention or treatment of medical conditions such as body aches and pains, minor abrasions and cuts, allergies, intestinal problems, sun burn, and insect bites.

When it is time to return home evaluate how future evacuation drills could be improved. What went right and what went wrong? Did you take too much of one thing and not enough of another? Could you improve the evacuation response time? Do you need to replace some old gear or acquire some new ones? If others participated in your drill, what do they plan to do differently next time? If tensions were high what can be done to lower stress levels? After conducting even one evacuation drill you'll know how to better prepare for and respond to a real evacuation emergency. Of course, camping can be a lot of fun so practice these drills as often as you like.

Part 4: Hunkering Down: What You'll Need

Unless you have a cabin in the woods that you know you can get to quickly no matter what, or water gushing under the door, your first and best place to have prepared is your home. Home is where you have the majority of your needs covered and in place. Or at least where you can have everything you need if you are prepared. Home is where you can find just about anything almost without thinking. So what do you need at home?

The following list is extremely basic and is to be used as a starting point. Add what you need based on the types of emergencies you think you may encounter and the length of time you think each will last, along with the specific needs of where your home is located. Your home is your shelter. Have everything you might need on a routine basis that maintains the structural integrity of your home. Besides the everyday household tools be sure you have the following for any situation of a week or more.

Plywood for broken windows or structural holes in the roof or a wall and the like.

Tarps of various sizes. These can cover a hole in the roof; keep you off a wet floor and a number of other things. If bugging out a good tarp can provide a pup-tent or canopy.

Nuts, bolts, nails, screws, hinges, etc.

Plumbing tools. Extra pipes, threader, caps, plumbing and electrical tape.

An extra plumbing fixture or two, extra door knob and or locks and padlocks.

Electrical wire and or baling wire. I like electrical because it can usually be used for anything that baling wire is used for as well as for electrical items. Nice and multi-functional.

Trench shovel, pick axe, sledge hammer – even if you are urban.

Replacement parts for any major item you may have to rely on. Camp stove, grill, portable non-electric heater, vehicle (if you are lucky enough to have extra fuel or make your own), tent patches and the like.

Miscellaneous non-electric tools as well including a manual hand drill and saw.

Always have plenty of duct tape on hand.

Other home considerations are anything to replace electrical machines, tools and functions in the house.

Lighting

Camp commode and its chemicals (Utility water is usually controlled by electricity in some way)

Heat – Fireplace or Wood Stove & Fuel

Portable Fire pit or stove – Have extra wood or pellets on hand for it

BBQ Grill – Have extra charcoal and or propane for it

Camping Equipment – If you are a camper, you probably have tents, sleeping bags, lanterns, camp stoves and the like. Be sure these are organized, in good working order and easy to reach. Be sure you have fuel for the camp stove and lanterns or camp heater.

Other Important Items for the home:

Food Storage – Long (more than two weeks) or Short term (two weeks and under). This includes drinking water. Remember the rule: One gallon per person per day. This is the bare minimum and can cover hygiene as well. This includes your pets as well, dogs and cats require a little less than humans, but use the one gallon rule and don't forget their food or first aid needs. If you have some other kind of pet, ask your vet what you can do in an emergency situation.

Water for hygiene – Brushing your teeth, washing hands, body and dishes, etc. Remember you can re-use "washing" water for more washing, or waterless anti-bacterial gel for washing your hands and arm pits, thus stretching your supply.

A small portable tub or basin or two to use for hygiene functions.

Reference books and documents. This should be for anything that you have to stop and think about how to go about doing and includes recipe books. These too should be organized and easy to reach. Do not count on the internet for this.

Expanded Sewing kit. This should include patches to repair clothing as well as the usual thread, needles, buttons, hooks, snaps and Velcro (the dots and various sized cut-to-fit strips).

Expanded First Aid kit and first aid book. If for the long term or injury inducing situation, add splints, slings and plenty of ace bandages.

Clothing and Footwear. Don't think fashion here, think functional. This clothing should be able to assist in keeping you warm or cool and as dry as possible. Think flannel lined denim bib overalls and shirts or sweat shirts and pants for cool to cold weather. Overalls are great as they are just about one size fits all, except for the length. For warm and hot weather, think light weight long pants and long sleeved shirts. You can roll the pant legs and sleeves up, but if you have to bug out the legs and sleeves will protect you from insects and sunburn. Have wicking socks and undergarments (t-shirts, panties, socks). Think two sets: One for cold weather and one for hot weather. Your footwear should be multi-functional and water proof or resistant as well. The tread should be good for traction on ice, snow, etc. and insulated for winter wear. Lightweight with good traction for sand, rocks, etc. for summer wear. This is not the place for sandals, water shoes or fancy snow boots.

Household 72-Hour Go Bag. This is in case your family must bug out and can't get to your individual go-bags. If all go-bags make it with you – all the better, you have extra. The basics, the minimum, are in this bag. Here is where MRE's and food bars are your food. The household go-bag should cover food, water, shelter, first aid, duct tape and plenty of those space age emergency blankets to cover each person in your family. These blankets can replace jackets and ponchos as well as serve as shelter in a pinch. Very multi-functional.

Individual 72-Hour Go Bags. Each one should contain what the household one does, but tailored to the individual and or pet, hence it will be smaller. Here you have the advantage of adding a jacket or poncho, extra socks and the like because you are not covering the entire household, just that one particular member. These go-bags should be lightweight and can be stored under each person's bed. For pets, store in their travel crate or if the dog is large enough have its go-bag as a dog backpack but stored in an easy to reach place. For children the bag or backpack should have plenty of handles and or wheels to facilitate the child in handling the bag by themselves.

Waterless anti-bacterial hand washing gel. This is really optional, but if you are at home, have plenty you can use this to wash hands and arm pits and stretch your water supply. These are great in individual go bags too.

Part 5: Food Storage if You're Hunkering Down

If you stand your ground and choose to weather the crisis, you must have an adequate food storage system in place.

History shows us that food preservation and storage was a critical part of everyday life for our predecessors. Cold storage or root cellaring (started in caves and holes dug in the ground) along with drying, jerking, smoking, salting and curing methods to preserve food, have all been in use for ages and then improved upon or made easier over the years thanks to modern technology.

Having three to five months of stored food on hand is still the norm in rural and northern areas. Homesteaders and country folk who live in these areas have preserved food for centuries in order to survive the more extreme isolating winters. This still is the case today because in these parts it is very common to lose electricity for several days to a week at a time, and residents are left only to rely on propane gas and woodstoves for heating and cooking. They know they cannot use the modern conveniences of refrigeration, ovens, freezers or microwaves for storing and preparing food when the power goes out. Nor can they just hop in the truck and drive to a store – so they store food to last all winter if necessary.

Why consider food storage?

Think about it. If the electricity goes off in your area for several days, in the worst season of the year, what will you do with what you have in your home? Is your heat gas or electric? Your kitchen appliances will all be rendered useless. Depending on the length of the outage, the food in your refrigerator and freezer will go bad before you can use it, even if you can cook it with a gas range.

If this is an urban citywide outage, water will go once the pipes are drained and become depressurized, as all big cities tend to use electric pumps to feed the main water lines. This may take from under one hour to a day depending on the size and age of the city water system. If you have a well and your water pump is electric – then count them out.

Gas for your vehicles will be unreachable because all the pumps at the station are electric. Perishables and frozen or refrigerated foods in stores will go bad. In long outages, food will not be delivered to stores. Fast food and restaurants will not be able to open their doors. One thing is for sure – you cannot count on any government or emergency agency to come to your rescue in a timely fashion.

Before you start your food storage plan, decide why you want to store food and how to use it with your everyday meals. This is important or you will not only be wasting your money, but the food as well. Stored food is not just “put on a shelf” and “forget it” until the power goes out. To keep it nutritional, tasting good and to keep from wasting your money, it must be used routinely. Use will facilitate rotation. Each season will yield more garden produce to be stored; or each week and month, more canned goods will be added to the pantry. True, some of these items may keep for decades, however many will not.

Study what you and your family normally eat and drink in any given week. Include condiments needed and comfort foods. Although nutrition is vital to survival, comfort foods are just as vital for emotional survival. So be sure to include all the snacks, treats and desserts. Don't forget your pets.

From your weekly common meals decide what cannot be stored long term and research if there is a substitute that your family would enjoy in its place.

Determine the space needed to store this type of commonly consumed food for a two week's supply. Then decide where and how to store it. The weekly storage needs can then be modified to include the timeframe you wish to ultimately store food for – one month, several months, one or two years. Simple yes, but forget every day fresh food and concentrate on storable foods – cans, dried, etc. Routinely use the stored food at least two to three times a week.

Document your family's common weekly activities. Include pets, work, school, sports and the like. Add new activities to your family's activity/vacation list like: gardening, canning, bread and jam/jelly making, making cider and vinegar, spinning and other skills of past or current homesteading. Plan to learn and do at least two to four each year. Many Colonial and Mountain Man Rendezvous, along with Native American festivals and fairs, have hands-on learning activities that you can participate in.

Research long term storage containers and their costs. Be sure to look around your home to determine what can be used that you already own. Remember, the air tight, water proof container you already have may not be suitable for food storage as is, but may still be useable if lined with a product that is ok to use with human food. Like certain plastic or mylar liners or bags.

Design a budget that includes food storage accumulation and purchases, for the food as well as the containers, back packs and for any new activities you have added, along with your normal budgeting items. Consider this to be at least \$10 extra dollars per normal grocery shopping trip. You might have to reduce eating out to once a week to offset the increased grocery bill, instead of every two or three days. Now is the time to learn how to distinguish between wants and needs and to avoid the "buy now, pay later" philosophy and adopt the "save now and buy later" mentality. When the electricity goes out or a disaster strikes, you will be grateful.

Create your weekly or monthly food storage needs shopping list and stick to it. You may want to have an initial list to accumulate the storage containers. Then another one to use year round for the actual food items themselves as you will be using these food items on a regular basis. Be sure to stick to your budget.

Set a start date and get moving!

A Word About MRE's or Meals Ready to Eat

The modern version of these are much more tasty and nutritious than what existed back in the 1970s but you still would not want to live for a month, yet alone a year or

more on these food sources. They definitely come in handy and serve a need, are perfect for the short term, are light weight and store almost forever.

Ways to collect and store a year's supply of food

Begin with a 72 hour bag of food, water, clothing and essentials for your home, each vehicle and each person or pet in your family. These should be portable in case of "bug-out" or evacuation conditions. For children, get backpacks that have wheels and or handles, and store under their beds. Store yours under your own bed. Store the pet bag in their travel crate.

Stock up on needed items when they are on sale. With some sale items you can "think big." For instance a year's supply of sugar for one adult is 100 pounds and if stored properly lasts up to 30 years. So when sugar is on sale – get a lot. Always buy in bulk whenever you can.

If one jar of peanut butter is on your shopping list, get two instead. Two cans of beans on your shopping list, buy four. Take advantage of two for one and buy one get one free sales. Not everything needs to be purchased by the case or in bulk.

When doing your food storage shopping, be sure to keep each list to at least $\frac{3}{4}$ nutritional foods and $\frac{1}{4}$ comfort foods or deserts, treats and snacks.

Water should always be rotated and used to keep it fresh. Obtain at least a two week supply of water for each member of your family, including pets. Have water in all sorts of containers. An inexpensive idea is to put water in emptied, clear, cleaned, plastic two liter soda bottles. Think small water bottles and store bought only for "on the run" individual needs. Fifty gallon drums are good for drinking and storing water, but they are heavy and hard to stack and move. RV and camping stores are excellent places to find water storage containers in various sizes and most have a very handy seven to ten gallon size that has a gravity spigot that people can move with medium effort. These are likely cheaper to purchase at RV stores, when you are purchasing singularly instead of in quantity, than food storage supply stores.

How to store all this food is a major concern if you want it to last and still be healthy and tasty to eat. The primary concern is keeping moisture, insects and rodents out of the food. It is always best to store food in a shaded, cool and dry place and routinely using the stored food at least two to three times a week.

Create a system to track and rotate your food items. If you don't before long you'll start wondering why your food "looks bad" or "tastes funny."

If you aren't quite organized yet or not sure how to track all this stored food, get a bunch of multi-colored sticky dots in two or three sizes. On a piece of paper place one dot for each color or size on it and then write a month to associate with that color and size dot. You can put the dots on your cases, cans, boxes, tubs, jugs and the like and only list the year purchased on the dot to keep tabs on what month of that year the item was purchased.

One of the hardest items to store is food that comes in paper packaging. You can “dry pack” these or have them dry packed at a cannery or you can put them in plastic containers that have air tight seals to keep bugs, air and moisture out. You may want to “double” pack these kinds of items, by putting them in Ziploc bags and then in an air tight container.

Your food and other supplies may be stored anywhere correct storage conditions exist. Look for cool, dry places with little to no direct light. Storage life can be significantly impacted by the following conditions:

Temperature: Store products at a temperature of 75°F/24°C or lower whenever possible. If storage temperatures are higher, rotate products more frequently to maintain quality.

Moisture: Keep storage areas dry. It is best to keep containers off of the floor to allow for air circulation.

Light: Protect cooking oil and products stored in PETE bottles from light.

Insects and rodents: Protect products stored in foil pouches and PETE bottles from rodent and insect damage.

For storage locations outside of the kitchen pantry and root cellar try:

Attics: If well-insulated to maintain a temperature of 75 degrees or below.

Basements: If it is cool and dry.

Garages: If it is cool and dry.

Freezers: Do not overlook space in a freezer for immediate long term storage of items that go rancid at room temperatures such as brown rice, extra whole-wheat flour, cornmeal and wheat germ.

Crawl space: If it is cool and dry, especially if you are going to store canned goods here. You may need a few sheets of plywood to keep items clean and dry.

Under beds: If the bed is too low, it may be raised on supports so containers can be slid underneath.

Tables: Barrels and other containers may be stacked and covered with a floor-length tablecloth.

Chests, trunks, cabinets, closets, shelves and old coolers: All of these may be utilized. Check closets for empty spaces.

Walls: Extra wall space may be used and hidden with a curtain or large piece of art work hanging in front of it.

Under furniture with legs: The space underneath a crib or changing table is a good place to store boxes of #10 cans. Cover with fabric.

Use under bed storage containers for canned goods. These work especially well when the cans are stored on their sides rather than upright.

Or if you have a closet shelf that is rather high, so you don't really use it often – load a plastic box with your food storage items there.

Make a table out of cases of canned goods and cover with a table cloth. Then put your stereo, TV or arrange plants on it. Use it as an end table or night stand.

Make a spice rack out of Velcro to use on the back of cabinet and closet doors. This is great long term storage for spices and other lightweight condiments.

Ever see those contraptions that hang in a closet for shoes, handbags, bulky sweaters and wrapping paper? Make your own out of pillowcases, jeans and shirts or convert an existing one for use as food storage.

Use a ratty old sweatshirt and sew the bottom closed, add a hanger and attach it securely and you now have a hanging food storage bag. You can do the same with pillow cases, frayed towels, jeans and overalls.

If you have an awkward corner in a room or hall that is dead space – curtain it off and store your food behind the curtains. Or curtain off the wall behind your sofa or TV about 2 feet from the wall. Great place to hide food storage.

If you are getting ready to get new furniture, think multi-functional and storage space. Ottomans, coffee tables, side tables and benches often come with under seat or under the top storage.

Have any piece of furniture with dead space behind or under it? Utilize it for storage. You can always put a table cloth or other decorative covering over the “ugly” barrels, cans and boxes and no one need ever know what is there.

Part 6: How to Dramatically Increase your Food Storage

When it comes to food storage, we have all heard the saying “store what you eat, eat what you store.” I suggest a small modification and advocate you to “store what you didn’t eat” through dehydration. Almost every type of food can be dehydrated and if you dehydrate the things you normally eat but just didn’t get to finish, you can easily preserve those foods you are accustomed to and eat them at a later time. Dehydrated foods can last a very long time if preserved correctly, and they can be mixed in with many foods.

Dehydration is the process of eliminating most of the water from the food, which makes it lighter in weight and allows it to be able to keep for a longer period of time when stored properly. Dehydrating the food also reduces the volume of the particular food as the water is no longer present. This is why dehydrated foods are so appealing to many hikers who are contentious about the weight and space of the food they will need to carry for longer backpacking trips.

I love dehydrating foods and here are six reasons why:

Dehydrated fruits and veggies have INTENSE flavors! Each thin slice of dehydrated tomato packs a wallop of flavor that you don’t find in a fresh slice. Dry a pear and you’ll see what I mean. Something amazing happens to the flavor once all of the water has been removed.

Dehydrating offers something different in the healthy snack category. My kids love the applesauce fruit leather they made themselves. They never get bored because one day it’s apple-cinnamon leather, another day it’s apple-peach leather...and a tasty apple-strawberry version is on tap for tomorrow! A #10 can of applesauce from Sam’s Club or Costco provides sheets and sheets of fruit leather, one of the easiest snacks in the world to pack in a lunch bag or backpack.

Something is always in season! The best bargains in produce are usually found when a particular fruit or vegetable is in season. Farmer’s markets, food co-ops, fruit stands, and pick-your-own-produce farms can offer amazing bargains. All that fresh goodness is easily transformed into dehydrated versions at a cost far less than commercially dehydrated foods.

Dehydrated foods don’t lose their nutritional value and maintain water soluble vitamins and minerals.

If space is an issue, dehydrated foods are your best friends! Twenty pounds of fresh tomatoes filled two large glass jars in my pantry once they were sliced and dehydrated!

Dehydrating saves you loads of money because you cut down heavily on wasted and spoiled foods.

It is simple to get started. First, you need a decent dehydrator. There are very expensive models available, but you don’t need to spend hundreds of dollars, you can

get a great, quality unit for under \$50. I use the Snackmaster from Nesco, and found it on sale for \$39.99. I added the fruit leather trays and fine mesh trays for another \$5.00. Check Amazon, Overstock and WalMart to see who has the lowest price and to also read other user reviews.

You will soon find out that dehydrating is much easier than canning. I have canned vegetables, meat and tomatoes for many years, so I thought dehydrating would be quite similar. By similar, I mean difficult and tedious. Boy was I wrong – dehydrating is very easy. If you are uncomfortable with canning, but want to try preserving your own food, dehydrating is a great way to start, especially if you start with your own leftovers.

The most challenging aspect to dehydrating is knowing how long to leave the food in the dehydrator. Various books and websites will list times with widespread ranges (4-20 hours) for each food. I did not understand these time discrepancies at first, but when I figured in the amount of humidity present at my location each time I run the dehydrator, I can plan roughly how long I need to run the machine. In the summer with its higher humidity, it takes almost twice as long to dehydrate the same item than it does in the less humid winter. This accounts for the wide ranges in dehydrating times. I keep notes with dates and times to refer to the next time I dehydrate a certain food.

Here are examples of what I have dehydrated:

Batch 1:

Fruit leather tray with cottage cheese that was going to expire in a few days

Fruit leather tray with leftover plain white rice

Fine mesh tray with celery cut into ¼” slices

Regular tray with leftover plain pasta

Batch 2:

Fine mesh tray with diced apples

Fruit leather tray with ½ jar of applesauce

Regular tray with banana sliced ¼”

Note that the foods without much smell were all in one batch, and the foods with more pronounced smells were in a different batch. You want to plan this way because the odors can intermingle between foods, especially when you dehydrate a variety of different things. You should plan to dry foods that have similar smells together. For example group each of these four types of foods together: fruits; strong-smelling vegetables (broccoli, cabbage); weaker smelling vegetables (carrots, celery, potatoes); foods from one meal (beef roast, carrots, potatoes or refried beans, taco meat).

Follow these dehydration tips to for easy preservation:

Temperature – fruits, vegetables, rice/pasta, cottage cheese, already cooked meat will all dry at 135 degrees; raw meats (beef jerky) will dry at 145-155 degrees. Arrange each different food on one tray so that there is a little space between each piece. This makes it easier to put the dried food into Ziploc bags after it is fully dehydrated. Example: beef roast cut into ½” cubes on one tray, carrots sliced into ¼” slices on another tray.

Storage – I label and date small snack size baggies, add the cooled, dehydrated food, then squeeze out all the air. This little baggie goes into a freezer type Ziploc bag with other baggies of the same food, again squeeze all the air out, then store in the freezer. Example: “Green Pepper 12/28/11” on the little baggie, then the larger baggie says “Green Pepper.”

Fruits:

Apples – core, cut into wedges about ¼- ½” wide, then slice into ¼” pieces. Great in oatmeal, biscuits, trail mix, etc.

Applesauce – spread ¼” thick and dry into fruit leather – can be mixed with other leftover fruit, but don’t add any sugar or honey as it makes the fruit leather sticky and too sweet. Eat as is.

Bananas – peel, cut into ¼” slices. Eat as is or rehydrate for banana bread, muffins.

Berries – mix with applesauce for fruit leather, or dry whole.

Peaches – great mixed with applesauce for fruit leather, or cut into ¼” pieces. Eat as fruit leather, mix the pieces in trail mix, oatmeal, biscuits, etc.

Pears – core, cut into wedges about ¼- ½” wide, then slice into ¼” pieces. Excellent in oatmeal, trail mix, etc. Or put in blender with applesauce for fruit leather.

Rhubarb – cut into ½” pieces.

Vegetables:

Beans (green) – dry in whatever size they were when you cooked them originally. Delightful in minestrone soup.

Cabbage – I dry the grated kind that comes in a bag for making cole slaw.

Carrots – cut into ¼” slices.

Celery – cut into ¼” slices.

Corn – dry individual pieces. If on the cob, shuck first.

Onions – NOTE: smells very strong – place dehydrator outside or in garage. Dice in ¼” pieces.

Peppers (green, red, yellow) – dice into ¼” pieces.

Potatoes (boiled) – cut into ¼” slices or shred, depending on how you want to use them later

Potatoes (mashed) – spread thinly (1/8”) onto the fruit leather tray. Dry until brittle, crush into powder, use to thicken liquids for gravies or soups. (The first tomato soup recipe that I ever made called for one boiled, mashed potato to thicken it instead of cream or milk. In an emergency situation you wouldn’t need to use your stored milk powder to have a creamy soup.)

Tomatoes – Mostly I dry tomatoes after they have been made into something else. Everything dries and rehydrates well. Examples: spaghetti sauce, salsa, ketchup, the liquid leftover from canning tomatoes that isn’t enough for another jar, etc.)

Zucchini – Grate and squeeze between paper towels before drying to get out excess moisture. Add 1 tablespoon to spaghetti sauce to add vitamins and help thicken it slightly. Or, slice into thin (1/8”) slices. Dip in your favorite salad dressing mixed with equal parts water. Drain, then dehydrate. Yummy veggie chips.

Meats:

Cut cooked meat into ½” cubes or strips about ½” wide. Dry until leathery.

Jerky is made from uncooked meat, spices, and salt. I buy the packets to mix with ground beef but there are tons of recipes available if you want to try jerky. Meat jerky must be dried at 145-155 degrees until leathery. Leftover jerky can be broken into small (1/4”-1/2” pieces) and rehydrated with other ingredients to make jerky stew or soups.

Dairy Products:

Cheese – grate, then spread out on paper towels cut to fit your trays exactly (no overhang). Dry until hard. Leave pieces as they are or crumble for cheese powder. NOTE: use real cheese, not processed cheese. All the books that I have say that you can only dry already hard cheeses like parmesan, but I have had good luck with Cheddar and Colby. I add it to dishes that require the cheese to be melted into it or melted on top. It doesn’t rehydrate into a product like regular cheese.

Cottage cheese – spread on trays. Dry until brittle. Crumble into a powder. Can be added to cooked recipes to thicken them or add flavor. A good example of this is when I made Norwegian Meatcakes and the sauce was just not thickening. I stirred in 1 teaspoon of dried cottage cheese powder and let it simmer for a few minutes. Not enough, so I added another 1 teaspoon of the powder and again let it simmer. Then, voila, the sauce was the desired creaminess.

Yogurt (plain) – add to applesauce or other fruit to make interesting fruit leather. Use about ¼ yogurt and ¾ applesauce/fruit.

Yogurt (flavored) – dry like fruit leather, eat like fruit leather.

Grains:

Pasta – place on trays with a little space between them. Dry until brittle. Bag gently so they don't break. These rehydrate quickly in room temperature water.

Rice – place on the fine mesh insert, stir occasionally during drying to break them apart. Dry until brittle. Bag gently so they don't crumble.

Using dehydrated foods

Fruits are very good to eat in their dried form as trail mix or fruit leather. They can be added to oatmeal or other cereal during the cooking process. Simply add an equal amount of water to allow for the rehydration. To add them to pancakes or other similar foods, rehydrate first by combining equal parts fruit and water. Start with less than you think you will need because they expand to about twice their dehydrated size. For my family of four, I rehydrate about 1 tablespoon of apple pieces with 1 tablespoon water in a little dish while I combine the other ingredients for the pancakes.

Vegetables are used in different ways. Sometimes they are just combined with water to rehydrate (spaghetti sauce, salsa, ketchup, etc.). Sometimes they can be put into your soup recipe (green beans, carrots, celery, corn, onion, peppers, zucchini, etc.). Dried vegetables that have been crumbled into powder can be added to bread or biscuit recipes. Powdered vegetables can also be used to make vegetable broth which will give you a lot of vitamins.

Simple Grid-down Recipes (2 servings):

Tuna Salad

Drain 1 14 oz. can of peas, measure the liquid. Add enough water to equal 1 cup.

Put 1 cup dehydrated pasta in a medium bowl, add the 1 cup of liquid. If desired, add 1 teaspoon dehydrated celery.

Drain the tuna (I don't use this liquid).

After the pasta has rehydrated for 5-10 minutes, check one piece to see if it ready, if so then drain any leftover water. Gently stir in the peas and tuna.

Add 1-2 packets of mayo until desired creaminess.

Salt/pepper, parsley to taste. A little fresh or dehydrated onion is good too.

Chicken Soup with Rice

Drain 1 10 oz. can of chicken, measure liquid. Add enough water to equal 4 cups.

Put ½ cup dehydrated rice in a medium pan. Add 1 teaspoon each: dehydrated celery, green pepper, carrot, onion. Add ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon of the 4 cups of liquid. Let rehydrate for 5 minutes.

Add the chicken, remaining water, 4 teaspoons/tablespons chicken broth powder (Note: soup powders vary in intensity – read your package to determine amount to add), spices like bay leaf, parsley, sage, salt/pepper. Heat until warm.

Alternate Method:

Drain 1 14 oz. can carrots and 1 10 oz. can of chicken, measure liquid. Add enough water to equal 4 cups.

Put ½ cup dehydrated rice in a medium pan. Add 1 teaspoon each: dehydrated celery, green pepper, onion. Add ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon of the 4 cups of liquid. Let rehydrate for 5 minutes.

Add the chicken, carrots, remaining water, 4 teaspoons/tablespons chicken broth powder (Note: soup powders vary in intensity – read your package to determine amount to add), spices like bay leaf, parsley, sage, salt/pepper. Heat until warm.

Beef and Potatoes

Drain 1 14 oz. can of sliced potatoes, measure liquid. Add water to measure 1 ½ cups.

Beef: Either tear beef jerky into bite size pieces or put ½ cup of dehydrated beef roast pieces in a medium pan. Add ½ cup of liquid. Allow about 15 minutes to rehydrate.

Add the sliced potatoes, 2 tablespoons dehydrated cottage cheese, 1 teaspoon/tablespoon beef soup powder (Note: soup powders vary in intensity – read your package to determine amount to add), remaining water, parsley, salt/pepper. Bring to a boil, then simmer until creamy.

Mexican Dinner

Rehydrate ½ cup of dehydrated leftover Mexican flavored ground beef and ½ cup refried beans in 1 cup water in a medium pan. Let sit for 15 minutes.

In a small dish, place ½ cup dehydrated rice and ½ cup water. Let sit for 5-10 minutes, then add to the meat (or meat/bean) mixture. Gently warm the meat/bean/rice mixture.

In the now empty rice dish, place 1 tablespoon dehydrated salsa, add 1 tablespoon water. Let sit for a few minutes, stir.

To serve, scoop the beef/bean/rice mixture onto your dish, then add salsa.

If you have it: add a little dehydrated cheese after adding the rice to the meat/bean mixture.

Candied Pumpkin Delight

Peel and seed one 5 pound pumpkin.

Cut in 2" x 4" strips.

Stir 1 tablespoon of baking soda into enough water to cover strips, and let soak for 12 hours.

Drain and wash strips in running water.

Drop pumpkin pieces into pot of boiling water, and cook until tender, but not soft. Watch this step: more firm is better than more soft.

Remove and crisp in ice water and drain well.

Mix 5 cups of sugar with 1 cup of water and boil for 10 minutes.

Add pumpkin pieces and simmer in covered pot until syrup is thick and strips are firmer.

Spread strips to dry.

After I let them dry for a couple hours, I like to put the strips in the dehydrator. I dry them until they get hard on the outside, with sugar crystallization, and yet soft inside.

Part 7: Firearms for Protection and Food

“The Second Amendment is a doomsday provision, one designed for those exceptionally rare circumstances where all other rights have failed – where government refuses to stand for reelection and silences those who protest; where courts have lost the courage to oppose, or can find no one to enforce their decrees. However improbable these contingencies may seem today, facing them unprepared is a mistake a free people get to make only once.” – Chief Justice Alex Kosinski – Ninth Circuit court 2003.

There are three important reasons to have a firearm available – 1) to protect yourself and your loved ones; 2) to hunt dangerous, destructive or delectable animals; 3) to keep despots respectful. We are fortunate that our forefathers planned ahead on our behalf and protected our God-given rights, 220-plus years later.

When it comes to selecting weapons to defend your home, your family or yourself in a time of survival, you should have at least one of each of the following: a pistol, a rifle and a shotgun. I believe in redundant back-ups. Real life proves to us that things break and it is necessary to have relief weapons ready when they do fail. Every police officer does it. Every soldier does it. You should do it, too. Always have more than one weapon system.

When deciding on a firearm that is right for you, the first step is to look for and handle a piece that feels good and fits well in your hand(s). First and foremost you have to feel comfortable holding your weapon. As I mentioned before all firearms will fail at some point, whether it be the ammo, how clean or dirty it is, how new or old it is or even how you hold it. But a second consideration you need to make when selecting a gun is its reliability. Be certain that you choose an ultra-reliable gun that will fire every time and then maintain that weapon to make sure it keeps going bang every single time.

When in doubt, take a look at what weapons are being used by military and police. These models have been tested and proven in a variety of situations and conditions and are solid choices for you as well.

For pistols, I have personally run thousands of rounds through Glocks, Browning M1911A1's, Heckler & Koch (H&K) USP's, Beretta 92's and Springfield XD's. A Glock is hard to beat and is about the best and most consistent handgun there is, but I have never experienced a hiccup with any of the weapons listed. In fact I would classify each of them in the category of “reliable enough to bet my life on.”

As far as rifles go, Savage makes a good bolt action .30-06 at a good price (Model 10/110 GXP3). For a little more money, you can never go wrong with a Remington 700 BDL, acclaimed for its consistency and accuracy. In my opinion most AR-15's are created equal, and with this weapon, maintenance is more important than brand. Colt or Bushmaster are my two favorites though. I have fired hundreds of rounds with a Colt AR-15 Match Target H-Bar 20" .223 and a Bushmaster AR-15 Varminter .223 and neither have failed me once. Both are great straight shooters, one shot, one kill type

rifles. But for most people you will never engage past 200 yards so the bull barrel only adds weight, which may be a hindrance during retreat. Having said that, if you plan to bug in and remain where you are instead of retreating to a bug out location, the extra weight may not be a concern.

A shotgun is a key weapon in your arsenal. I love over/unders for bird hunting, but a better option for the prepper would be a pump action Remington 870. Just about every law enforcement agency in the country, and much of the world, uses this particular weapon because they are rugged, durable and flat out without a doubt reliable. It is the world's best selling shotgun for good reason. It is an ideal defense weapon but versatile enough to hunt with. There is no need to look elsewhere, the Remington 870 is the only shotgun you'll need.

Now that you're readily equipped with a pistol, a rifle and a shotgun, let's talk about basic firearm safety. Gun safety rules are essential, and you must properly educate yourself and every member of your family or group on safe gun handling procedures. First, treat every gun like it is loaded and always keep it pointed in a safe direction, meaning that even if it were to go off, it would not cause injury or damage. Never point your gun at anything you don't want to destroy. Secondly, always keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to fire. When holding a gun, rest your finger on the trigger guard or along the side of the gun. Until you are actually ready to fire, DO NOT touch the trigger. Thirdly, always identify your target and what is beyond it. You want to make sure you have a safe backstop. I have seen professionals shoot each other on accident because they were complacent and negligent and I urge you that no matter how long you've been shooting or how experienced you think you are, follow these basic rules.

You will need to be prepared on what to do with your weapon and how to do it, should you need to discharge your firearm. There are several tactics a prepper should employ. Obviously we need to start by talking about cover or physical protection from your enemy, since you can't shoot if you're dead. Forget just about everything you see in the movies. They do not accurately portray real life situations and confrontations. The rule is for objects that are not solid including dirt, debris and solid drywall of at least 18 inches, you need at least 18 inches of cover. Trees that are over 18 inches in diameter (also known as big-trees, which also make good concealment for those living in wooded areas and want to bug-out instead of bug-in) and fire-hydrants if you get stuck out in the open are good choices for cover. If you're near a car, the only thing you should get behind are tire rims or an engine block. Anything else can be penetrated too easily. Even most small .22 caliber bullet will penetrate through both car doors on a vehicle, do not risk your safety crouching behind them.

Ideally, you will need to think more about cover in a home-type setting though so let's talk more about relevant cover around the house. Most items in and around a home are only good for concealment, at least that is the case in my urban situation where most of the houses are wood and not block. Should you be in an environment where filled block is present, consider this solid and useful cover against most small arms fire. However keep in mind, when the calibers/loads begin to exceed .308, even filled block will not sustain repeated assault from these weapons. Remember if you are defending your homestead against armed looters and a shooting breaks out, there

are not many household surfaces that stop bullets. That is why you need to prepare your home concealment strategy.

Unlike cover which provides you with a physical barrier, concealment offers a visual barrier, or hiding place. Cover can double as concealment (remember big-trees and engine blocks), but concealment cannot provide cover. Adequate hiding places are bushes, walls, fences, dark shadows or even standing deadly still in the woods or a dim area so as not to attract the searching eye with movement.

You've set yourself up with practical cover or viable concealment, and are now ready to engage with the enemy, if need be. There are a few basic rules and tactics to remember. Do not flag your weapon on barriers, windows, doors, corners or anywhere someone might be waiting for you. That is do not lead with your weapon, you don't want to warn anyone looking in your direction of your whereabouts. Your line of fire should be the first thing to enter a kill zone. Your eyeball, along with as little of your head as possible, should be looking down the sight of your gun. The first thing any bad guy or girl should see of you coming around a corner or out from cover is the barrel of your gun pointing at him or her, followed by a muzzle flash and the gates of hell. Do not make a wide, long swing around the corner with your gun so he or she has time to aim and fire on you. This also prevents an attacker from taking your firearm if they are waiting for you around a corner.

If you are the home team, you are in a position of power and advantage. So know your surroundings and how to use them to your benefit. Depending on whom you ask (different trainers give two different ratios), it takes either four to one or 10 to one attackers to overcome a trained person in a fortified position. Those are impressive odds in your favor. As a prepper, and especially if you choose to bug-in, it would be a good idea to have some sand bags on site to fortify with or concrete filled tires to use as cover. Get creative and use what you might already have around your house or property, but remember 18 inches for soft cover is the bare minimum you will want to have and at least 6-8 inches of metal or concrete for solid cover. The United States military has using these proven tactics for almost every war since the birth of the country, you should entrust your survival to these time-tested strategies as well.

How should you hold your pistol when shooting? To start with, your left hand should be high on the pistol with both of your thumbs almost touching the slide. Place your left thumb forward so it is in front of your right thumb. Both thumbs should be pointing at the target. As for grip pressure – about 40% with your right hand and 60% with your left. Your left hand is your steering hand; same as if you were pointing a rifle. Both elbows should be almost locked so your arms are pointing straight out. The muscles in your arms have poor memory, but locked elbows are always the same.

There are as many opinions on proper body position stances as there are flavors at Baskin-Robbins. Personally I prefer the FBI (or Isosceles) stance, where you stand upright with both feet parallel and shoulder width apart, pointing toward the target with the majority of your weight on the balls of your feet, just like for wrestling, boxing, or karate. With your arms out front, this position forms the shape of an Isosceles triangle, hence the name. It is a good shooting platform and adapts well to shooting on the move, which you should be doing if not situated behind cover.

When shooting a rifle, proper foot placement is the most important, and most overlooked, element of shooting form. For right-handed, right-eye dominant shooters, picture a clock on the ground (one with hands, not digital.) Your left foot should point at 12 o'clock and the right foot at 2 o'clock with six to eight inches between the heels. 12 o'clock points at where you will point the gun and where you will break the target. It is also the center of your "Zone of Fire." Your stance should look like that of a boxer in the ring – feet spread apart, well balanced, arms and trunk free to swing to the right and the left of the target. This position must be comfortable and natural to allow quick movement in any direction. Stand erect and hold your arms out in front at shoulder height. Move your left hand to the right elbow and the right hand to your left elbow. Take the gun and place it on the right shoulder in the pocket developed when your arms came up. Remember to keep your arms and elbows level with your shoulders. You should place the top of the butt stock at the top of the shoulder with the muzzle elevated to about 45 degrees. Place your head on the stock and look down the barrel. This should hang the cheekbone on the comb "top" of the gun stock and have the head properly placed. Place your left hand on the forearm and your right hand on the grip. Now slowly lower the gun to horizontal while hunching your right shoulder up a bit, making sure your right elbow remains level with your shoulder. Now move your body forward without moving your feet. This results in your left knee barely bending with 60 percent of your weight on your front or left foot. Move back and forward to learn the weight transition and how it feels. Standing with the weight forward allows smooth swinging to either the left or right and the pivot can be felt clear to the ankles – as it should be. Don't aim the shotgun or rifle, point it at your target. Keep in mind that in a time of survival you may not be able to defend or attack while on your feet. Be ready to fire from a kneeling or prone (lying on your stomach) position as well.

When you are shooting, you should either be firing while moving to cover, or shooting while encroaching to gain a better position on your attacker. Or if you have both good position and cover, you should be presenting as little target as possible and delivering well aimed shots as quickly as you can accurately shoot until the threat stops (or stops moving, if you prefer). It is important to remember that anything or anyone you shoot once is worth shooting twice. The double tap is your friend, so when in doubt shoot 'em all out, but be ready and able to reload if you do run your magazine dry, unless you have no other alternative.

As with any skill, practice makes perfect. Starting now, go to the range and work on your technique and learn how to properly fire your weapons, if need be. For those who are new to the world of guns, don't be afraid to get involved. Learn how to protect yourself and your family. You can go to any gun range or gun shop and ask someone to show you the basics of stance grip, sight alignment and trigger control. It may cost you \$20-40, but trust me, it will be money well spent. Remember that all the preparation in the world will not save you if you don't have the knowledge of how to use the necessary tools. In a gunfight, the bottom line is that the man or woman that puts the most accurate rounds on target before the other man or woman does will be the one who comes out on top. It only takes one round to drop someone. In fact more people are killed with .22's than any other round in the world, statistically speaking. Make sure you're the one who is prepared with the proper firearm choice and necessary training and tactics. By following all of these steps, if and when the time

comes that you might have to open fire on someone, you will be far ahead of the average shooter, in a superior position to survive.

Here are five arsenals to consider, based on your needs, budget and lifestyle:

The I work at Wal-Mart Arsenal

1. Smith & Wesson Model 10 .38 caliber revolver
2. Mosin-Nagant 91 rifle
3. Single Shot .12 gauge shotgun

The Government Welfare Arsenal

1. Smith & Wesson Model 10 .38 caliber revolver
2. Short Magazine Lee-Enfield rifle
3. Mossberg Maverick 88 .12 gauge pump shotgun

The I Have a Full-Time Job Arsenal

1. Glock Model 19 handgun
2. Ruger Mini-14 Ranch rifle or Bushmaster AR-15 Varminter .223
3. Remington 870 Express shotgun with spare riot gun barrel

The Yuppie Survival Arsenal

1. Springfield XD 3" Sub-Compact Pistol
2. Colt 1911 A1 .45 ACP
3. Winchester Model 70 in .308 Win. rifle
4. Remington Model 7 bolt-action rifle chambered in .223
5. Remington 870 Express shotgun with spare riot gun barrel

The I Have Two Jobs and Some Money in the Bank Arsenal

1. Glock Model 19 handgun
2. Taurus CIA Model 850 .38 special revolver
3. Ruger Mini-14 Ranch rifle or Colt Match Target H-Bar AR-15
4. Ruger 10/22 rifle
5. Remington 870 Express shotgun with spare riot gun barrel
6. Savage Model 24F .223 Remington over 12 gauge shotgun

How much ammunition will I need?

First, consider the following questions:

1. Exactly what are you storing it for? For the survivalist, it is food gathering (hunting) and home or self-defense.
2. How long will the crisis last? For the sake of this example, let's assume it lasts five years.
3. Could buying and storing ammo be a legitimate investment like gold? Yes and very likely as a barter item for stuff you may need and cannot buy.

Let's look at the food gathering ammunition needed for five years.

Hunting Large Game

Using a centerfire rifle or a shotgun using slugs: (stock 180 rounds)

Your centerfire hunting rifle or the very capable shotgun really doesn't need a large amount of cartridges if used for larger animal food gathering. If you live in a game rich area and depending on the size of your family or group, you may take two to six deer or similar sized game per year. Remember, to make the meat last you must have refrigeration or be skilled at preserving it with other means like salting or canning.

Let's assume you know how to hunt game and the worst case is three shots for the kill or three rounds per animal. At that kill/ammunition rate mentioned, that amounts to 18 cartridges a year for six animals. For five years of hunting that's only 90 rounds!

Now let's say Murphy's Law rears its head and things do not go according to plan and the kill shot attempts are more than expected. Or perhaps something you really did not originally plan on, relatives who did not take the time to prep for the crisis move in and now you have more mouths to feed. So for backup you store two times the perfect amount which results in 180 rounds for the five years.

Hunting Small Game

Using a shotgun with #6 shot: (stock 3,000 rounds of #6 shot)

Shotguns are the ultimate and most productive food gathering tool. From rabbits and squirrels to birds and deer, you just cannot beat this gun. With a shotgun you may have to hunt two to three times per week or about 150 hunts per year. If you use two rounds per hunting day, that equals 300 rounds per year – 1,500 rounds for five whole years. Double that to 3,000 rounds to account for the 2x rule mentioned above.

The preferred shot size is #6 for small game and birds because the BBs are large enough to kill quickly and there are fewer of them so you tend not to destroy the meat with many smaller hits. You shouldn't try and stock specific shot sizes for specific game, it will add considerably to the cost of your stock and is basically a waste of your money.

Hunting Small Game

Using a rifle, such as a Ruger 10/22: (stock 3,000 rounds)

The Ruger 10/22 is a great small game rifle. It is accurate out to 75 yards and is the most inexpensive food gathering tool you can own and use.

Using the same hunting scenario as the shotgun, 150 hunts per year, you need to store 3,000 rounds for a five year period.

Personal Defense – Concealed Carry Handguns

For your primary pistol caliber: (stock 1,000 rounds)

Hand guns are an essential means of protection. They are for concealed carry for immediate protection or to get you safely back to your home or to suitable defense weapons. Choose a .38 special, 9mm, 40 caliber or 45 caliber handgun. Because these are so common, ammunition is plentiful and reasonably priced.

It is difficult to come up with an amount to stock because the handgun is mainly a defense weapon and likely will not be used as much as the rifle and shotgun. So for some target practice and general necessity, stock 200 rounds per year, or 1,000 rounds for five years.

Home Defense

Centerfire Rifles, Carbines or Shotguns

Let's hope this need never materializes, but it can. Remember Watts, New Orleans after Katrina and other cities where people become uncivilized in the wake of a disaster or crisis? If you are counting on the police force to help you during this time forget it, they will be nowhere to be found and you're on your own.

Part 8: Money During a Time of Mass Panic

We have seen recently during the global economic crisis that human emotion is tied very closely to money matters. The major stock exchanges around the world run on the notion of what might occur in the future. Commodities are traded based on what might happen with consumer spending, directly affecting the worth of stocks of publicly listed companies. Confidence sends the markets soaring, while fear causes it to plummet.

One golden rule to remember is that CASH IS KING. Now I advise all readers of this guide to start saving cash at home. Starting today if you have not began already. Make it an emergency fund. Real money, not electronic numbers on a computer screen. Most technology will probably crash after the event, sending the current digital world back to the Stone Age. Cash will rule the day.

After any major emergency or catastrophic event, any items or services that you will need to purchase will have to be done through hard currency. So do not wait, start your emergency fund now. Store it safely somewhere in your home. The interest you will earn will be known as survivor's interest!

You should have an adequate supply of smaller bills, nothing larger than a \$20. Diversify your cash with \$5, \$10 and \$20 bills, enough to last you several months. A fire proof safe is a good investment, you can bolt it to the floor and store your valuables and cash inside.

Precious metals are a universal currency, recognized and accepted around the world as a form of payment, and thus will be extremely valuable and useful after a catastrophe. What should you invest in?

Silver is the easiest form of wealth conversion since it is more affordable than its golden counterpart. Keep in mind that throughout all of human history, silver and gold have not lost relative value to an associated paper currency. In fact, as paper currency depreciates, silver and gold will both appreciate in terms of that currency.

Gold is the most cross-platform currency in the entire world, period. It is an excellent store of excess wealth.

When choosing a form of precious metal, it is worth your while to consider having it in a form that is easily recognizable. For example, the round minted 1 oz American Silver Eagle or American Gold Eagle, and the Canadian Maple Leaf are common and popular precious metal products in North America. Consider buying some 1/10 oz rounds of gold. People are more familiar with these minted coins than they are with bars. Bars should not be avoided per se, however they may be more difficult to transact with than a coin might be.

Credit cards will be rendered useless after the event so do not rely on them. Also make an inventory of items that you currently own that you might be able to use to barter with people in your community. Even during the current recession, more and more people are starting to barter items for services and other goods.

We need to change our modern mentality of living beyond our means with borrowed money. Trust me, after a major emergency, no one will care how much your jeans or sneakers cost! Survival is our number one priority.

Part 9: Start Today, Survive Tomorrow

None of us knows exactly what the future holds. The world we live in is ever changing, constantly evolving and often surprising. As we watch the rest of our lives unfold, we must be prepared for anything. Your survival depends on your choices and what you decide to do from this day forward. Now armed with some valuable information, you are prepared to be a “doer,” one who steps up and takes the necessary precautions, learns new skills, takes time and energy to ensure that you and your family will not only survive when (not if) an emergency occurs, but thrive. Or you can do nothing and wait for something to possibly happen and then when it does, tell yourself, “I wish I would have been more prepared.” Don’t wait, today is that day, begin. The preparation and all that it entails may seem daunting to you, but it pales in comparison to how overwhelmed you will feel when disaster strikes and you have done nothing to ready yourself and your family. Start small: take a firearms class, adopt a food storage program, pick-up a few supplies for your bug out bag. Remember it wasn’t raining when Noah built the Ark.