

# Quick Guide To Surviving Any Emergency



*Patrick Lambert*

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*by*

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# 1. Introduction

## ***A. What this book is about***

Surviving is an interesting concept in our modern days. There used to be a time, not that long ago, where I had no emergency supply, no survival tool, and no plan for any kind of emergency. Here I'm not only talking about an end-of-world scenario or the zombies coming to life, but the lack of something as simple as a bandage or extra water bottle. That may seem naive to anyone who thinks about it for a few minutes, but it's not uncommon. I live in a large town, where everything is accessible in local stores, often 24 hours a day. Just a few months ago, we had a very small emergency. The water treatment plant that serves the city had technical problems, and for 48 hours, a water boiling notice was in effect. During that second day, I went to two different grocery stores, several convenience stores, and many other places where water bottles were sold. What I saw were deserted shelves. Not a single of those places had any water bottle left, not a single one. And that's after just 2 days. This was the wake up call I needed.



Of course my interest in survival, prepping and emergency preparedness wasn't born from a single event. I would say it's a combination of things. I'm a big fan of things like The Walking Dead, TV shows focusing on a post-apocalyptic world. I also like to watch survival and prepper videos, people who like to stockpile items for SHTF scenarios, or when the S\*\*t Hits The Fan. I've read a lot of books and went through a lot of materials, and finally decided to write this ebook with some of the information I had gathered, and results from my own experience. If you're looking for a book that goes in-depth on a particular topic, then there are already plenty of choices out there. For medical supplies, the American Red Cross publishes very good guides. If you want to know



everything about self defense, then there are more books and videos out there than you would ever need to know everything about guns or knives. This isn't what I wanted to write.

When it comes to generic survival guides, I found there was a lack of selection. There are a lot of survival guides focused on the woods, either for people living out of towns, going camping, or focusing on end-of-world scenarios where you're expected to leave your house and live on what nature is giving you. Again, that's not what I wanted to focus on. Instead, I wanted to write a guide for the average person, people who live in urban areas like most people in the developed world, and a guide that would also focus on all emergencies, everything from a power loss, flood, earthquake, to the most remote and final types of events like a pandemic, world financial collapse, and yes, a zombie uprising. This guide will cover everything you need to know to start preparing and be ready, focusing on the most likely scenarios first and foremost.

### ***B. Preppers vs survivors***



The word *preppers* has a very bad connotation in the general public for a number of reasons. A prepper is basically someone who actively prepares for emergencies and disasters. One reason preppers have a bad reputation is the *active* part. Some people are obsessed by it, and will have basements full of dehydrated food able to last them years, a personal bunker, and enough weapons and ammo to supply a small country. I don't consider myself a prepper, at least not according to this definition. I also don't think anyone should start their preparedness activities with this mindset. One key concept that we'll cover a lot here is smart survival. As I said before, the point of this guide is to get you ready for any emergency, from the most likely to the least likely.

What is the chance that tomorrow morning, the world will end, and zombies will rise up? I can tell you with much assurance that it just won't happen. However, how likely is it that some people in this country will suffer a power loss, a flood or a fire? Those are all disasters that happen all the time. Any smart preparedness plan starts with those types of disasters first. The

short term, high probability events. Once you're ready for those, then you can start thinking about the less likely events. I've seen people buy and stock up so many items that they literally empty out their bank accounts. Yet if you lose your job next week, it doesn't matter how many MRE (Meal Ready to Eat) bags you have, without an emergency financial fund, you may not be able to pay your car or home loan for the month. Again, it all comes back to smart preparedness.

### ***C. How long should you stock up for?***

I strongly believe that items are just one part of being prepared. There are a lot of things we will cover, such as having a plan, having skills and a physical body that allows you to survive emergencies, but the fact remains that items play a big role as well. So it's not surprising that one question which comes back all the time is how long someone should stock up for. Said in another way, how long is the emergency expected to last? Of course there is no real answer to that. We can't know in advance how long the next disaster will last. You may suffer a power loss that lasts a day, or the world may end, at which point the emergency will technically last forever. But again, you can be smart about it. The US government highly suggests that everyone have 72 hours worth of food, water and supplies, which I would call a short emergency. I personally think this is much too low. A better guideline should be between 1 to 3 months, a medium length disaster. This is based on various disasters which occurred in the past, and how long they tend to last.

Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans on August 29, 2005. The evacuation order was given 2 days prior. It took less than 3 days for the city to go from a normal, every day town, to complete chaos. By the fourth day, there were reports of looting, gun shots, and the region was so unstable that the authorities stopped rescue efforts in most of the areas. It wasn't until September 9 that some flights were allowed back in, and it took many weeks for people to be able to return to their homes. Meanwhile, those who had been evacuated were given very basic supplies in the Superdome, the designated shelter for evacuees. People without plans and supplies were left to FEMA, and I'm sure a lot of those people will not make that mistake again.

Disasters don't have to be that big to cause a lot of problems either. In August 2003, a widespread power outage hit parts of the US and Canada. Almost 10 million people lost power, most of them for 2 days. As a result, the water supply stopped for millions of people, with others still having running water but having to boil it before it would be

safe. Any type of train or bus transit was also stopped due to its reliance on the grid, and gas stations were no longer able to pump gas. Most of them didn't even have a generator as backup.

#### ***D. At your own risks***

Obviously, no guide can cover everything, and this one certainly doesn't claim to. In fact, everything here is given as an advice to help you kick start your emergency preparations. I make no guaranty that anything stated here will help or even not hurt your situation. Everyone's situation is unique, and your particular situation may require different preparations than what is covered here. Use the advices contained in this ebook at your own risk, and do your own research. I do not claim to be a professional in any particular field covered here.



## 2. Making a plan

### *A. Knowing your situation*



A lot of emergency preparedness programs, especially government ones, give you generic guidelines on how you should plan for emergencies. This can be useful, and we'll cover that in the next section. But perhaps more importantly, you should become aware of your unique situation. As I've said before, this guide is mostly for urban people, those of us who live in the heart of a city, or somewhere in the suburbs. If you live on a farm, a ranch, or in the middle of the forest, then your

situation is likely to be completely different, and so will your plan.

Even in a city, everyone is in a different situation. First, learn what disasters are most likely to occur. For example, where I live, there has never been a major earthquake. Now this doesn't mean I should completely avoid preparing for an earthquake, but it's quite likely to be far down the list. Same thing for hurricanes or tsunamis. Being inland, I highly doubt I will have to deal with a tsunami. However, because I live in Canada, a winter storm is a very likely event. It's been less than 20 years since we had a major storm, one that caused problems throughout the entire province, and it's quite likely to happen again. Power outages is another big one. If, however, you live down in tornado valley, or in a location prone to hurricanes, then your plan should cover other things.

### *B. Preparing your plan*

Your plan should have three parts. The first part is the actual planning phase. You should make a list of items you want to get in order to be ready for the disasters that may occur, and keep that list up to date. A lot of the things we'll talk about have expiration dates, especially food, and you should plan on how you will rotate those

items, keep track of these dates, and know when you're missing some items.

The second part of your plan should be what to do whenever an emergency occurs. This includes things like what if you're at the office and you need to get home in a hurry. Do you have things on you that will allow you to get home, even if all transportation has stopped, or if the roads have been destroyed? What if you're home, are you bugging in (staying in your house as long as possible) or bugging out (going to a remote location) as soon as possible? If you're planning to bug out, do you have items ready to go, and a place where you'll be going? These are all things we will cover in the next chapters.

Finally, your plan should include how you will handle yourself and your family during an emergency. For example, if there's a power outage, do you break out the flashlights or go straight for candles? Do you know where the nearest flashlight or candle is? Could you find them in complete darkness? What if you planned to bug in, stay at home and live on your supplies while the disaster goes on, but then an evacuation order is given, and the authorities are at your door, ordering you and your family to leave, how will you react? Those are just a couple of hypotheticals you need to think about now, so that you're ready should something happen.

### ***C. Practicing***

Once your plan is ready, you need to practice it. This is especially true if you have a family. Every school and many offices conduct fire drills, because fire is probably the most likely emergency you may encounter. But you need to conduct those drills at home as well. As you prepare for other emergencies, you need to practice those as well. Even if you think your plan through for a long time, only practicing will show you what you may have forgotten. If you plan on getting out of the city should a major disaster occur, and go to a second home or a cabin in the woods, you need to practice bugging out, so that you know whether you forgot anything, and that you can actually survive once there.

### 3. Transportation

#### *A. Cars and trucks*

Now that we've covered the basics and some philosophical concepts, let's get down to earth for the actual preparedness. Many people have a vehicle, a car or a truck, that they have access to. If you own one, then that is a major asset in your arsenal. There's a lot of talk on what makes the best survival vehicle, or bug out truck, but I believe those are details. The idea of a vehicle is to get from point A to point B. Having one will allow you to leave should an evacuation of your town be called, and to carry items between your home and a store or a friend's place should you need to. Remember that you may also have access to a vehicle even if you don't own one. If you drive a truck as part of your day job and a major emergency occurs, nothing prevents you from using it to get back home, or to carry supplies.



If you do own a vehicle, or have access to one, then there are a few things you should do to prepare. First, always keep extra fuel around. You don't need a lot, but you should keep a few gas containers. Remember that fuel goes bad after about a year, or sooner if water gets in it. So make sure you rotate that fuel. Another item you may want to get is a suction pump, in case you need to move fuel from one container, or vehicle, to another. Finally, keep spare parts for things that are likely to break during an emergency. Remember that it doesn't have to be an end-of-world event for repair shops to close down. A simple power outage will often be enough to leave you stranded. This includes items like spare tires, an air pump, motor oil, etc.

If you really want to spend some extra money on the vehicle area, think of some extra features that car or truck can have that will help you in a disaster situation. If you install a wrench in front, it can help you clear blocked roads. If you have extra compartments on the roof, they will allow you to carry more items. If you have a bike rack at the back,

you will have a way out should you run out of gas.

### ***B. Bicycling***

A bicycle is an often forgotten yet very useful preparedness tool. Again, even though we're focusing on the most likely emergencies, it doesn't take much to send people into a panic and cause massive bottlenecks on the roads. A bicycle may go slower than a car, but if the roads are blocked, you may be much better off on one. Also, a bicycle doesn't require any fuel, so that's a big plus. Many people own one, especially if you live in a city, you know how bad traffic can get in normal conditions. If you don't and want to acquire a bicycle, you don't need to go for a very expensive bike. A simple mountain bike can do just fine. Make sure you follow local laws, like wearing a helmet and having proper illumination on the vehicle.

More than just transportation, a bicycle can also help you carry items. Stores will sell you a rack that you can add at the back or front of the bike where you can attach some fairly large bags. These can be used as emergency supplies for when you're out of the home.

### ***C. Public transit***

Obviously, public transit should be a last resort during an emergency. Of course a lot of us rely on public transportation in our daily lives, but this is the first item which will be shut down should an emergency occur, or could be affected by the disaster itself, such as a flooded subway. And even if buses and subways are still running, they will be overcrowded right away. Your plan in case of disasters should avoid public transit if at all possible.

One last thing to take note of are evacuation routes. Many cities set up various paths meant for an emergency, such as hurricane routes or other evacuation routes which are pre-determined along with emergency shelters. You should get to know these plans, and integrate them in your own. However, make sure you don't fully rely on them. It's likely that in an emergency, those routes and those shelters would get crowded very quickly. Plus, there are some disasters where you may not want to be in a crowded location. If you're in a pandemic, for example, you want to avoid other people. This means hospitals, shelters and public transit should be avoided at all cost. Most diseases require close contact to be transmitted, so staying away and wearing a mask will help.



## 4. Food and water

### A. Water



The human body requires water on a regular basis to avoid becoming dehydrated. A good guideline is to have 1 gallon (or 3.7 liters) of water per person per day. This is enough for drinking and doing various daily activities like brushing your teeth or washing dishes. There are multiple ways to store water, and you should use more than one way. You can buy small water bottles, large ones, or containers that you fill up yourself. Make sure that any container you get is sold as a food-grade container. Wash it with dish washing soap before filling it up, and write the date on it. A factory sealed water bottle can last years, but a container that you fill up will go bad within weeks if you don't seal the container correctly. Algae and bacteria can grow inside of a water bottle if the seal is broken.

As I've said before, a 1 to 3 month time frame is a good guideline to start with. If you have the money and space to extend that to a full year afterward, then good for you, but that should only be done after you've done your short to medium term preparedness. This however means that if you do end up in a disaster that lasts longer

than you're prepared for, you may have to improvise. Learn how to make water safe for consumption. Even if you don't have water bottles to drink from, there is water available in many places outside, from rain to rivers and even sewers.

There are many ways to purify water. The first is by using small tablets that you can buy at a local pharmacy. House bleach can also be used. Simply pour 1/4 teaspoon of bleach into 1 gallon of water and let it rest for 30 minutes. The result will have an aftertaste, but it will be safe to drink. Both of these methods obviously require you to have the items on hand, so now is the time to add them to your shopping list. If you end up in an emergency and have nothing, then SODIS may be your last hope. Exposing water to sun light will kill most of the bacteria thanks to UV radiation. Place the water in a transparent bottle with no label, then leave it in the sun for 6 hours (or 2 days

under clouds) and your water will be safe enough to drink.

### ***B. Food***

A normal human being can survive without food for several weeks. However, this is not something you should attempt. There are a lot of nasty side effects as a consequence of not eating, which is why you should always make sure you eat close to your normal calorie count for the day. This is around 1,800 for women and 2,400 for men. So when you plan your storage, take those values into account. Again, the government says you should have 72 hours of food stored, and that would be a bare minimum. In my opinion, you should plan for 1 to 3 months, so here you may have to dedicate quite a bit of shelf space.

The next thing to decide is what should you stock up? Some people go straight for the MRE or dehydrated food, but I think that's a bad idea. Anyone who eats an MRE will tell you why it's a bad idea. Instead, think about what you enjoy and eat on a regular basis. Find the items that last a long time, such as a year or more, and start with that. Any type of canned goods should be your priority. These items will typically always last between 1 and 3 years, if not more. You can stock up on beans, soup, pasta, vegetables, fruits, and make a very healthy meal plan from cans alone. Then, think about some of the other items you may want to add to your storage. Peanut butter lasts a long time and adds taste to most things, as do spices. SPAM is a popular item among preppers because it lasts so long and contains a lot of calories, but once again think whether you actually enjoy the taste first. Finally, honey is an item you may not think about but lasts forever and can be good for many reasons, including as a desert.

Expiration dates come into play with many items, but especially with food. Make sure you write down expiration dates so you don't let your food reserve go bad. One good way to handle this is by constantly rotating your stockpile. Don't think of it as a separate storage for emergencies, instead think of your shelves as a very large daily food reserve. As you eat stuff from the front of the pile, add more to the back. That way, you will always have your 1 to 3 months reserve and none of it will ever go bad, since you'll be rotating them constantly.

### ***C. Utensils and plates***

Food and water are the primary concerns for supplies, but don't forget the little things.



If a disaster happens and you are out of running water, you don't want to use utensils and plates which will require you to wash them. This would use precious water that you need to keep for drinking. So make sure you stock up on throwaway utensils and plates. Those can be acquired for a very low amount of money, but if you have them once a disaster strikes, you will be very thankful you thought about it. The same is true for things like plastic containers, aluminum paper, or Ziploc bags. These are all things we may not think about, but it can be a big inconvenience if you run out and you can't go to the store to buy more.

Trash bags are also critical to have, for many reasons. If you run out of trash bags, you will have a serious problem when trying to get rid of your trash. But more than that, they can be useful in a number of other ways. If the water system runs out, then the sewer pumps may be offline as well. This means you may not be able to use your toilet. Trash bags can be useful to get rid of human waste as well. For the worse case scenarios, they can also be used to get rid of dead bodies. Again, the chance that a disaster will happen where you need to handle dead bodies is remote, but it's not as unlikely as you may think. People die in disasters, even small, short term disasters, and if there's no way for you to bring them to a morgue, then you may have to handle them yourself.

#### ***D. Cooking***

Having a portable stove is something you should consider if you plan on keeping food that require cooking. In many disasters you will not have electricity, so you want to have something small that can work with propane or another gas you can stockpile. Make sure you get something that can be used indoors, and read the instructions carefully. Then, of course, keep a reserve of fuel handy.



In the long term, if the disaster doesn't end, then obviously setting up a garden may be your best bet. Farming or even gardening is something that can take quite a bit of time to become good at, and is certainly outside the scope of this guide. There are many things to think about, such as the area you use, a watering system, nets to keep insects and birds out, seeds, and so on.

## 5. Tools

### ***A. Quality and usefulness***

Tools cover an insanely large amount of items, and there are many books covering them in details. Here, the point isn't to get you familiar with all of them, and as I've mentioned before, preparedness isn't just about the items, it's also about knowing how to use them. Getting a bunch of tools you do not know how to use is pointless, so we will focus on items that every home should have, along with their possible uses in a time of disaster. If you aren't used to being handy with tools and doing home repairs, you may want to familiarize yourself with the concepts by watching some shows on the Home & Garden network.

Before getting to the actual tools, I'd like to quickly talk about the quality of tools, and the uses that they have. A lot of people, especially in the survival community, believe that any item you get should have as many uses as possible. The idea behind this is that you may have a limited amount of space, say in your vehicle or bug out bag, and so if you can add a single item that has 10 different functions, it's much better than 10 different tools. That's a very valid view, but I would like to add a word of caution. Anyone who uses tools on a daily basis will tell you that quality and handling is critical for tools. There are a lot of basic tools that may need to be used often, and if you rely on a multi tool or pocket tool, you may find yourself frustrated trying to use these tools for anything more than rare instances.

I've owned and tried many types of tools, and I've always found the small, integrated tools that seem so popular in some circles to be very hard to use. I would much prefer have one good, high quality item that does one thing well, than the same tool in a dozen multi devices. Having a pocket tool is fine as part of your EDC (Every Day Carry) as we'll see later on, or as part of a bug out bag, but you should always have at least one high quality tool of each type at your home or retreat location.

### ***B. Small and pocket tools***

The first and perhaps most versatile tool is the knife. There are people who spend all their time solely reviewing and experimenting with knives. Personally, I would say you should have two good, high quality knives within reach. A folding pocket knife is a must, since it's so easy to carry with you and can be used for so many things, from opening boxes, to cutting ropes, packages, raw food, rescue situations, and so on. You should

also have a longer hunting knife or machete as well. These are useful when the small pocket knife simply can't do the job, such as cutting wood. One other feature you should look at when thinking about buying a knife is whether you want a serrated blade or not. I believe this is purely a personal preference, and you should try both before deciding. A lot of people prefer a non-serrated blade because they can use the whole blade for push cuts, which means using a blunt object on top of the blade to help cutting something hard. Personally, I much prefer serrated blades.

The next type of small tool you should have is a set of screwdrivers. I don't think there's a lot to be said about that, and most people already have screwdrivers, however make sure you don't rely solely on powered tools. A powered screwdriver will do you no good if the power goes out. A hammer should be next, and just like for blades, you should have at least two, a small and a large one. The small one is used for nails, while the large one would be used for larger items. Again, these are things you probably already have, but I would say you should make sure to have a high quality tool of each type at each location you're preparing for.



Tape, both the measuring kind and adhesives, should be something you stock up on. There are so many cases when a quick repair can be done thanks to something as simple as duct tape, and it's so cheap that stockpiling some is a no-brainer. Rope is another item everyone should have. Remember that there are many types of rope. The most popular one in survivalists and people who go camping is called paracord. These are lightweight nylon ropes originally designed for parachutes. They are thin and very powerful, able to carry a lot of weight. You should invest in some, even if it's slightly more expensive.

If you look on Amazon or even in many stores, you will find an endless number of multi tools and pocket tools. While I personally dislike the tools found in these devices, since they are typically of low quality and hard to use effectively, they do have their place. If you're working on your EDC, bug out or vehicle bag, then you may not have the room

for the full sized tools. Here, make sure you at least spend some money on getting quality items made of stainless steel. A lot of the cheaper ones are simply worthless. There's a lot of other tools you can get as well. You may want a saw, wrench, crow bar, shovel, and so on, all of which have their places, but it depends on how much you want to spend. Always favor hand tools over power tools, and don't spend all your budget on things you're unlikely to ever need.

### ***C. Construction and destruction***



Basic tools will get you through any type of short or medium term emergency, as long you don't have specific needs. But if something does happen, or you need to survive a longer disaster, then you may need to plan a bit more. A hammer will do fine to maintain an item with nails, but it will do you little good if you need to create something brand new, and you didn't store any nail.

The types of items you should stock up on highly depends on your situation. For people in Florida, where hurricanes are common, it's not rare that people have garages filled with wooden planks and nails so they can cover their windows and doors. Having items to cover your windows should be a basic preparation for everyone however, not just those in hurricane county. If a disaster occurs and people have to flee town, either by fear or because of an evacuation, it can be a very good idea to cover your windows and prevent nature or other people from coming in.

You should also keep all kinds of other repair items, again based on your own situation. If you own a house, then having extra bricks, wood, paint, metal rods, electrical wires, and so on is probably something you're already familiar with. You should go through those items and see whether you have enough to last a few months, should the need arise. If you live in an apartment, obviously you won't need all that, but you should still have some raw materials to ensure you can make repairs and maintain your apartment in an emergency. Remember that your landlord may not be around if the city is shut

down for a week. Being handy with tools can also be very useful to create items that you need and didn't think of stocking up on. And should the worst happen, you can help rebuild homes in your community.

## **6. Communication**

### ***A. Cell phones and land lines***

Most of us use cellphones in our daily lives, and that's a good thing. Cellphones are the most ubiquitous communication platforms out there. Many smartphones include GPS, maps, cameras, all kinds of things that can be useful in case of an emergency. Let's say an earthquake happens when you're on the road, and the path you were about to take becomes unavailable, would you know where else to go? What if you find another car having a medical emergency, do you have a phone to call 911?

But cellphones can only go so far. First, they are highly dependent on batteries. A modern smartphone will barely last a day on a battery charge, which is obviously not enough. Consider getting a power case, which is a case with an extra battery in it. If you have a vehicle, you should also have a car charger inside of it, so you can recharge your phone. Finally, there are a lot of portable battery chargers as well. An 8,000mAh portable USB charger costs round \$30 and could recharge your cellphone 2 to 5 times.

A lot of people are giving up their land line for their cellphone, and financially that can be a wise decision. However, remember that a land line is typically the one utility which will last the longest in an emergency. Cellphones rely on towers, and if there's a disaster, the tower will be overcrowded. The first thing people who try to use their cellphones realize in an emergency is that there is no service. Either everyone is using the cell tower, or authorities shut communications down to allow first responders sole access. A land phone doesn't even require power since it gets its juice from the phone jack. As long as the generators keep working at the local phone company, your land line will work.

### ***B. Two-way radios***

When the phone goes down however, a two-way radio may be the only way you can communicate with others. A lot of serious preppers are also HAM operators. The amateur radio scene is certainly not as popular as it once was, mostly because the Internet replaced a lot of it, but it can still be useful in an emergency. Whenever something happens where everything goes dark, the one type of communication that goes on the longest is the HAM community. Getting a HAM license is free in Canada and inexpensive in the US, and only requires you to answer a simple test. A good radio will



also allow you to scan the waves, and you may be able to monitor what your local emergency services are doing, giving you first hand information that others don't get, and giving you a leg up.

A basic handheld scanner or radio can be acquired for around \$100, but if you don't want to spend so much, you may be looking at the two-way radios sold at electronic stores. These are typically around \$35 to \$70 for a pair, and allow you to communicate. If you have a family, I highly recommend getting a pair so you can keep in contact should you get separated. However, don't get fooled by the packaging. Many of them say they are good for 20 or 30 miles, but in an urban environment, they will likely only give you between 1 and 2 miles, whereas a true HAM radio can give you a far greater range.

### ***C. FM and weather emergency radio***

Another item everyone should have is a battery-powered FM and weather radio. In the US, the NOAA broadcasts continuous weather information over the air, along with emergency information. In Canada, the same service is provided by the Weather Service. FM bands are useful for obvious reasons as well. Local stations always try to stay on top of events, and you may find out about an upcoming disaster by monitoring your local station. There are many emergency radios sold that cover those bands, some even come with a built-in solar panel or hand crank, for around \$40.



## **7. Electronics and power**

### ***A. Flashlights and candles***

Light becomes very important in the case of any power outage, which is something linked to many types of emergencies. Whether you're having a hurricane, earthquake, or chemical spill, power is often one of the first things to go. If you want to see in the dark, you need light. Flashlights come in many types and most are inexpensive. You should have at least two for every location. Older flashlights use light bulbs, but newer ones use LEDs, and I suggest you get those, since they provide more light for less power.

Another thing to think about is the type of use you will have for your flashlights. Make sure you have at least one high quality flashlight that can be banged around. A lot of the cheaper ones are made of plastic and will break easily. If you have to use your flashlight for any length of time, you will discover that a cheap one does not endure well. Another thing to think about is providing light for an entire area. If you set up a workshop to do some repairs and you're in the dark, you don't want to have to hold your flashlight the whole time. Consider getting one that has a hook so you can hang it on the wall.

Candles aren't high tech, but when it comes to providing light and even some heat, they are great. Candles are very inexpensive, and they last a long time. You should have a reserve of candles along with things to start a fire. A typical candle will last you between 5 and 60 hours, depending on the length. You should have, at a minimum, a lighter and matches. Don't rely on a single item to start a fire. Many people have a flint as well for a worse case scenario. As for heat, a neat trick is to use metal cans to surround your candles and reflect the heat. This will help your candles produce more heat for an emergency situation.

### ***B. Batteries***

A lot of those electronics work on batteries. If you can, I highly suggest you standardize on one or two battery types. Personally, I only have items that require AA and AAA batteries. If you buy a flashlight that requires small rounded batteries, then that's one more type you need to stockpile, and those can cost more than standard batteries. If you run out, they are also harder to find. Note that batteries have a shelf life as well.

There are three types of batteries, from worse to best: Nickel/Cadmium, Alkaline and Lithium ion. The Cadmium type will last around 1 to 2 years, the Alkaline around 5 to 10 years, and the Lithium ion longer still.

What typically happens over time is that batteries will lose their charges, which isn't a big deal, but worse still is that batteries will also leak. If they get heated or exposed to sun, they may leak much sooner. This is why you should keep batteries stocked in a container, and keep your emergency electronics empty. If you've ever left batteries inside of a flashlight or other device for a long time without use, you know what a leak can do to the device.

### ***C. Fuel and generators***

Power is something everyone needs for our daily lives, and in a short term emergency we can make due with batteries. But in a longer term disaster, we may need more than a few AA batteries. Having a working fridge is critical to food conservation, having some lights that aren't draining our flashlights or candles can be very nice, and if we need to do serious repairs we may need to use power tools. Even more crucial, if you live in an area that gets cold at night or in the winter, then you need some heating, all of which requires power.

The most typical type of emergency power is by using a generator. They don't come cheap, but if you own a house or have access to an outdoor area, then buying a generator can provide you with quite a bit of power. Of course, fuel becomes the next problem. Keeping a few bottles of propane for a stove is one thing, but having enough gas to keep a generator running is something else. Another option you can use is a set of solar arrays. This requires having access to a roof or at least an outdoor area that faces the sun, and you need to invest in a setup beforehand, but if you do, then that may well give you an endless supply of power, which is a very attractive thing.

An emergency solar power setup typically consists of an array of car batteries which are linked together into a 12 volt system. You can use a trickle charger to connect them to your solar panels, and then use an inverter to connect the batteries to your devices. A lot of things can go wrong, and if you intend to invest in such a system, I highly suggest you do some research first. But for less than a thousand dollars, you can generate enough power to keep a small home running for as long as the sun is visible in the sky.

## 8. Security and defense

### *A. Home security*



Home security is something that should be fully integrated in any emergency preparedness. Someone once said that any society is 3 meals away from anarchy. Any time a disaster happens, either man-made like a protest, financial trouble, or a natural disaster, it doesn't take long for chaos to ensue. This means people breaking into stores, and eventually into houses. During Katrina, those who refused to evacuate reported a large number of gun shots being heard every single night in the city. If you prepare for a disaster, you can be sure the vast majority of people out there have not, and when they find out that you have supplies, they will want them.

There are multiple facets to home security. The first one is knowledge. Whether you're preparing for a month or a year, you shouldn't let the world know about it. Some people prepare with a community or neighbors, and that's fine. In fact for any medium to large scale disaster, preparing with a community is a great idea. You never know what item you'll need, or what skill you won't have, where a community can be very useful. Maybe one of them is a doctor, and another is an auto repair person. However, outside of yourself, your family, and your community, don't go around advertising what supplies you may have.

As for the actual security part, that's very similar to what you may already be using, except for a few details. If your home defense plan is to call the cops, that may not be an option in a disaster. Of course dialing 911 should be the first option if at all possible, but you should prepare for other options. Obviously, if the world has ended in a financial collapse, you may well find yourself alone to defend your goods. But even with a small emergency, let's say a flood or power outage, cops may simply be too busy to answer a call about home invasion or an alarm going off. So make sure you have physical means to secure your home, like a dead bolt, bars on your windows, and some

kind of defensive items you can use as a last resort.

### ***B. Personal defense***

When it comes to personal defense, guns are often mentioned. In fact, many preppers dedicate the bulk of their efforts to stockpiling dozens of guns and boxes of ammo. There is something to be said for having a good defensive plan. In any end-of-world scenario, there is no doubt that if a community has supplies, then it better also have enough weapons to defend them, or unscrupulous folks will take them away.

But in most cases, that situation is unlikely to happen. Again, this guide is focused on the most likely scenarios, and ending up in a situation where there is no more rule of law is very unlikely. Remember that those with the bigger weapons are more likely to be the authorities, so more often than not the best plan is to lay low, not come out guns blazing. What is far more likely is that you need to fend an attacker off, either as you walk down the street, or from your home.

What you can have in term of defensive weapons will vary based on your permit and location. In Canada, for example, our whole legal system is set up in a way where people are expected not to defend themselves. We rely on the rule of law to come to our rescue. No one other than approved authorities can carry a weapon such as a gun, baton, pepper spray or spring loaded knife, and even in your home, if you own a gun permit and use a gun in pure self defense, you will have legal problems. In the US, the second amendment makes the possession of guns far easier, but whether you should get one or not is purely a personal preference.

### ***C. Training***

Defense is one area where training and practice comes into play a lot. Regardless whether you rely on a gun or a security system to stay safe, your skills are going to be the last line of defense in any situation. Remember that many crimes have been stopped thanks to something as simple as a broom or shovel, and at a minimum you should check out some videos on YouTube showing personal defense techniques, both with a stick and with your hands. Conflict avoidance should always be at the forefront, and there are many ways to try and defuse a situation. But in a worst case scenario, where you have something, someone else wants it, and you don't have any immediate help or a way to run, having completed some self defense courses could be a life saver.

## 9. Medical and hygiene supplies

### ***A. Realistic medical preparedness***



Even among survivalists or preppers, it's safe to say that medical preparedness is typically the area that is the least known and the least understood. It's not a surprise, since we're accustomed to leave these topics to the professionals. When someone has a medical emergency, we call an ambulance or go to the ER. Also, medical supplies don't tend to have the *cool* factor that other topics do, and they aren't used for something other than medicine.

Many people own weapons because they hunt, or tools because of their trade. Few outside of the medical core know much about medical topics.

Despite this lack of skill, some people really go all out when stockpiling medical supplies, and in my opinion that isn't needed. For example, there is no point in buying an expensive surgical kit if you don't know how to use it. Yes, you may have someone nearby that happens to be a doctor and is there when the need arises, but the likelihood is remote. Similarly, some people go out and buy fish antibiotics, because those aren't restricted like human antibiotics. It's fairly easy to get the information on which types there are, and where to buy those pills, but again I find that fairly pointless. Antibiotics, especially these types of pills, have a lot of counter indications. They are restricted because they require a medical professional to properly administer. Having them on hand may prove to be useful in a rare situation, but it may also lead people to take them when they are better off not to. As always, dialing 911 and getting professional help is always the best course of action if at all possible.

### ***B. What to put in your medical bag***

What you put in your medical bag will typically depend on how big that bag is, but typically they are items you should know how and when to use. It may also not be a bag but some shelves at home, or perhaps you want a medium sized medical bag for your car, and another smaller first aid kit as part of your Every Day Carry. I will cover the EDC case below, but for now I'll let you know what I think should be in your medical supplies assuming you have at least a shelf available.



First, buy bandages and dressings, as many of them as you can afford and fit in your medical bag or shelf. This is the number one item you should have, since skin integrity is what typically is the most problematic area in an emergency. People get hurt, they get cuts, and you need bandages. In an emergency, dressings should also be changed between twice and three times a day, which ends up requiring a lot of them. Don't only get the small bandages, get medium sized gauze and wraps as well.

Next you should get some hydrogen peroxide and the 3 in 1 antibiotic creams. Both of those are used to disinfect wounds, but peroxide has several more uses as well, such as disinfecting teeth injuries, getting rid of mold in flooded areas, or removing fungus. Rubbing alcohol should also be stockpiled, with the 70% version being the most effecting one. You can disinfect any item such as scissors, medical equipment or other items. Also consider buying some reusable masks. If someone comes in with an infection, either because there's a pandemic or simply because that person has a cold and you don't want to get sick, then having masks handy is useful.

Other items to get include pain killers, nose spray, eye droppings, splinters, CPR mask, cold packs for muscle aches, sirups, a thermometer, and finally a large box of gloves. If you have all of those items in your medicine cabinet or bag, then you will be prepared for many situations. Of course there are many more items you may wish to get, and I certainly am not qualified to tell you whether your particular setup is good or bad. But one good rule of thumb is to look at what you typically use on a daily basis. Do you often find yourself needing a particular medicine? Then make sure to stockpile that. Do you use glasses or contact lenses? Then try to keep a spare pair. If you're stuck inside of a winter storm for a month with no contact to the outside world, breaking your glasses the very first day may be quite unnerving if you didn't plan for it. Finally, training is key here. You should know how to use all the items you stockpile. At a minimum, get a CPR course and first aid training.

### ***C. Hygiene***

A lot of people plan for the worse, such as gun shot wounds or IV solutions, but in reality, most medical professionals agree that what typically ends up being the worst problems in a disaster situation are simple things caused by a lack of proper hygiene. Things like tuberculosis, cholera, typhoid and respiratory infections are the first diseases to manifest themselves. The Haiti earthquake was a vivid example of what can

happen in a large scale disaster when hygiene becomes a concern. So if you want to avoid problems, you need to keep your hygiene up.

This means that your emergency supplies should include hand sanitizer, the type that doesn't require water, along with toothpaste and mouth wash. These typically don't cost much and it's easy to stockpile a few. You should also make sure you have extra towels and other toiletry that you may need should you not have access to a store for an extended period of time. Making sure your environment is clean is also very important. Make sure you store enough tissue paper and cleaning items to keep your surroundings clean.

Finally, if you already have a health condition, you may need extra preparations. Things like vitamin supplements if you tend to have a vitamin deficiency, extra medications if you have chronic diseases, etc.

## 10. EDC and bug out bag

### *A. Every Day Carry*

EDC simply refers to what you carry with you at all time. There are a lot of people placing a lot of importance on Every Day Carry, and rightfully so. At the end of the day, you can only prepare so much, and you never know when a disaster will hit. Even if your house is filled with emergency supplies, what would happen if a disaster occurs and your house gets leveled while you're at the office. Or you simply can't go back home, because an evacuation order was issued. If there's a chemical spill near where you live and the authorities don't let you go back, then what you currently have on your person may be all that you're getting.

The basic idea behind an EDC is making sure you have as many items as possible for situations that are as likely as possible, without weighting you down. I've seen many cases of people creating EDC bags, but then they weight so much that they leave them home most of the time. An EDC that you do not carry with you all the time is not really an EDC. So to start off, list the items that you already carry on you, and figure out what each item can be used for. Then, see how much more stuff you can carry. If you tend to always have a backpack with you, wear cargo pants, and have a jacket with several pockets, you will be able to carry a lot more than if you work in an office with street clothes and no bag. Still, even if all you have is your belt and front pockets, you would be surprised at what you can manage to fit in there.

Let's start with the keychain, perhaps your most versatile item. If you look on Amazon or eBay, you will find an endless supply of items that have been created especially to be worn on a keychain. If you use a carabiner, you can also attach things to your belt outside of your pockets. Don't forget your wallet, which may actually carry more than just money and credit cards. There are also bags that can be used around your waist or ankle.

Regardless of where you wear your items, here are a



few that you should consider adding to your EDC. The first is a flashlight. Everyone should carry a flashlight with them, since being able to see in the dark is the most basic thing you may need in an emergency situation. There are a lot of small keychain flashlights you can get for cheap. Another useful item is a multi tool. Some are small enough to place on a key chain, others come with a pouch. If you don't want to carry a whole multi tool, then consider key screwdrivers, which are screwdrivers shaped as keys.

A pocket knife is also a very useful item, both to open boxes in every day use, or to cut a seat belt to save someone in a car accident. The uses here are limitless. Having a first aid kit is also useful, or if you don't have room for a full kit, consider adding a few bandages to your wallet. A lot of people suggest carrying something to start a fire, and a pocket lighter works fine here, although in an urban environment I think it's less of an issue.

Food and water are also very important survival tools, and carrying at least a water bottle is something everyone should do. If you carry a bag then there are slightly bigger items you may want to carry such as a change of clothes, a towel, some rope, tools such as a hammer and saw, some hygiene items, an emergency radio, batteries, an extra pair of shoes, a poncho and a space blanket for shelter.

### ***B. Bug out bag***

A bug out bag is the name given to supplies that you would take with you on the road. A lot of preppers and survivalists put a lot of efforts into their bug out bag, however I would caution against that. In most situations, especially if you live in the city, you're much better off staying home. If something happens, some disaster that you need to cope with, you are far better off being with your supplies in your home than trying to head out in the forest.

However, you should still make plans for a bug out bag. Even if you plan to ride out an emergency at home, that may not always be possible. There may be an evacuation order, or your home may simply not be safe anymore, because of radiation, biological or chemical agents. Keep your bug out bag as a last resort, but make sure it's ready in case you need it.

A bug out bag should be very close to what you carry with you for daily life, but also

things you would need for a longer stay. As usual with anything you're going to carry, weight is important. If you're on foot, you may not be able to bring enough food for a month, but if you have a vehicle, then you can fit far more items inside of it. Look at everything we've covered so far, and take a sample of everything that you would typically need out of your home for a while. Remember that if you have to go outside, you may not end up in a place as comfortable as home was, so you may want to get some skills in outdoor survival while you can. There are plenty of books and videos covering every aspects of forest survival, from building a shelter to hunting wild game, and the items you need.

## 11. Cash and bartering items

### ***A. Your emergency fund***

The items and skills we've covered so far can come in handy in many types of emergencies, but not every disaster involves things breaking down around you, or nature trying to take control of your environment. Sometimes, the trouble is less visible. A financial emergency, either a personal one such as losing your job, or a more widespread one such as a financial collapse, isn't all that unlikely. Not that long ago we've had several European countries in deep financial trouble. Many people found themselves unable to withdraw cash from an ATM for weeks at a time in Cyprus, and others found their bank accounts lacking funds because of unprecedented government measures.

Regardless of the source of the emergency, you should always have an emergency fund, both in cash and in your bank account. Financial experts say that you should keep 3 months of living expenses as a minimum in your bank account. That means if you lose your job tomorrow morning, you should have enough to survive for at least 3 months while you find a new job. At home and on your person, you should also keep enough cash to get by for a couple of days at a minimum. Credit and debit cards are nice, but if the ATMs stop working, then cash is your only currency.

### ***B. Gold and silver***



A lot of financial preppers, those who believe an financial disaster is likely to happen, think that the most likely outcome will be FIAT currencies losing their values. All the current currencies in the world are backed by nothing more than the governments that print them. That means trust is paramount, and as governments print more cash, this



trust may be going down. If something were to happen where the US government was no longer trusted to honor its word, such as for the bonds it issues, then all trust would go away, and the value of the US dollar would plummet. Even if you hold a lot of cash, that cash would become worthless. This has happened many times before, with Zimbabwe being the most recent example. After an hyperinflation which lost all trust from the world community in its currency, its value plummeted. Right now, a single US dollar is worth 360,000 Zimbabwean dollars.

Because of this potential outcome, some people think that they should stockpile real currencies, silver and gold. These values are based on rarity, and cannot go up or down based on any one country. This has merit, and could be useful in a local crisis, however the problem comes when it's time to exchange those items. It's unlikely that local stores would start accepting gold bars for food, so this should only be used if you plan to get out of the country should something like this happen, so you can exchange your gold for other currencies.

### ***C. Barter items***

Another popular activity among preppers is getting ready for a barter economy. This is another area I think should be approached only after you've done all your other emergency preparedness. The chance that a world economical collapse will happen, or another end-of-world event where no current currency is worth anything, is very remote. Still, in such a situation, a barter economy is the most likely outcome. In that case, you could trade various items for other types of items. For example, say you're able to buy a large quantity of medical items now. Even if you don't end up needing them in a disaster situation, perhaps you could trade them for food or water. The same principle can be applied to a stockpile of ammo, food, or any other item which will likely be needed in a disaster scenario.

## 12. Conclusion

### ***A. Thinking smart***

Hopefully, this guide gave you a good overview of what it is you should be doing to prepare for disasters. There are many types of emergencies that can happen, and many of them have similar elements, such as a loss of power, loss of running water, and loss of access to stores or roads. Preparing for disasters is not something that is only for tinfoil hats folks thinking about the end of the world. Every single person should be prepared to take care of themselves, at least for a short to medium time frame. It's unrealistic to think everyone will be ready for the zombie apocalypse, but disasters are not rare. There are emergencies of all sorts all around the world. Everything from fires, to floods, medical situations, chemical spills, and so on. Being ready for them is simply being prudent.

### ***B. Don't become obsessed***

With that said, don't become obsessed with survival either. There are things that no one can prepare for. There are cases where even the most well prepared person won't survive. If you get hit by lightning, your bug out bag won't get you out of it. Emergency preparation is something you should do and dedicate some time to, but once it's done, once you have your supplies and basic skills, along with a plan of what to do when something happen and how to keep your perishables rotated, then you should move on with your life. If you keep thinking the world is going to end, that can't possibly be healthy. Of course, if your plan is to become fully autonomous, skilled and equipped to survive by yourself with food from the land and completely off the grid, that's a noble sentiment, but understand that it's not for everyone, and make sure you prepare for the more likely emergencies before thinking end-of-world stuff.

Another popular mistake is to always go for the most expensive items. There are cases when you want quality, like a tool that you will be likely to use a lot, but in many cases, you would be surprised at the amount of items you can find in a dollar store or Walmart. While you may not want to rely on a dollar knife for your survival, and you may actually see a difference in shelf life between a \$1 battery pack and a \$5 one, there are items where you can save. The difference between a \$1 and a \$5 bandage box bought in a dollar store versus a pharmacy, or a \$30 emergency weather radio and a \$100 one that also happens to have a lot of extra features you aren't likely to use,

should make the choice clear.

I hope the information in this ebook has been entertaining and informative, and I wish you luck should any disaster fall upon you. Should you have comments about this ebook, drop me an email at [dendory@gmail.com](mailto:dendory@gmail.com).