
THE PREPAREDNESS REVIEW

Winter 2014

www.thepreparednessreview.com

Table of Contents

How to Make a Live Capture Box Trap and Trigger System Box - Creek Stewart.....	pg.3
How to Cook on a Wood Stove - Melissa K. Norris.....	pg 10
Emergency Sanitation Basics: Sewage - Dr. Joe Alton, MD.....	pg.12
Situational Awareness: Your Surroundings & Yourself - Chris Ray	pg.16
Budget Food Storage (Printable) - Linda Loosli.....	pg.21
Primitive Prognostication: Weather - Jason.....	pg.23
Natural Yeast Starter Flakes - Melissa Richardson	pg.27
How to Use Pool Shock to Purify Water - Gaye Levy	pg.32
DIY - Wall-Hanging Canned Food Storage - Alex.....	pg.37
The One Simple Secret to Surviving Any Crisis - Daisy Luther.....	pg.40
Off Grid Cooking Options - Tessa Zundel.....	pg.44
Thinking About Your Neighborhood from a Tactical Perspective - Patrick Henry.....	pg.47
How to Get the Most from Your Tomato Harvest - Angi Schneider.....	pg.49
You Can't Survive TEOTWAWKI without First Surviving... - Kristina Frost.....	pg.51
Colds, Sore Throats & Common Infections - Dr. Ryan Chamberlin	pg.54
30 Pandemic Essentials - Linda Loosli.....	pg.58
A Critical Firearm Accessory - Joe Nobody.....	pg. 61
Creating Myth when the SHTF - Todd Sepulveda.....	pg.65

TPR is published two times a year. Articles are contributed by authors who write for the online Preparedness Community. Articles may have been written exclusively for this edition of TPR or republished by permission. Permission to reprint any articles published in The Preparedness Review should be gained from the original author, through their contact information on their website.

For more information about The Preparedness Review or to contribute to a future edition, please visit www.thepreparednessreview.com.

From the Editor:

I'm excited to release the 5th edition of The Preparedness Review. If you have been following TPR all along, you'll notice that I pushed back the release of TPR a little. Instead of releasing in the Fall (Nov.) and Spring (May), I'm releasing in Winter (Dec.) and Summer (June). This change will allow me to focus on TPR on my off time from work.

I've always said that I wanted TPR to include articles that if you didn't have the internet available, you would still have quality articles in TPR, hopefully printed out or saved electronically somewhere, that will allow you to access great preparedness content. Although not every article will apply to your preparedness, I believe there is something in TPR5 for everyone!

At the time of this release, TPR1-4 has been downloaded over 139,200 times. The first TPR came out in the Fall of 2014. I appreciate it when you share the link and website of **The Preparedness Review** - www.thepreparednessreview.com.

One major change that you should notice right off the bat is that I'm doing this edition **AD FREE!** In the past, ads have helped to cover the cost of the website, hosting TPR and the email subscription service. I've chosen to not worry about that stuff this time. However, if you would like to support TPR and the other online efforts of Prepper Website, I would ask that you make your Amazon purchases through the Prepper Website link. Purchases made through that link, no matter what you buy, earn Prepper Website a small percentage. And the cool thing is that it isn't any extra money out of your pocket. The items that you were already going to buy help out! And a little goes a long way! I definitely appreciate your support!

To comply with Amazon terms, I have to link to a page on Prepper Website, which will contain the link to order from Amazon. To support TPR and Prepper Website by making your Amazon purchases through our link - [click here!](#)

Lastly, after you read the articles in TPR5, please visit the websites that contributed the work. Many websites out there do it for the love of sharing preparedness. I know they will appreciate your support too!

Peace,
Todd



The Preparedness Review is a part of the [Prepper Website Family of Websites and Online Resources!](#)

How to Make a Live Capture Box Trap and Trigger System Creek Stewart

As many of you know, I now host The Weather Channel's hit new survival show FAT GUYS IN THE WOODS. In this show I take regular guys into the wilderness for a 6 day survival 'Wake-Up Call'. In each episode we must meet our CORE 4 survival priorities – SHELTER, WATER, FIRE and FOOD. This article details one of the live capture traps that we built on the show to capture a quail. To my knowledge, this is a trap style that originates in Asia but versions of it exist all over the world. It's very unique in that it can be constructed from all natural materials. Below I detail the trap design as well as the trigger I normally pair with it.



It all starts with 2 pieces of cordage and 2 sticks...

A length of cordage is tied between the ends of two sticks. When tied, the length of rope should be a little longer (6 or so inches) than the sticks. The shape at this point should be somewhat rectangular because the cordage sides are longer than the stick sides. The length of your sticks will determine the size of your trap, in this case about 18" x 18".



Now, twist each stick so that cordage forms an X in the middle. At this point, your trap should look fairly square.



The coolest thing about this trap is that it's held together with tension. You start by sliding sticks one at a time in a log-cabin pattern UNDERNEATH of the string. The string will be loose in the beginning but will start to tighten as you build up the walls underneath with sticks. It is this tension that ultimately will hold all of the sticks in place.



Below is a trap almost finished using a natural reverse wrapped yucca leaf cordage – just like we did in the episode of FAT GUYS IN THE WOODS.



Here the trap is finished with the trigger set. Now, let's discuss the trigger system that I use with this trap. It's awesome AND simple!



THE TRIGGER

This trigger system is very simple and is in essence a double trip line. There is a pretty cool trick to making the trigger stick. I use a pencil below to illustrate:

First, cut a slice in the middle of the trigger stick that is about 1/2 of the way through. The saw from a multitool works perfect for this.



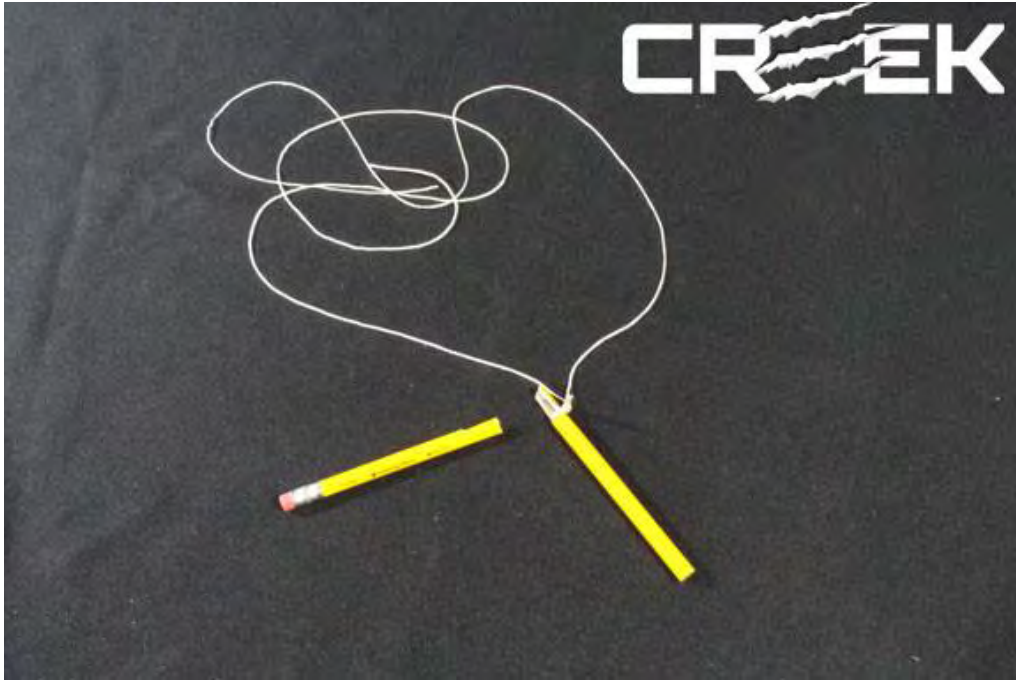
Now, turn over the stick, move 1/2 inch down and make another cut 1/2 way through on the opposite side.



Then, with your thumbs at each cut, firmly snap the stick in half.



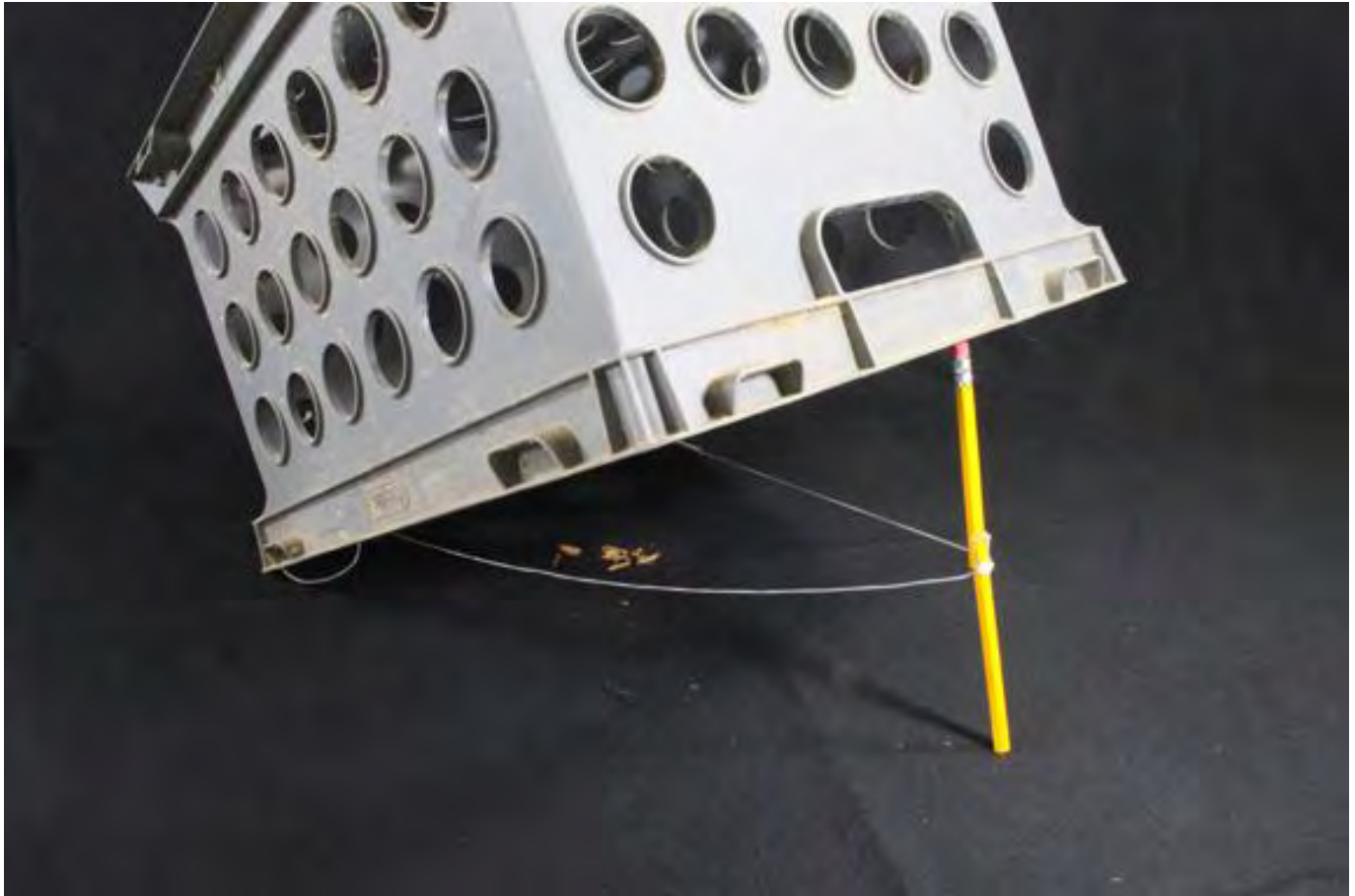
Nine times out of ten the stick will snap as shown above with 2 perfectly mated notches. This completes your trigger stick. The only remaining step is to tie two thin trip lines to one half of the trigger stick. I typically tie them around the top of the bottom half.



The other ends of the trip lines should be tied to the back 2 corners of the box trap – in this case, an egg crate.



Now, assemble the trigger stick and prop up the front of the box. You can see that the two trip lines are impossible for a small game animal to avoid when trying to get the bait that is located toward the back of the trap between the trip lines.



In the episode when we caught the quail, we used rose hips as bait and thin yucca fibers as trip lines. The trip lines don't have to be very strong because the trigger stick is very sensitive.

CONCLUSION

The basic principle of this trap design can be applied in all types of environments, both urban and wilderness. Use your creativity when it comes to cages – even a cardboard box will work! Innovation is one of your most important survival skills!

Creek Stewart is the Owner and Lead Instructor at Willow Haven Outdoor - a leading Survival and Preparedness Training Facility located on 21-acres in Central Indiana. He is also the star of the popular [Fat Guys in the Woods](http://www.willowhavenoutdoor.com) TV program that airs on The Weather Channel. For more information on Survival Courses and Clinics offered at WHO, visit <http://www.willowhavenoutdoor.com>. You can contact Creek directly at creek@willowhavenoutdoor.com.

How to Cook on a Wood Stove

Melissa K. Norris

Why should you learn to cook on a wood stove?

As a little girl, I remember my mother cooking stew on top of our wood stove during the winter months. We have a decent size forest on our homestead and every year we lose a few trees to a windstorm or old age, so a wood stove is the perfect way to use our resources.

Cooking on a wood stove takes me back to the pioneer days and to my grandmother's kitchen, where she had an old wood cook stove. My parent's still have a hybrid 1940's Monarch half wood and half electric stove. You could say I come from a long line of wood stove cooking.

Learning to cook on a wood stove is smart for survival type situations, such as power outages, but I cook on mine even when we have power. **It's extremely frugal to cook on a wood stove, like as in free.** You're already using your wood stove for heat, so using it as a cooking source is doubling your resources.

Here's my tips for cooking on a wood stove.

- 1. Have an established fire.** You'll want to have your fire started and burning before you begin cooking. The surface of your wood stove should be heated and a good source of coals inside. If you need the surface to be hot for frying meat, go ahead and open the draft.
- 2. Use cast iron cook ware.** Cast iron does not retain hot spots, plus it conducts heat. All of our cooking is done with cast iron. For more tips on cooking and caring for cast iron, read our [Cast Iron 101](#). Our affiliate partner Amazon has this [Lodge Cast Iron Dutch Oven](#) that doubles as a slow cooker/casserole and when turned upside down the lid is a skillet. How awesome is that? I have a thing for items that double as others...
- 3. Plan your time accordingly.** Cooking on a wood stove takes longer than cooking on a gas or electric stove. It takes about the same as using a slow cooker. Give your food enough time to cook.
- 4. Know your temperatures.** The main part of your wood stove top will be the hottest. You can use canning rings to lift your pot up from the heat. The upper shelf of our wood stove is cooler. After I've browned the meat or gotten things to a boil, I move the pot to the upper shelf to stay at a simmer. The main cooking area of our wood stove measured at 250 degrees, which is in the average between the low and high setting on most slow cookers.



5. Watch your food. Keep an eye on how fast or slow your food is cooking. Too fast, turn down your drafts and move the food to a cooler area of the stove top. Too slow, open up your drafts and add more wood to the fire. Also, if you're using damp uncured wood, you won't get a hot fire.

6. Have fun! Cooking on the wood stove is fun. You can bake bread in a cast iron Dutch oven, [rolls](#), biscuits, and of course, stews, soups, chili, roasts, and even casseroles. Need some recipes? Check out my recipe section, this [Bean and Ham Soup](#) and these [Cabbage Rolls](#) would be perfect cooked on the wood stove.

Bean and Ham Soup-Frugal Suppers

Author: MelissaKNorris

Prep time: 10 mins Cook time: 2 hours Total time: 2 hours 10 mins

Serves: 12

Ingredients

- 1 ham bone with meat
- 1 cup diced onion
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 cup diced carrot
- 1 cup chopped rutabaga (or parsnips)
- 1 cup sliced celery
- 4 cups white beans
- 4 cups water
- Dash of salt and pepper

Instructions

1. Chop all of your vegetables up in fairly even size, so they cook evenly. Put your ham bone in a large stock pot, Dutch oven, or slow cooker. Dump in all your vegetables.
2. Add the beans, undrained if using canned, drained if you soaked dried beans the night before. Pour in 4 cups of water.
3. Bring to a low simmer on the stove top. Allow to simmer for about 2 hours, stirring every now and then.
4. Once meat is falling off the bone, transfer bone to a plate. Using tongs, pick off any good chunks of meat remaining on the bone, and put meat back into soup. Add a dash of pepper and salt. Serve.

Recipe by Melissa K. Norris at <http://melissaknorris.com/2014/01/bean-and-ham-soup-frugal-suppers/>

Melissa K. Norris is an author, radio show host, newspaper columnist, and blogger of [Pioneering Today](#), inspiring your faith and pioneer roots. She lives with her family in the Pacific Northwest and shares old-fashioned traditional skills for those of us living in a modern world through heirloom gardening, preserving the harvest, from scratch cooking, raising livestock, and self-sufficiency. You can visit her website at <http://melissaknorris.com/>

Emergency Sanitation Basics: Sewage

Joe Alton, M.D., aka Dr. Bones

As a physician, my main focus is keeping people healthy. Given the availability of modern medical care and sanitation techniques, my job is easier than it was for my predecessors one hundred years ago. Like many folks in today's society, I have been spoiled by high technology, mass production, and Big Pharma. Most feel that good health is just something that is due to them, and that they don't have to think about it anymore than they would their next breath.

Sanitation in a Societal Breakdown

Yet, in uncertain times, can we be so sure that our system for disposal of human waste will always be in place? From the aftermath of a severe storm to a complete societal breakdown, the answer is no.

When our infrastructure is working, we generally are able to provide fresh clean water for drinking and provide food for the table that is unlikely to be contaminated. We also have ways to flush waste from our immediate surroundings. When that infrastructure is damaged, we will be easy prey for infectious disease. One only has to look back to the earthquakes in Haiti and the subsequent Cholera epidemic there to know that this is true.

A growing number of people are now storing food for use in tough times, and quite a few are providing for the common defense by accumulating means of protecting themselves and their families. To their credit, many are also putting away medical supplies and learning skills to deal with injuries and common medical complaints. Few, however, have given a great deal of thought to how they will maintain a sanitary environment for their family or survival group in times of trouble. This is despite daily news reports of hundreds or even thousands of deaths due to this issue in many third world countries.

Why Sanitation Matters

Here is a pearl of wisdom from Ol' Dr. Bones that you can take to the bank: If you can keep your family clean, your water sterilized, your food properly prepared, and your waste effectively disposed of, you will do more to keep your loved ones healthy than anything I, as a physician, will be able to do. Your gauze bandages, your number 10 cans of beef Stroganoff, and your closetful of ammunition will be of little use if you allow infectious disease to run rampant among your people.

When electrical power is lost due to a storm, water utilities cannot operate the pumps that maintain water pressure in the pipes that travel to your home. This pressure is one way water utilities ensure that your water is free from harmful bacteria. When the pressure is lost, a boil water order is established by the local authorities. In our neck of the woods (South Florida), lessons have been learned the hard way by various hurricanes. The result was the outfitting of water treatment and distribution facilities with generators, but not every town or city in the country has this system in place.

Therefore, human sewage may be a big problem in the aftermath of a storm or a complete collapse. If the water isn't running, a community without a ready supply will have a nightmare on their hands after as little as three days. There are various examples of this in the recent past. In the grand majority, people were clueless as to what appropriate planning was with regards to simply flushing a toilet. After filling whatever porcelain or ceramic options they had, they proceeded to pick rooms where they would defecate and, as a result, their homes were uninhabitable in less than a week.

Here's where some simple planning pays off. If you have access to water, even water unfit to drink, you can have a working toilet by filling the tank with water before flushing or by pouring a couple of gallons directly into the toilet bowl. This will trigger the siphoning action of the plumbing and send your excrement on its merry way. This works well if you have a septic tank, although probably not forever.



“manual” flush

If you have municipal sewer lines, you have a sewer line known as a “lateral” that goes from your home to the sewer main. Find out if the sewer main is down or not. If the main line is functioning, you can use the process in the above paragraph. If the sewer main is down or blocked, the act of flushing the toilet will eventually back up sewage into the rest of your plumbing (known as backflow). There are backflow prevention valves that can be installed or might already be there; try to find out if you have them.



waterless toilet

So how would you deal with human waste when you have no water to spare for the purpose? If you are in your home, empty your toilet as much as possible; then, place two layers of garbage bags (the sturdier the better) inside and lower the lid to hold them in place. Once you have done your duty, pour some sand and some bleach solution over the waste; this will help deodorize. If you're a cat person, you have a head start as you've probably stored away some kitty litter to use. Also, consider some of the commercially produced powders that are on the market. After several uses, it will be clear that it's time to dispose of the waste, which you already have conveniently bagged.



**5 gallon bucket with
“luggable loo” toilet**

It might be wiser to move this bodily function outdoors, as our ancestors did. Here's where a 5 gallon bucket from Home Depot or Lowe's comes in handy. Line it with the same 2 garbage bags (have you stored plenty of these in your preps?) and place your toilet seat, a couple of short length 2 x 4s, or even a commercially produced top made just for that purpose on top, and you're good to “go”. Use sand, dirt, kitty litter, or even quicklime along with some bleach solution until the bag is half full or so. There are even self-composting toilets that are manufactured especially for power-down scenarios, but I have no experience with them. If you do, please let me know how they worked out.

Of course, there is the outdoor latrine, either single or multiple use. For those on the move, a single hole dug when the need arises will work, if covered effectively and some important rules are followed (see below). For the long term, you will want to dig a trench latrine. A [trench latrine](#) is basically just that, a trench dedicated to waste that can be utilized multiple times. The dimensions of the latrine will depend on the length of time it is needed and the number of people in your group. For a small group, make it 18 inches wide, at least 24 inches deep and at least several feet long. Keep the dirt from the trench in a pile next to it with a shovel, and make sure you cover up the waste after each use to discourage flies, etc.

As an aside, when I was traveling in the third world some years ago, the public restrooms consisted of a hole in the ground that you straddled and bent over. Not very dignified, but it did the job. Consider a longer trench and some kind of partition sheet if your group is big enough to have more than one person utilizing it at a time.

A main concern about any latrine or waste deposited in a hole is contamination of the local water supply. Follow these rules diligently when choosing latrine location and waste disposal outside:

- Don't place a latrine anywhere near your water supply (at least 200 feet away is best)
- Disperse single holes over as wide an area as possible (at least 200 feet away from water)
- Don't place latrines anywhere near where rain water runoff occurs
- Don't place latrines near food preparation or eating areas
- Avoid digging single use holes where others are likely to wander
- Holes dug in raised areas will be less likely to cause leaching into the water supply
- Consider areas in sunlight as they heat up the soil and speed decomposition

Although, as the survival medic, you might not consider all this to be part of your job description, it really is. You are the Chief Sanitation Officer, and it's your duty to make sure that you keep conditions in your retreat as healthy as possible. If you haven't made plans for sanitation, you're not as prepared as you have to be to keep your family healthy in tough times.

*Joe and Amy Alton are the authors of the #1 Amazon Bestseller "[The Survival Medicine Handbook](#)". See their articles in *Backwoods Home*, *Survival Quarterly*, and other great magazines. For over 400 articles on medical preparedness, go to their website at www.doomandbloom.net.*

Situational Awareness: Your Surroundings & Yourself

Chris Ray

Situational awareness is the most important skill set when it comes to your safety. By practicing situational awareness, you can avoid being in dangerous situations, possibly involving another person, unsafe driving conditions or any number of other things.

I define situational awareness as the ability to take in information about those around you, your surroundings as well self-analysis, interpret that information and act accordingly to your current situation. To fully develop this I'll briefly explore the three aspects of situational awareness.

Awareness of Those Around You

Coopers Color Code is absolutely a part of situational awareness. You can't avoid the danger if you aren't aware of it and you can't be aware of it if you're not watching for it. This is a skill set that I developed young. I was horribly picked on from grade one through grade nine. I learned that being unaware got my books dumped, got me punched or found me as the target of some other torment. This is a skill set some people are born with and others have to learn.

The Cooper Color Code was developed by Col. Jeff Cooper, USMC. Col. Cooper was one of America's premier firearms instructors, forming the American Pistol Institute. There have been many variants and this will be my take of the Cooper Color Code.

Condition White - White is the lowest level of awareness. This is the level you are at when at home and relaxed. If you are in Condition White out in public, you may be startled by someone as they pass in the grocery store or cut someone off in traffic and not realize it until they're in your rearview mirror being unfriendly in your general direction.

Condition Yellow - In condition yellow you are relaxed but fully aware of your surroundings. This is the place where you spend most of your day. There are no specific threats but you are aware that there could be and you are scanning for them. I think of it like the Terminator movies; the Terminator would scan every person or target it came into contact with. If the target was deemed safe, it stayed at Condition Yellow and moved to the next target. If the target was deemed a possible threat, the Terminator continued to scan the same threat or moved to Condition Orange.

Condition Orange - In condition orange, your mindset changes from relaxed and aware to "I may have to defend myself". You are focused on a single target and continue to scan others to see if they mean to do you harm. You also draw a mental line in the sand; telling yourself "if they do 'x', I will do 'y'". If they prove not to be a threat, you move back down to Condition Yellow. If they do 'x', you move to Condition Red.

This might be the most important part of this entire exercise. You have to decide right now how you will handle a threat so that when you are in Condition Orange or Red, you already know how you'll respond. Your heart will be racing and your mind will be taking in too much information to decide in THAT moment. In Condition Orange, you just draw the mental line in the sand and already know how you will respond.

Condition Red - You are ready to fight. You may or may not have to but you are mentally ready. Most of the time you won't actually have to. Mr. Dirtbag is often a coward and the simple act of you being aware will be enough to stop him. If Mr. Dirtbag does move to do you harm, you have already decided your action. Now you must act with as much force as is needed to stop the threat.

Here is an example:

My wife and I are at home in condition white, getting ready to go to the mall for an errand. We are both armed. We leave the house and switch to Condition Yellow. We remain there until we walk into the mall and three thug-looking guys stare us down as they enter right before us. We are now in Condition Orange, with all of them.

We have discussed this previously and agreed that if there was ever the need to draw on a single person, I would be the one to draw. If there is need to draw on multiple people, I draw on the right person, she on the left. This isn't to say that this is our first action, just what we would do if the situation dictates it. Since we have both moved to Orange, we are both making mental lines in the sand and waiting for one of the three to cross them. If the three continue into the mall and keep to themselves, we move back to Yellow. However, if they turn around, we move immediately to Red.

At this point, we haven't drawn on Mr. Dirtbag and friends but we are ready to if they take us down that road. If they turned around because they remember they forgot their receipt in the car and are going back to get it, we move back to Orange until they are out of sight. If they start to move toward us and clearly mean us harm, we would act according to them and stay in Condition Red until they moved on. At that point, we would de-escalate, eventually back down to Yellow.

You can learn a lot from just watching people. They often tell you things they wouldn't say with their mouths. In fact I think more people tell the truth with their actions than they do with their lips. This by itself isn't enough to be fully aware; it is just one piece of the puzzle.

Awareness of Your Surroundings

Being aware of your surroundings means not only paying attention to what you see but often what you don't, comparing what is normal to what you have in front of you and assessing it and looking for things that are irregular.

Here is an example of something standing out from what you are used to seeing. You often stop at McDonalds for coffee at 6:00 am. There are a few cars in the parking lot, lights on inside and you can see the employees working. If, one morning, you pull up and there are cars in the lot but there are no lights on and no one answers the drive-thru, the differences should be setting off some alarm bells.

Here is an example of something you might not see often but that you have to assess, depending on what you believe to be normal; you are finishing up your Christmas shopping at a popular mall and notice a backpack that is sitting on the floor, partially hidden, with no one near it. This is abnormal as you would normally expect to see people near the bag.

Awareness of Self

We're all aware of what mood we're in or how we feel about something, but sometimes we might not know why. For instance, there have been times when I've met someone and almost instantly wanted to punch them in the mouth. Does it make sense? No, not really. Should I feel that way? No, probably not. Should I pay attention to it? Absolutely, yes! I'm not easily angered, so when someone does anger me, I immediately go to Condition Orange and pay close attention to them.

There are often things that our subconscious picks up on that we often don't "see" right away, if at all. Call it intuition, your gut or the Holy Spirit, but when something inside starts sounding alarms do not silence them with logic. I think women have an easier time with this. Men can feel shame when feelings of fear, anger or other "bad" emotions come to the surface, so we ignore or explain them away. Sometimes awareness of one of these is enough to get you to take action, sometimes it could take more. The more you practice situational awareness, the easier it will become to notice things that would normally have gone unnoticed.

I did something recently that I have not done in many years! I went to the mall; not just any mall, mind you, but the Mall of America, the nation's biggest mall! I went for a work event, and since I hadn't been there in almost a decade, I thought I would walk around and see what I could see.

I came up with several observations and suggestions that could help one stay alert and safe in a crowded situation. This could be a mall, a state fair, or, in an emergency, it could be an evacuation route or center.

Awareness

Practicing situational awareness in any public setting can be difficult at times. It can be nearly impossible when you add hundreds or thousands of people. Using the Cooper color code is an effective way to gauge potential threats in low to moderately busy situations. However, if you are in a situation where you have, not only to scan for threats, but also need/want to take in the sites or look for someone you're meeting, it is quite difficult to assess every passerby for more than a second or two. In large groups of people, I change my scanning method somewhat. For example, a young teenage girl who is giggling with a friend is usually not going to be a threat. This being the case, I then dismissed groups of teenage girls as potential threats. The same could be said for a group of elderly gentleman, or any group of similar people. Now, of course, they would get a second look if they did something that got my attention, such as following me.

Because I was in a setting where people were there with purpose, I expected them to act in certain ways; looking at merchandise, walking to or from a store, looking for the next store to shop at, you get the idea. Anyone who did anything outside of these expected behaviors got more of my attention.

For example, there was a group of people sitting on benches. Some of them were talking, others were people watching and one of them was watching me. Because I thought it odd that a man in his late thirties or early forties was watching me, I made a point to look behind me as I passed. I then noticed that he got up and followed me. This could have been a total coincidence, but knowing my biggest threat in the mall is pickpockets, I decided to act instead of waiting to see what happened. I moved off to the side of the walkway and stopped, watching him as he passed. When he got a bit ahead of me, I went on my way again, making sure I knew where he was.

Maintaining awareness also makes you much more polite than the average person. At 6'0 tall and 220 pounds, I'm a fairly big guy. I lost count of how many people I had to dodge to keep from knocking them over or, in one case, getting run over by a motorized scooter. Playing this kind of leapfrog and trying to keep people at as much distance as I could also made me a harder target to pickpocket.

Sliding Into Condition White

I don't care who you are, it is impossible to maintain perfect situational awareness at all times, especially when you're in an environment where you need to split your attention between looking for someone in particular, finding a gift, maintaining a conversation, eating a meal and so on.

One sure fire way to slide back into condition white is using your phone. Below are some tips I used both on the occasions when had to use the phone, or when I was looking at an item.

I only used the phone in a non-busy area, and made sure my back was to the wall. I made sure to continue to scan every five to ten seconds. I also kept the phone close to my body and kept a solid grasp on it. I've watched footage of people getting their phones stolen right from their hands. They almost always have it as far from them as possible, yet not quite a full arm's length away. I had my wrists touching my frame and checked my peripherals frequently.

Limiting Mr. Murphy

Because I dislike Mr. Murphy and his law and want to limit the amount of things that do go wrong, special precautions should be taken in large groups of people. Below are some random security related ideas that go along with situational awareness.

- Don't put your wallet in your back pocket. The front is much harder to pickpocket from.
- Women, if you carry a purse, carrying it cross body won't keep it from being stolen but can limit pick pocketing.
- At the mall there were some parents using those kid "leashes". I used to think those were a bad idea until I watched a young couple with two kids. The wife was pushing the stroller, the husband was carrying bags and had the kid that could walk tethered to him with one of these. He frequently checked on him but the tether gave them a little more freedom than they would have had otherwise.

- Men – When using public restrooms, either do like the ladies and use the buddy system, or if going solo, use the stall. There was a crime wave here a few years back where a man was targeting men who were alone standing at the urinal. He would walk behind them and give them an elbow strike to the back of the head, then while they lay there unconscious he would empty their pockets.
- Women – When using a public restroom, the safest stall is the one with a solid wall to one side. You can place your purse on the floor in the corner. There is then no risk of someone taking it off the door hook or reaching under and grabbing it.
Always know the quickest way out of the area as well as an alternative route.
- Pay attention to anyone paying more attention to you than they are anything else. A nod and a smile can let them know you are aware of them. They might just think that you remind them of someone or they may have sinister intentions.
- If there is an emergency and everyone is heading for the exits; depending on the emergency, it might be best to let the crowd pass by and then leave. If you did as suggested above, you know where an alternate route is.
- One would think that evil couldn't hide in large groups of people. However, some very evil things were done at the Superdome during hurricane Katrina. The point here is that even in large crowds of people, those who want to do you harm can find pockets where foot traffic is light. This is one of the reasons to use the buddy system.
- Make your valuables hard to get to. I usually wear cargo pants and button the pockets. If you carry a bag or purse, make sure it is zipped. If you have one that doesn't close, while it might be handy, it is not secure from someone willing and with nimble fingers.
- If you are attacked, it will often come from behind you. Check your six, or look behind you frequently. This is a hard one to get used to, partly because there can be so much to scan in front of you, that looking behind you just doesn't occur to you. Think of how often you are supposed to check your mirrors while driving; every 5-8 seconds is recommended. Since walking is a much slower pace, I think checking your six every 30 seconds is sufficient. I walk maybe 100 yards in the parking garage at work and I often check my six twice.
- When you're in public and having a conversation, keep your eyes moving at all times. It's easy to become hyper-focused on a conversation. I worked security at a local high school and watched a teenage boy who was involved in a conversation, walk into oncoming traffic and get hit by a car. In shock, he got up and tried to walk away, we stopped him and called an ambulance. I wonder if he learned as much as I did from the experience.
- It's easy to get sucked into what you're doing at work. Because workplace violence is so prevalent, I try to listen to what is going on around me, especially when there is a sound that doesn't fit. Just because I have seen this person every work day for the last five years, doesn't mean that he isn't capable of violence in the work place.
- When we go out to eat, I prefer to have my back to a wall, and always sit facing the door. I continuously scan the room and everyone that comes in the door.

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

Budget Food Storage-Printable

Linda Loosli

Do you need a Budget Food Storage-Printable? It's at the very end of this post! I often get asked this question: "Food Storage-Where Do I Start?" So I had a printable made to help get you started. First, think of what you eat everyday. Your food storage should be filled with food you are used to eating, cooking and baking with everyday. Please think in your mind what you eat almost everyday. My husband loves to eat cereal and bananas with milk while reading the newspaper each morning to start his day. So, of course we buy the cheapest, biggest bags of cold cereal a shopping basket will hold. I am not kidding. Remember, I do not like to grocery shop. Next, for my breakfast I like oatmeal, a little honey, no milk, raisins and pecans or almonds. I do make smoothies with fruit and veggies from time to time as well. I do not want oatmeal everyday. I also like my whole wheat bread toasted. I am just giving you a few ideas to think about for breakfast. Mickey Mouse waffles are a must for my grandkids.

So basically my breakfasts consist of: milk, cereal, fresh bananas, oatmeal, honey, raisins, nuts. The smoothies would have spinach, kale, celery and a variety of fruits. I would need wheat to grind to make my bread, yeast, lemon juice, salt, etc. I would need water to make the smoothies, oatmeal and the bread. We need **14 gallons of water** per person per day.

So here is my budget food storage shopping list for breakfast:

- Cereal-easy to store
- Bananas-I could use fresh or freeze dried bananas
- Milk-fresh milk or I could buy some long term milk in a #10 can in case a disaster or unforeseen emergency happened
- Oatmeal-easy to store-I can make oatmeal in 15 minutes-[make your own oatmeal](#) in a jar
- Honey-long term storage/Sugar is another long term sweetener
- Raisins/Nuts-long term storage, although the nuts must be kept in the freezer or they go rancid
- Spinach, Kale and Celery-I freeze my spinach, dehydrate my Kale and make powder, and use freeze dried celery, if needed
- Water-I need the water to make the milk if all I had was instant or dry milk
- Whole wheat I have stored-I buy 200 pounds at a time-I am very fussy where I get my whole wheat-Hard White Wheat
- Yeast-some make bread without yeast...I prefer my whole bread bread recipe...it is who I am
- Salt-its a basic necessity to make several things to eat
- Baking powder/Baking Soda (basics-to stock)
- Oil (be careful, oil does go rancid) but I need it to make my bread (I buy Olive and Coconut)



Food Storage: Where do I Start?

	Planned Meals	Extras I could Purchase
Sunday	Breakfast Lunch Dinner	
Monday	Breakfast Lunch Dinner	
Tuesday	Breakfast Lunch Dinner	
Wednesday	Breakfast Lunch Dinner	
Thursday	Breakfast Lunch Dinner	
Friday	Breakfast Lunch Dinner	
Saturday	Breakfast Lunch Dinner	

Okay, so you can see if you have canned your own food you are in great shape. If you have a garden you are in great shape. So, now every time you go to the grocery store you will pick up a few extra bags of cereal (in our case). Maybe one #10 can of instant milk. Grab a container of honey or sweetener of choice. Start contacting your friends and work together to buy in bulk, mainly to save money. Buy a few buckets with airtight lids and fill and date them with oats if you like oatmeal. Buy one extra large bag of flour (6 months is the shelf life-you cannot see the mold spores, but they are there, in my opinion). I am very careful what I buy and store so I do not waste a penny. Learn to make biscuits. Learn to make bread.

So here is my budget food storage shopping list for lunch:

- Bread-I make bread because it is critical to keep my grocery costs down-learn to make tortillas, bread, pizza dough or biscuits
- Water packed canned tuna and chicken. They have a fairly short shelf life (2-3 years). This keeps me out of the store and is cheaper than buying freshly sliced meat or expensive pre-packed lunch meat.
- Mayonnaise and Miracle Whip (typically 1 year shelf life)
- Peanut butter and jam (typically 1 year shelf life)
- Apples (they last a couple months depending on the type of apple and stored in the refrigerator)
- Carrots (one month-if stored properly in the refrigerator)
- Soups are good to have in your pantry as well (some store longer than others)
- Water, water and more water

Okay for long term, pick up several cans of tuna or chicken/turkey. If you can pressure can your meat that is awesome! Grab extra containers of peanut butter and jams or jelly. If you make jam or jelly even better. Grab a few jars of mayonnaise or Miracle Whip. A few extra apples in the refrigerator would taste great if we were unable to travel on the roads because of a disaster or unforeseen emergency.

So here is my budget food storage shopping list for dinner:

- Salad or vegetables (I make my own dressings)
- Dehydrated potatoes are a staple in my home
- Pasta, quinoa or rice with some kind of meat (I buy hamburger in bulk and package in one pound baggies)
- Chicken or turkey (I buy frozen in bulk)-if you raise chickens that is awesome, hunters are prepared for the unexpected for sure, learn to smoke or pressure can your meat
- Water, water and more water
- Long term budget food storage: pick up some cans of green beans, corn, beans (dry or canned), quinoa, rice and pasta
- Learn to dehydrate what you grow in your garden or on your fruit trees
- Learn to can/bottle the fruits you grow.....or buy cases of fruits and vegetables as your budget allows.

Once my family was grown and I'd retired from my job, I changed my focus and started my own blog, [Food Storage Moms](#), mainly because I was seeing what was happening to the economy and disastrous events that were occurring around the world. I wanted to teach people to live on less money and in order to do that I needed to experiment with my own life. If I was going to teach the world to be self-sufficient, I knew I had to be self-sufficient.



Food Storage: Where do I Start?

Planned Meals

Extras I could Purchase

<i>Sunday</i>	Breakfast	
	Lunch	
	Dinner	
<i>Monday</i>	Breakfast	
	Lunch	
	Dinner	
<i>Tuesday</i>	Breakfast	
	Lunch	
	Dinner	
<i>Wednesday</i>	Breakfast	
	Lunch	
	Dinner	
<i>Thursday</i>	Breakfast	
	Lunch	
	Dinner	
<i>Friday</i>	Breakfast	
	Lunch	
	Dinner	
<i>Saturday</i>	Breakfast	
	Lunch	
	Dinner	

Primitive Prognostication

Jason

Most of the time the weather man takes a beating from us. We expect the forecast to be accurate & reliable, for the most part it is. When they are right, we expected that. When they are wrong, we sure let them have it. I will admit that I surely take the weather forecast for granted. Reminds me of a left tackle in football. The entire game he could play lights out, never letting anyone past him giving the quarterback plenty of time to throw the ball, that's what you expect of him. However, it just takes that one time, that one mistake & the defender goes right past him & knocks the quarterback into next week & out for the rest of the season. We tend to forget the times the weather was predicted right & dwell on the few times it's wrong.

One of the first tasks I do before a hiking or camping trip, before getting my pack together, is check the weather forecast. If bad weather is on the way then I tend to take that into consideration. I will however, go outside & take a look around & get a grasp of the weather in my exact area. Weather forecasting by news stations give a general estimate for a general area. I can remember a time this summer, my day off was the next day & the forecast was for greater chances of rain than not. With my day off coming up, I was watching the weather closely for the past few days & using my best judgment I decided to go against the forecast & go camping. Not a drop the entire time.

In case of a survival situation, a power outage or if you are in a wilderness area for days or weeks, you will need to figure out a way to predict the weather for a more enjoyable experience.

Here are some ways you can use nature to help figure out the upcoming weather.

- Ropes swell before a storm.

(Especially prevalent in natural fiber & primitive handmade cordage, a dry rope will absorb the rise of water vapor from the humidity of an approaching storm. Ropes will be less forgiving of knots & a general difficulty of use.)

- Wild animals tend to feed heavily before a storm.

(The oncoming low pressure causes a variety of reactions. Changing pressure causes irritation, aggravation & general unease. This increase in overall activity gives predators a better opportunity & low pressure has a side effect of giving predator's enhanced senses like vision & hearing. Most flying predators & prey seek lower altitudes for comfort so having everyone on the same level will definitely stir things up.)

- Animals make noise before a storm.

(No matter what species you are, when you are irritated you want to make it known. Birds, frogs, dogs, insects & just about everything else that can make a noise will do so.)

-Herding animals get together before a storm.

(The herding mentality of animals like horses & cows will band together for comfort & protection. Cows will lie down together & horses will stand in tight formations to protect themselves from driving rain or strong, cold winds.)

-Birds fly closer to the ground before a storm.

(The irritation felt by the changing air pressure can be described as similar to our ears popping in a rising airplane. Imagine yourself as a bird with highly sensitive senses, you would want out of that immediately too.)

-Frogs stay in water & croak before a storm.

(Frogs return to the shelter of their home in the water for protection & comfort. Then, the pressure changes also cause irritation & they let us know.)

-Biting insects bite & annoy more before a storm.

(Flies, gnats & mosquitoes are irritated by the pressure change so they seek lower ground & bother us while camping.)

-Bees are nowhere to be found before a storm.

(The saying goes, “A bees wings never get wet.” It’s critical to bees navigation senses that they don’t leave the hive in the rain or they won’t make it back.)

-Flowers close up before a storm.

(To protect their pollen inside, the pedals on flowers like tulips will close to prevent pollen from washing out.)

-Tree leaves curl up before a storm.

(High humidity & winds curl up the leaves on deciduous trees showing their backsides. The silver maple tree is famous for this effect.)

-Body aches & pains appear before a storm.

(There have been countless studies on the effects of weather on the human body. The pressure changes that take place both inside & outside the body apparently wreak havoc on our bones & joints. Studies show the combination of pressure changes, temperature changes & humidity effect people with ailments like arthritis & other bone & joint disorders. In our house we are fortune enough to always know when the mercury is about to hit the floor. When we had our child, my wife received an epidural for the labor & the day before a cold snap comes in, the location where the needle was inserted gives her a little discomfort. It’s never wrong to date.)

-Improved vision before a storm.

(Low pressure air moving in is less dense with fewer impurities in the air allowing us to see further. The saying goes, “The further you see, the closer the rain.”)

-Improved hearing before a storm.

(The low cloud cover provides better acoustics making for improved hearing.)

-Improved vision & hearing gives predators an advantage over prey in low pressure atmosphere that relate to the previous examples listed.

-The lower the clouds the greater the chances for a storm.

(Storm clouds are typically large, low hanging clouds so this is more of a general statement. Low clouds bring rain.)

-“Red sky in the morning, sailors take warning.”

(Most of us have heard this saying & most nautical limericks are reliable. An orange-reddish sunrise is typically a sky with high, few clouds of high pressure traveling east & away from you. The color comes from the dense, high pressure, dusty air in front of the sunrise. This saying is just telling you that a dry day just left you, commonly followed by a different front of air.)

-Rainbow in the morning means imminent rain.

(I had an experience with this first hand, just this past summer driving home from work at about 6 in the morning. Driving straight south on the interstate I looked to my right to see a beautiful double rainbow. What a sight to see, a double rainbow where I could see both beginning & ends. To my left was an orange sunrise & behind the rainbow was a very dark grey wall of storm clouds. Needless to say, a couple minutes later the sky let loose & came down on me. The low rising sun, free of clouds, was hitting the water droplets in the approaching storm clouds from the west.)

-Smoke from a campfire stays low to the ground before a storm.

(The moisture laden air keeps the smoke particles full of water vapor making it slow rising.)

- “Wind from the east, not fit for man nor beast.”

(The typical flow of winds come from the west so a general assumption is winds coming from somewhere other than the prevailing winds direction will bring weather.)

-Seagulls stay close to land before a storm

(Another maritime rule that is trustworthy, watching the seagulls. Rumor has it that New England fisherman would go as the seagulls would. Sailors would watch if seagulls leave the shores for the ocean, if they stayed so did the ships.)

-Campfire is less active before a storm.

(Using firewood from local wood or downed trees would have a higher moisture content due to the increase humidity. All aspects of firestarting would be difficult along with the sounds of popping & crackling wood releasing their moisture.

The sources I referenced : *Weather Wisdom* by Albert Lee – *Mike Lynch's Minnesota Weatherwatch* by Mike Lynch

Jason loves to hike and camp with his family. When he is not spending time outdoors, he likes to share his love of nature and the outdoors by writing for [Around the Cabin](#).

Natural Yeast Starter Flakes: The Biggest Little Thing in Your Bug Out Bag

Melissa Richardson

What is Natural Yeast, and what are yeast “flakes”? A natural Yeast starter is a mixture of flour and water full of beneficial bacteria and yeasts capable of leavening bread. Once you learn to keep a starter for leavening bread, you never have to buy yeast from the store again. Starter flakes are dehydrated starter bits that can work like the “seeds” to grow a new starter.



If you're like most preppers, you've stocked up on enough SAF yeast “bricks” to double as a barricade. There are three main problems with relying on commercial yeast for a long-term safety net.

1. Time: Every day that passes is one day closer to the expiration date. Starter flakes on the other hand, never expire, and “living” starters stay alive as long as they are fed (flour and water). They are often passed from generation to generation for centuries. I can trace my starter's “geneology” to 1847.
2. Depletion: Every time you use your commercial yeast, there is that much less, and you never get that amount back. Natural yeast starters double in volume every time you feed them. You essentially HAVE to use it or discard some to keep the quantity in check. With my little starter I keep at home, I have grown enough yeast in one week to provide starter to over 300 people.
3. Portability: You probably don't have any bricks of yeast in your Bug Out Bag do you? Of course not! There isn't room for it. Even if you had a small packet or two and got your hands on some wheat down the line, you can't make enough bread to make it worth even that small space. With Natural Yeast, one tiny, weightless envelope of flakes provides the opportunity for endless loaves of bread.

Starters provide you one added benefit that commercial yeast can never touch: protection from pathogenic bacteria. The organisms in a living natural yeast starter are pro-biotic, and will inoculate your stomach and intestinal flora with beneficial bacteria you are going to need in a survival setting. Here are just a few of the ways these good “bugs” can protect you in survival:

1. Maximize nutrition while minimizing harmful effects caused by wheat's natural defense mechanisms and anti-nutrient enzymes.
2. Pre-digest sugars that can be harmful to diabetics- especially when access to protein and leafy-green fiber is limited.
3. Crowds out bad bacteria in your gut, keeping you healthy by leaving very little room for them to colonize and cause trouble.
4. Will actually alert your body's defense mechanisms (T-Cells) to the presence of bad bacteria, helping your body fight off pathogens faster and more efficiently.

Those of you who already know this and have cultivated your own starters as part of your homesteading program may not have considered storing flakes in your Bug Out bag simply because you already have a living starter. But consider: what if there is an earthquake and your starter jar is broken? What if the whole kitchen is broken? Knowing you have flakes stored to reconstitute will give you peace of mind wherever you go for safety. Even if you don't know how to bake with sourdough, starter flakes do not take up much room, are good indefinitely, and offer a multitude of benefits in a weightless square inch of space.

If you do not have a starter, starter flakes can be requested for free from calebwarnock@yahoo.com, www.carlsfriends.net (click on "how to get Carl's starter"), or purchased from Cultures For Health. Each of these are shipped with reconstitution instructions in the package.

If you have a starter already, making starter flakes is a cinch.

You will need:

- Fresh, mature starter (starter that has bubbled up). Do NOT use starter that does not show any bubbles, or starter that has collected liquid on top. This will not produce good flakes.
- Parchment paper or dehydrator sheet
- Rubber spatula/frosting spreader
- Oven or other warm/dry area
- envelope/plastic bag or watertight storage container (whatever you prefer to store your flakes in).

To make the flakes:

1. Take a small scoop of your starter with your spreader and spread it very thinly across your parchment (if you have a thick starter like I do, you might need to dilute the scoop in a bowl with a teaspoon of water to help it spread thin).



2. Place the parchment in your oven with the oven light on for 12-24 hours. If using a dehydrator, put your machine on the lowest setting.

- When the starter is dried it should curl away from the parchment on the edges. Use your fingers or the back of a spoon to gently break up the starter into smaller pieces.



4. Roll your parchment into a funnel and pour the flakes into your envelope or bag.

To Reconstitute your Starter flakes:

You will need:

- 1 tsp starter flakes
- A small bowl or container (glass or ceramic, but nothing containing base metals!)
- Canning jar or ceramic crock (but nothing containing base metals!)
- Stirring utensil
- 3 cups of flour
- 3 cups of water (purified is best, but without any purifying drops or iodine tablets)

Instructions:

Day 1

1. Place starter flakes and 1 tablespoon of water in small bowl.
2. When flakes are softened, break up with stirring utensil and add 1 tablespoon flour
3. Place in a warm spot (70 degrees Celsius at least) to ferment for 24 hours.

Day 2

1. Check for bubbles. You probably won't have any but might have a brownish liquid on top. That's a good sign.
2. Pour off liquid, if any. Feed the starter 1 Tablespoon water and 1 heaping Tablespoon flour.
3. Stir well and set to ferment in warm location.

Day 3

1. Bubbles? Liquid? Hopefully yes, but if not, keep going.
2. Feed starter $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water and a heaping $\frac{1}{4}$ cup flour.
3. Stir well and set to ferment in warm location



Day 4

Your starter should be bubbling by now, and you have enough starter to fall into a regular morning/evening feeding schedule (if you do not have refrigeration) or twice weekly schedule (if you do have refrigeration).

If you do not have bubbles by this point, something may have gone amiss. You can continue building your starter for a few more days, possibly adding in some organic apple skins or grapes to boost fermentation (you will take these out once your starter begins to bubble), or you can reduce your starter back down to 1 tsp and build again from there.

Most importantly, take the time to practice this process now, before the “price” paid for learning a new skill is too expensive to afford. Either way, having starter flakes in your bag can’t hurt. It is easier to learn to use a tool you have in your hand, than one you don’t. 😊



Melissa Richardson is an instructor, blogger, and author of [The Art of Baking with Natural Yeast](#), and [Beyond Basics with Natural Yeast](#). She is passionate about grain-related research and teaching people to bake with natural yeast to improve self-sufficiency and health, which has earned her the title of “The Bread Geek.” Melissa has been featured on multiple news programs, newspaper articles, and has taught thousands of people to bake through her personal and online tutorials. She blogs at thebreadgeek.com, and as @thebreadgeek on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest.

How to Use Pool Shock to Purify Water

Gaye Levy

If I were to ask how many of you store liquid bleach along with your other prepping supplies, I am certain that a good percentage of you would raise your hands. Liquid bleach is a powerful disinfectant and sanitizer but did you know that there is something better? Something with an almost indefinite shelf life that is inexpensive and takes almost no room to store?

That something is the chemical [Calcium Hypochlorite](#) most commonly known as [Pool Shock](#).

I have known about Pool Shock for years but because it is not readily available in my area, I never took the time to search it out so I could stockpile some for my own emergency preps. That has now changed and today I plan to show you how to use Pool Shock the easy way, step by step.

Why Not Bleach?

Before we start, you may be asking “why not use liquid bleach?”. There are a few problems with liquid bleach. It takes a lot of room to store bleach plus the usable shelf life is only six months to a year depending on storage conditions.

The folks at [Clorox](#) say this:

The active ingredient in liquid bleach, sodium hypochlorite, is very sensitive to high heat and freezing, but under normal home storage conditions, it should still perform well for nine to twelve months.

In addition to a limited shelf life, there is another problem. I have had reports from [Backdoor Survival](#) readers telling me that in their area, they can only purchase “Clorox Ultra” which is concentrated. When I called Clorox to ask how to use concentrated bleach to purify water, they said that it was not intended to be used in that manner and why would I want to do that anyway. Seriously, their representative actually said that.

Pool Shock – The Boilerplate

When I started doing research for this article, I visited some of the most respected survival and preparedness blogs and forums for background material. After all, pool shock is pool shock and there must be some standards for use, right?

With just one exception, all of the sites I visited included this boilerplate from the EPA:

You can use granular calcium hypochlorite to disinfect water.

Add and dissolve one heaping teaspoon of high-test granular calcium hypochlorite (approximately ¼ ounce) for each two gallons of water, or 5 milliliters (approximately 7 grams) per 7.5 liters of water.

The mixture will produce a stock chlorine solution of approximately 500 milligrams per liter, since the calcium hypochlorite has available chlorine equal to 70 percent of its weight.

To disinfect water, add the chlorine solution in the ratio of one part of chlorine solution to each 100 parts of water to be treated. This is **roughly** equal to adding 1 pint (16 ounces) of stock chlorine to each 12.5 gallons of water or (**approximately** ½ liter to 50 liters of water) to be disinfected.

To remove any objectionable chlorine odor, aerate the disinfected water by pouring it back and forth from one clean container to another.

Have your eyes glazed over yet? Mine have. Being an accountant, I like to deal in absolutes so what is this business about “one heaping teaspoon”? Plus, what’s up with the references to “approximately” and “roughly”?

I decided that it was time to do my own testing, and sure enough, each time I measured out a heaping teaspoon, I had different results; they ran the gamut from 1 1/4 teaspoons to 2 teaspoons. This made my head hurt.

Another thing. Over and over I read that you should use pool shock that is a minimum of 78% calcium hypochlorite with the balance being inert ingredients. Fair enough, but there are two problems with this. First, what you find locally may be 68%, it may be 78%, or it may be something else. I sourced mine from [Amazon](#) and it was 73% calcium hypochlorite. Second, the EPA, makes no such recommendation or at least none that I could find. They simply say “high-test”.

Did I mention this made my head hurt?

But there is more. I actually found a couple of sites that said to use one heaping **tablespoon** of Pool Shock for each two gallons of water! You know, just because you find something on the internet does not mean it is true.

My conclusion? The exact amount and the exact percentage does not matter as long as it is within a reasonable range and close to the EPA standard. I do think it is important that the pool shock does not contain other additives that may or may not be safe even when highly diluted. Other than that, however, it is my belief that the precise percentage of Calcium Hypochlorite to inert ingredients does not matter as long as it is 68% or higher.

For my own use, I settled on 1 teaspoon of pool shock per gallon of water when making up my stock chlorine solution. Then, to disinfect water, I used 3/4 ounce of my pool shock solution to treat a gallon of water. This makes it easy to calculate how much to use, regardless of the size of your container.

Step-by-Step: How to Purify Water Using Pool Shock

The first thing I did was gather my supplies. Notice that I used [eye protection goggles](#) and rubber gloves. Other supplies included an empty bleach bottle, funnel, shot glass, and measuring spoons.

I verified the size of my stock chlorine solution container, namely a repurposed bleach bottle. My bottle held 1.42 gallons and I wrote this on the outside with a Sharpie pen. My intent, however, was to only prepare 1 gallon of stock solution to keep the math simple.



After donning my protection gear, I added water to my stock solution bottle, carefully measuring the quantity. I used exactly one gallon of water.

I then measured out some pool shock; one level teaspoon to be exact. I put the cap back on the bottle and swished it around a bit. I gave it a sniff test and it definitely smelled bleach-like.

The next step was to purify water. I wanted to make drinking water and for me, the smaller the jug the better. I chose a 64 ounce repurposed apple juice jug. Remember the easy math? The EPA says 1 part chlorine solution to 100 parts water so the math is $64/100 = .64$ ounces.

Keeping things easy, that translates into approximately 2/3rd ounce. Remember, the EPA guideline uses the word “approximately” all over the place. That was good enough for me. To easily measure the proper dilution, I used a [mini shot glass](#) that had measurement markings along the side.



Be sure to pour your pool shock into your water and not the other way around. The last thing you want is to splash the solution on yourself on the surrounding surfaces (although you have probably noticed that I did this outdoors).

After preparing my newly purified water, I drank up. Three things. I did not throw up, I did not get diarrhea and I did not get sick or die.

I am comfortable with the results even though the solution I made may have been slightly stronger than the EPA guidelines. Then again, given the vagueness of the EPA guidelines, perhaps my measurements were spot on.

Note: I did not find that my water had an objectionable smell or taste. True, it was not sweet tasting like the water coming out of my Royal Berkey but it was palatable. If your own purified water has an unpleasant odor, simply aerate it by pouring it back and forth between clean containers. This trick applies to any water, not just water treated with pool shock.

Label your pool shock solution. This is powerful stuff. Get out your Sharpie and label the jug with as much information as you can. Store it in the same manner you store liquid bleach, up high and away from pets and children and in a location that is cool, dark and dry.



Also store your unused pool shock safely. Because it is corrosive, I chose a mason jar with a [plastic lid](#). Plus, rather than empty the pool shock into the jar, I sealed the plastic bag it came in with a clip and stuffed the bag inside of the jar.

Other Handling and Storage Considerations

I contacted the manufacturer of the pool shock I purchased and requested a Material Safety Data Sheet on the product. They promptly responded and here is what it said about handling and storage:

Keep product tightly sealed in original containers. Store product in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area. Store away from combustible or flammable products. Keep product packaging clean and free of all contamination, including, e.g. other pool treatment products, acids, organic materials, nitrogen-containing compounds, dry powder fire extinguishers (containing mono-ammonium phosphate), oxidizers, all corrosive liquids, flammable or combustible materials, etc.

Do not store product where the average daily temperature exceeds 95° F. Storage above this temperature may result in rapid decomposition, evolution of chlorine gas and heat sufficient to ignite combustible products.

Recommendations

Now that I have been through the process and understand the math, I am comfortable using pool shock to purify water for drinking, hygiene, and sanitation purposes. It is not, however, an excuse for not storing water nor an excuse for not having a supply of traditional water purification liquids or tabs that are pre-measured and simple to carry with you in bug-out-bags and emergency kits.

As far as I am concerned, the pool shock I have purchased is reserved for dire emergency use, period. Yes, I feel it is safe, but it is still a powerful chemical solution as is liquid bleach. I will use it as the water purification method of last resort and if the time comes, I will be thankful I have it on hand.

Disclaimer

I have to say this: I am not a chemist and I am not an expert. My methods are my own and they work for me. That being said, if you have any hesitation at all, visit other resources including the EPA and make the decision to use pool shock your own and not just something someone told you to do. Here is a link: [Emergency Disinfection of Drinking Water](#).

The Final Word

Everywhere you look you will see a recommendation to store bleach for water purification. I have made that recommendation and so have many, if not most, of my blogging peers. What you may not have seen is that liquid bleach has a limited shelf life of 6 to 12 months. I fear that this could be leaving a lot of people ill prepared to produce safe, potable water in an emergency.

This means that a person that began prepping a year ago, and does not know to rotate their bleach, is already living with false security when it comes to water purification. And what about people that have been prepping longer?

As long as pool shock is stored properly, it will have an almost indefinite shelf life plus, a small one pound package will treat many thousands of gallons of water. Ten thousand to be exact. It can be mixed and used as potable water and as a disinfectant, just like bottled liquid bleach.

At the end of the day, do your own research and decide for yourself. All I can say is that for me, the \$13 investment was more than worth it for peace of mind down the road.

***About Gaye:** Gaye Levy started [Backdoor Survival](#) so that she could share her angst and concern about our deteriorating economy and its impact on ordinary, middle-class folks. She also wanted to become a Prepper of the highest order and to share her knowledge as she learned it along the way. On Backdoor Survival you will find survival and preparedness tools and tips for creating a self-reliant lifestyle through thoughtful prepping and optimism.*

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

How-to Guide – DIY Wall-hanging Canned Food Storage

Alex

Introduction:

When my wife and I moved into our new home last year, we quickly filled the basement kitchen cabinets with our canned food. At the same time, we had an unfinished, stud-exposed wall in the underneath-the-stairs storage room. We decided we could better utilize this space by building a vertical canned food rotation system.

Our solution allowed for 17 columns of standard sized cans at 16 cans per column for a total storage space of 272 cans.

Since I'm describing this after the fact, it was difficult to get pictures, and unfortunately, I have no pictures of the process, so I'll do my best to be as detailed as possible.

You may need to modify the plans as necessary to fit your mounting location as well as the material counts and sizes below to fit your designated space.



Required Materials:

- 1 Box of 1 1/2" wood screws
- 1 4'x8' sheet of 1/2" plywood
- 1 2"x4"x36"
- 1 5.5" piece of scrap
- 1 4.75" piece of scrap
- 1 1"x8"x96"
- 1 1"x2"x96"
- 18 1"x4"x48"
- 18 1"x3"x48"

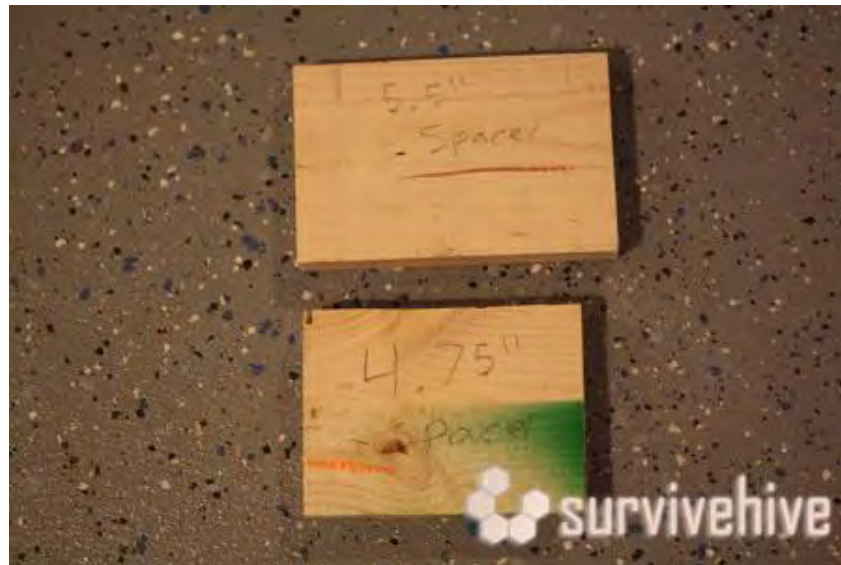
Required Tools:

- Drill driver, with assorted drill bits
- Table saw, or circular saw and a steady hand
- Tape measure
- Pencil

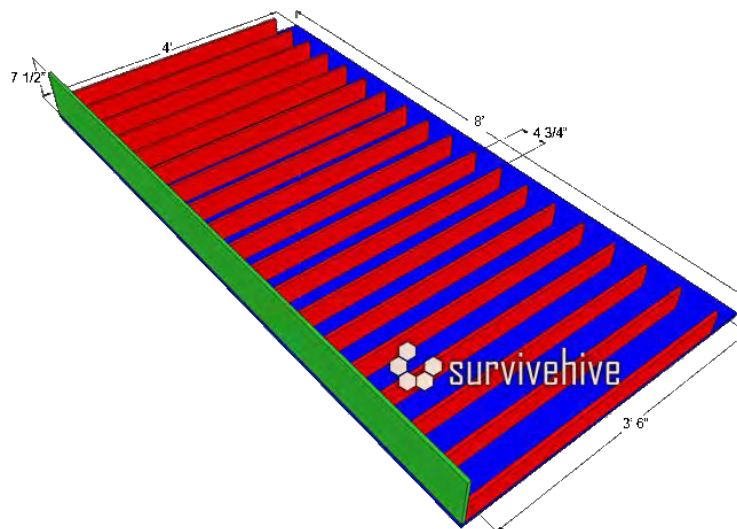
Cutting and build preparation:

1. Cut each 1"x4" piece to 42". Yours could be taller. We went shorter to allow room for the 1"x8" that will sit along the bottom to catch the cans, and a 5.25" gap at the top to load the cans in, since ours butts up against the ceiling.
2. We cut the 1"x3" pieces to 38.5" to leave a 3.5" gap at the bottom for removing the cans.
3. We cut 13 small angled pieces off of the 2"x4" to sit in the bottom of each column and push the cans out as gravity brings them down.

- I used some scrap lumber to cut a 5.5" and 4.75" piece of 1"x4" to use as quick measurement guides.



NOTE: This picture is not to scale. It shows 19 1x4s (red.) In reality, only 18 1x4s are used with these plans.



- I started by holding a 1"x4" piece (red) against the right edge (short side) of the plywood (blue) and drawing a line.
- I then drew a line 5.25" down from the top of the plywood (blue) (long side.)
- Use a small drill bit to drill pilot holes in the middle of the .75" area between the right edge of the plywood (blue) and the line you drew. This makes it easy to hold the 1"x4" (red) against the top line and left line, and complete the next step.
- Using the pilot holes you just drilled screw the 1"x4" (red) along the right edge and the line, making sure to align the top with the line 5.25" down from the top.
- Take the 4.75" spacer and butt it up against the vertical 1"x4" (red) that you just screwed into place. Now take your pencil along the opposite edge, and slowly pull the spacer down along the vertical 1"x4" (red). You will now have a parallel line 4.75" away from the vertical 1"x4" (red).

6. Repeat the previous step with the 5.5" spacer. You should now have two parallel lines, .75" apart designating where your next vertical 1"x4" (red) will go.
7. Drill Pilot holes in between the two lines you just drew.
8. Repeat steps 5-7 until you have all your vertical sections (red) in place.
9. Butt the 1"x8" (green) horizontally against the bottom of the vertical 1"x4"s (red), and screw it in to each 1"x4" (red) bottom.
10. Place the 1"x2" (not shown in diagram above) at the end of the 1"x8" (green) and screw it down to serve as a lip to keep the cans from rolling off.
11. Now take your 1"x3" (not shown in diagram above) pieces and skipping the farthest left and farthest right, center them on the 1"x4" (red) vertical pieces, while aligned with the top of the vertical pieces and screw them in. These will serve as a lip to keep the cans stacked.
12. For the end pieces, you can center them, screw them in, then mark a line along the outer edge to cut off the excess width.
13. Taking your small angled pieces of 2"x4", screw them on top of the 1"x8" (green) centered in each column. This will serve to push the cans out toward the 1"x2" lip.
14. You're finished with the building! Now it's up to you to determine the best and safest method to hanging the entire thing on a wall. DISCLAIMER: This thing will be heavy when loaded. Make ABSOLUTELY sure you're tied in to enough studs to support the weight.

Conclusion:

Sit back, and enjoy your hard work.

Alex ("Maximus") is an Air Force Tactical Communications Veteran with many years of experience living in less-than-ideal, even hostile conditions in combat theaters. After his enlistment, he worked for the Department of Defense analyzing Command and Control software for vulnerabilities, and managed the Air Force's Wireless Communications program. He was an Emergency Management volunteer and Storm Spotter in Altus, OK for six years. He now lives in Utah with his wife and step-son building his preparations, enjoying Ham Radio, and working on his website - <https://www.survivehive.com>.

The One Simple Secret to Surviving Any Crisis

Daisy Luther

When disaster strikes, will you be ready? Will you be organized, calm, and ready to adapt to whatever the situation brings? Sometimes we have some warning, and sometimes things happen out of the blue. There is one simple secret that will allow you to sail through nearly any crisis. It doesn't cost a lot of money, or take up an entire roomful of storage space.

It's your ability to accept the scenario.

The more time you spend denying that this could ever happen to you, happen in your home town, or occur at all, the less time you have to take definitive action. In fact, your willingness to accept that disaster could strike before it ever does puts you even further ahead, because you'll be ready for immediate action without wasting valuable time wrapping your brain around it.

We recently hovered on [the edge of evacuation for 12 days due to the King Fire](#), a forest fire that nearly reached 100,000 acres. We got up on a sunny Saturday morning, never realizing that would be the day an angry man would punctuate a domestic dispute by setting fire to a tree in the other person's yard. Certainly, no one expected that one act of anger to set off a fire that would exceed the size of the city of Atlanta.

However, he did set that fire, and it came as close as 2 miles to our home over the almost-two-weeks that we watched with bated breath.

During the fire, I joined a number of local groups online so that I could get the most up-to-the-minute information, and during this time, I took lots of notes of my observations. The thing that was very clear is that those who were at least somewhat prepared handled the situation far better than those who simply couldn't accept that this threat was actually happening to them.

As someone who has studied preparedness for many years, I witnessed firsthand the classic exemplar of human behavior during a disaster. Tess Pennington, the author of [The Prepper's Blueprint](#), wrote an article last year called [The Anatomy of a Breakdown](#). In the article, she pointed out that in the event of disaster, society devolves in a predictable pattern with four distinct phases. Her observations were accurate during our experience. As we watched the events unfold, some people changed dramatically.

The difference between the people who crumbled, becoming easily offended, snarling, and hysterical, and the people who were generous, calm, and effective? Their levels of preparedness, both mental and physical.

Think about any stressful situation that has ever happened to you. Once you accepted the fact that it had happened you were able to set a course of action. Once you had definitive steps to take, you probably felt much calmer. You took control of the things you could, and you executed your plan. Only by taking that first step – accepting that this mishap had indeed occurred – could you take the next two.

- 1.) Accept**
- 2.) Plan**
- 3.) Act**

No matter what situation you find yourself in, these steps will nearly always see you through.

Here's what we saw.

During our own experience, here are the things I witnessed. They could apply to any type of disaster, natural or otherwise:

Bug out bags are absolutely the first prep you should make. If you're just getting started, do this one thing. You can do it without spending a penny, by just gathering up things that you already own. You may not have a top-of-the-line, ready-for-the-apocalypse bag like [THIS ONE](#), but you'll still be far ahead of most people. When we first learned of the fire and realized that evacuating might become necessary, I had only two things to do. I had to get documents from the safe (the documents, by the way, were already housed in a plastic folder, so I only had to grab that one thing) and pull the pet carriers out of the shed. In less than 5 minutes, we were ready to roll. Had it been necessary, we could have left with only the photocopies of the documents, because those always remain in our bug-out bags. Having your bug-out bag ready means that you have accepted in advance that disaster could strike.

Any time one disaster strikes, several more are sure to follow. This is highly probable. Some people in the fire zone not only stayed on the edge of evacuation for nearly two weeks, but they also lost power due to the fire. This greatly reduced their ability to get news and information, which is vital in a disaster situation. It leads to even more worry and stress, and while you're dealing with the potential of your home burning down, you're also living through a power outage lasting several days. [Getting prepared for a two week power outage](#) is absolutely vital and can see you through most regional disasters. Also, when it finally began to rain, although it helped to quench the flames, firefighters were suddenly threatened by flash floods,. These were made worse because the areas no longer had the same natural obstructions to deter the flow of water.

Unprepared people panic. Some people panicked initially. When we got the first evacuation alert (a notice that evacuation was highly likely within the next 24 hours), a woman who lived down the street was wailing and sobbing as her husband tried to pack up their vehicle. She was rendered absolutely useless by fear. Meanwhile, my 13 year old was fulfilling her list while I fulfilled mine and we quickly made an orderly stack of important belongings, then turned on a movie to beat the stress. Had our area actually been forced to evacuate, those who panicked would have either been the last to leave, or they would have forgotten important things as they left in a disorganized rush. It's important to decide ahead of time who packs what, and for each person to have a list. Sit down well before disaster strikes and [make an evacuation plan](#) with your family.

Get organized. All the lists in the world won't help you pack quickly if you don't know where things are. One change we're making is that all of the items we deemed precious enough to pack and take with us will now be stored in one area so that we won't have to look for them when seconds count. Another friend ran into the issue of dirty clothes: he actually had to evacuate with hampers of unwashed laundry. Having your home tidy and organized (and your laundry washed and put away) will help your packing go smoothly in the event of a sudden evacuation.

You can't be prepared for everything. Disaster situations are always fluid and they don't go by a script. It's vital to [be adaptable to the changing situation](#).

Keep your vehicle full of fuel. If you have to evacuate, lots of other people will be hitting the road too. When you're stuck in traffic, you don't want to be worried about your fuel gauge dropping to the empty mark, leaving you stranded in a dangerous situation.

The criminals come out, like cockroaches. Within 24 hours of the first evacuations, we learned that the local scumbags had looted some of the homes that had been left unattended. Within 48 hours, we learned that the scourge had reached the outlying areas, with these people breaking into cars that had been loaded up with the things that families had determined to be most important to them. Of course, if you've evacuated, there's nothing you can do about what's happening to your home. But before evacuation, or in the event of civil unrest, it's vital to be prepared to defend your family and belongings. In these situations, the first responders are busy, and that's what criminals rely on. You should consider yourself to be completely on your own, and be ready for trouble. Keep in mind that during the [civil unrest in Ferguson](#) recently, the only businesses that didn't get looted were the ones at which the owners stood [armed and ready to defend their property](#).

The longer the stress lasts, the worse some people behave. As continued stress is applied, the true nature of a person becomes evident. People who formerly seemed like perfectly nice individuals were on the local message forums saying terrible things to one another. They were verbally attacking others for imagined slights and taking offense at things that would normally never ruffle feathers. Some folks were launching tirades against the very people who were performing the greatest service: the admins of the webpages who worked round the clock to keep us informed. If it was this bad in a potential emergency, can you imagine how bad things will get in a truly devastating long-term scenario?

But then...some people are wonderful. Alternatively, sometimes you see the very best of human nature. The generosity of many of my neighbors cannot be overstated. They housed livestock, pets, and families full of strangers during the evacuation. People showed up at the shelter with food and comfort items for those who had been evacuated. Firemen who came from near and far to fight the blaze were constantly being treated to meals at local restaurants, as other diners surreptitiously paid their tabs. Watching the kindness and gratitude helped to restore some of my faith in human nature, after seeing the squabbling and crime. It was interesting to me that the people who gave the most generously were the ones who were the most prepared. These folks were calm and could focus on other things besides "Oh my gosh, I don't know what to do!" We definitely learned who the people were that we wanted to surround ourselves with when the S *really* HTF.

Take steps now to be one of those calm people later.

Today, I want you to think about disasters. It's certainly not a pleasant thought, [but considering these things now](#) – when there's no fire bearing down on you, no hurricane heading your way, no chemical spill poisoning your water, no pandemic in the next town over – allows you to think more clearly and make a definitive plan of action.

So...

Check your bug out bags.

Organize your most precious belongings.

Discuss the plan with your family so that everyone knows what to expect.

Make these decisions now so that when – and it’s always “when” not “if” – disaster knocks at your door, you’re prepared to respond immediately. Learn about what to expect from others in order to keep your family safe and on-plan. Human nature isn’t as much of a variable when you can predict their behavior.

What to pack:

Here are the things we packed for our potential evacuation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bug out bags• Cell phone• Address book with important contacts• Money, credit cards• Pet carriers – I prefer the hard-sided ones so that our pets are sheltered better in a crowded vehicle• Pet food• 2 weeks of clothing• Extra shoes• Personal hygiene items• Documents (identification, insurance, passports, etc.)• A utility bill or other proof of residence | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small Portable safe for valuables• Family photos• Items of sentimental value• Reading material• Laptops• Water• A small fire extinguisher• Extra fuel in a safe container• Phone and laptop chargers• car charger• On the recommendation of a friend, I threw our swimming goggles in, to offer eye protection in the event we had to drive through thick smoke |
|---|---|

Your list might also include:

- Security items for children
- Items to entertain children
- Prescription medication
- Allergy medication
- Religious items for comfort
- Food (If you go to an evacuation shelter, you may end up having to purchase meals out or make due with very small rations)
- Bedding

Make a written checklist that you can easily access. You might include the location of items that are packed away. Decide on these things now, when you have the time to calmly think about what items are the most important.

I can’t emphasize enough the importance of those sentimental items. We feared that if we had to leave our home, we might never be coming back. Identify the things that are dear to your heart and put them in a place where you can grab those treasures quickly. Insurance can’t replace photos of those who have passed on, special gifts, and items that bring you memories of loved ones.

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

Off Grid Cooking Options

Tessa Zundel

No one likes heating the house in the summer by turning on the oven and I'm no exception. I also look for any opportunity to prepare food that doesn't include using my *%\$!!*!! ELECTRIC stove; is there a cook out there that actually prefers these things? Plus, energy, whatever we may like to think, is not exactly an endless resource – and it's expensive! So, I've been thinking for awhile about off grid cooking options. Our sunny Utah summers offer plenty of sunshine to use our solar oven and I try to take advantage of them as much as possible. In fact, my area of Utah has over two hundred days on average that are sunny, which includes winter, although I have yet to trudge out in the snow to use it come December. I'm a native Californian and still majorly wussy about snow.

Off Grid Cooking With Solar Ovens

To begin our off grid cooking journey we purchased an [SOS](#) Sport solar oven a few years ago and have enjoyed learning how to use it. There are [other brands](#), as well, and I encourage you to check them out.



It's a very basic solar oven, no frills and operates like they all do on the idea of catching the sun's rays to pull heat into the box/oven in order to cook your food without needing power – well, power you pay for, anyway. Solar ovens are like slow cookers that don't require any electricity to run. For best results, you usually preheat it, like any oven, but that just means setting it out in the sun about a half hour to an hour before you need to use it. We've cooked all kinds of things in ours from fish to soup to bread to “boiled” eggs.

A really neat feature of this kind of cooking is that, unless you go off and leave for a really long time, you don't burn food cooked in a solar oven. The SOS is light and easy to use, with only a few parts. The main body is a black box that has a plastic lid that attaches with six metal clasps so it doesn't blow away in the wind and so wayward kiddos don't get into a hot oven. There's also a sun shield that attaches with spring clasps to magnify the sun's heat and draw it into your oven.

The wide design of this one means that you don't have to turn it very often to follow the sun; you want to maximize the sun's rays by following the movement of the sun for however long you're cooking your item. Some items require only a half hour while others take several and you don't want to lose the sun. I would buy another one, especially if I could find one on sale, but these are pretty economical to begin with. There are [other brands](#), of course. I have a friend who has a [Sun Oven](#) and loves it. It's quite a bit sturdier and deeper than mine but it folds up for toting around and isn't too heavy. It has an internal thermometer, too, which is way cool.

I lost the [thermometer](#) that came with my SOS – I needed to attach it somehow so that didn't happen. Sigh. My biggest pet peeve with these things is that they only hold my [9×13 casserole dish](#), but nothing bigger. I feed ten people – I need bigger, especially for off grid cooking. What I'll have to do is buy two to three more of these things so that I can make a main dish, side dish, bread and dessert all at once. If I were more hard core, I'd make my own; but, alas...

Off Grid Cooking With The Hot Box

Another item I love to use for off grid cooking is my [Hot Box](#) aka Wonder Box. These things are like [bean bags](#) that cook in your kitchen!

They're super insulated bags with a top piece that acts like a lid and they were developed from the Wonder Boxes designed to help African moms cook a whole pot of something like rice using only a minimal amount of fuel. The idea (which is not an historically new one) is that you bring a pot of rice (or similar item) to boil and then shut off the stove (or put out your cook fire), place a lid on the pan and put the whole lidded pot into the center of the box bottom. Put the box's lid on and let it sit for as long as it takes to cook the food; with my brown rice, it usually takes about an hour-ish. You can buy them online but they're pricey.



I decided to make my own since I'm cheap – which is part of why off grid cooking appeals to me in the first place. The boxes are stuffed with polystyrene [pellets](#) and made with cotton fabric, or any other natural fiber – wool would be neat! I'm not much of a seamstress so I went to a neighbor's house so she could mentor me in putting them together. Later, I found [this](#) good tutorial from [Prepared Not Scared](#) with the pattern and, if you're interested in making one, I'd suggest you check it out. (Food Storage Made Easy has this fun Powerless Cooking Series they did and you can follow their adventures [here](#).) The cool thing about doing it with someone was also that we were able to split the cost of the pellets; we got a price break for ordering them in bulk but it would have been way too many pellets for just one person unless we were each making five boxes! FYI, another friend suggested we stuff our boxes in the bathroom, better yet, the tub to minimize the mess; there's major static electricity on these babies and the little buggers can just go everywhere! And I mean, everywhere.



For off grid cooking you can use these things for preparing grains, veggies and soups as well as yogurt. I also mellow my soap batches in my boxes before I cut and cure them. They do take up space so you have to find a place to put them but they're worth it.

Off Grid Cooking With Your Grill

Another thing to consider for off grid cooking is using a propane grill; or, if you have access to charcoal, a [Webber Kettle](#) type set up. Grillin' is surely not a new concept but I think it bears mentioning here to make sure we've covered the basics. Then, of course, there's open fire or wood burning stove cooking which are awesome for off grid cooking but not so awesome for keeping cool. I guess I'm also a wuss about the heat. What a baby. My new best friend in the world of summer cooking is kebabs (we say kabobs at our house, but we're just unhip that way) – where have these been all my life?! You can Google a myriad of marinade recipes but they're essentially stuff on a stick, cooked over small flame.



In Turkey, the traditional birth place of the kebab, the stick would most certainly have meat on it (typically lamb), but you can also make veggie ones or a combination of the two. Maybe you grew up eating these wonderful things and are wondering why I'm bothering to talk about something so basic. I was deprived on Turkish food, clearly, and hadn't ever had a kebab until I lived in Russia (the wonder of the kebab spread to the Caucasus), where a Russian family treated us missionaries to homemade kebabs over an open, outdoor flame. (Random memory but, their yard also had the first [cistern](#) I'd ever seen; this city girl asked if it was for swimming! The father laughed a bit at that but was very kind in explaining the idea of water conservation/redirection.) I guess I'd forgotten about them until this summer when I was desperate for something easy that could be grilled quickly in order to satisfy the children who were nipping at my heels like Corgis for their dinner. I suggest marinating the veggies with your meat (if you're using any), in order to enhance the flavor.

Anyway, there you have it; that's what we're doing so far but are always on the lookout for more ideas. What are your favorite ways to beat the heat and the energy bill while cooking? Tell me more about [Dutch ovens](#), for instance – I have yet to learn to really use them without [charcoal briquettes](#), which are cheating, in my opinion.

We're slowly learning how to use campfire for cooking (without briquettes) – [here's our post on our first forays into outdoor cooking](#). And did you see our post on [campfire cookies](#) – I love S'mores, but how many [marshmallows](#) can you eat, really?

Tessa Zundel is the homemaking, homesteading, homeschooling mother of five small children and wife to one long suffering man. She currently lives on an acre in suburban Utah but will soon be making her home in the wilds of Missouri. She is an advanced master gardener, slowly working on becoming a master herbalist and is the founder of the Salt Lake County Seed Swap. She is also the author of [DIY: Healthy, Holistic Bug Out Bag](#). Most days you'll find her hauling her good natured, adventuresome children around to learn about herbs, small farm livestock, fiber and other lost arts, whole foods and home education. There's always something being tinctured, fermented, built or milked around here - just ask the long suffering man! To find out what her latest project is, pop on over to [Homestead Lady](#) and join the fun! You can also find her on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Google +](#), [Pinterest](#) and [Hometalk](#).

Thinking About your Neighborhood from a Tactical Perspective

Patrick Henry

Long ago, there were no such thing as police officers who roamed around in their cars connected by radio and dispatchers who monitored a central 911 system. If trouble broke out, you and your family were on your own. You may have been able to rely on neighbors if they lived close enough but the defense of your property was a personal responsibility.

Flash forward to today and for a whole host of reasons our society has largely abdicated this responsibility to law enforcement. While there are many noble police officers out there, they are woefully outnumbered when it comes to people so while they may arrive in time to help, usually the police arrive after the drama has occurred and try to sort out the players as best as they can. This isn't ideal when our society is functioning as it should be. A police presence could be non-existent in a crisis or disaster and it will be back to you and possibly your neighbors to defend your village or neighborhood.

Again, I am not talking about some snow that keeps people at home. I am talking about chaos where for whatever reason, [law enforcement is unable to get to you much less protect you](#) and you have bad people who are trying to get in. For the rest of these articles I am going to assume a national disaster that has rendered our nation in a crisis where [there is no rule of law](#).

Rethinking your Neighborhood

Your neighborhood could be configured in all types of ways depending on where you live. In a larger city we might have boundaries that are simply streets. Your neighborhood might run a certain number of blocks ending at the river. It could be that your neighborhood is the traditional suburban subdivision complete with a sign out front. You could live in a gated community or your neighborhood might just be a dozen homes in the country.

Before you enact a plan to defend your neighborhood, it helps to think about a few things first.

Understand the Enemy – Who are you defending your neighborhood from? What kinds of threats could you expect to encounter? For the purposes of this article, we aren't going to consider a professional military force. We will say that the enemy could be lone individuals or gangs who range from simply hungry and desperate to organized and violent. Depending on your location and the duration of the event, you might encounter all types of people.

Use Situational Awareness – This will be key to any defense and that is to know what you are protecting and who is trying to get in. The size of your defensive team will dictate how much area you can realistically try to secure. There are force multipliers obviously and we will get into those in an upcoming post, but you have to know your neighborhood better than anyone so that you can model your defensive strategies where you will have the most advantage.

In another post on Preparing your neighborhood against attack, I mentioned drawing out the boundaries. You may only be able to secure a couple of streets or even one street and it will help to draw out the streets identifying access areas, choke-points, natural cover and the assets you hope to control. Some resources you can use now are websites like [MyTopo.com](#) that will allow you to order a detailed

topographic map of your entire area or Scribblemaps.com that will allow you to create your own maps and add symbols. Naturally, these would need to be taken care of before any crisis prevents you from access computers or the internet.

Use the defenders advantages

I mentioned also that virtually none of us have a walled compound so it isn't like we can march along the wall and shine spotlights down on anyone trying to access your neighborhood like some type of Alcatraz Island. You will have to use the advantages you do have though to give you and the rest of your neighborhood defenders the upper hand. If someone does come into your neighborhood you will be able to rely on your strengths.

You will have the ability to fight from cover and to create fortified positions. Again, this is assuming a SHTF type of scenario. What can you use? Depending on the disaster you can roll cars into position, refrigerators, use stones that used to form your ornamental garden walls. For me if this really was a disaster I would be looking to build my own foxholes and augment those with sandbags. Digging a hole is free and a lot of dirt makes great cover. With planning and enough resources (people) the routes into your neighborhood that you want to defend can be set up to be highly defensible.

You have the home field advantage. You know your neighborhood and where everything is. You will know where your partners are with rifles trained on the bad guys. Communication will augment this but we will get into that later as well. You will know where paths through the woods go, where fences are opened or where special defensive devices meant to injure or slow the enemy are hidden.

You have the ability to prepare. Anyone who is intent on coming into your neighborhood will only be able to observe from the outside what is going on provided you don't have patrols outside of your area watching for this behavior. You can set up defensive positions, deploy obstacles to prevent unwanted vehicle traffic and reinforce as you go along. If this is a gang who is somewhat organized they could have experience offensively but they will not have had as much time as you to prepare your neighborhood to be defended against them.

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

How to Get the Most from Your Tomato Harvest

Angi Schneider

My absolute favorite thing to grow is tomatoes. I love that there are literally thousands of varieties to try. I love the flavor of homegrown tomatoes – store bought tomatoes just cannot compare. I even love the smell of tomato plants – which don't really smell very good, but I love them anyway.

So, when we harvest our tomatoes I want to be sure that we don't waste one single bit. When we bring our tomatoes inside, the first thing we do is cut the "belly button" off (most people call this the stem) and any bad parts and then cut the tomato in half. We put the tomato halves in zip lock bags and put them in the freezer.

I do this for two reasons, the first is that it's not always convenient to process the tomatoes when we get our biggest harvests, in fact, it is almost never convenient to process them at the height of harvest season. The second reason is that they are so much easier to peel once they have been frozen.

I take tomatoes out of the freezer the night before I'm going to can them. I put them in large bowls and pans and let them thaw out. The next morning I take the ones that are the most thawed and dump them out of the zip lock bags into a large roaster pan (I use this because my strainer is oblong and it fits into the lid of the roaster pan.)



The tomato peels come right off the thawed out tomato.



In the middle are the thawed tomatos. I put the peels in a bowl (see photo below), the pulp in the strainer and I pour all the juice into a big pot. I can the juice to use in rice or soups. I like doing it this way so that I don't have to let my [spaghetti sauce](#) or [salsa](#) cook down for hours. I have a friend who cooks down the juice all day to make it more concentrated. You can do whatever works best for you.



Eventually the peels go into the blender with a little of the juice and get turned into "sauce". I add this to the spaghetti sauce or salsa that I'm making that day to help thicken it up a little.

You can also dehydrate the peels and then blend them up into a powder. This is what I do with the [cherry tomatoes](#). I use it in soups or rice, it's super good.

Angi Schneider is a minister's wife and homeschooling mom. She is passionate about growing food for her family and living a simple life. She blogs their homesteading and homeschooling adventures at [SchneiderPeeps.com](#) and is the author of [The Gardening Notebook](#) which she wrote to help other gardeners remember all the great information they are learning.

YOU CAN'T SURVIVE THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT WITHOUT FIRST SURVIVING THE WORLD "AS" WE KNOW IT

Kristina Frost

Whether or not the end of the world as we know it (TEOTWAWKI) is in our near future, down the road or never comes to pass, the fact remains that if you are reading this, you currently live in the world AS we know it. The world as we know it is a social landscape. Everything we have built and everything we do is contingent on other people. We have all become the people we have become because our ancestors were survivors. Our ancestors were adept at creating and maintaining groups, tribes and societies. Because of their ability to function in a society or group, the people before us mastered the art of making clothing, tool making, fire, water collection and purification, container making, shelter building, hunting, foraging, fishing, trapping and agriculture. Ironically, all of these things are things that most of us today no longer know how to do on our own. If we face a catastrophic change in our current state of the world, these skills would once again mandate who lives and who doesn't.

But first, those ancestral survivors mastered and honed their social skills. They worked together toward a common mission of survival. In order for you to confidently move toward honing the abilities that they once had, you must first master the art of social survival. Even if your preference or your plan is to be a lone wolf, because you live in a social world, your odds are greatly increased if you have social skills to add to your basic-needs "survivor pack".

The following is a short list. This list is not all encompassing and should be added to, but here is a mini foundation of basic "social survival skills" for interacting, attracting, inspiring, motivating, and leading people:

1. Criticism is critical and because it is critical it cannot be constructive only destructive. People do what they do for a reason. We are all motivated for different purposes and reasons. Generally, we are seeking some type of emotional payoff or other outcome for our behaviors and our actions. This payoff can be positive or negative. People are more often motivated emotionally rather than logically. B.F. Skinner was able to show many years ago that even animals learn and retain information more productively when given positive reinforcements rather than negative reinforcements. Yet, we humans still seek to change people via complaints, forced conformity, criticisms and condemnations. It simply doesn't work. Keep your eye on your goal in interacting with people and know that being critical will never get your needs met.

2. Find people interesting and show and express a genuine interest in them. We are all drawn toward those that have the ability to make us feel good about ourselves. It's a simple thing about human nature. But, the important word in this one is "genuine." This sincerity of purpose may be difficult for many people. None of us want to be flattered by someone who isn't genuine or for someone to show an interest in our lives or what we have been doing that really doesn't care. Our hope is that other people are genuinely interested in

us when they inquire as to how we are doing. If you ask that question, mean it. No one really wants the flat answer that we socially have grown trained to say: "fine, how are you?" Appreciate it if someone actually answers that question whether it was what you were hoping to hear or not. This is the cornerstone of a good leader, a good person, a good team player, a good friend or a good mate.

3. Let the other person's self-interest be the conversational guide. This one is vital because it plays off of the fact that people like it when you show an interest in them. If you visit with someone, even briefly, at the grocery store or wherever you go take a moment to visit with them about real things, their life, their family and things that they actually care about. You may find that people tell you their life story. This should tell you how desperate the person was for someone to show an interest in them or to care or to listen. You need to always remember that it is an honor when people show that kind of trust or comfort level with you to choose to share personal information with you. This is absolutely a necessary skill to being a good leader. People want to hear about what matters to them, people want to talk about what matters to them and how something will ultimately affect them. Show a genuine interest in other people and ask about them and the things that matter to them.

4. Appreciate people: show it, share it, give it. This is important in all relationships and interactions. Everyone needs and wants to feel appreciated and it is important to take that extra time to say it and to show it. In my experience, many people will jump through hoops for you as long as they feel that their efforts are appreciated. This is a very easy thing to do and in exchange, most people will be happy to help you out as well. This type of social interaction is a win-win. Remember to be genuine in your efforts as no one appreciates lip-service. Attempt to show your appreciation in your actions and in your behaviors, in small things and for simply being who they are. How you treat others and how you show your appreciation for others will shine through in your ability to be an effective leader.

5. Figure out what other people desire or want and find a way to inspire this within them: This is about honing the ability to inspire and motivate other people. This is a key quality in having and displaying charisma, motivational speaking ability and leadership skills. Whether you are leading yourself, your family or your subordinates, it is imperative that you capture the essence of what motivates other people in your circles and beyond. Once you know how they are motivated and by what, motivating and inspiring them in a forward direction is much easier.

Inspiring others can accomplish great things. Plus, it feels good to positively impact other people who may later thank you for inspiring them toward something they might not have otherwise accomplished. The number one skill that you can use to inspire, motivate and transform people is to arouse that "desire" or that "want" from deep within them.

6. Smile! Be aware of your face!! This seems like such a simple concept, yet if you watch people and their facial expressions, you will see concern, anxiety, stress, fatigue, fear, depression, exhaustion, irritation and many other emotions and feelings, but rarely will you see genuine happiness. watch yourself for a few days or even for one day and attempt to smile whenever and wherever you encounter another person young or old. Allow your face to really light up. People will respond warmly to you. People are drawn to magnetic, charismatic and happy people. People want what you have to offer. Smiles are good for you and they are good for them. Babies love smiles for a reason. Think about your smile every time a child enters the room. Children are very intuitive at an early age and will read your face. This carries into adulthood and we all slowly become experts at reading faces, body language and other hidden communication. Smiling at other people is the number one easiest thing that you can do to connect with other people, improve your social skills and get other people to respond positively to you.

These six skills are the beginning of your "social survival kit. Read and re-read these six life skills and begin to practice them everywhere you go and in everything you do. Social skills, like tool making and fire starting, must be learned and practiced. Master these and master your social landscape.

For Further Reading on B.F. Skinner, human behavior, operant conditioning, reinforcements and behavior modification, you can visit the following links:

B.F. Skinner Foundation 2014 - <http://www.bfskinner.org/> , <http://www.bfskinner.org/behavioral-science/definition/>

I know how to take care of myself no matter what life throws at me. My philosophy is that everyone should plan and prepare for any event in which they may have to take care of themselves. Whether your situation becomes serious because of a loss of job, mother nature or something even more catastrophic, you need to know that you have the basic skills and supplies to meet your own and your family's needs. Whether short term, long term, or indefinitely, I believe that education, preparation, practice and the right mindset will increase your odds of survival. I am passionate about sharing my philosophy with others and inspiring others to become more self-reliant and prepared. In my blog, "Bread and Country," I write about: Survival mindset and psychology, preparedness, self-reliance, breads, bush crafting, primitive living, off grid, fishing, urban survival, wellness, sociology, psychology, human motivation, survival leadership and the will to live. Education: AA, BA, BS, MLS, MPS Background: Counselor, life coaching and skill trainer, Educator, Facilitator, Emergency Medical Technician, writer, personal trainer, and advocacy. Follow me breadandcountry.blogspot.com, <https://twitter.com/istudypeople>, <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/thestuffoflife>

Colds, Sore Throats & Common Infections

Dr. Ryan Chamberlin

Communicable diseases are common when people are packed close together, particularly in the late fall into deep winter.

The prepper should keep in mind two guiding principles of wintertime sickness: most contagious illnesses occurring in North America are caused by viruses, and viruses aren't killed off by antibiotics.

The black plague and cholera may reappear in Europe and parts of the third world, but hopefully won't surface in America. Viral infections like Measles, Mumps, and Rubella are also unlikely to become a threat. Most of us and our children have been immunized.

Washing your hands and coughing into your elbow crease do more to prevent infections, than wearing surgical masks or isolating people with minor illness. Most of the viruses we are talking about are either spread by contact with an infected surface, or are airborne and carried by respiratory droplets. This is why soap and water and correct coughing technique are so important.

Most colds and flu will appear after the initial stress of the disaster is over, and preppers have settled down and into a routine. The general stress a person is under until then, winds up the immune system and protects them for as long as possible. However this is a debt that eventually must be paid back. Illness becomes more prevalent at this stage.

Common Eye Problems

Pink eye and corneal abrasions are among the most common ocular conditions encountered in the field.

Pink eye is usually caused by a virus, though rarely bacteria can be responsible. The white part of the eye, the sclera, becomes reddened from inflamed blood vessels that are normally invisible. The sclera is covered by a transparent layer, underneath which these vessels run.

Treatment involves anti-inflammatory eye drops, sometimes with antibiotics mixed in. These probably won't be available in times of global disaster, so patching the eye for a few days is the best that can be done. Wearing cotton gloves can help remind the person not to touch their eye, and inadvertently spread the disease to others.



Scratched eye, stained to take up green dye. Looks bad but is harmless. Sub-conjunctival bleed the watery to puss like discharge. Pink eye! Note the streaks of red over the white area (sclera) and

Corneal abrasions occur when the clear part of the eye, the cornea, sustains a minor scratch but produces major pain and tearing. We discussed this injury earlier, and said that patching for 24 hours is generally all that's needed for its resolution. Physicians will sometimes stain the eye with fluorescein, a dye which is taken up by the scratched area, and reveals the percentage of cornea damaged. If greater than 50%, the patch should be left on for 48 hours instead of 24. Because the dye won't be available to us, you'll have to decide on symptoms alone. So injuries consistent with larger abrasions should be patched for two days instead of one.

Subconjunctival hemorrhages look horrific, but are harmless. They can result from even the most minor of traumas, including coughing. One of the blood vessels running between the clear covering and the white sclera breaks open, and a very small amount of blood spreads out encircling the cornea. It will change colors like a bruise before resolving in the following weeks.

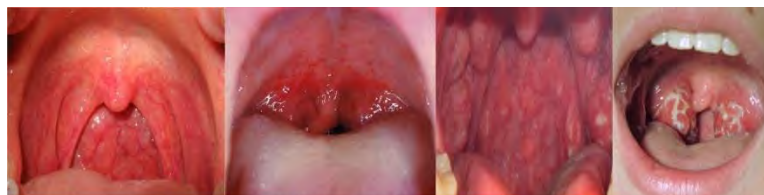
Sore Throats

Most people get these from time to time, especially if they have small children in public schools. Kids are walking petri dishes, often bringing germs home for everyone's enjoyment. Most causes are viral, but can sometimes be bacterial.

Medicine has struggled with how and when to treat sore throats for the past 50 years, but finally a global recommendation has been made: even if the sore throat is caused by bacteria, it should not be treated with antibiotics, unless it's strep.

Studies have clearly been shown *not* to speed the person's recovery. The exception is strep throat. But it's not treated to help the person get better, it's treated to reduce the incidence of related diseases that *streptococcus* can cause. Scarlet fever, rheumatic fever, post-streptococcal glomerular nephritis (inflammation of the kidneys,) even nervous tics and movement disorders can all result from a strep infection. This is why when you bring the kids to the doctors for a sore throat, they do a rapid strep test in the office. If it's negative, antibiotics aren't prescribed.

In the field it might be wise to give the person amoxicillin, as rapid strep tests are not going to be available. Remember to ask the person if they are allergic to penicillin beforehand. Allergic reactions usually result in skin rashes, but in rare cases a type of shock called anaphylaxis can occur.



Tonsils have been removed. Mildly inflamed throat.

Tonsils are red & inflamed. No puss is seen.

Tonsils can be small but spread around.

Tonsils with exudate or puss.

When you look into someone's throat, you may find they've had their tonsils removed, but they can still get strep and other types of infections. Tonsils are really aggregates of small lymph nodes, and some people have more than others (shown in the third picture to the right.) Unfortunately you can't tell what's causing the infection: virus, strep, or another bacteria. Not from its appearance alone.

Finally, remember that children younger than two don't get strep. The bacteria can't adhere to the throat without a special protein receptor the child makes. And that doesn't happen until they're about two-and-a-half years old.

Ear Infections

As with pink eye and sore throats, ear infections are usually self-limiting; meaning they'll resolve on their own without treatment. The reason we're considering all three, is because they make children cry. Military history is full of heartbreaking stories where children have given away the position of those hiding. And of little ones suffocated by their parents to prevent it from happening.



Middle Ear Infections

While you probably won't be looking in the ears of children, an infection can be presumed from a fussy child tugging on the lobe. Most parents have sat up with a child through the night due to the pain infections cause. There's a solution. It's unapproved and unconventional... but it works.

If the child does not have ear tubes, or a suspected perforation of their eardrum, you can drop lidocaine into the ear canal while they lay on their side. Insert a cotton ball or foam hearing protector to help keep the anesthetic in. Mixing lidocaine with long acting bupivacaine can extend the pain relief for up to six hours. The anesthetics numb pain receptors on the eardrum, allowing everyone to sleep, or at least keep quiet in times of trouble.

This treatment should not be used if there's a hole in the eardrum, either from a perforation, or from an ear tube. The lidocaine will get into the middle ear where small bones transmitting sound are located. The medication may injure or even dissolve these structures.



In emergencies, and if you're sure the eardrum is intact, drop lidocaine in to numb the tympanic membrane.

For outer, or external ear infections, you can make up something similar to cipro drops by mixing Fish Flox in saline or lidocaine. Or you can use a topical antibiotic, and place it in the external ear canal.

Amoxicillin can be used for treating middle ear infections, but as with most antibiotics, bacterial resistance to the drug can be high.

External Ear Infections

When you see crusting or puss like material coming out of the ear, the infection is probably not in the middle ear, but in the external canal. It can be from the middle ear, but only if the eardrum has ruptured releasing the material. In this case, the person commonly has some degree of pain relief, as the pressure causing the pain has been relieved. External ear infections usually cause swelling you can see, helping tell the difference between outer and middle ear infections. Adults typically get external ear infections, whereas middle ear infections are the domain of children.

Dizziness and Vertigo The last consideration of ear troubles involves one of the scariest conditions... vertigo. Colds and other conditions can cause inflammation in the balance centers of the inner ear. The person may feel fine, when suddenly the world literally spins. Balance is lost, and person may become nauseated. The sudden and severe nature of this condition makes people think they're having a stroke, or that they have a brain tumor.

The anxiety this produces can uncouple a person, especially in the context of the collapse of civilization. The good news is that the worse the symptoms, the less likely it's anything serious. Tumors grow slowly, producing symptoms over time. Strokes can cause similar symptoms, but are rare and usually accompanied by other obvious neurological symptoms. Reassure the person. While the symptoms can last several weeks, they diminish and disappear over time. The vomiting they cause can lead to dehydration, and in the early stages fluid and electrolyte replacement may be necessary.

The most violent vomiting, the kind with a calculable velocity of its own, is usually caused by food poisoning. Unlike other illnesses, this one is always preventable. But that fact alone still doesn't stop people from getting it.

Dr. Chamberlin is a Professor of Medicine living in Portland Oregon. He teaches a number of subjects including Neuroscience, Genetics, Anatomy and Minor Surgery.

He blogs and writes on subjects central to preparedness and disaster management. Focusing on Survival and Field Medicine, his writing career began with a question: How do you teach preppers to become medics? How do you guide them to where they feel comfortable dealing with medical emergencies?

30 Pandemic Essentials

Linda Loosli

Below is a list of 30 Pandemic Essentials to start with that I feel we need in our emergency buckets, boxes or containers. Here's the deal...we all keep hearing about the different strains of FLU or MRSE. Let me explain what I call a Pandemic Flu Outbreak. In my opinion, Pandemic Flu is virulent human flu that will cause a global outbreak or pandemic of a very serious illness. Right now there is currently no pandemic flu...but because our bodies might have very little immunity to a HUGE outbreak...the disease can spread easily from person to person...in other words a pandemic is a global disease...its when a new influenza emerges and begins to cause serious illness. It passes from person to person and then spreads worldwide...



In the last century three Influenza Pandemics occurred...1918-19, 1957-58 and 1968-69. Many scientists believe it is a matter of time before another influenza pandemic occurs. This is why I feel so strongly about having a Pandemic Essential bucket. I know we all have first aid kits. When was the last time we looked to see if we have current items...or are we missing some badly needed Motrin or Tylenol for we as adults and our kids? What are the dates on the medicine containers? How many alternative home remedies are we prepared to make or use?

Let's get started:

1. Face Masks (N-95's) to help stop the dust from an earthquake or infections spreading from sneezing (I store 100's of these-its who I am)
2. Diapers (cloth) they can be used for many things. Cleaning, babies, stop the bleeding from cuts, wash or dry dishes...add a scarf for your head as well
3. Cough medicine, fever medications, ****prescriptions as required (stock up on 90 days if possible) , [Hydrogen Peroxide](#) and rubbing alcohol, Vicks VaporRub
4. Portable radio-hopefully you have a crank one or someway to power it to hear what is going on locally if you you lose power
5. Flashlight with extra batteries, or a solar flashlight is even better with a crank as well-my favorite is the [Goal Zero Solar Flashlight](#)
6. Manual can opener, this is a must-have for every kit. You might need to open other's food storage cans as well as your own
7. Garbage bags and kitchen size bags-these can be used for trash, body bags if need be, potty chairs
8. Canned juices (bag/cartons)-I put 100% juice in this container-ten pouches...I am sure it has some sugar...I still need it in my bucket

9. Fluids with Electrolytes-I can also make my own electrolyte solution that is very similar, but I want one large bottle ready to serve
10. Anti-diarrhea medicine-diarrhea can kill if the person gets too dehydrated...I always look at a child's lips to see if they are dry and shiny red or cracked-they need water asap
11. Paper towels-I only put 4 rolls of paper towels in the bucket...of course we can use more, but this bucket is just an emergency grab and go container
12. Toilet paper-this is a must have in my 30 Pandemic Essentials list! LOL! You can never have too much toilet paper...
13. Thermometer-I put this in the bucket, but really, if someone is that sick we can usually tell if they have a fever..its when the fever gets over 104 degrees in the morning that things become so critical. Typically fevers are always higher in the afternoon...I get worried if its in the morning..its just me. If I cannot break a fever...I will worry...if I can break a fever...I feel the fever is good and is fighting the virus naturally. Remember I am not a doctor...I am a mother, grandma..we have mother's intuition...if the child is lathargic...we know what to do..but if we have zero access to a doctor or antibiotics...I want to be able to think through what I must do to help someone until help arrives
14. Canned baby formula with bottles ready to serve if needed-I feel I must put some baby formula in my bucket. I do not have any babies around me, but if I had to feed a newborn baby I will have something hopefully that is nourishing to a baby
15. Dog food-yep, I am thinking about my beloved Shih-Tzu, Boston. If you have pets, at least the small pets you can take with you, add some cans of food for them in your bucket
16. Soap and anti-bacterial soap-I am constantly washing my hands...I know this is one more way we can not only keep hands clean but also slow down the spread of infection..wash hands..wash hands...wash hands..
17. Cups-lots of cups-I decided on some small 4 ounce size cups because I can put 100 in a small area of the bucket-this means I will have 100 cups for whatever or whoever needs them
18. Disposable rubber gloves-you can never have too many disposable gloves....latex free is even better when you decide to buy some to add to your stash
19. Bleach-okay I have to say I need bleach...I know some people are against bleach...well, I will use it to help clean up the sewage backup overflow or whatever I need to kill bacteria..pool shock works well too (very concentrated-be careful)
20. Clear plastic sheeting (4mil) 100 feet for setting up an isolation room-one reader mentioned about adding Mosquito netting (folds up very small) to the bucket
21. Duct Tape-oh my gosh, just start talking about [Duct Tape](#), it has a million ways we can use it..that's the link where I share 25 ways to use duct tape

22. Borax-great for toilet provisions-it helps clean the potty chair but also-put a little in the bottom of the portable toilet to help control the odor
23. Clothesline rope and clothes pins-we might have a washing/rinsing bucket, but we might need to hang up some wet clothes to dry
24. Laundry Soap-ready to use for dirty underwear, at the very least..we can wear shirts and short or pants several times but it would be nice to have clean underwear
25. Dawn Dish Soap-this is my favorite liquid soap..it might cost a bit more but the few cents is totally worth the grease this stuff can clean. One of my readers mentioned using Dawn Soap in baggies with a little water to clean underwear, rinse and dry them. Plus she uses Dawn Liquid Soap to wash her hair!
26. Kitty Litter-great for potty chairs (also a reader mentioned you can get “oil dry” much cheaper at automotive stores)
27. Water Filters and purification devices- I use the LifeStraw and the Berkey Sport Water Bottle for filtering water
28. Water containers-collection, storage and carrying containers-never throw out a bucket...you can never have too many buckets for washing, rinsing or mixing large batches of meals for your neighborhood (food containers only-for meal preparation)
29. Water-LOTS of water [Water Needs](#)-I have WaterBricks with handles to grab and go
30. Minimum 2 weeks of food for everyone in your family-see below how I store the food needed for my family

Here’s the deal, I filled this huge blue bucket with everything shown above EXCEPT the 2 weeks worth of food, the kitty litter, and the water we will need. In the pic, you can see my clear plastic container with my 2 weeks worth of food. Here is the post on the [clear plastic bag](#) of food.

Here is a link to the [Utah Flu Pandemic](#) website. I am sure all the states have a website you can view regarding how they are prepared for a Pandemic Outbreak...should one occur. Please remember, I am not a doctor or someone in the medical field. I just want to be prepared for the unexpected. These are just 30 Pandemic Essentials to get you started...it’s one more step to being prepared for an unforeseen emergency or disaster. This is part one of my pandemic preparedness project. I’ll be providing additional information in the days to come.

Once my family was grown and I’d retired from my job, I changed my focus and started my own blog, [Food Storage Moms](#), mainly because I was seeing what was happening to the economy and disastrous events that were occurring around the world. I wanted to teach people to live on less money and in order to do that I needed to experiment with my own life. If I was going to teach the world to be self-sufficient, I knew I had to be self-sufficient.

A Critical Firearm Accessory **Joe Nobody**

One extremely important accessory for a shoulder-fired weapon is frequently overlooked by preppers. It is unpretentious, cheap, readily available, and easy to install. It's the sling.

Suffering from a lack of sex appeal, lost in a plethora of available furniture, and definitely not the cover-girl of gun porn, the lowly sling often suffers from a lack of appreciation – until your body has paid the price.

Through the years, I have conducted numerous training sessions and can now easily identify the guys and gals who have experience in the field... the folks who have carried a long gun for an extended period of time. Their slings are functional and comfortable – like an old pair of well-worn blue jeans or a seasoned pair of boots. They fit, function, and perform critical tasks without fanfare or ritz. Those who have ignored this critical component suffer – sometimes badly. More on that down-article.

No doubt some of you are wondering, “Why is Joe ranting on and on about something as simple as the humble sling? It's just a length of material that you use to attach a weapon to your body – right?”

Not really. Not in a practical application.

In the gun-candy store, it's easy to get distracted by lights, lasers and fancy optical doodads. At the range, other shooters rarely stroll over and say, “Wow, what a nice sling.” In the gun safe, they tangle and annoy. But if you ever have to keep a shoulder-fired weapon on your person for extended periods of time, there is nothing you'll appreciate more than a good sling.

Many of the folks I work with haven't spent a lot of time with a weapon in the field. That's not a criticism or a sin; it's simply a fact that few occupations or lifestyles demand the need or naturally deliver those experiences. Most of us do not walk into corporate America carrying a long gun.

Even the gents who have served for years in the infantry may not consider that their military experience will likely differ from that of a post-event prepper. Protecting the homestead while accomplishing daily activities, chores and movements is different than the routine of a soldier who is a component of a fighting unit. I often challenge my friends to perform one simple task without leaning their rifle against a tree – set up camp. Pitch the tent, build a fire, and empty the packs while wearing your blaster. The experience can be a real eye opener.

Take that exercise one step further; envision a typical post-event day from dawn to dusk with security as part of your plan. This mind-movie will help you realize the need for comfortably accommodating your weapon. Unless you find yourself surviving in a densely populated urban area, you'll most likely spend a *lot more time* carrying your rifle than shooting it. This is a critical point. You probably won't be fighting, sweeping, clearing, or defending all the time. (If your environment requires such diligence, it might be time to consider another location.)

You will, most likely, be spending countless hours gardening, gathering, harvesting, and performing manual labor. If there is no rule of law, you'll probably want a firearm close by, or on your person. You may spend considerably more time traveling by foot than you do now. There's a reasonable chance you'll be outside and exposed for significant portions of the day.

All of this translates into the lowly sling playing an important role. The wise prepper will evaluate this humble piece of kit now, rather than later when it's too late. Prove that you can carry that blaster comfortably, securely and in a manner that is "mission configurable."

Types of Slings

For years, there were two basic types of slings: Single-point and 2-point. (For a short time, there was a 3-point sling, but it faded from the market quickly.)

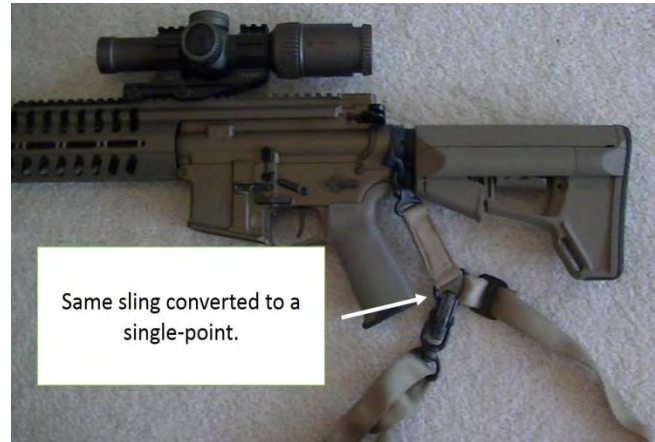
A few years back, the single-point sling was all the rage. It debuted as a cool accessory, and droves of shooters wanted to convert their battle rifles to accept this option. For most, this was a huge mistake. Single-point slings are for SWAT teams, hostage rescue units, and other outfits that are expecting short duration encounters of intense violence. Single-point slings are great for moving a weapon to the weak-side shoulder, close-quarters combat, and other tactics that require a lot of movement of a weapon. They, however, suck as a way to secure a long gun for extended periods while on the move.

Infantry soldiers, hunters, search and rescue responders, and probably preppers need slings that secure the weapon tightly against the torso. This configuration allows running, jumping, climbing, walking, and picking berries without the rifle banging into knees, thighs, or more personal regions between a male's legs. A hot barrel can make this capability even more critical.

Consider that you may need to slide the rifle around to your back if you have to use your hands to carry something heavy or to climb. You'll want to be able to tighten and tuck that fancy AK either in front or across your shoulders, and do so in a way that doesn't rub off significant swaths of flesh.

Recently, a new design has eliminated the need to make a choice. Several vendors now offer what I call "hybrid" slings that easily convert from single-point (when you're expecting to fight) to a more comfortable two-point arrangement. This nifty invention gives us preppers the best of both worlds.





When shopping for a sling, consider these factors:

- Be aware of the strap width and thickness. When you have a pack, body armor, load-rig, jacket or other paraphernalia on your shoulders, strap-pollution can be an issue. Wide and thin slings are typically the best option.
- At least one connection point should swivel. This avoids tangles, twists and hang-ups.
- Metal rings, clips, and buckles will hold more weight than their plastic counterparts.
- Look for quick adjustment straps. These are extremely handy.
- Quick Detach (QD) connectors are also great innovations. Over the years, I've been in numerous situations where I wanted to get the weapon off my body in a hurry. QD mounts work well.
- The company Magpul probably offers the most configuration/options:
<http://store.magpul.com/category/slings>

But wait. Carrying the weapon is only part of the equation.

Have you ever read those great articles on a gazillion uses for paracord? Well, a good rifle sling has its own list of secondary applications. Not as many as 550-cord, but more than many people realize.

A sling can be used to provide a brace for several different shooting positions. Used correctly, it can steady a shooter's aim.



Using the sling as a plumb line

Or how about an angle indicator for non-level shots? If you live in mountainous or hilly country, you know that making a shot 40 degrees down into a valley requires some adjustment. Often, it's difficult to judge the correct angle. This handy little accessory can help you with the estimate by creating a plumb line.

Properly selected, a sling can form a tourniquet, elevate an injured arm, tow something, fashion a stretcher or drag bag... the list could go on and on.

Essentially, a sling is a fancy 4-foot section of very strong rope. What could you do with that in an emergency situation?

Consider a scenario where you have three people in your group and need to climb a tree in order to scout. Three of these cords attached end-to-end would yield a 12-foot section of climbing rope.

In my fictional series, *Holding Their Own* , the protagonist uses his rifle sling and backpack straps to make a safety harness for a dangerous climb.

I'm sure many of you can be even more creative.

What I have come to respect most about preppers is a mindset of adaptability. I'm sure if you put 50 likeminded individuals in a room, they would devise dozens more innovative uses for this little length of material.

Acquire a good sling for your favorite model of post-collapse blaster. Adjust, test, and train with it in place. You'll be glad you did if things ever slide over the edge.

*Visit **Joe's** website, www.joenobodybooks.com, for more articles, reviews, books, and other resources for those who believe in the self-reliant lifestyle.*

Creating Myth when the SHTF Todd Sepulveda

As a public school administrator, one of my job responsibilities is to sit in special education IEP meetings and represent the district. Most of these meetings only last one hour. However, one year, I had more than a few IEP meetings that required an Asian translator. Now, I don't know if you have ever noticed, but anything that is said in English, takes twice as long in ____ (I'm not sure exactly which Asian dialect I was hearing). One day, in an effort to not fall asleep, I'm responsible remember, I started focusing on the words and sounds the translator was saying. I started saying them in my head like I knew what I was saying. Later that week, on the way home from my son's Taekwondo class, I started "talking" in Chinese (that's what I called it). My son wasn't listening to some advice I was giving, so it was like I was talking a foreign language to him....don't most parents feel that way? Anyway, the "Chinese" caught on.



I continued "talking Chinese" from time to time until the Summer when we went on a family cruise out of Galveston. I don't know why I started, but I started "talking Chinese" and everybody thought it was funny. So I kept it up. I did it EVERYWHERE! It was starting to be a second language!

One day we all headed to the pool area on the cruise ship when I realized I forgot my sunglasses in the cabin. I told everyone that I would meet them there and went back to get my shades. On the way up to the pool, I joined an Asian family in the elevator. They smiled at me as I stepped on and then continued to talk to their kids in their native language. Now, you have to remember, I had been "talking Chinese" all week like it was real. When I heard them talking in their native language, I joined in. It was automatic. I wasn't thinking! After my fake "Chinese" left my mouth I realized what I had done.

What happened next totally amazed me. The two parents looked at each other, looked at me and then both of them bowed towards me. I was stunned! But I bowed back and smiled. I arrived at my deck before they did, so I smiled as I got off the elevator. When I met up with my family, I told them what happened, but they didn't believe me. I kid a lot and they just believed it was another one of my jokes.

The next day, we were all eating in the casual dining room. As we sat there enjoying all the food, the Asian family from the elevator was walking passed us. As they approached and noticed me, they stopped and bowed again. I didn't get up, but I bowed my head as I sat. As they continued on, I noticed that my family was sitting there with their mouths open! "I told you it really happened," I said.

The story you just read is fake. But I have told it to many people, convincingly enough that they believe me. I guess I'm a good liar. Now, not all of it is fake, only the part of the cruise. But that's probably what makes it seem true.

Being able to tell a convincing "story" might be useful in a SHTF scenario. If things break down like we read about in our favorite fictional stories or even if things just break down where crime is rampant and you and your community are your own security force, [having another "layer" to get someone to think twice](#) about walking in to your neighborhood might be a useful deterrent.

Signs, Signs and more Signs

In a SHTF scenario, there is probably not going to be a lot of medical care around. People are going to think twice about getting themselves into a situation where they could be infected with a disease that they could potentially die from. Putting up signs leading up to the entrance of a neighborhood, or even a few miles before, saying that the neighborhood/town has been infected with...let's say, small pox, might be enough to keep some away.

Other warning signs might be useful too. How about a warning sign that says, "Warning! Stay off the main roads! Cannibals!" Or what about, "Warning, Nuclear accident ahead – Wear Safety Equipment!" Any sign could be made to meet the needs of your area. It might even be useful to have some signs pre-made.

Give Hope

Let's say a group comes along and asks for food, water or supplies. If you prepared, they could take one look at you and know that you have what they need. They might not have the force to take what you have, but they could become a nuisance to where you would have to worry about them coming back around and maybe even stealing when you or your group weren't looking. In this situation, you could give them enough food or water to get them away from you, at least a day or two and then feed them information that a town or sanctuary has been setup down the road. It might look something like this...

Them: Mister, we've been walking for days. We are hungry and thirsty and need something or we are going to die.

You: I can only spare a days worth of food and water for you.

Them: Mister, anything would be great. We are going to die if we don't get anything.

You: Wait here and I'll get you some food and water.

You return

You: Here you go. If you head up this road and turn right on C.R.145, you will get to the town of Lorel. I heard that they have government assistance there helping them with food, water and shelter.

Little did they know that Lorel is two days away. By the time they get there and don't find anything, they won't have the energy to want to turn back and bother you. It's mean and heartless. To be honest, it would be hard for me to do. But I haven't ever been in that situation and I don't know exactly how I would respond.

Create Fear

The best example of this that I can think of is the movie, The Village. In it, a group lives in a big open field surrounded by deep woods. No one ever goes into the woods because monsters live there. These monsters are attracted to the color red and from time to time, they venture into the field/village. I'll leave it there in case you haven't seen the movie. I don't want to spoil it. [Watch the video](#). Even after watching the movie, this video still gives me some chills. 😊

Something like a "monster" roaming the woods would need to have some truth to it. There would need to be a costume made and this "monster" would really have to do some bad things, like kill livestock to a point, to make the myth believable. The myth would also have to travel beyond your borders so that people would "talk" about a monster that roams the woods or area of that community .

Practice Now

Practice telling little white lies right now. I'm not talking about telling lies that would hurt someone or cheat someone out of something. I'm just talking about telling stories that are convincing, like the one I started with. See if people believe you. If not, ask at what point they didn't believe you. Was it because the little white lie was out of your character? Or was it because the lie was unbelievable?

Conclusion

To "sell" a myth or a lie, people have to believe it. This isn't something that can be done tongue and cheek. Those that share the myth have to be convincing. But, if your life and the life of your loved ones depended on it, could you do it?

Todd Sepulveda is the editor of [Prepper Website](#) and [The Preparedness Review](#). His goal is to link others with great preparedness content. Check out the [Prepper Website Family of Sites](#) to find more great content.

Thanks for Downloading The Preparedness Review - 5th Edition! If you would like to support The Preparedness Review and Prepper Website, please make your Amazon purchases through our affiliate link. - [Click Here](#).

