

PREPAREDNESS 101: THE ULTIMATE SURVIVAL CHECKLIST



URBAN SURVIVAL SITE

Preparedness 101: The Ultimate Survival Checklist

A Beginner's Guide to Planning and Preparing for Natural and Manmade Disaster.

Welcome to Urban Survival Site! We've designed this guide as a navigation tool to allow you to quickly scan and access nearly 200 of our best articles covering all aspects of preparedness.

The information below is bundled by topic, and we have articles on pretty much every topic related and emergency preparedness.

Here's a quick overview of the primary categories. Click on any one of them to jump to that section.

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Note: If you're viewing this PDF in a browser, the links will open in the same window, closing the PDF. To avoid that, be sure to right-click on links and open them in a new tab.

Beginners



If you are new to prepping, you should take some time to research and think about how to approach the topic of preparedness.

It's an emotional subject, but emotional decisions often miss the mark or lead us to overreact. It's easy to spend too much on the wrong things without taking some time to ponder, plan, and prepare.

We've assembled an outstanding team of experts on the subject of emergency preparedness, and their experiences and insights are captured here across a range of subjects. Each section invites you to read more with direct links to articles, videos, and lists put together by these accomplished preppers.

It's easy to grab a list of all of the things you should acquire. In fact, it's too easy. Lists can become a blur and we may find we've spent money on things we don't need, or live in an area where items are unnecessary because hurricanes don't happen in the Rocky Mountains and blizzards don't happen in the desert.

The Fog of Prepping

Military historians often refer to "the fog of war." It's how a battlefield or military campaign is often accompanied by the unexpected and the dynamics of how things unfold always seem to change and be in a constant state of flux.

Disasters evolve and unfold in the same way and it can be difficult to accurately anticipate every possibility. That's why it makes sense to assess your situation and ask some fundamental questions.

Who Are You?

A single guy in his 30s? A single mom in her 20s? A husband and father or a senior citizen with some health issues? Your personal needs and the needs of those around you should be at the forefront of your mind while planning and prepping.

Where Are You?

Many natural and manmade disasters tend to occur in certain geographical areas. Coastal areas are more prone to weather extremes like hurricanes and flooding. Urban environments are more likely to see civil unrest as opposed to rural environments.

Some disasters can happen anywhere, but take some time to think about the probability and the type of disaster that may affect the area where you live.

Why Are You Prepping?

It's worth taking the time to think about your motivation for prepping. Some people who have endured disasters are keenly sensitive to another occurrence. But if you were once the victim of a flood, is that all you're preparing for in the future?

It's also easy to get caught up in the fear and try to prepare for every possible scenario. That's both expensive and unrealistic. It's important to separate logic from emotion when preparing for anything.

The standard advice from experienced preppers is to take a slow, methodical approach to the events that could realistically affect you and your loved ones.

Are You Prepared for the Best?

The prepper's mantra is: prepare for the worst and hope for the best. But if Y2K taught us any lessons, it's that some of us weren't prepared for the best. It's hard to keep a positive outlook in the midst of a pandemic, but it's worth being a student of history to understand how and when disasters occur and how they resolve.

It all gets back to the fog of war. It will never be easy to predict the future or the patterns of the present, but if we do our homework and keep an open mind, we can put together a common-sense plan for preparedness that won't leave at the mercy of events.

Read More:

- [15 Reasons To Prep Even If Doomsday Never Arrives](#)
- [21 Prepper Tips I Wish I'd Heard BEFORE I Started Prepping](#)
- [23 Things To Buy RIGHT NOW If You're Totally Unprepared For A Disaster](#)
- [30 Survival Items Every New Prepper Should Get](#)
- [50 Beginner Survival Tips That Every Prepper Should Know](#)
- [Top 20 Prepping Mistakes To Avoid](#)

Survival Skills



Stockpiling supplies is a good idea in the short-term, but the long-term brings other challenges. Eventually, you may start to run low on supplies and be forced to go out in search of them.

When that happens, you'll have to find and purify water, grow and prepare food, and build things from scratch using whatever materials are at hand. That's where survival skills come in.

Knowledge Is Power

American pioneers didn't survive because they had lots of gear and supplies. They survived because they had the knowledge necessary to sustain themselves.

How many of us possess the ability or knowledge of how to sew clothing from fabric? Grow, harvest, and preserve fruits and vegetables? Raise, feed, butcher, and preserve livestock with basic animal husbandry skills?

And while most of us can figure out how to apply antiseptic and a bandage, how many of us have the ability to suture stitches or treat third-degree burns?

The Forgotten Past

Technology has changed the world and has changed us as well. You're reading this on a computer with an Internet connection that allows you access to the collective knowledge of humanity.

Where is that knowledge if the grid goes down and the Internet becomes a rare luxury inaccessible to most? Maybe it's time to remember the past and revisit those skills, crafts, and sustainable activities that ultimately created civilization.

Read More:

- [9 Most Overlooked Survival Skills](#)
- [9 Street Survival Skills for the Concrete Jungle](#)
- [13 Survival Skills That Could Save Your Life](#)
- [17 Lost Survival Skills Your Ancestors Had](#)
- [20 Skills You Can Trade After The End Of The World](#)
- [22 Basic Skills You'll Be Forced to Learn After the Collapse](#)
- [30 Survival Skills Modern People Have Forgotten](#)

Building A Library



Regardless of our skill sets, no one can remember everything. And here again, our reliance on the Internet for instant knowledge and information may fail us in a time of disaster. That's why a personal library of books on various survival skills is worth the investment.

Read More:

- [100 Best Survival Books Of All Time](#)

It may also be worth thinking about what other books you would want to have if no other books were available. Think of it as a family activity. Play the desert island game and ask them what books they would be willing to read over and over, then get those books.

First Aid



Everyone knows how to put on a Band-Aid or take a painkiller. But what if someone gets a really deep cut or broken bone or something worse. During a crisis, going to the hospital might not be an option. This is why it's so important to learn some basic first aid skills.

Read More:

- [9 Most Important First Aid Skills To Learn](#)
- [10 Common Injuries And How To Treat Them](#)
- [50 Lost Remedies From The Old Days](#)

Medical



Of course, it's not enough to just have first aid skills. You're also going to need plenty of medical supplies. Granted, there are natural remedies out there, but for most medical emergencies you'll need to have the right supplies and medicines on hand.

Read More:

- [11 First Aid Supplies You Can't Have Too Much Of](#)
- [14 First Aid Items You May Have Forgotten](#)
- [25 Supplies You Need To Survive The Next Pandemic](#)
- [33 Over-the-Counter Meds You Need to Stockpile](#)
- [How To Build an Emergency First Aid Kit from Scratch](#)
- [How To Make An Herbal Medicine Chest](#)
- [Medical Supplies That Will Disappear Fast in a Crisis](#)

Frugality



Frugality involves many different things: learning to make do with less, knowing how to find great deals, making the best use of coupons, finding clever ways to lower your bills, saving and upcycling [things other people would throw away](#), and so forth.

If you learn these things now, you'll fare a lot better during another Great Depression or other long-term disaster. If nothing else, you'll save money that you can use to purchase more emergency supplies.

Read More:

- [10 Free Things You Can Do To Prepare For Disaster](#)
- [13 Dirt-Cheap Items Every Prepper Should Hoard](#)
- [14 Prepper Items To Look For At Garage Sales](#)
- [23 Things That Preppers Shouldn't Throw Away](#)
- [25 Prepper Items To Look For at Flea Markets and Thrift Stores](#)
- [40 Emergency Supplies You Can Find In Dollar Stores](#)

Bugging Out



Location. Location. Location. A cave in the Rocky Mountains would be a good location to wait out significant civil unrest. But it would probably be a very bad location in the middle of an earthquake. Where we are has a lot to do with our ability to survive any disaster.

In some instances, we may need to bug out. In others, we may choose to hunker down and bug in. Regardless of where we go, situations change and events continue to unfold. All we can do is assess, adjust, and do what we can to make sure any location is secure.

And while we're at it, it's worth thinking about what's involved with traveling from one location to another.

Read More:

- [7 Tips to Help You Bug Out Fast](#)
- [8 Tips for Defending Your Bug Out Location from Marauders](#)
- [11 Events That Mean It's Time To Bug Out](#)
- [17 Bug Out Vehicle Mistakes To Avoid](#)
- [Bugging Out On Foot: How Far Can You Go?](#)
- [How to Find the Perfect Bug Out Location](#)
- [What To Do If You Don't Have A Bug Out Location](#)

Disaster Scenarios



The true measure of a disaster is the impact it has on everything around us. The duration is certainly a factor, but some events that occur quickly following a disaster can have significant effects as well. Think of it as a cascade effect. How does a single event lead to a progression of failures and challenges?

Read More:

- [6 Things That Can Happen During Martial Law](#)
- [7 Dangerous Places to Avoid When Disaster Strikes](#)
- [10 Scary Things That Would Happen If The Grid Went Down](#)
- [12 Places To Hide Your Survival Supplies During Martial Law](#)
- [13 Things NOT To Do When Disaster Strikes](#)
- [15 Terrifying Truths About Long-Term Disasters](#)
- [EMP Survival: How To Be One Of The 10% Who Survive](#)
- [Why 90% of the Population Would Die Without Electricity](#)

Health



Regardless of your current physical condition, any disaster is going to impose both physical and emotional stress. Injuries will be common and diseases could be widespread as basic sanitation, sewer systems, and water supplies are compromised.

Making matters worse are the shortages of medical supplies, medicines, and medical care that often accompany disasters. Make sure you have a plan and always have a “Plan B” like natural alternatives.

Read More:

- [11 Herbal Alternatives to Antibiotics](#)
- [11 Medicinal Herbs for Natural Pain Relief](#)
- [11 Native American Herbs & Recipes Worth Learning](#)
- [15 Ways To Wipe When The Toilet Paper Is Gone](#)
- [27 Hygiene Products You'll Need After The SHTF](#)
- [How To Wash Your Clothes Without a Washing Machine](#)
- [What To Do With Waste After The Shit Hits The Fan](#)

Survival Tips



If you don't have experience with something, take the time to learn from people who do have experience. Learning survival tips from the experts could save you a lot of time and aggravation down the road.

Read More:

- [6 Ways to Open a Can Without a Can Opener](#)
- [13 Urban Survival Tips From The Homeless](#)
- [20 Common Myths About Survival](#)
- [Top 20 Prepping Mistakes to Avoid](#)

Urban Survival



It doesn't take a crisis to make the streets mean, but things get a whole lot more complicated in urban environments when disaster strikes. Here's how to make the best of the worst in the city.

Read More:

- [6 Street Smart Skills You Need In An Urban Disaster](#)
- [10 Gray Man Tips To Help You Blend In During A Crisis](#)
- [13 Things You Can Scavenge From Cars After The SHTF](#)
- [21 Urban Survival Hacks You Have To Try](#)
- [Daily Life After The End Of The World As We Know It](#)
- [Top 20 Places to Scavenge for Supplies After SHTF](#)
- [Urban Survival: How to Live in Your Car](#)
- [What If You're Caught In A Riot While Driving?](#)

Gear Lists



There's a difference between stockpiling and hoarding. Stockpiling is the methodical and measured accumulation of items for later use over a predetermined duration. Hoarding is the indiscriminate accumulation of stuff. Preppers stockpile; everyone else fills closets with toilet paper.

A standard approach to stockpiling is the use of lists. Lists are a good idea and a good reminder of what you need to stockpile. But that assumes the list is put together with some thought behind it. A lot of this gets back to those key questions. Who are you? Where are you? Why are you prepping? With that in mind, you're in a position to start making your list. Or list of lists.

Read More:

- [9 Urban Survival Tools To Get Before The SHTF](#)
- [18 Things Everyone Should Start Hoarding](#)
- [21 Things You Should Have In Your Vehicle At All Times](#)
- [25 Items That Will Be Worth Their Weight In Gold After The SHTF](#)
- [33 Survival Items You Can Fit In Your Pocket](#)
- [50 Dirt-Cheap Items That Will Be Priceless After The Collapse](#)
- [50 Items That Will Disappear Fast In A Crisis](#)
- [100 Survival Items You Forgot To Buy](#)
- [200 Items You Can Barter After The Collapse](#)

Power



Power is something we all tend to take for granted. Ever since we could walk, we've been used to the idea that you can just flip a switch and turn on the lights. Not to mention indoor heating, air conditioning, microwaves, electric ovens, devices, and more.

While we can learn to live without things like microwaves, when it comes to lights and electric-powered survival gear, we'll need some alternative ways to generate power.

Read More:

- [7 Ways You Can Generate Power After A Disaster](#)
- [11 Ways To Light Your Home When The Power Goes Out](#)
- [15 Questions To Ask Before The Power Goes Out](#)
- [15 Things To Do When The Power Goes Out](#)
- [Surviving a Massive Power Outage in the City](#)

Water Basics



Water comes first, and then food. The reason is simple. After 3 days without water, you die. It doesn't matter who you are, you die. On the other hand, we can go weeks without food and go months on minimal nutrition.

And it's not about stockpiling water. That's hard to do for any long duration. The recommendations vary, but on average a person needs to drink a half-gallon of water a day. If there are 6 people in your group that's 3 gallons of water a day just for drinking. Do the math. It adds up when you start thinking about water for cooking, bathing, washing, etc.

The critical success factor with water gets back to sustainability. More accurately, it's the ability to find, collect, purify, and store water on a regular basis.

Read More:

- [8 Mistakes To Avoid When Collecting Rainwater](#)
- [8 Places You Can Store Your Drinking Water](#)
- [8 Survival Water Mistakes That Could Make You Sick](#)
- [10 Ways To Collect Water After The End Of The World](#)
- [15 Ways To Purify Water In A Survival Scenario](#)
- [How To Harvest And Drink Rainwater](#)
- [The Beginner's Guide to Emergency Water Storage](#)

Survival Food



How much food you stockpile depends on your own personal feelings about risk and preparedness. Recommendations vary, but standard advice is to store foods with long shelf-lives, focus on staples or ingredients that allow you to make a variety of nutritious meals, and to eat what you store and store what you eat.

There's also that sustainability factor related to gardening, wild foraging, and hunting to supplement and potentially replace your food storage.

Read more:

- [11 Weeds You Can Eat](#)
- [17 Emergency Foods You Should Keep in Your Vehicle](#)
- [17 Survival Foods That Can Last A Century](#)
- [20 Survival Foods That Will Last For 20 Years](#)
- [23 Most Overlooked Survival Foods](#)
- [25 Wild Edibles You Can Find In The City](#)
- [100 Best Survival Foods At The Grocery Store](#)
- [How to Use Tree Bark for Survival Food and Medicine](#)

Food Storage



Even products specifically manufactured and packaged for long-term storage are susceptible to spoilage if not stored correctly. Your food needs to be in a cool, dark, dry location and sealed inside airtight bags or buckets or both.

Read More:

- [5 Safe Canning Tips You Should Know](#)
- [7 Alternative Ways To Preserve Food](#)
- [10 Tips For Rotating Your Food Storage](#)
- [10 Ways To Preserve Meat Without a Fridge or Freezer](#)
- [12 Signs Your Survival Food Has Gone Bad](#)
- [15 Food Storage Mistakes That New Preppers Make](#)

Cooking



If you don't know how to cook it's time to learn. And after you've done that it's time to learn how to cook without power. Meals have always been associated with comfort and the ability to prepare a decent meal is not only critical to physical survival but emotional survival as well.

And while you're at it, take some time to learn about pioneer recipes and cooking styles. The best lessons for cooking without power are from those who never needed it.

Read More:

- [9 Survival Recipes That Are Easy To Make](#)
- [15 Kitchen Gadgets That Work Without Power](#)
- [How to Make Bannock, A Healthy and Delicious Survival Food](#)
- [How to Make Flour from Beans, Nuts, Seeds, and Even Corn Flakes](#)
- [How to Make Hardtack: A Cracker That Will Last A Century](#)
- [How To Make Pemmican: The World's First Survival Food](#)
- [How To Make The Most Delicious Beef Jerky Ever](#)
- [The Ultimate Guide To Cooking Without Power](#)

Gardening



You don't need green acres to have a garden. You can even grow vegetables in buckets. You might be surprised at how much food you can grow indoors. Sometimes you have to be creative about how you're creative.

Read More:

- [9 Fastest-Growing Fruit Trees for Your Backyard](#)
- [10 Fastest-Growing Vegetables for Your Survival Garden](#)
- [12 Gardening Hacks for New Gardeners](#)
- [12 Seed Starting Tips to Start Your Garden Right](#)
- [25 Fruits And Veggies You Can Grow In Buckets](#)
- [Growing Food in Buckets: A Step by Step Guide](#)
- [How to Build a Survival Seed Bank so You Can Grow Food After the Collapse](#)
- [Urban Survival Gardening: A Guide for Beginners](#)

Projects



In a long-term disaster, there will be many days when we are confronted with do-it-yourself projects. That's the challenge when we're on our own. There's nobody else to do it.

Read More:

- [3 DIY Emergency Heaters That Will Keep Your Warm This Winter](#)
- [13 DIY Stove Tutorials for Urban Preppers](#)
- [Basic Soap Making Tutorial That Anyone Can Follow](#)
- [How To Build a Rocket Stove](#)
- [How To Build a Solar Furnace for Only \\$50](#)
- [How To Build an Urban Survival Toilet](#)
- [How To Make a Candle That Lasts 100 Hours](#)

Upcycling



Upcycling is the ability to take something and use it or modify it in a new and unique way. At a time when supplies are limited, it's a great way to find resources we wouldn't have considered.

Read More:

- [18 Off Grid Uses For Tin Cans](#)
- [20 Survival Uses for Chap Stick](#)
- [21 Brilliant Uses for Buckets](#)
- [21 Survival Uses for Plastic Grocery Bags](#)
- [27 Survival Uses for Floss You Never Thought Of](#)
- [27 Uses for Alcohol After the SHTF](#)
- [33 Prepper Uses for Aluminum Foil](#)
- [35 Surprising Uses for Borax](#)
- [35 Uses for Diatomaceous Earth: The Miracle Mineral](#)
- [37 Survival Uses for Trash Bags](#)
- [50 Survival Uses for Duct Tape](#)

Home Defense



Home defense gets back to the question of, “Where are you?” It’s situational to some degree, but your location can be proportional to the level and type of threat.

If you’re in the city and the grocery stores are empty, you’ll want to turn your home into a fortress. If you’re in the country and the disaster is temporary, home defense won’t be quite as important (but important nonetheless).

Read More:

- [7 Unusual Home Security Tips You Probably Didn't Know](#)
- [8 Secret Gun Saves You Can Hide Around The House](#)
- [9 Ways To Fortify Your Home Before All Hell Breaks Loose](#)
- [10 Easy Ways To Deter Burglars](#)
- [11 Home Security Tips for Life After SHTF](#)
- [17 Common Home Security Mistakes](#)
- [How To Defend Your Apartment From Looters After SHTF](#)
- [How To Literally Bulletproof Your Home](#)
- [How To Prepare For A Home Invasion](#)

Self Defense



Be careful out there. Any encounter with other people in a time of disaster will always deliver an elevated level of threat. It's fair to assume that others are desperate, equally afraid, potentially panicked, mistrustful, or worse—looking to take advantage of the chaos of the situation.

How you defend yourself personally has a lot to do with your physical condition, your abilities, and how well you've prepared for the worst. In many instances, the best defense is to avoid situations where you'll need to defend yourself.

Read More:

- [6 Things That Could Attract Dangerous People After SHTF](#)
- [8 Ways to Avoid Dangerous People During a Disaster](#)
- [10 Defensive Shooting Tips That Could Save Your Life](#)
- [10 Tips For Surviving An Active Shooter](#)
- [How To Defend Yourself Using Only A Knife](#)
- [Street Fighting Skills: How The Navy Seals Train](#)
- [Urban Survival: How To Survive A Mugging](#)
- [When Can You Shoot An Intruder In Your Home?](#)

Weapons



If the disaster gets severe enough and looters are going door to door in search of supplies, you may have no choice but to use a deadly weapon in self-defense. Start researching them now and learn to use them ahead of time.

Read More:

- [2 Guns You Should Take Along When You Bug Out](#)
- [3 Best Ammo Calibers To Have After SHTF](#)
- [5 Best Guns For Home Defense](#)
- [6 Survival Guns You'll Need After The End Of The World](#)
- [11 Best Knives to Have in a Disaster \(and Why\)](#)
- [30 Survival Weapons For Your SHTF Arsenal](#)
- [How To Make Gunpowder Step by Step \(With Pics\)](#)
- [How To Make Your Ammunition Last For Decades](#)

When The SHTF



Some disasters go from bad to worse. At other times, disasters pile on top of disasters. Wild-fires during a pandemic come to mind. It's the kind of thinking worth considering as you assess what could really happen.

Read More:

- [8 Tips For Surviving Biological Warfare](#)
- [10 SHTF Problems You Might Not Have Planned For](#)
- [10 Things You Must Do To Survive Nuclear War](#)
- [11 Ways People Die During Disasters](#)
- [12 Places To Stay Far Away From After SHTF](#)
- [13 Events That Could Trigger A Societal Collapse](#)
- [Daily Life After The End Of The World As We Know It](#)
- [How to Get Home After the SHTF](#)

Weather



In the category of natural disasters, weather tops the list and the list is long. From hurricanes to tornadoes, tsunamis, wildfires caused by drought, mudslides and landslides caused by rain, typhoons, blizzards, deep freezes, heat waves, and did we mention dams bursting?

Weather is an equal opportunity disaster. It doesn't matter who you are or where you live, at some point in time the weather is going to cause problems from power outages to flooding or worse.

Preparation Depends on Location

People living in coastal areas prone to flooding and wind damage from hurricanes have a different set of things to worry about than someone living in a dry, inland valley subject to wildfires or desert drought. FEMA has a standard set of disaster preparedness plans and recommendations, and you should consult their website to assess the threats in your area.

And it's not just about staying safe at home. You need to think about what to do if you're at work, if the kids are at school, or if anyone in your family is on the road traveling. Given the

extreme weather we've all experienced, it's likely that someday you or someone you know will be adversely affected by the weather. Now is a good time to think about how to prepare.

Read More:

- [9 Supplies You Need for a Summer Power Outage](#)
- [10 Steps To Surviving A Winter Power Outage](#)
- [10 Ways To Prepare For A Flood And 11 Things To Do After](#)
- [11 Tips To Avoid Heatstroke When Your AC Goes Out](#)
- [17 Ways You Can Stay Warm When The Power Goes Out](#)
- [21 Winter Survival Items That Every Prepper Should Own](#)
- [27 Winter Survival Items You Should Have In Your Car](#)
- [How To Stay Warm in Your Car If You're Stuck in A Winter Storm](#)
- [How People Kept Houses Cool Before Air Conditioning Was Invented](#)
- [The Ultimate Guide To Hurricane Preparedness](#)

Economic Survival



When we think about economic collapse, our first thoughts turn to the Great Depression. In actual fact, the current GDP and unemployment in the U.S. are statistically greater than the worst numbers of the Great Depression.

What's obvious is that many disasters can quickly lead to economic disasters. How well the economy recovers from COVID-19 remains to be seen.

Read More:

- [10 Lessons From Venezuela's Economic Collapse](#)
- [10 Things You Must Do Before The Dollar Collapses](#)
- [13 Things To Do Before the Economy Collapses](#)
- [17 Best Jobs To Have When The Economy Collapses](#)
- [20 Items To Buy Before A Great Depression](#)
- [How to Survive The Next Great Depression](#)
- [Top 10 Jobs After The Grid Goes Down](#)
- [What The Next Great Depression Will Look Like](#)

Holidays Amidst Disaster



Preparing for a New Normal

If the past shows any precedent, it's that disasters have long-lasting effects. It's human nature to want things to return to normal, but what every generation has seen is that they returned to a new definition of normal following a calamitous disaster.

It happened after the Great Depression and following both World War I and World War II. What normal looks like after the Coronavirus pandemic has passed will redefine all of the generations currently enduring it. The only question that remains is what kind of disasters may inevitably follow? And how prepared will we be when they occur?

Good luck!