

The Self-Reliance Foundation

Essential Skills & 30-Day Action Plan for Personal Resilience

A SalarsU Guide by Randy Salars

Welcome, Future Self-Reliant

Self-reliance isn't about paranoia or isolation. It's about capability. When you know you can handle what life throws at you, fear loses its grip. When you can provide for yourself and help others, you become an asset rather than a liability.

This guide gives you a structured path from wherever you are to genuine preparedness—not fantasy scenarios, but practical skills that matter.

Part 1: The Self-Reliance Mindset

What Self-Reliance Actually Means

It means:

- Reduced dependence on fragile systems
- Confidence in your own capabilities
- Ability to adapt when circumstances change
- Resources to help yourself and others
- Skills that don't require electricity or internet

It doesn't mean:

- Living off-grid (unless you want to)
- Expecting apocalypse
- Isolating from community
- Hoarding supplies without skills
- Abandoning modern conveniences

The Three Pillars

Pillar	Focus	Timeframe
Skills	What you can do	Permanent—skills don't expire
Supplies	What you have	Medium-term—require maintenance
Mindset	How you think	Foundational—underlies everything

The Self-Reliance Spectrum

Self-reliance exists on a spectrum. Nobody is 100% self-reliant (nor should they be—interdependence is human). The goal is appropriate capability for your circumstances.

Level 1: Basic Resilience (Where most should start)

- 72-hour self-sufficiency

- Basic first aid
- Emergency communication plan
- Minimal dependency on just-in-time systems

Level 2: Extended Independence (Intermediate)

- 30-90 day self-sufficiency
- Intermediate skills across all categories
- Some food production capability
- Backup power and water systems

Level 3: Substantial Self-Sufficiency (Advanced)

- Long-term self-sufficiency capability
- Advanced skills in multiple areas
- Significant food production
- Energy independence
- Community leadership role

Level 4: Complete Homesteading (Lifestyle choice)

- Near-total self-sufficiency
- Master-level skills
- Full food production
- Off-grid capable
- Teaching others

Most people need Level 1-2. Levels 3-4 represent lifestyle choices, not requirements.

The Psychology of Preparedness

Your mindset determines your effectiveness more than your gear.

The Prepared Mind

1. **Awareness without anxiety:** Know risks exist without catastrophizing
2. **Competence builds confidence:** Skills reduce fear
3. **Responsibility over victimhood:** What can I do vs. what happens to me
4. **Long-term thinking:** Today's actions affect tomorrow's options
5. **Abundance mentality:** Enough to share, not just survive

Common Mental Traps

Normalcy Bias: "It can't happen here" or "It's always been fine." Reality: Everything that's never happened... hasn't happened yet.

Panic Buying: Reacting to crisis instead of preparing calmly. Result: Paying premium prices for suboptimal supplies.

Fantasy Scenarios: Preparing for zombie apocalypse while ignoring job loss, medical emergency, or natural disaster. Reality: Mundane emergencies are far more likely.

Gear over Skills: Buying equipment without learning to use it. Truth: A skilled person with minimal gear outperforms an unskilled person with warehouses of supplies.

Isolation Fantasy: Believing you can survive alone indefinitely. Reality: Humans are social animals; community is essential.

Building the Right Mindset

- Practice making do with less voluntarily
 - Camp occasionally without modern conveniences
 - Learn from experienced practitioners
 - Maintain perspective—most days are normal days
 - Focus on what you can control
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Part 2: Essential Skills Assessment

Rate yourself honestly on each skill (1 = No ability, 5 = Proficient):

Water

- Identify water sources in your area ___
- Purify water (boiling, filtration, chemical) ___
- Store water safely long-term ___
- Collect rainwater ___

Food

- Cook without electricity ___
- Preserve food (canning, drying, smoking) ___
- Grow vegetables ___
- Identify edible wild plants in your region ___
- Hunt or fish (where legal) ___

Shelter

- Basic home repairs ___
- Set up emergency shelter ___
- Insulate against cold/heat ___
- Secure your home ___

Fire

- Start fire without matches ___
- Build sustainable fire ___
- Fire safety and control ___
- Cook over open fire ___

First Aid

- Treat wounds and bleeding ___
- Recognize medical emergencies ___
- Perform CPR ___
- Treat common illnesses ___
- Assemble and use first aid kit ___

Navigation

- Read a map and compass ___

- Navigate without GPS ___
- Find direction using sun/stars ___
- Know your local area thoroughly ___

Defense

- Situational awareness ___
- De-escalation techniques ___
- Basic self-defense ___
- Home security measures ___

Communication

- Function without cell phone ___
- HAM radio basics ___
- Signal for help ___
- Establish meet-up plans with family ___

Tools

- Basic hand tool proficiency ___
- Knife skills and sharpening ___
- Knot tying ___
- Sewing and repair ___

Your lowest scores indicate where to focus first.

Part 3: The 30-Day Action Plan

Week 1: Assessment & Basics

Day 1-2: Home Assessment

- Walk through home noting: water shutoff, gas shutoff, electrical panel, fire extinguishers, exits
- Identify what you'd grab in 5-minute evacuation
- Check smoke/CO detectors

Day 3-4: Water Security

- Store 1 gallon per person per day for 3 days minimum
- Buy or assemble water filtration method
- Identify 3 water sources within 5 miles

Day 5-7: Basic Supplies

- Assemble 72-hour kit (see checklist below)
- Organize existing supplies
- Create inventory list

Week 2: Food & Fire

Day 8-10: Food Storage

- Buy 2-week supply of non-perishable food you'll actually eat
- Practice cooking one meal without electricity

- Learn one food preservation method

Day 11-14: Fire Skills

- Practice starting fire with matches, lighter
- Practice starting fire with ferro rod or other backup
- Build and maintain a fire safely (where legal)
- Cook something over fire

Week 3: Medical & Communication

Day 15-17: First Aid

- Take online first aid refresher (Red Cross offers free courses)
- Assemble or upgrade first aid kit
- Practice wound treatment, splinting, CPR basics

Day 18-21: Communication Plan

- Create family communication plan
- Establish meeting points (local and distant)
- Program emergency contacts
- Practice going 24 hours without cell phone

Week 4: Skills & Integration

Day 22-24: Navigation & Awareness

- Get paper maps of your area
- Practice compass use
- Walk your neighborhood noting resources, routes, hazards

Day 25-27: Integration

- Run a mini-drill: simulate power outage for evening
- Cook dinner, navigate with flashlight, test your kit
- Note what worked and what didn't

Day 28-30: Planning Forward

- Identify top 3 skill gaps from assessment
- Schedule training or practice for each
- Set 90-day goals for next level of preparedness

Part 4: The 72-Hour Kit

Container

- Backpack (comfortable for walking distance)
- Waterproof bag liner

Water

- 3 liters minimum (more in hot climate)
- Water filter or purification tablets
- Collapsible water container

Food

- 3 days of calorie-dense, non-perishable food
- No-cook options (energy bars, dried fruit, nuts)
- One way to heat water (small stove, fuel)

Shelter/Warmth

- Emergency blanket (mylar minimum, wool preferred)
- Rain poncho or tarp
- Extra socks and underwear
- Season-appropriate clothing layer

Light/Fire

- Headlamp + extra batteries
- Lighter AND waterproof matches
- Ferro rod (backup)
- Tinder (cotton balls with petroleum jelly)

Tools

- Multi-tool or knife
- Duct tape (wrap around water bottle)
- Paracord (50 feet minimum)
- Work gloves

First Aid

- Basic kit (bandages, antiseptic, medications)
- Personal prescriptions (rotate regularly)
- Moleskin for blisters
- Sunscreen, insect repellent

Documents

- Copies of ID, insurance, important papers
- Cash (\$200+ in small bills)
- USB drive with digital copies
- Emergency contact list (written, not just in phone)

Communication

- Charged phone + backup battery
- Hand-crank or battery radio
- Whistle
- Notepad and pencil

Personal Items

- Sanitation supplies
- Medications
- Glasses/contacts if needed
- Comfort item (book, cards)

Critical: Actually pack this kit. Put it somewhere accessible. Check it twice yearly.

Part 5: Urban vs. Rural Considerations

Urban Self-Reliance

Advantages:

- More resources nearby
- Faster emergency response
- Community density (potential mutual aid)

Challenges:

- Dependent on supply chains
- Limited space for storage/growing
- Higher crime potential in disruptions

Focus Areas:

- Bug-out routes and alternatives
- Apartment/condo specific preps
- Community building
- Gray man principles (blend in)

Rural Self-Reliance

Advantages:

- Space for growing, animals, storage
- Less dependent on immediate supply chains
- More self-contained resources

Challenges:

- Longer emergency response times
- Must provide more yourself
- Isolation can be vulnerability

Focus Areas:

- Medical self-sufficiency
 - Equipment maintenance
 - Fuel storage
 - Communication over distance
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Part 6: Building Community

No one survives alone long-term. Self-reliance includes building networks.

Layers of Community

1. **Household:** Everyone should have basic skills and know the plan
2. **Neighbors:** Know them, help them, build mutual aid potential
3. **Local network:** Church, clubs, organizations with practical skills
4. **Extended network:** Family, friends in other regions

What to Look For

- People with complementary skills
- Shared values (reliability, discretion, generosity)
- Geographic diversity (don't all be in same flood zone)
- Willingness to help AND accept help

Building Trust

- Start with normal neighborly behavior
 - Offer help without expectation
 - Share non-sensitive preparations
 - Observe who's reliable over time
 - Have clear agreements before emergencies
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Part 7: Continuing Development

90-Day Goals (After 30-Day Plan)

- Complete first aid certification
- Store 30-day food supply
- Learn one new preservation method
- Improve weakest skill area
- Expand community connections

1-Year Goals

- 90-day supply of essentials
- Proficiency in 3+ fire-starting methods
- Growing some of your own food
- Alternative power source (solar, generator)
- Full family training on basics

Ongoing Practices

- **Monthly:** Check supplies, rotate food
 - **Quarterly:** Practice a skill, run a drill
 - **Yearly:** Full kit review, plan update
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Part 8: Water Mastery

Water is life. Three days without it and you're in serious trouble. Mastering water—finding, purifying, storing, and conserving—is the foundation of all self-reliance.

Understanding Water Needs

Minimum Daily Requirements:

- Drinking: 1/2 gallon per person
- Cooking: 1/4 gallon per person
- Hygiene: 1/4 gallon per person (minimum)
- **Total baseline: 1 gallon per person per day**

Realistic Requirements:

- Hot climate: 1.5-2 gallons per person per day
- High activity: Add 1/2 gallon per day
- Illness (diarrhea, fever): Double intake
- Infants/elderly: Additional care needed

Beyond Survival:

- Laundry: 15-30 gallons per load
- Bathing: 25-50 gallons (tub) or 2-5 gallons (sponge bath)
- Toilet flushing: 1.6-7 gallons per flush
- Garden irrigation: Varies significantly

Water Storage

Container Types:

Container	Pros	Cons	Best For
Food-grade plastic jugs	Cheap, portable	Limited life, can crack	Short-term, rotation
5-gallon buckets	Stackable, versatile	Heavy when full	Medium storage
55-gallon drums	Large capacity	Immobile, need pump	Long-term stationary
IBC totes (275+ gal)	Very large capacity	Takes space, sunlight exposure	Large-scale storage
Water bricks	Stackable, durable	Expensive	Organized storage
WaterBOB	Emergency bathtub liner	Single use, fragile	Hurricane/storm prep

Storage Guidelines:

1. Use food-grade containers only

- Never use containers that held chemicals
- BPA-free preferred
- Look for recycling symbol #1 or #2 HDPE

2. Clean and sanitize before use

- Wash with dish soap and rinse thoroughly
- Sanitize: 1 tsp unscented bleach per gallon water
- Rinse and dry completely

3. Store in appropriate conditions

- Cool, dark location
- Away from chemicals (fumes can permeate plastic)
- Elevated off concrete (chemicals can leach)
- Rotate every 6-12 months

4. Treatment for long-term storage

- Municipal water: Already treated, may need rotation only

- Well water: Add 1/8 tsp unscented bleach per gallon
- Commercial water storage treatments available

Water Purification Methods

Boiling

- Most reliable method for biological contamination
- Bring to rolling boil for 1 minute (3 minutes above 6,500 ft)
- Kills bacteria, viruses, protozoa
- Does NOT remove chemicals, heavy metals
- Fuel-intensive

Chemical Treatment

Bleach (Sodium Hypochlorite 5.25-8.25%)

- Clear water: 8 drops per gallon
- Cloudy water: 16 drops per gallon
- Wait 30 minutes before drinking
- Slight chlorine smell = properly treated
- Only use unscented, regular bleach

Iodine

- 5-10 drops per quart (more for cold/cloudy water)
- Wait 30 minutes
- Vitamin C tablet can reduce iodine taste
- NOT for pregnant women or those with thyroid issues
- Long-term use not recommended

Water Purification Tablets

- Follow package directions exactly
- Convenient for portability
- Various types: chlorine dioxide, iodine-based
- Check expiration dates

Filtration

Gravity Filters

- Big Berkey, ProOne, similar
- Excellent for home/base camp use
- Remove bacteria, protozoa, many chemicals
- No power required
- Higher upfront cost, low per-gallon cost

Pump Filters

- MSR, Katadyn, Sawyer
- Good for backcountry/mobile use
- Physical effort required
- Filters need replacement/cleaning

Straw Filters

- LifeStraw, Sawyer Mini

- Lightweight, portable
- Personal use only
- Limited volume per day

UV Treatment

- SteriPen, similar devices
- Kills pathogens via UV light
- Fast, easy
- Requires batteries
- Doesn't filter particles or chemicals
- Water must be clear

Distillation

- Boil water, collect condensed steam
- Removes almost everything: pathogens, chemicals, salt
- Very fuel-intensive
- Small output
- Use for salt water or heavily contaminated sources

Finding Water

Natural Sources (in order of preference)

1. Spring—usually cleanest natural source
2. Fast-moving stream—self-filtering, less contamination
3. Lake or pond—standing water, more treatment needed
4. Swamp/marsh—heavy treatment required
5. Rain collection—generally pure, but check collection methods
6. Morning dew—labor intensive, small yield
7. Snow/ice—melt before drinking (eating snow lowers body temp)

Urban Sources

- Water heater tank (40-80 gallons typically)
- Toilet tank (NOT bowl)—if no chemical tablets used
- Ice cube trays/freezer ice
- Canned vegetables (drink the liquid)
- Swimming pools (heavy treatment needed—chemicals)

Signs of Water in Nature

- Vegetation (especially willows, cottonwoods)
- Animal tracks converging
- Insects (especially bees)
- Birds flying toward water at dawn/dusk
- Valleys and low areas

Water Conservation

When water is limited, conservation becomes essential.

Immediate Actions

- Plug drains in sinks and tubs
- Catch shower warm-up water

- Reuse gray water (non-contaminated) for flushing
- Reduce toilet flushing (if it's yellow, let it mellow)

Medium-Term Practices

- Sponge baths instead of showers
- One-pot cooking
- Paper plates (reduces dishwashing)
- Navy showers: wet, turn off, soap, rinse
- Hand sanitizer instead of handwashing (for low-risk tasks)

Collection Systems

- Rain barrels on downspouts
 - Tarps for rain catchment
 - Dehumidifier water (can be used for non-drinking purposes)
 - Air conditioner condensate
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Part 9: Food Security

Food security means having reliable access to nutritious food regardless of circumstances. This ranges from basic pantry stocking to full food production.

Storage Food Fundamentals

Shelf Life Factors

- Temperature: Cool = longer life
- Light: Dark = longer life
- Moisture: Dry = longer life
- Oxygen: Less = longer life
- Pests: Sealed = protected

Storage Conditions

- Ideal: 50-70°F, dark, dry
- Avoid: Garages (temperature swings), attics (heat), basements (moisture)
- Inspect regularly for pests, damage

Building Your Food Storage

Phase 1: 72-Hour Supply (Start Here)

- Foods you already eat
- No-cook options for power outages
- Easy to prepare
- Consider dietary restrictions

Suggested Items:

- Peanut butter
- Crackers
- Canned fruits, vegetables, beans
- Dried fruit, nuts
- Granola bars
- Honey (never spoils)

- Canned tuna, chicken, salmon
- Bottled water

Phase 2: 30-Day Supply

- Extend your pantry items
- Add variety
- Include comfort foods (morale matters)
- Begin rotation system

Additional Items:

- Rice (white stores longer than brown)
- Dried beans, lentils
- Pasta
- Canned soups, stews
- Oatmeal
- Flour, sugar, salt
- Cooking oil
- Powdered milk
- Coffee, tea
- Spices and seasonings
- Multivitamins

Phase 3: 90-Day Supply

- Long-term staples
- Bulk purchases
- Special packaging for longevity

Long-Term Items:

- Wheat berries (30+ year shelf life properly stored)
- White rice in mylar with oxygen absorbers (20+ years)
- Dried beans in mylar (20+ years)
- Honey (indefinite)
- Salt (indefinite)
- Sugar (indefinite if dry)
- Freeze-dried foods (25+ years)
- MREs (5-7 years)

Phase 4: One Year+ Supply

- Major bulk purchases
- Diverse protein sources
- Complete nutrition planning
- Serious rotation system

The FIFO System (First In, First Out)

Rotation prevents waste and ensures freshness.

1. **Date everything** when purchased
2. **Store new items in back/bottom**
3. **Use oldest items first**
4. **Check dates during monthly inspections**

5. Donate or use soon anything approaching expiration

Food Preservation Skills

Canning

Water Bath Canning (high-acid foods)

- Fruits, jams, jellies, pickles
- Tomatoes (with added acid)
- Requires proper jars, lids, equipment
- Follow tested recipes exactly (botulism risk)

Pressure Canning (low-acid foods)

- Vegetables, meats, soups, beans
- Requires pressure canner (not pressure cooker)
- More equipment, more skill required
- Essential for serious food preservation

Dehydrating

- Removes moisture to prevent spoilage
- Fruits, vegetables, meats (jerky)
- Electric dehydrator easiest
- Solar dehydrator (no power needed)
- Oven on lowest setting (less efficient)

Tips:

- Slice uniformly for even drying
- Blanch vegetables before drying
- Store in airtight containers with desiccant
- Properly dried = no moisture when squeezed

Smoking

- Hot smoking: cooks and preserves
- Cold smoking: preserves only (requires cure first)
- Adds flavor
- Traditional method, no power required
- Requires practice and proper equipment

Fermenting

- Sauerkraut, kimchi, pickles
- Adds beneficial bacteria
- Preserves vegetables without refrigeration
- Low-tech, ancient method
- Requires some learning curve

Freezing

- Easiest modern method
- Power dependent (vulnerability)
- Chest freezers more efficient than upright
- Frozen food can last 6-12 months

- Have backup plan for power outages

Food Production

Container Gardening

- Possible almost anywhere
- Tomatoes, peppers, herbs, lettuce
- Grow bags, pots, buckets
- Limited yield but valuable skills

Raised Beds

- Better soil control
- Easier maintenance
- Good for poor soil areas
- Can be intensive (high yield per square foot)

In-Ground Gardening

- Largest potential yield
- Requires more space
- Soil building takes time
- Most traditional approach

Key Crops for Self-Reliance

- Potatoes (high calories, stores well)
- Beans (protein, nitrogen-fixing)
- Squash (stores through winter)
- Corn (calories, flour, animal feed)
- Tomatoes (versatile, preservable)
- Greens (fast-growing, nutritious)
- Root vegetables (carrots, beets, turnips)

Protein Sources

- Chickens (eggs, meat, pest control)
- Rabbits (fast breeding, small space)
- Fish (aquaponics, pond)
- Goats (milk, meat, smaller than cattle)
- Hunting/fishing (where legal)

Part 10: Shelter and Home Security

Your home is your primary shelter. Making it secure, resilient, and comfortable without grid services is essential.

Home Resilience Audit

Walk through your home and assess:

Structure

- Roof in good condition (no leaks)
- Windows secure (locks work, glass intact)

- Doors solid (deadbolts, reinforced frames)
- Foundation sound (no cracks, water intrusion)
- Trees/branches that could fall on house

Systems

- Know location of: water shutoff, gas shutoff, electrical panel
- Fire extinguishers present and current
- Smoke/CO detectors working
- Alternative heating source (and fuel)
- Backup lighting throughout house

Supplies

- Tools for basic repairs
- Tarps for emergency roof/window covering
- Plywood sized for windows
- Sandbags or equivalent for flooding

Climate Control Without Grid Power

Staying Warm

Passive Methods:

- Close off unused rooms
- Heavy curtains over windows (open for sun during day)
- Rugs on floors
- Door draft stoppers
- Gather in one room

Active Heating:

- Wood stove (requires chimney, fuel storage)
- Pellet stove (requires electricity unless battery backup)
- Kerosene heater (use with ventilation, CO detector)
- Propane heater (Mr. Buddy, similar—indoor-rated only)
- Generator with electric heater (fuel-intensive)

Emergency:

- Tent inside house (holds body heat)
- Multiple sleeping bags nested
- Hot water bottles
- Eat—calories generate heat
- Stay active during day

Staying Cool

Passive Methods:

- Open windows on opposite sides (cross ventilation)
- Shade windows from outside
- Open at night, close during day
- Spend time in basement (cooler)

- Avoid cooking indoors

Active Cooling:

- Battery-powered fans
- Misting spray bottle + fan
- Wet bandana around neck
- Cool water soak for feet
- Generator with AC (very fuel-intensive)

Emergency:

- Hydrate constantly
- Limit activity to cool hours
- Loose, light clothing
- Find or create shade
- Know signs of heat exhaustion/stroke

Home Security Layers

Security works in layers—each one slows or deters threats.

Layer 1: Perimeter

- Good lighting (solar motion lights)
- Clear sight lines (no hiding spots)
- Thorny bushes under windows
- Locked gates, fences
- "Beware of Dog" signs (whether true or not)

Layer 2: Structure

- Solid doors (wood or metal core)
- Reinforced door frames and strike plates
- Deadbolts (minimum 1-inch throw)
- Window locks (and pins for sliding windows)
- Security film on windows
- Bars/grilles where appropriate

Layer 3: Detection

- Dogs (best early warning system)
- Motion sensors
- Door/window alarms
- Security cameras
- Gravel pathways (noise)

Layer 4: Response

- Defensible position inside home
- Communication to call for help
- Legal defensive tools you're trained to use
- Family plan (who does what)

Alternative Shelter

If you must leave your home:

Vehicle Shelter

- Always keep gas tank half-full+
- Blankets, water, snacks in car
- Know how to create shade
- Never run engine in enclosed space (CO)

Tent/Tarp Shelter

- Practice setting up before you need it
- Location: high ground, natural windbreaks
- Away from dead trees, flood zones
- Consider ground insulation

Emergency Improvised Shelter

- Debris hut (forest materials)
 - Snow shelter (if proper conditions)
 - Use tarps, branches, natural features
 - Focus on waterproof and windproof
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Part 11: Fire Mastery

Fire provides heat, light, cooking, water purification, and psychological comfort. Master fire and you've solved multiple survival problems.

Fire Starting Methods

Primary Methods (Always Carry)

Lighter

- Bic-style disposable
- Cheap, reliable, many lights per lighter
- Carry at least two
- Can work when wet (dry and flick)

Waterproof Matches

- Strike-anywhere preferred
- Store in waterproof container
- Include striker material

Secondary Methods (Backup)

Ferrocerium Rod (Ferro Rod)

- Creates shower of sparks
- Works when wet
- Thousands of strikes
- Requires practice
- Need fine, dry tinder

Magnesium Fire Starter

- Shave magnesium, spark with striker
- Burns extremely hot

- Good for wet conditions
- Requires practice

Emergency Methods (Skill-Intensive)

Fire Plow

- Rub hardwood against softer wood
- Creates friction and ember
- Exhausting, difficult

Bow Drill

- Spin hardwood on softwood using bow
- Ancient, reliable when practiced
- Requires specific materials, technique

Hand Drill

- Spin between palms
- Most difficult friction method
- Requires perfect materials, calluses

Solar (Lens)

- Magnifying glass, eyeglasses, water bottle
- Focus sunlight on tinder
- Only works with sun
- Surprisingly effective when done right

The Fire Triangle

Fire requires three elements:

1. **Heat** (ignition source)
2. **Fuel** (something to burn)
3. **Oxygen** (air)

Remove any one and fire dies. Add more of each and fire grows.

Tinder, Kindling, Fuel

Tinder (catches spark, burns fast)

- Dry grass, leaves
- Birch bark
- Fatwood shavings
- Cotton balls with petroleum jelly (carry these!)
- Dryer lint
- Char cloth
- Commercial fire starters

Kindling (catches from tinder, burns medium)

- Small twigs (pencil-sized and smaller)
- Split small sticks
- Dry pine needles
- Cardboard

- Small pieces of fatwood

Fuel (sustains fire, burns slow)

- Larger sticks (thumb-sized to wrist-sized)
- Split logs
- Hardwood burns longer, hotter
- Softwood catches easier, burns faster

Fire Lay Structures

Teepee

- Tinder in center, kindling leaning against it
- Good for starting
- Burns fast and hot
- Add larger fuel as it establishes

Log Cabin

- Stack fuel in square pattern
- Tinder and kindling in center
- Burns longer, more stable
- Good for cooking

Lean-To

- Large piece at back, smaller material leaning against
- Good in wind (back to wind)
- Easy to build

Star (Indian Fire)

- Logs radiating from center like wheel spokes
- Push logs in as ends burn
- Conserves fuel
- Good for long-burning

Dakota Fire Hole

- Dig two connected holes
- Fire in main hole, air intake from side hole
- Hides flame, reduces smoke
- Very fuel-efficient
- Good for cooking

Fire Safety

Starting Fires Safely

- Clear area of dry material (5-foot radius minimum)
- Have water nearby
- Never leave unattended
- Consider wind direction
- Check local fire conditions and regulations

Extinguishing Fires

- Drown with water
- Stir ashes, drown again
- Repeat until no heat, no steam
- Feel with back of hand (not palm)
- If no water, smother with dirt (less reliable)

Indoor Fire Safety

- Use only approved heating devices
 - Proper ventilation (CO kills silently)
 - CO detector required
 - Clear area around any flame or heater
 - Have fire extinguisher accessible
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Part 12: First Aid and Medical Preparedness

In emergencies, professional medical help may be delayed or unavailable. Basic medical knowledge is essential.

Disclaimer: This information is educational. It does not replace proper training or professional medical care. Take first aid and CPR courses.

First Aid Priorities

The ABCs

- **A**irway: Is it clear?
- **B**reathing: Are they breathing?
- **C**irculation: Is there a pulse? Is there severe bleeding?

Address in Order

1. Scene safety (don't become another victim)
2. Life-threatening bleeding
3. Airway obstruction
4. Breathing problems
5. Circulation issues
6. Other injuries

Bleeding Control

Minor Bleeding

- Clean wound with water
- Apply pressure with clean cloth
- Apply bandage
- Keep wound elevated if possible

Severe Bleeding

- Apply direct pressure immediately
- Use cleanest available material
- Do NOT remove pressure to check
- If blood soaks through, add more—don't remove
- Apply pressure to pressure points if needed

- Tourniquet as last resort for limbs (life over limb)

Tourniquet Application

- 2-3 inches above wound (not on joint)
- Tighten until bleeding stops
- Note time of application
- Do NOT loosen once applied
- Get professional help ASAP

Common Injuries

Burns

- Remove from heat source
- Cool with running water (not ice) for 10-20 minutes
- Cover loosely with sterile bandage
- Do NOT pop blisters
- Do NOT apply butter, toothpaste, etc.
- Seek medical help for large or deep burns

Fractures and Sprains

- Immobilize the injury
- Ice (20 on, 20 off)
- Compress (wrap, not too tight)
- Elevate above heart if possible
- If obviously deformed, do NOT try to straighten
- Splint in position found

Choking (Conscious Adult)

- Encourage coughing if they can
- If they can't speak, cough, or breathe:
 - Stand behind person
 - Fist above navel, below ribcage
 - Quick upward thrusts
 - Repeat until cleared or unconscious
- If unconscious: CPR, check for object between compressions

Medical Kit

Basic Kit Contents:

- Bandages (various sizes)
- Gauze pads and roll
- Adhesive tape
- Antiseptic wipes
- Antibiotic ointment
- Pain relievers (acetaminophen, ibuprofen)
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antihistamine
- Hydrocortisone cream
- Tweezers
- Scissors

- Nitrile gloves
- CPR mask
- Emergency blanket
- First aid manual

Advanced Additions:

- Tourniquet (CAT, similar)
- Israeli bandage (pressure dressing)
- QuikClot or hemostatic gauze
- Sam splint
- Triangular bandages (slings)
- Eye wash
- Burn dressing
- Oral rehydration salts
- Medications: EpiPen if needed, prescription meds

Extended Medical Kit:

- Suture kit (with training)
- Surgical stapler
- Stronger pain medications (prescription)
- Antibiotics (prescription, with guidance)
- Blood pressure cuff
- Stethoscope
- Medical reference books
- Dental emergency kit

Common Illnesses

Dehydration

- Symptoms: thirst, dark urine, dizziness, confusion
- Treatment: oral rehydration (water with electrolytes)
- ORS recipe: 1 liter water + 6 tsp sugar + 1/2 tsp salt
- Prevent by drinking before thirsty

Diarrhea

- Major cause of dehydration
- BRAT diet: Bananas, Rice, Applesauce, Toast
- Anti-diarrheal medication sparingly
- Replace fluids continuously
- Seek help if bloody, prolonged, or high fever

Hypothermia

- Symptoms: shivering, confusion, slurred speech, sleepiness
- Treatment: get warm, dry, sheltered
- Remove wet clothing
- Gradual rewarming (not hot—can cause shock)
- Skin-to-skin contact in sleeping bag
- Warm, sweet drinks if conscious

Heat Exhaustion/Stroke

- Exhaustion: heavy sweating, weakness, cool pale skin
- Stroke: hot dry skin, confusion, loss of consciousness
- Treatment: cool immediately
- Remove from heat, hydrate (exhaustion), cool rapidly (stroke)
- Heat stroke is life-threatening—get help

Medical Training

Get trained. Books and guides help, but hands-on training is essential.

Recommended Training:

- American Red Cross First Aid/CPR
- Wilderness First Aid (WFA)—16-hour minimum
- Wilderness First Responder (WFR)—80+ hours
- Stop the Bleed (bleeding control)
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Part 13: Communication and Navigation

When normal communication fails, you need alternatives. When GPS dies, you need traditional navigation.

Communication Without Cell Service

Short-Range Options

FRS/GMRS Radios

- Consumer walkie-talkies
- FRS: No license required, lower power
- GMRS: License required (easy to get), higher power
- Range: 1-5 miles (terrain dependent)
- Good for family/neighborhood communication

CB Radio

- No license required
- Range: 4-10+ miles
- Vehicle-mounted or handheld
- Good for convoys, rural areas

Medium-Range Options

MURS Radio

- No license required
- 5 channels, low power
- Less congested than FRS
- Good for property, farm, rural use

HAM Radio (Amateur Radio)

- License required (test, but no morse code)
- Technician license: local communication
- General/Extra licenses: long-range
- Can communicate across world

- Active community, emergency networks

Long-Range/Emergency Options

Satellite Communicator

- Garmin inReach, SPOT, similar
- Subscription required
- Works anywhere with sky view
- Two-way texting
- SOS function

Emergency Beacons (PLB)

- Personal Locator Beacon
- One-way emergency signal
- No subscription (406 MHz beacons)
- For life-threatening emergencies only

Communication Plan

Every household needs a communication plan for when normal channels fail.

Elements of a Good Plan:

1. Contact List

- Written (not just in phone)
- Out-of-area contact (relay point)
- Local emergency services
- Neighbors, friends

2. Meeting Points

- Primary: Near home (end of driveway, neighbor's house)
- Secondary: In neighborhood (park, school)
- Tertiary: Out of area (relative's house, landmark)

3. Communication Schedule

- Check-in times if separated
- Specific radio channels/frequencies
- Code words for different situations

4. Backup Methods

- If no phone: radio, neighbor relay, physical check
- If no power: battery backups, vehicle charging
- If separated: follow meeting point protocol

Map and Compass Navigation

GPS is wonderful—until it isn't. Learn traditional navigation.

Map Reading Basics

Understanding Your Map

- Legend: symbols, scale, features

- Contour lines: elevation (closer = steeper)
- Scale: 1:24,000 means 1 inch = 2,000 feet
- North: usually top of map (check arrow)

Terrain Association

- Match map features to what you see
- Identify landmarks: peaks, saddles, ridges, valleys
- Water features: streams flow downhill (contour V's point uphill)
- Man-made features: roads, buildings, power lines

Compass Basics

Parts of a Compass

- Baseplate: for map work
- Housing: rotating ring with degrees
- Needle: red end points to magnetic north
- Orienting arrow: "put red in the shed"
- Direction of travel arrow: where you go

Taking a Bearing (Map to Field)

1. Place compass on map
2. Align edge with route
3. Rotate housing until orienting lines parallel map's north-south lines
4. Read bearing at index mark
5. Hold compass level, rotate body until needle in shed
6. Walk in direction of travel arrow

Following a Bearing

- Pick landmark in distance on your bearing
- Walk to it
- Repeat
- Check bearing periodically

Declination

- Magnetic north \neq True north
- Difference varies by location and changes over time
- Adjust compass or calculations accordingly
- Find your declination: ngdc.noaa.gov

Natural Navigation

When you have no tools:

Sun

- Rises in east, sets in west
- Highest point (noon) is south (Northern Hemisphere)
- Shadow tip method: mark shadow tip, wait 15 min, mark again—line between points runs east-west

Stars (Northern Hemisphere)

- North Star (Polaris) indicates north
- Find Big Dipper, follow "pointer" stars 5x distance

Other Indicators

- Moss: often grows on shaded side (not always north!)
 - Snow melts faster on south-facing slopes
 - Prevailing wind directions (know your area)
 - Satellite dishes point south (in USA)
-

Part 14: Tools and Skills

Tools extend human capability. Skills make tools useful. Both are essential.

Essential Tools

Cutting Tools

Fixed Blade Knife

- Primary tool
- Full tang (blade extends through handle)
- 4-6 inch blade
- High-carbon or stainless steel
- Keep sharp—dull knives are dangerous

Folding Knife

- Everyday carry backup
- 3-4 inch blade sufficient
- Locking blade preferred

Axe or Hatchet

- Wood processing
- Camp tasks
- Shelter building
- Buy quality, maintain edge

Saw

- Folding saw for portability
- Bow saw for camp
- Chainsaw for serious work (requires fuel)

Striking Tools

Hammer

- Standard claw hammer for most tasks
- Heavier sledge for demolition
- Rubber mallet for gentle work

Shovel

- Full-size for serious digging
- Folding for portability
- Flat blade for trenching, pointed for digging

Leverage Tools

Pry Bar

- Opening, breaking, moving
- Various sizes for different tasks
- Steel for strength

Come-Along

- Portable winch
- Pulling vehicles, moving heavy objects
- Rated for weight capacity

Knots Every Self-Reliant Person Should Know

Basic Knots

Overhand Knot

- Simplest knot
- Stopper knot
- Foundation for others

Square Knot (Reef Knot)

- Joining two ropes of equal size
- Not for critical loads
- Easy to tie and untie

Bowline

- Creates fixed loop
- Won't slip or bind
- "Rabbit comes out of hole, around tree, back in hole"
- Essential rescue knot

Utility Knots

Clove Hitch

- Attaching rope to pole
- Adjustable
- Not secure alone—add half hitches

Taut-Line Hitch

- Adjustable tension
- Great for tent guylines
- Slides one way, grips other

Trucker's Hitch

- Mechanical advantage
- Tying down loads
- Very secure when done right

Joining Knots

Sheet Bend

- Joining ropes of different sizes

- More secure than square knot

Double Fisherman's

- Very secure
- Difficult to untie
- Good for creating loops

Repair Skills

Sewing

- Replace buttons
- Patch holes
- Hem clothing
- Repair gear

Basic Kit:

- Needles (various sizes)
- Thread (several colors, strong)
- Scissors
- Pins
- Thimble

Duct Tape Engineering

- Temporary repairs for almost anything
- Waterproofing
- Blister prevention
- Bandage holding
- Wrap around water bottle for portable supply

Wire and Cord

- Baling wire: general binding
- Paracord: 550 lb test, inner strands for finer work
- Zip ties: quick fastening
- Safety wire: securing bolts

Learning New Skills

The Skill Acquisition Process

1. **Unconscious Incompetence:** Don't know what you don't know
2. **Conscious Incompetence:** Aware of the gap
3. **Conscious Competence:** Can do it with focus
4. **Unconscious Competence:** Automatic, instinctive

Effective Practice

- Deliberate practice: focused, specific, challenging
- Spaced repetition: better than cramming
- Test yourself: don't just review, perform
- Teach others: deepens your understanding
- Real-world application: practice in conditions you'll face

Finding Training

- YouTube (free, varies in quality)
 - Community college courses
 - Extension services (gardening, food preservation)
 - Clubs and organizations (HAM radio, shooting, etc.)
 - Mentors and experienced practitioners
 - Books and manuals (build library)
 - FEMA courses (free online)
-

Part 15: Financial and Legal Preparedness

Self-reliance includes financial resilience and understanding legal considerations.

Financial Resilience

Emergency Fund Basics

- 3-6 months expenses minimum
- Accessible but not too accessible
- High-yield savings account
- Separate from regular checking

Diversified Savings

Cash on Hand

- \$500-\$2000 in small bills at home
- Secure location (fireproof safe recommended)
- Banks may close, ATMs may fail
- Think about denominations: \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20

Precious Metals (Optional)

- Hedge against extreme circumstances
- Focus on small denominations
- Silver more practical than gold for small transactions
- Only after other preparations

Barter Goods (Beyond Money)

- Alcohol (spirits store indefinitely)
- Tobacco products
- Coffee
- Ammunition (where legal)
- Medications
- Skills and labor

Reducing Expenses

Fixed Costs Review

- Housing: Can you reduce or relocate?
- Transportation: Do you need that car payment?
- Insurance: Shop annually
- Subscriptions: Audit and cut

Variable Costs

- Food: Cook at home, reduce waste
- Energy: Efficiency improvements
- Entertainment: Free and low-cost options
- Clothing: Buy quality, maintain, repair

Increasing Income

Side Income Ideas

- Skills you already have
- Assets you already own (renting tools, space)
- Selling unneeded items
- Freelance work
- Teaching/tutoring

Reducing Dependence

- Grow some food
- Do your own repairs
- Reduce consumption
- Barter and trade

Legal Considerations

Know Your Local Laws

Property Rights

- What can you do on your property?
- Water collection (some states restrict!)
- Livestock and agriculture
- Building codes and permits

Self-Defense

- Castle doctrine in your state?
- Duty to retreat?
- Concealed/open carry laws
- Use of force continuum

Food and Commerce

- Cottage food laws
- Selling eggs, produce
- Home business regulations
- Health department requirements

Important Documents

Keep copies (digital and physical, stored safely):

- Identification (driver's license, passport)
- Birth certificates
- Social Security cards
- Marriage certificate
- Property deeds
- Vehicle titles

- Insurance policies
- Medical records and prescriptions
- Financial account information
- Estate documents (will, trust, POA)

Estate Planning

Basic Documents

- Will: Who gets what
- Power of Attorney: Who makes decisions if you can't
- Healthcare Directive: Medical wishes
- HIPAA authorization: Who can access records

Don't Wait

- Online services make this affordable
 - Review and update periodically
 - Tell someone where documents are
-

Quick Reference: Priority Actions by Scenario

Power Outage (Short-term)

1. Flashlights, candles
2. Don't open freezer unnecessarily
3. Check on vulnerable neighbors
4. Charge devices if partial power

Evacuation Order

1. Grab go-bag, documents, medications
2. Follow predetermined route
3. Contact family per communication plan
4. Listen to emergency broadcasts

Shelter in Place

1. Secure home
2. Fill bathtubs with water
3. Inventory supplies
4. Stay informed via radio

Infrastructure Disruption

1. Implement water conservation
 2. Begin food rotation (eat fresh first)
 3. Limit vehicle use
 4. Connect with community network
-

Part 16: Energy Independence

Energy powers modern life. When the grid fails, those with alternative energy sources maintain capability.

Understanding Your Energy Needs

Inventory Your Usage

Walk through your home and list:

- Refrigerator/freezer (essential, high draw)
- Heating/cooling (essential, very high draw)
- Lighting (essential, moderate draw)
- Water heater (important, high draw)
- Medical equipment (critical if used)
- Communication devices (important, low draw)
- Entertainment/comfort (nice but optional)

Prioritizing for Emergencies

Priority	Items	Notes
Critical	Medical equipment, heating in extreme cold	Must have backup
High	Refrigeration, minimal lighting, communication	Should have backup
Medium	Hot water, cooking	Manual alternatives exist
Low	Entertainment, convenience devices	Can wait

Backup Power Options

Generators

Portable Gas Generators

- Pros: Relatively affordable, flexible fuel
- Cons: Noisy, exhaust, requires fuel storage
- Sizes: 2,000-10,000+ watts
- Use: Short-term outages, specific circuits

Portable Inverter Generators

- Pros: Quieter, cleaner power (safe for electronics)
- Cons: More expensive, typically smaller output
- Sizes: 1,000-4,000 watts typical
- Use: Sensitive electronics, camping, moderate loads

Whole-House Standby Generators

- Pros: Automatic, powers entire house, runs on natural gas/propane
- Cons: Very expensive (\$5,000-\$15,000+), professional installation
- Use: Seamless backup, frequent outages, medical needs

Dual-Fuel Generators

- Pros: Gas or propane flexibility
- Cons: Slightly more complex
- Use: Extended outages, fuel flexibility

Generator Safety

CRITICAL: Never run generator indoors or in enclosed space. CO kills.

- Place 20+ feet from house
- Point exhaust away from windows/doors
- Use outdoor-rated extension cords
- Don't refuel while hot
- Ground if required
- Never backfeed into house wiring without transfer switch

Solar Power

Portable Solar Panels

- Power banks, small devices
- 10-100 watt panels
- Good for communication, lighting
- Limited power output

Solar Generators (Power Stations)

- Large battery with solar input
- 500-3000+ watt-hours
- Quiet, no fuel
- Good for moderate loads
- Combine with portable panels

Residential Solar + Battery

- Professional installation
- 5-20+ kW systems
- Can power entire home
- Battery backup (Powerwall, etc.)
- Significant investment (\$15,000-\$50,000+)
- Long-term energy independence

Other Options

Wind

- Small wind turbines available
- Location dependent (need consistent wind)
- Can complement solar

Micro-Hydro

- If you have running water
- Can provide 24/7 power
- Complex installation

Fuel Storage

Gasoline

- Shelf life: 3-6 months without stabilizer
- With stabilizer (Sta-Bil): 1-2 years
- Store in approved containers
- Keep away from heat, ignition sources
- Rotate regularly (use and replace)

Propane

- Shelf life: Indefinite (doesn't degrade)
- Portable tanks or large fixed tanks
- Safer than gasoline
- Many applications: heating, cooking, generators

Diesel

- Shelf life: 6-12 months
- More stable than gasoline
- Requires different generators
- Can be treated for longer storage

Firewood

- Dry (seasoned) wood essential
- 1-2 years drying time for hardwood
- Store covered, off ground
- 3-5 cords per winter (climate dependent)

Off-Grid Living Basics

For those pursuing serious energy independence:

System Components

1. Generation: Solar panels, wind, hydro
2. Storage: Battery bank
3. Regulation: Charge controller
4. Conversion: Inverter (DC to AC)
5. Distribution: Wiring, breakers

Sizing Your System

- Calculate daily watt-hour usage
 - Account for seasonal variation
 - Add 25-50% buffer
 - Consider battery days (cloudy weather coverage)
 - Consult professionals for serious systems
-

Part 17: Transportation Preparedness

Getting where you need to go—or deciding to stay—requires preparation.

Vehicle Preparedness

Keep Your Vehicle Ready

Maintenance

- Regular oil changes and service
- Tire condition and pressure checked
- Brakes, lights, wipers functional
- Battery in good condition
- Keep gas tank at least half full

Emergency Kit in Every Vehicle

- Jumper cables or jump starter
- Basic tools
- Flashlight and batteries
- First aid kit
- Blanket
- Water (gallon minimum)
- Non-perishable snacks
- Phone charger (12V)
- Seasonal: ice scraper, sand/kitty litter, sunshade

Extended Vehicle Kit

For serious preparedness:

- Fix-a-flat or tire plug kit
- Tow strap or recovery strap
- Shovel (folding)
- Fire extinguisher
- Road flares or reflective triangles
- Spare fuses
- Duct tape
- 2 quarts oil
- Gallon of coolant
- Maps of your region

Alternative Transportation

Bicycles

- No fuel required
- Quiet
- Exercise benefit
- Cargo capacity with panniers/trailer
- Maintain: tires inflated, chain lubricated, brakes working
- Keep spare tubes, patch kit, basic tools

Walking/Hiking

- Ultimate backup
- Requires physical fitness
- Know routes that avoid obstacles
- Proper footwear essential
- Understand your realistic range

Boats/Watercraft

- If you live near water
- Can bypass road obstacles
- Requires different skills
- Maintenance and storage considerations

Bug-Out vs. Bug-In Decision

When to Stay (Bug-In)

- Home is secure and defensible
- Roads are dangerous or impassable
- You have supplies at home
- Evacuation destination is unclear
- Officials recommend sheltering in place

When to Leave (Bug-Out)

- Home is no longer safe (fire, flood, structural damage)
- Mandatory evacuation order
- Threat is approaching (wildfire, chemical spill)
- Supplies are exhausted
- Civil unrest in immediate area

Making the Decision

Consider:

- What is the specific threat?
- What do officials recommend?
- Do I have a safe destination?
- Can I get there safely?
- What do I have here vs. there?
- What's the timeline?

Bug-Out Routes

- Primary route: Most direct, likely most congested
- Secondary route: Alternative direction, less obvious
- Tertiary route: Backroads, may be longer
- Know all three by heart
- Practice driving them
- Note: fuel stops, water sources, potential obstacles

Long-Distance Travel Preparedness

If You Must Travel Far

Vehicle Prep

- Full tank before departure
- All fluids topped off
- Tires checked (including spare)
- Emergency kit doubled

Route Planning

- Multiple routes identified
- Fuel stops planned (don't let tank get below half)
- Rest stops identified
- Emergency contacts along route

Documentation

- Vehicle registration
- Insurance cards
- ID for all travelers

- Cash
 - Medical information
-

Part 18: Mental and Physical Resilience

Your body and mind are your primary survival tools. Maintain them.

Physical Fitness for Self-Reliance

Functional Fitness Goals

Self-reliance requires:

- Cardiovascular endurance (sustained activity)
- Strength (lifting, carrying, pulling)
- Flexibility (injury prevention)
- Balance (uneven terrain)
- Mobility (getting up, down, through)

Practical Fitness Standards

Can you:

- Walk 5 miles with a 30-lb pack?
- Carry 50 lbs up stairs?
- Sprint 100 yards if needed?
- Get up from ground without using hands?
- Work physically for 4+ hours?

If not, work toward these capabilities.

Training Without Gyms

Bodyweight Exercises

- Push-ups, pull-ups, squats
- Lunges, planks, burpees
- No equipment needed
- Can be done anywhere

Functional Training

- Carry heavy objects (farmer's carries)
- Chop wood
- Dig
- Climb stairs with weight
- Walk varied terrain

Rucking

- Walking with weighted pack
- Excellent cardio + strength
- Simulates real-world demands
- Start light, increase gradually

Mental Preparedness

Stress Management

Emergencies are stressful. Build stress tolerance now.

Daily Practices

- Deep breathing exercises
- Physical exercise (natural stress relief)
- Adequate sleep
- Limit news consumption
- Time in nature

Building Stress Tolerance

- Practice minor discomforts
- Cold showers
- Fasting occasionally
- Physical challenges
- Delayed gratification

Decision-Making Under Pressure

OODA Loop

- Observe: What's happening?
- Orient: What does it mean?
- Decide: What should I do?
- Act: Do it

Avoiding Paralysis

- Make decisions quickly but not rashly
- Accept imperfect information
- Good-enough decisions now > perfect decisions later
- Adjust as you learn more

Maintaining Morale

In extended emergencies, morale matters:

- Maintain routines where possible
- Stay productive (meaningful work)
- Connect with others
- Find moments of humor
- Celebrate small wins
- Help others (purpose is therapeutic)
- Limit negativity exposure
- Physical activity
- Sleep and nutrition

Sleep in Emergencies

Importance of Sleep

Sleep deprivation causes:

- Impaired judgment
- Slower reaction time

- Weakened immune system
- Emotional instability
- Reduced physical performance

Sleep Strategies Without Power

- Go to bed at dark, wake at light (natural rhythm)
- Block light with blackout curtains or eye mask
- White noise from nature or battery fan
- Temperature regulation with blankets or cooling
- Maintain regular schedule

Watch Rotations

If security requires someone awake:

- Minimum 4-hour sleep blocks
 - Rotate fairly
 - Brief reliefs thoroughly
 - Have wake-up protocols
-

Part 19: Children and Family Preparedness

Self-reliance includes preparing your entire family, including children.

Age-Appropriate Training

Toddlers (2-4)

- Teach to stay with parents
- Know address and parent names
- Recognize danger sounds (smoke alarm, tornado siren)
- Practice family meeting spots

Young Children (5-8)

- Memorize parent phone numbers
- Basic fire safety and evacuation
- 911 usage (and when not to use)
- Swimming basics if possible
- Follow directions in emergencies

Older Children (9-12)

- First aid basics
- Fire starting basics (supervised)
- Navigation basics
- Cooking simple meals
- Care for younger siblings
- More complex emergency roles

Teenagers (13+)

- All skills adults should have
- Driving (if licensed)
- More responsibility in plans

- Can help train younger children
- May have specialized skills

Making Preparedness Fun

Children learn through play and engagement:

- Camping trips (practice skills)
- Scavenger hunts (navigation)
- Cooking challenges (food prep)
- First aid games
- Map and compass adventures
- Garden projects
- Building shelters (forts)
- Fire starting (supervised)

Family Emergency Plan

Every Family Member Should Know:

1. Meeting places (primary and secondary)
2. Out-of-state contact (phone number memorized)
3. How to turn off utilities
4. Where emergency supplies are
5. How to call for help
6. What to grab in quick evacuation

Practice Regularly

- Fire drills
- Evacuation drills
- Communication checks
- Meeting point practice
- No-power evenings (simulation)

Pets and Livestock

Pet Preparedness

Include in your planning:

- Pet food (2-week minimum supply)
- Water for pets
- Medications
- Carriers/crates
- Leashes, muzzles if needed
- Copies of vaccination records
- Recent photos
- Identification (microchip + tags)

Know Your Options

- Pet-friendly shelters (limited)
- Hotels that accept pets
- Friends/family who can help
- Never leave pets behind in evacuation

Livestock Considerations

- Shelter options during disasters
 - Water and feed storage
 - Evacuation plans (trailers, routes)
 - Identification (brand, tags, photos)
 - Community mutual aid for animals
-

Part 20: Seasonal Preparedness

Different seasons bring different challenges. Prepare accordingly.

Winter Preparedness

Cold Weather Risks

- Hypothermia
- Frostbite
- Frozen pipes
- Power outages (ice, snow)
- Vehicle accidents
- Carbon monoxide (from heating)

Winter Preparations

Home

- Insulation and weatherstripping
- Alternative heat source and fuel
- Pipe insulation or heat tape
- Ice melt/sand for walkways
- Snow removal tools
- Emergency supplies (power outages common)

Vehicle

- Winter tires or chains
- Ice scraper and brush
- Extra blankets, warm clothing
- Sand or kitty litter (traction)
- Jumper cables
- Full tank policy more important

Personal

- Layered clothing system
- Waterproof outer layer
- Warm hat, gloves, boots
- Hand and toe warmers

Summer Preparedness

Hot Weather Risks

- Heat exhaustion and stroke
- Dehydration

- Wildfires
- Severe thunderstorms
- Tornadoes (in some regions)
- Power outages (high demand)

Summer Preparations

Home

- Ventilation strategy without AC
- Window coverings to block heat
- Battery-powered fans
- Extra water storage
- Food that doesn't require cooking
- Fire defensible space (if in wildfire area)

Vehicle

- Coolant and fluid checks
- Shade when parked
- Extra water always
- Sunshade for windshield

Personal

- Hydration supplies
- Sun protection (hat, sunscreen, sunglasses)
- Light, breathable clothing
- Knowledge of heat illness signs

Spring Preparedness

Spring Risks

- Flooding (snowmelt, rain)
- Tornadoes (peak season in many areas)
- Severe thunderstorms
- Mudslides
- Allergies (health preparedness)

Spring Preparations

- Clean gutters and drainage
- Check sump pump
- Review flood insurance
- Storm shelter location
- Severe weather alerts on phone
- Outdoor equipment maintenance

Fall Preparedness

Fall Risks

- Hurricanes (Atlantic coast)
- Early winter storms
- Power outages (transitional weather)
- Heating system failures

Fall Preparations

- Heating system maintenance/service
 - Chimney cleaned if using
 - Firewood stocked and dried
 - Winterize outdoor plumbing
 - Fall harvest and preservation
 - Vehicle winterization
 - Seasonal supplies rotation
-

Part 21: Urban Survival Specifics

Urban environments present unique challenges and opportunities for self-reliance.

Urban Challenges

Higher Risks

- Dependence on supply chains
- Limited space for supplies
- Higher crime during disruptions
- Evacuation complexity (traffic, routes)
- Apartment limitations (fire, heat)
- Neighbors' actions affect you

Urban Advantages

- More resources nearby
- Faster emergency response (usually)
- Community density (mutual aid potential)
- Diverse skills in population
- Infrastructure (when working)

Apartment and Condo Preparedness

Space-Limited Storage

Creative Storage Ideas

- Under beds (flat containers)
- Behind furniture
- Vertical shelving
- Closet organization
- Ottoman/bench storage
- Luggage filled with supplies
- Distributed throughout (not all in one place)

Multi-Use Items

- Water containers that stack
- Food that serves as decor (mason jars)
- Emergency tools in everyday use

Apartment-Specific Concerns

Fire Safety

- Know multiple exit routes
- Fire extinguisher (check if allowed)
- Rope/fire ladder for upper floors
- Don't rely on elevators
- Meet firefighters outside

Security

- Door reinforcement (if allowed)
- Window locks
- Know neighbors
- Intercom/entry system familiarity

Utilities

- Know shutoff locations
- Coordinate with building management
- Understand heating/cooling when power fails
- Water storage is critical (no well option)

Urban Navigation

Know Your Area

Walking Distance Resources

- Water sources (rivers, lakes, pools)
- Food sources (stores, restaurants, gardens)
- Medical (hospitals, pharmacies, clinics)
- Government (police, fire, city offices)
- Community (churches, community centers)

Alternative Routes

- Back streets
- Alleys
- Parks and greenways
- Pedestrian areas
- Routes avoiding highway choke points

Urban Movement Tips

During Disruption

- Blend in (gray man concept)
- Move purposefully, not panicked
- Avoid crowds
- Have destination in mind
- Travel in daylight if possible
- Be aware of surroundings

Urban Community Building

Neighbor Relationships

Start Now

- Introduce yourself

- Share contact information
- Note skills and resources
- Help with small things
- Build trust over time

During Crisis

- Informal neighborhood watch
 - Resource sharing
 - Division of labor
 - Communication network
 - Mutual protection
-

Part 22: Rural and Remote Area Specifics

Rural areas offer more self-reliance potential but different challenges.

Rural Advantages

Greater Self-Sufficiency Options

- Space for gardens, livestock
- Wood for fuel
- Water sources possible
- More privacy and security
- Less dependence on supply chains
- Community tends to be self-reliant

Rural Challenges

What You Must Provide

- Medical care (distance to hospitals)
- Fire protection (may be volunteer only)
- Law enforcement (long response times)
- Utilities (may be more fragile)
- Supplies (can't run to store easily)

Remote Area Preparedness

Extended Self-Sufficiency

If you're truly remote:

- 30-90 day supplies minimum
- Medical kit more comprehensive
- Communication critical (HAM radio, satellite)
- Mechanical skills essential
- Community network vital
- Weather awareness important

Seasonal Access Issues

If Road Access Can Be Cut

- Stock up before isolation season

- Alternative access (snowmobile, boat, helicopter)
- Emergency signaling capability
- Rescue plan known to others
- Self-sufficiency for duration

Homestead Skills

For those pursuing rural self-reliance:

Essential Homestead Skills

- Animal husbandry
- Food preservation
- Equipment maintenance
- Basic veterinary care
- Carpentry and construction
- Electrical basics
- Plumbing basics
- Land management
- Weather reading
- Butchering
- Dairy processing
- Seed saving

Building Toward Independence

Year 1: Foundation

- Garden basics
- Preservation (canning, freezing)
- Chickens for eggs
- Basic tool use

Year 2-3: Expansion

- Larger garden
- Small livestock (rabbits, goats)
- More preservation skills
- Alternative energy introduction

Year 4-5: Advancement

- Meat production
- Dairy (goats or cow)
- Significant food production
- Energy independence progress

Ongoing

- Continuous skill building
- Community integration
- Teaching others
- Refining systems

Part 23: Community and Group Survival

No one survives long-term alone. Community is essential to resilience.

Building Your Network

Concentric Circles

Circle 1: Household

- Everyone trained
- Everyone knows plan
- Defined roles and responsibilities
- Full trust and cooperation

Circle 2: Extended Family/Close Friends

- Similar preparedness values
- Regular contact
- Mutual aid agreements
- May be bug-out destinations

Circle 3: Neighbors

- Know them now
- Identify skills and resources
- Build relationships
- Potential cooperation in crisis

Circle 4: Community Groups

- Church, clubs, organizations
- Shared interests and values
- Broader resource pool
- Formal or informal networks

Mutual Aid Agreements

What to Discuss (Before Crisis)

- What resources can we share?
- What skills do we bring?
- Under what circumstances do we activate?
- Where would we gather?
- Who makes decisions?
- How do we communicate?
- What are expectations for contribution?
- How do we handle security?

Keep It Simple

Start with:

- Information sharing
- Equipment lending
- Skill exchange
- Neighborhood watch
- Food sharing/garden exchange

Group Dynamics

Roles in Groups

- Leadership (decision-making, coordination)
- Security (watch, defense)
- Medical (first aid, health)
- Supply (food, water, procurement)
- Communication (internal, external)
- Technical (repairs, equipment)
- Child/elder care

Avoiding Conflict

- Clear expectations upfront
- Fair distribution of work and resources
- Transparent decision-making
- Address issues early
- Maintain morale
- Allow private time/space

Security Considerations

OPSEC (Operational Security)

Don't advertise:

- Your supplies
- Your specific preparations
- Your detailed plans
- Your vulnerabilities
- Your valuable resources

Do:

- Appear no better or worse prepared than neighbors
 - Be helpful without revealing everything
 - Build trust gradually
 - Share knowledge, not inventory lists
-

Part 24: Scenarios and Stress Tests

Practice scenarios to identify gaps in your preparations.

Scenario 1: 72-Hour Power Outage

Summer Version

- No AC
- Refrigerator food at risk
- Minimal lighting

Questions

- How do you keep cool?
- What do you eat?

- How do you see at night?
- How do you communicate?
- What about medication requiring refrigeration?

Winter Version

- No heat
- No hot water
- Early darkness

Questions

- How do you stay warm?
- Can you cook?
- Is frozen food safe (outdoor storage)?
- Are pipes at risk?

Scenario 2: 2-Week Isolation

You cannot leave your home for two weeks.

Questions

- Do you have enough food?
- Do you have enough water?
- What about medication refills?
- What about sanitation (if water stops)?
- How do you maintain mental health?
- Can you work remotely?

Scenario 3: Must Leave Home Immediately

You have 15 minutes to leave and may not return.

Questions

- What do you grab?
- Where do you go?
- How do you get there?
- Who do you contact?
- What documents do you need?
- What about pets?

Scenario 4: No-Notice Disaster

Earthquake, tornado, explosion—sudden onset with no warning.

Questions

- Does everyone know initial actions?
- Where do you meet if separated?
- Can you function with no power, water, communication?
- What if someone is injured?
- What if home is damaged?

Scenario 5: Extended Grid-Down

Power is out for 1-3 months across your region.

Questions

- Can you produce or source food?
- How do you purify water long-term?
- What about medical needs?
- How do you maintain security?
- Do you have community to work with?
- What's your communication plan?

Using Scenarios

How to Practice

1. Discuss scenario as family
2. Walk through what you'd do
3. Identify gaps and questions
4. Address gaps (skills, supplies, plans)
5. Actually practice when possible

Mini-Drills

- One evening with no power (by choice)
 - 24 hours eating only from storage
 - Walk bug-out route
 - Practice fire starting
 - Test communication plan
 - First aid scenarios
-

Part 25: Resource Lists and References

Recommended Books

General Preparedness

- "The Prepper's Blueprint" by Tess Pennington
- "When All Hell Breaks Loose" by Cody Lundin
- "Build the Perfect Bug Out Bag" by Creek Stewart

Medical

- "The Survival Medicine Handbook" by Joseph Alton
- "Where There Is No Doctor" by David Werner
- "Wilderness First Responder" by Buck Tilton

Food Production/Preservation

- "Ball Complete Book of Home Preserving"
- "The Vegetable Gardener's Bible" by Ed Smith
- "Storey's Guide to Raising Chickens"

Skills

- "Bushcraft 101" by Dave Canterbury
- "SAS Survival Handbook" by John Wiseman
- "The Encyclopedia of Country Living" by Carla Emery

Financial Preparedness

- "Your Money or Your Life" by Vicki Robin
- "The Total Money Makeover" by Dave Ramsey

Organizations and Training

Emergency Training

- American Red Cross (first aid, CPR)
- FEMA CERT Program (free)
- Stop the Bleed (bleeding control)
- Wilderness First Aid providers

Amateur Radio

- ARRL (American Radio Relay League)
- Local HAM clubs

Agricultural Extension

- State university extension services
- Master Gardener programs
- Food preservation classes

Online Resources

Government

- Ready.gov (federal preparedness)
- FEMA.gov (emergency management)
- CDC.gov (health preparedness)
- Weather.gov (weather alerts)

Non-Profit

- RedCross.org
- Your state's emergency management

Note on Online Resources

- Verify information from multiple sources
- Government sources for official guidance
- Community sources for practical tips
- Be skeptical of commercial hype

Supplier Considerations

When purchasing supplies:

- Buy from reputable sources
 - Read reviews and ratings
 - Start with essentials before exotic gear
 - Skills before gadgets
 - Test gear before depending on it
 - Buy once, buy quality when possible
-

Final Thoughts

Self-reliance is a journey, not a destination. You don't need to become a wilderness expert or doomsday prepper. You need to steadily expand your capabilities and reduce your vulnerabilities.

Start with the 30-day plan. Build from there. Every skill you learn, every supply you store, every connection you make increases your resilience—and your ability to help others.

That's the real goal: not just surviving, but maintaining your humanity and usefulness when things get hard.

Welcome to the self-reliant life.

Appendix A: Complete Checklists

72-Hour Kit Master Checklist

Water & Hydration

- Water (1 gallon per person per day = 3 gallons minimum per person)
- Water purification tablets or drops
- Portable water filter
- Collapsible water container
- Electrolyte packets

Food

- 3-day supply of non-perishable food per person
- Can opener (manual)
- Eating utensils (spork, mess kit)
- Energy bars (minimum 6 per person)
- Dried fruit and nuts
- Peanut butter or nut butter
- Crackers or hardtack
- Comfort foods (candy, chocolate)

Shelter & Warmth

- Emergency blanket (minimum 2 per person)
- Wool blanket or sleeping bag liner
- Emergency bivvy or sleeping bag
- Tarp (8x10 minimum)
- Paracord (50 feet minimum)
- Extra clothing (season appropriate)
- Rain poncho
- Hat and gloves

Fire & Light

- Lighters (minimum 2)
- Waterproof matches

- Ferro rod
- Fire tinder (cotton balls with petroleum jelly)
- Headlamp (with extra batteries)
- Flashlight (with extra batteries)
- Chemical light sticks (6+)
- Candles (emergency type)

First Aid

- Complete first aid kit
- Personal medications (7-day supply)
- Pain relievers (ibuprofen, acetaminophen)
- Anti-diarrheal medication
- Antihistamine
- Prescription copies
- Glasses/contacts (spare)
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Hand sanitizer

Tools & Equipment

- Fixed blade knife
- Multi-tool
- Duct tape (small roll or wrapped around object)
- Zip ties (various sizes)
- Work gloves
- Sewing kit
- Safety pins
- Scissors
- Wire (baling or snare)

Navigation & Communication

- Local maps (paper)
- Regional maps (paper)
- Compass
- Cell phone with charger
- Battery bank
- Solar charger (small)
- FRS/GMRS radios (if you have them)
- Whistle
- Signal mirror
- Emergency contact list (written)

Documents & Money

- Copies of IDs (driver's license, passport)

- Copies of insurance policies
- Cash (\$200+ in small bills)
- USB drive with important documents
- Family photos (for identification if separated)
- Emergency contact numbers (written)

Personal Hygiene

- Toilet paper
- Feminine hygiene products
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Soap (small bar)
- Towel (microfiber)
- Wet wipes
- Trash bags (for sanitation)

Special Needs

- Infant supplies (formula, diapers, wipes)
- Pet supplies (food, water, carrier)
- Medical devices (CPAP, insulin, etc.)
- Mobility aids (spare cane, etc.)

Home Emergency Supply Checklist (2-Week Minimum)

Water Storage

- 14 gallons per person stored
- Water purification method
- Water containers (food-grade)
- WaterBOB or bathtub storage solution
- Rain collection system (if allowed)

Food Storage

- 2-week supply of foods you eat
- Manual can opener
- Cooking pot for no-power cooking
- Camp stove or alternative cooking method
- Fuel for alternative cooking (propane, Sterno, etc.)
- Cooler for refrigerator items during short outage
- Bulk staples (rice, beans, pasta)
- Canned proteins (tuna, chicken, beans)
- Canned vegetables and fruits
- Comfort foods and snacks
- Coffee/tea
- Spices and seasonings

Power & Light

- Flashlights throughout house
- Extra batteries (AA, AAA, D, C)
- Battery-powered lanterns
- Candles (with holders)
- Generator OR solar generator
- Fuel for generator (stored safely)
- Extension cords (heavy-duty, outdoor-rated)
- Battery backup for medical devices

Heating & Cooling

- Alternative heat source (if relevant)
- Fuel for heat source
- Blankets and sleeping bags
- Battery-powered fans
- Portable AC unit (if available)

First Aid & Medical

- Comprehensive first aid kit
- 30-day supply of prescriptions
- Over-the-counter medications
- First aid reference book
- Medical supplies (as needed)

Sanitation

- Toilet supplies for no-water situation
- 5-gallon bucket with toilet seat lid
- Garbage bags (heavy-duty)
- Bleach (unscented)
- Cleaning supplies
- Personal hygiene items (30-day supply)

Security

- Home security measures in place
- Flashlights for checking perimeter
- Defensive tools (as appropriate)
- Reinforced doors and windows
- Safe/lockbox for valuables

Communication

- Battery or hand-crank radio
- FRS/GMRS radios
- Spare batteries
- Written contact lists
- Meeting point plans documented

Tools

- Basic tool kit
- Tarps for emergency repairs
- Plywood for windows (if in storm area)
- Sandbags (if in flood area)
- Chainsaw or hand saw (if trees are risk)

Vehicle Emergency Kit Checklist

Basic Kit (Always in Vehicle)

- Jumper cables or battery jump starter
- Flashlight with batteries
- Basic tool kit (screwdrivers, pliers, wrench)
- First aid kit
- Fire extinguisher (small)
- Reflective triangles or flares
- Blanket
- Water (1 gallon minimum)
- Non-perishable snacks
- Phone charger (12V)
- Paper maps of region
- Pen and paper
- Rain poncho
- Work gloves

Extended Kit (For Prepared Driver)

- Tow strap or recovery strap
- Fix-a-flat or tire plug kit
- Portable air compressor
- Shovel (folding)
- 2 quarts motor oil
- 1 gallon coolant
- Spare fuses
- Duct tape
- Zip ties
- Wire
- Emergency fuel container (empty, for getting fuel)

Seasonal Additions

Winter:

- Ice scraper and brush
- Sand, kitty litter, or traction mats
- Extra warm clothing

- Hand and toe warmers
- Extra blankets
- Candle and tin can (for heat)
- Bag of salt

Summer:

- Extra water (double normal)
- Sunshade for windshield
- Sunscreen
- Hat
- Bug spray

Annual Preparedness Audit Checklist

January

- Review and update emergency plans
- Check all expiration dates on food
- Rotate any expiring items
- Test all flashlights and replace batteries
- Verify fire extinguisher charge
- Update emergency contact lists

April

- Spring clean emergency supplies
- Check for moisture damage
- Test and service generator
- Verify storm shelter readiness
- Update vehicle emergency kit
- Check rain gear and outdoor equipment

July

- Check water storage (taste test, rotate if needed)
- Verify cooling plans if AC fails
- Update first aid kit
- Check prescription medication supplies
- Test communication equipment
- Practice one emergency skill

October

- Prepare for winter (heat source, fuel)
- Service heating equipment
- Check winter clothing supply
- Verify food storage for holidays
- Test all smoke and CO detectors

- Update 72-hour kits for season

Monthly (Quick Check)

- Review food storage for expiring items
- Check fuel levels (generator, vehicles)
- Verify prescription medication supply
- Test one piece of emergency equipment
- Review and practice one skill or plan element

Appendix B: Emergency Plans Templates

Family Communication Plan

Household Information

Family/Household Name: _____

Address: _____

Household Members

Name	Phone	School/Work	Medical Needs	Special Skills

Emergency Contacts

Out-of-Area Contact #1:

- Name: _____
- Phone: _____
- Email: _____
- Address: _____
- Relationship: _____

Out-of-Area Contact #2:

- Name: _____
- Phone: _____
- Relationship: _____

Local Emergency Contact:

- Name: _____
- Phone: _____

Meeting Locations

Primary Meeting Place (near home):

- Location: _____
- Address: _____
- Description: _____

Secondary Meeting Place (in neighborhood):

- Location: _____
- Address: _____
- Description: _____

Out-of-Neighborhood Meeting Place:

- Location: _____
- Address: _____
- Directions: _____

Important Phone Numbers

- Police (non-emergency): _____
- Fire (non-emergency): _____
- Hospital: _____
- Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222
- Doctor: _____
- Pharmacy: _____
- Insurance Agent: _____
- Utility Company: _____
- Landlord (if renting): _____

Evacuation Routes

Route 1 (Primary):

- Direction: _____
- Major roads: _____
- Destination: _____

Route 2 (Secondary):

- Direction: _____
- Major roads: _____
- Destination: _____

Route 3 (Alternate):

- Direction: _____
- Description: _____

Important Utility Information

Water shutoff location: _____ Gas shutoff location: _____ Electrical panel location: _____ Propane tank location: _____

Home Security Assessment

Exterior Assessment

Perimeter

- Fencing adequate: Y / N
- Gates lockable: Y / N
- Exterior lighting adequate: Y / N

- Clear sight lines (no hiding spots): Y / N
- Address visible from street: Y / N

Entry Points

- Front door: Solid core / Hollow / Metal
- Front door deadbolt: Y / N
- Back door: Solid core / Hollow / Metal
- Back door deadbolt: Y / N
- Garage door secure: Y / N
- Window locks functional: Y / N
- Sliding door security bar: Y / N

Vulnerability Notes:

Interior Assessment

Safety Equipment

- Smoke detectors (one per level minimum): Y / N
- CO detectors (if gas/propane in home): Y / N
- Fire extinguisher(s) current: Y / N
- First aid kit location known: Y / N
- Flashlight in each bedroom: Y / N

Safe Room/Defensive Position

- Location: _____
- Features: _____
- Supplies present: _____

Action Items (Prioritized)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Medical Information Form

Personal Medical Information

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Blood Type: _____ Allergies: _____
 _____ Primary Doctor: _____ Doctor Phone: _____ Insurance: _____
 _____ Policy Number: _____

Current Medications

Medication	Dose	Frequency	Purpose

Medical Conditions

Surgical History

Emergency Medical Notes

Pharmacy Information

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Address: _____

Medical Equipment Needs

Appendix C: Skill Development Worksheets

Skill Assessment Matrix

Rate yourself honestly: 1 = No ability, 2 = Basic awareness, 3 = Can do with guidance, 4 = Competent, 5 = Could teach others

Water Skills

Skill	Current	Target	Priority
Identify local water sources	—	—	—
Boil/chemical purification	—	—	—
Use water filter	—	—	—
Store water long-term	—	—	—
Collect rainwater	—	—	—

Food Skills

Skill	Current	Target	Priority
Cook without power	—	—	—
Can foods (water bath)	—	—	—
Can foods (pressure)	—	—	—
Dehydrate foods	—	—	—
Grow vegetables	—	—	—
Raise chickens	—	—	—
Hunt/fish	—	—	—

Forage edibles	—	—	—
----------------	---	---	---

Fire Skills

Skill	Current	Target	Priority
Start fire (lighter/matches)	—	—	—
Start fire (ferro rod)	—	—	—
Start fire (friction)	—	—	—
Build various fire lays	—	—	—
Cook over fire	—	—	—
Fire safety/extinguishing	—	—	—

Medical Skills

Skill	Current	Target	Priority
Basic first aid	—	—	—
CPR	—	—	—
Bleeding control	—	—	—
Splinting/immobilization	—	—	—
Recognize emergencies	—	—	—
Treat common illnesses	—	—	—

Navigation Skills

Skill	Current	Target	Priority
Read paper map	—	—	—
Use compass	—	—	—
Navigate without tools	—	—	—
Know local area on foot	—	—	—

Communication Skills

Skill	Current	Target	Priority
Use FRS/GMRS radio	—	—	—
HAM radio basics	—	—	—
Signal for help	—	—	—

Tool Skills

Skill	Current	Target	Priority
Knife use and sharpening	—	—	—
Axe/hatchet use	—	—	—
Basic hand tool proficiency	—	—	—
Knot tying	—	—	—
Basic sewing/repair	—	—	—

Top 5 Skills to Develop:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Skill Development Plan

Skill to Develop: _____

Current Level: ____ / 5

Target Level: ____ / 5

Target Date: _____

Learning Resources:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Practice Plan:

Week	Activity	Time Commitment	Completed
1			
2			
3			
4			

Progress Notes:

Competency Demonstration:

How will you prove you've learned this skill?

Appendix D: Budget-Friendly Preparedness

Starting from Zero: The \$0 Preparedness Plan

No money? Start here:

Week 1: Information

- Download FEMA app (free)
- Read Ready.gov website
- Get paper maps from gas stations
- Learn about local hazards
- Make a family communication plan
- Identify meeting places

Week 2: Organization

- Gather documents, make copies
- Organize what you already have
- Clean out pantry and inventory
- Start eating from oldest food first
- Save glass jars and containers

Week 3: Low-Cost Actions

- Fill empty bottles with water
- Save dryer lint for fire tinder
- Practice skills (fire, navigation)
- Learn which plants are edible locally
- Talk to neighbors, build relationships

Week 4: Free Resources

- Public library for survival books
- YouTube for skill videos
- CERT training (usually free)
- Red Cross app (free)
- Extension service classes (free/low-cost)

Building Supplies on a Budget

\$50 Investment (First Priority)

- Water containers (repurpose if possible): \$0-10
- Basic first aid kit: \$10-15
- Flashlight with batteries: \$5-10
- Basic manual can opener: \$3-5
- Lighter (multi-pack): \$3-5
- Candles: \$5
- Whistle: \$2
- Extra food (buy on sale): \$10-15

\$100 Investment (Second Priority)

- Water filter (Sawyer Mini or similar): \$20-25
- Additional food storage: \$20
- Better first aid supplies: \$15
- Fire starter (ferro rod): \$8-10
- Basic knife: \$15-20
- Rope/paracord: \$8-10
- Radio (hand-crank/battery): \$15-20

\$250 Investment (Building Foundation)

- Comprehensive first aid kit: \$30-50
- Larger water storage: \$20-30
- 30-day food supply (gradual): \$50-75
- Quality multi-tool: \$30-50
- Camp stove and fuel: \$25-35
- Additional lighting: \$15-20
- Storage containers: \$15-20

Monthly Budget Approach

If you have \$25/month for preparedness:

Month 1: First aid kit (\$15), water storage (\$10) *Month 2:* Flashlights and batteries (\$15), fire supplies (\$10)

Month 3: Food storage additions (\$25) *Month 4:* Water filter (\$25) *Month 5:* Radio (\$20), hygiene supplies (\$5)

Month 6: Knife/multi-tool (\$25)

Continue rotating: food, medical, tools, comfort items

Free and Low-Cost Training

Free Online Resources

- FEMA Independent Study courses
- Red Cross online training
- YouTube skill tutorials
- State emergency management websites
- Extension service publications

Low-Cost Local Training

- Community college courses
- CERT training (free)
- Red Cross classes (\$25-75)
- Scout or outdoor clubs
- Community garden programs
- Master Gardener programs

Practice Without Spending

- Camp in backyard (skill practice)
 - Cook without power (disconnect stove)
 - Navigate with map only (leave GPS behind)
 - Start fire without lighter (use ferro rod)
 - First aid scenarios with family
 - No-electricity evenings at home
-

Appendix E: Reference Charts

Water Purification Quick Reference

Method	Effectiveness	Time	Pros	Cons
Boiling	Excellent (bio)	1-3 min boil	Reliable, no chemicals	Fuel needed, no chemical removal
Bleach	Good (bio)	30 min wait	Cheap, portable	Taste, limited effectiveness
Iodine	Good (bio)	30 min wait	Light, portable	Taste, not for everyone
Tablets	Good (bio)	30-240 min	Convenient	Expensive per use
Filter	Excellent (bio)	Immediate	Fast, no taste	Cost, maintenance
UV (SteriPen)	Excellent (bio)	1 min	Fast, easy	Batteries, clear water only
Distillation	Excellent (all)	Hours	Removes everything	Very slow, fuel intensive

Bio = Biological (bacteria, viruses, protozoa) **Note:** Only distillation reliably removes chemicals and heavy metals.

Fire Starting Success Rates

Method	Difficulty	Reliability	Conditions
Lighter	Very Easy	Very High	Works wet if dried first
Waterproof matches	Easy	High	Wind can be issue
Regular matches	Easy	Medium	Fail when wet
Ferro rod	Medium	High	Requires practice, good tinder
Fire steel	Medium	High	Similar to ferro rod
Magnifying lens	Medium	Medium	Needs sun
Bow drill	Hard	Medium-High	Requires skill, right materials
Hand drill	Very Hard	Low-Medium	Expert level
Fire plow	Hard	Low	Exhausting

Knot Selection Chart

Purpose	Best Knots
Tie to post/pole	Clove hitch + half hitches
Adjustable loop	Taut-line hitch

Fixed loop (won't slip)	Bowline
Join two ropes (same size)	Square knot
Join two ropes (different sizes)	Sheet bend
Secure load	Trucker's hitch
Stopper (prevent rope from pulling through)	Overhand, figure-8
Creating loop in rope end	Bowline, figure-8 on a bight

Food Storage Shelf Life

Item	Properly Stored	Notes
White rice (sealed, no O2)	25-30 years	Must be protected from oxygen
Wheat berries (sealed, no O2)	30+ years	Must be protected from oxygen
Honey	Indefinite	May crystallize but safe
Salt	Indefinite	Keep dry
Sugar	Indefinite	Keep dry
Dried beans (sealed, no O2)	25-30 years	May need longer cooking over time
Rolled oats (sealed, no O2)	25-30 years	Must be protected from oxygen
Pasta (dry)	8-10 years	Sealed storage
Canned goods (low acid)	3-5 years	Check for damage
Canned goods (high acid)	18 months-2 years	Tomatoes, fruits
Freeze-dried (commercial)	25-30 years	Keep sealed until use
MREs	5-7 years	Temperature dependent

Key Factors: Cool temperature, darkness, low humidity, no oxygen (for bulk storage)

Medical Emergency Quick Reference

Call 911 For:

- Chest pain or pressure
- Difficulty breathing
- Unconsciousness
- Severe bleeding (won't stop)
- Severe burns
- Seizures
- Stroke symptoms (FAST: Face drooping, Arm weakness, Speech difficulty, Time to call)
- Severe allergic reaction
- Poisoning
- Broken bones with visible deformity

- Spine/neck injury

ABCs (Check in Order):

1. **A**irway - Is it clear?
2. **B**reathing - Are they breathing?
3. **C**irculation - Do they have a pulse? Severe bleeding?

CPR Basics (Adult):

- 30 compressions (2 inches deep, 100-120/min)
- 2 breaths
- Continue until help arrives or they recover
- Push hard and fast

Choking (Adult):

- If can speak/cough: encourage coughing
- If cannot: Heimlich maneuver (abdominal thrusts)
- If unconscious: CPR, check mouth between cycles

Bleeding Control:

1. Direct pressure (don't let up)
 2. Elevate if possible
 3. Tourniquet if life-threatening limb bleed
-

Appendix F: 90-Day Advanced Development Plan

Month 1: Foundation Building

Week 1: Assessment

- Complete full skills assessment
- Inventory all current supplies
- Identify top 3 skill gaps
- Identify top 3 supply gaps
- Create training schedule

Week 2: Water Security

- Store 14-day water supply (minimum)
- Acquire and test water purification method
- Map 3 water sources within 5 miles
- Practice purification methods

Week 3: Food Security

- Inventory pantry and create list
- Store 14-day food supply
- Practice cooking without power (one meal)
- Learn one preservation method (choose: canning, dehydrating, or fermenting)

Week 4: Communication & Documentation

- Complete family communication plan
- Practice meeting at designated spots
- Gather and copy important documents
- Program emergency contacts in all phones
- Create written contact list

Month 2: Skills Development

Week 5: Fire Mastery

- Practice fire starting with lighter (build confidence)
- Practice fire starting with ferro rod (achieve reliable success)
- Learn and build 3 different fire lays
- Cook one meal over fire

Week 6: First Aid

- Take first aid/CPR course (or thorough refresher)
- Assemble or upgrade first aid kit
- Practice wound care on family members
- Learn to recognize medical emergencies
- Know when to call 911 vs. wait-and-see

Week 7: Navigation

- Acquire paper maps of local area and region
- Learn compass basics
- Navigate one route using only map and compass
- Identify multiple evacuation routes

Week 8: Home Security

- Complete home security assessment
- Address top 3 vulnerabilities
- Practice family safety plan
- Know all utility shutoffs

Month 3: Integration & Testing

Week 9: Power & Light

- Assess power backup options
- Acquire or test backup lighting
- Practice evening without power (intentional)
- Ensure communication works without power

Week 10: Scenario Testing

- Run 24-hour "power outage" simulation
- Identify gaps and address immediately
- Test evacuation process (pack and load car)

- Time yourself and family

Week 11: Community Building

- Identify 3 neighbors for potential cooperation
- Have preparedness conversation with family
- Join local group (CERT, HAM, etc.)
- Identify community resources

Week 12: Review & Plan Forward

- Review all checklists (what's done, what remains)
- Update skills assessment (improvement?)
- Create next 90-day goals
- Schedule ongoing practice and rotation

Ongoing Maintenance Schedule

Weekly

- Review any news affecting preparedness
- Check one category of supplies
- Practice one small skill (even 10 minutes)

Monthly

- Full supply check
- Test one piece of equipment
- Review and update one plan element
- Use and replace rotating food

Quarterly

- Run a drill or scenario
- Take inventory of all supplies
- Review insurance and documents
- Seasonal kit adjustments

Annually

- Major audit of all supplies
- Review and update all plans
- Professional servicing (generator, fire extinguishers)
- Set new preparedness goals

Appendix G: Emergency Quick Actions

Power Outage (Immediate Actions)

First 5 Minutes:

1. Check if it's your house or neighborhood
2. Get flashlights (don't use candles yet)
3. Unplug sensitive electronics
4. Note time it started

5. Check on vulnerable family members

First Hour:

- Report outage to utility
- Check refrigerator/freezer (note time, keep closed)
- Assess heating/cooling needs
- Check on neighbors
- Gather battery-powered information (radio)

Extended Outage:

- Limit fridge/freezer opening (4 hrs fridge, 48 hrs full freezer if closed)
- Eat perishables first
- Use camp stove or grill for cooking (outside only)
- Charge devices from car if needed
- Check in with neighbors regularly

Evacuation (Rapid Departure)

5-Minute Evacuation:

1. Grab go-bag (should be packed)
2. Grab medications
3. Grab wallet/purse/keys
4. Grab phone and charger
5. Pets into carriers
6. Leave

15-Minute Evacuation: All above, plus: 7. Grab document folder/USB 8. Grab extra clothing bag 9. Grab additional food/water 10. Turn off utilities if safe to do 11. Lock house 12. Take photos/video of belongings

Before You Leave (If Time):

- Turn off water at main
- Turn off gas at meter (if leak suspected)
- Unplug major appliances
- Leave a note for others who might come
- Post on social media or contact someone

Severe Weather (Tornado Warning)

Immediately:

1. Go to lowest floor
2. Interior room (no windows)
3. Get under sturdy furniture
4. Cover head with arms
5. Stay until all-clear

Best Locations:

- Basement
- Interior bathroom (lie in tub)
- Interior closet
- Under stairs
- Center of building

Avoid:

- Windows
- Mobile homes (evacuate if possible)
- Vehicles
- Overpasses

Earthquake (During Shaking)**If Indoors:**

- DROP to hands and knees
- Take COVER under desk/table
- HOLD ON until shaking stops
- Stay away from windows, exterior walls
- Don't run outside during shaking

If Outdoors:

- Move away from buildings, power lines, trees
- Drop and cover if nothing to move to
- Stay in open area

After Shaking:

- Expect aftershocks
- Check for injuries
- Check for hazards (gas leaks, structural damage)
- Don't use elevators
- Be ready to evacuate

Medical Emergency (General Protocol)**STEP 1: Assess Scene**

- Is it safe to approach?
- What happened?
- How many victims?

STEP 2: Call for Help

- Call 911 (or have someone do it)
- Stay on line
- Follow instructions

STEP 3: Assess Victim

- Are they responsive?
- Are they breathing?
- Is there severe bleeding?

STEP 4: Provide Aid

- Start CPR if not breathing
- Control severe bleeding
- Don't move unless necessary
- Keep them calm and warm

STEP 5: Wait for Help

- Stay with victim
 - Monitor condition
 - Be ready to report what happened
-

Final Thoughts

Self-reliance is a journey, not a destination. You don't need to become a wilderness expert or doomsday prepper. You need to steadily expand your capabilities and reduce your vulnerabilities.

Start with the 30-day plan. Build from there. Every skill you learn, every supply you store, every connection you make increases your resilience—and your ability to help others.

That's the real goal: not just surviving, but maintaining your humanity and usefulness when things get hard.

Welcome to the self-reliant life.

Appendix H: Comprehensive Gear Guides

The Complete Bug-Out Bag Guide

Your bug-out bag (BOB) is your portable lifeline. This guide covers everything from selection to packing.

Choosing the Right Bag

Size Considerations

- 30-40L for 24-48 hours
- 40-55L for 72-hour kit
- 55-75L for extended survival
- Consider body size and fitness level

Key Features

- Multiple compartments for organization
- MOLLE webbing for attachments (optional)
- Padded waist belt (essential for heavy loads)
- Sternum strap
- Hydration bladder compatible
- Water-resistant material
- Neutral colors (gray, tan, olive)

Popular Options by Budget

Budget	Recommendation	Capacity	Price Range
Budget	Teton Sports Scout	55L	\$50-70
Mid-Range	Kelty Redwing	50L	\$100-150
Premium	Mystery Ranch 3DAP	45L	\$250-350
Military	5.11 Rush72	72L	\$200-250

Packing Your BOB

Weight Distribution

- Heavy items: Close to back, centered
- Medium items: Middle of pack
- Light items: Bottom and top
- Frequently used: Easy access pockets

Organization System

Zone 1 (Bottom): Shelter and sleeping

- Sleeping bag or bivy
- Tarp or emergency shelter
- Ground pad (if compressed)

Zone 2 (Main compartment bottom): Heavy essentials

- Food
- Cooking gear
- Extra water

Zone 3 (Main compartment top): Clothing

- Extra clothes
- Rain gear
- Cold weather layers

Zone 4 (Top lid): Quick access

- First aid kit
- Snacks
- Map and compass
- Fire kit

Zone 5 (Hip belt pockets): Immediate needs

- Knife
- Lighter
- Energy bar
- Small flashlight

Zone 6 (Side pockets): Water

- Water bottles
- Water filter

Zone 7 (Front pocket): Documents

- ID copies
- Cash
- Contact info

Seasonal Adjustments

Summer Additions

- Extra water capacity

- Sun protection (hat, sunscreen)
- Insect repellent
- Lighter sleeping system
- Electrolyte packets

Winter Additions

- Heavier sleeping system
- Extra insulation layers
- Hand/toe warmers
- Fire starting redundancy
- High-calorie food
- Snow gaiters

The Complete First Aid Kit Guide

Tier 1: Basic Kit (For everyday carry and light outdoor activities)

Wound Care

- Adhesive bandages (assorted, 20+)
- Butterfly closures (6)
- Gauze pads 4x4 (6)
- Gauze roll (1)
- Medical tape (1 roll)
- Moleskin (1 sheet)

Medications

- Pain relievers (ibuprofen/acetaminophen, 20 each)
- Antihistamine (diphenhydryl, 10)
- Anti-diarrheal (loperamide, 6)
- Antacid tablets (10)

Tools

- Tweezers
- Small scissors
- Safety pins (6)
- Nitrile gloves (4 pair)

Misc

- Antiseptic wipes (10)
- Antibiotic ointment (6 packets or tube)
- Hydrocortisone cream
- Sunscreen (small)
- Lip balm with SPF

Tier 2: Intermediate Kit (For extended outdoor activities and home preparedness)

All of Tier 1, plus:

Advanced Wound Care

- Gauze pads 2x2 and 4x4 (12 each)
- ABD pads (large wound dressings, 4)

- Conforming bandage rolls (3)
- Elastic bandage (ACE wrap, 2)
- Triangle bandages (2)
- Wound closure strips (Steri-Strips)
- Tincture of benzoin (helps tape stick)

Advanced Medications

- Aspirin (for heart attack, 10)
- Glucose tablets (for diabetics, 10)
- Oral rehydration salts (4 packets)

Advanced Tools

- SAM splint
- CPR mask
- Emergency blanket (2)
- Instant cold pack (2)
- Penlight
- Medical shears

Misc

- Eye wash (small bottle)
- Burn dressing (non-stick, 2)
- Irrigation syringe
- Finger splint

Tier 3: Advanced/Trauma Kit (For serious preparedness and wilderness)

All of Tier 1 and 2, plus:

Trauma Items

- Tourniquet (CAT or similar, 2)
- Israeli bandage (pressure dressing, 2)
- Hemostatic gauze (QuikClot or Celox, 2)
- Chest seal (2)
- Nasopharyngeal airway (if trained)
- Suture kit (if trained)

Extended Medications (with proper training and/or prescriptions)

- Epinephrine auto-injector (if prescribed)
- Prescription antibiotics (if obtained)
- Stronger pain relief (if prescribed)
- Anti-nausea medication

Advanced Equipment

- Blood pressure cuff
- Stethoscope
- Pulse oximeter
- Medical reference book
- Dental emergency kit
- Cervical collar

Water Filtration Systems Comparison

Personal Use Filters

Filter	Type	Flow Rate	Capacity	Weight	Best For
Sawyer Mini	Squeeze/gravity	0.5L/min	100,000 gal	2 oz	EDC, lightweight
Sawyer Squeeze	Squeeze/gravity	1.7L/min	100,000 gal	3 oz	Backpacking
Katadyn BeFree	Squeeze	2L/min	264 gal	2 oz	Fast filtering
LifeStraw Personal	Sip	N/A	1,000 gal	2 oz	Emergency/backup
MSR Guardian	Pump	2.5L/min	10,000L	17 oz	Viruses + bacteria

Camp/Home Filters

Filter	Type	Flow Rate	Capacity	Best For
Big Berkey	Gravity	1 gal/hr	Long-term	Home use
Katadyn Drip	Gravity	4L/hr	39,000L	Base camp
MSR Trail Base Kit	Gravity	1L/min	N/A	Group camping

What Each Type Removes

Contaminant	Hollow Fiber	Carbon	Ceramic	UV	Chemical
Bacteria	Yes	Some	Yes	Yes	Yes
Protozoa	Yes	Some	Yes	Yes	Some
Viruses	Some	No	No	Yes	Yes
Chemicals	No	Yes	No	No	No
Heavy metals	No	Some	No	No	No
Sediment	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

Recommendations by Use Case

Backpacking (weight priority)

- Primary: Sawyer Squeeze or Katadyn BeFree
- Backup: Chemical treatment (Aquamira, tablets)

Emergency Preparedness (home)

- Primary: Gravity filter (Berkey, ProOne)
- Backup: Sawyer with collapsible containers

International Travel

- Primary: MSR Guardian (removes viruses)

- Backup: SteriPen UV

Vehicle Kit

- Primary: Sawyer in kit
 - Backup: Water purification tablets
-

Appendix I: Regional Hazard Guides

Coastal and Hurricane Preparedness

Hurricane Season Preparation

Before Season (January-May)

- Review insurance policies (flood, wind)
- Clear property of debris and dead branches
- Install or prepare hurricane shutters
- Stock up on plywood for windows
- Service generator
- Build up non-perishable food supply

During Season (June-November)

- Monitor weather forecasts daily during active periods
- Keep vehicles fueled
- Know evacuation routes and zones
- Have communication plan ready

When Hurricane Approaches (72+ hours)

- Begin monitoring closely
- Review supplies and plans
- Fuel all vehicles
- Get cash
- Charge all devices
- Prepare indoor safe room

When Hurricane is Imminent (24-48 hours)

- Install shutters or board windows
- Bring in outdoor furniture
- Fill bathtubs with water
- Secure important documents
- Make evacuation decision
- Contact out-of-area family

If Evacuating

- Leave early (avoid traffic)
- Take evacuation routes
- Don't drive through standing water
- Go to designated shelter or inland location
- Bring BOB and additional supplies

If Sheltering in Place

- Stay inside and away from windows
- Move to interior room during worst winds
- Fill bathtub for flushing water
- Unplug electronics
- Have radio for updates

Storm Surge Protection

Storm surge is the #1 killer in hurricanes.

Know Your Zone

- Find your evacuation zone (local emergency management)
- Zone A evacuates first
- Evacuation may be mandatory

Storm Surge by Category

Category	Surge Height	Notes
1	4-5 feet	Dangerous
2	6-8 feet	Very dangerous
3	9-12 feet	Devastating
4	13-18 feet	Catastrophic
5	18+ feet	Catastrophic

Earthquake Preparedness

Structural Preparation

Inside Home

- Secure tall furniture to walls
- Strap water heater
- Install cabinet latches
- Move heavy items from high shelves
- Know gas shutoff location
- Consider structural retrofit

Outside Home

- Trim trees near house
- Secure chimney
- Know about soil liquefaction risk

During an Earthquake

If Indoors

- DROP - Get on hands and knees
- COVER - Under sturdy desk/table, or against interior wall
- HOLD ON - Until shaking stops
- Stay away from windows, exterior walls, heavy items

- Do NOT run outside during shaking

If Outdoors

- Move to open area away from buildings
- Watch for falling debris, power lines
- Drop and cover if you can't move

If Driving

- Pull to side of road (not under bridges/overpasses)
- Set parking brake
- Stay in vehicle until shaking stops
- Watch for road damage when moving

After an Earthquake

Immediate Actions

- Check for injuries
- Be prepared for aftershocks
- Check for gas leaks (smell, hissing)
- If gas leak: open windows, leave, don't use electrical
- Turn off utilities if damage suspected
- Put out small fires
- Don't use damaged chimneys

Next Hours/Days

- Stay out of damaged buildings
- Wear shoes (broken glass)
- Check in with neighbors
- Monitor emergency radio
- Conserve phone battery
- Don't tie up phone lines unless emergency

Wildfire Preparedness

Creating Defensible Space

Zone 1 (0-5 feet from structure)

- Use hardscape (gravel, concrete)
- No plants against house
- Clean gutters
- Screen vents with 1/8" mesh
- Move firewood away

Zone 2 (5-30 feet)

- Remove dead vegetation
- Space trees (10+ feet between crowns)
- Trim trees up (6-10 feet from ground)
- Remove ladder fuels (vegetation connecting ground to trees)
- Use fire-resistant plants

Zone 3 (30-100 feet)

- Thin trees
- Remove dead wood
- Create fuel breaks
- Maintain regularly

Evacuation Planning

Early Evacuation Decision

- If you're uncomfortable, LEAVE EARLY
- Don't wait for mandatory order
- Traffic and conditions worsen quickly

What to Take

- Important documents
- Medications
- Phone chargers
- Comfort items
- Photos/hard drives
- Pets with carriers and supplies

Before Leaving

- Close all windows and doors (don't lock)
- Remove flammable window treatments
- Move furniture away from windows
- Turn on lights (helps firefighters see in smoke)
- Shut off gas
- Connect hoses and fill anything that holds water
- Leave a note with date/time and contact

Winter Storm and Blizzard Preparedness

Before Winter

Home Preparation

- Insulate pipes
- Service heating system
- Clean chimney
- Weatherstrip doors and windows
- Check roof for damage
- Stock winter supplies

Vehicle Preparation

- Winter tires or chains
- Full winter emergency kit (see vehicle checklist)
- Battery check
- Antifreeze check
- Full tank policy

During Winter Storm

Stay Home If Possible

- Minimize travel
- Let others know your plans if you must travel
- Monitor conditions

Staying Warm

- Close off unused rooms
- Gather in one room
- Dress in layers
- Use alternative heat carefully (CO danger)
- Keep at least one window slightly cracked if using any combustion heat

If Power Goes Out

- Protect pipes: open cabinet doors, drip faucets
- Add extra blankets
- Use flashlights (not candles)
- Keep refrigerator/freezer closed
- Check on neighbors

If Caught Outside

- Seek shelter
 - Cover exposed skin
 - Keep moving to maintain body heat
 - Watch for frostbite and hypothermia signs
-

Appendix J: Extended Resource Directory

Water Equipment

Filters and Purifiers

- Sawyer Products (sawyer.com) - Squeeze filters, gravity systems
- Katadyn (katadyn.com) - Ceramic filters, portable purifiers
- MSR (msrgear.com) - Guardian, pumps, chemical treatment
- Big Berkey (berkeyfilters.com) - Gravity filters
- LifeStraw (lifestraw.com) - Personal and family filters
- SteriPen (steripen.com) - UV purification

Storage

- WaterBrick (waterbrick.org) - Stackable containers
- Aqua-Tainer (reliance-products.com) - 7-gallon containers
- 55-gallon drums - Multiple suppliers
- IBC Totes - Industrial suppliers, Craig's List

Food Storage

Long-Term Storage

- Augason Farms (augasonfarms.com) - Buckets, #10 cans
- Mountain House (mountainhouse.com) - Freeze-dried meals
- Wise Company (readywise.com) - Emergency food kits
- Thrive Life (thrivelife.com) - Freeze-dried ingredients

- Nutristore (costco.com) - Bulk freeze-dried

Equipment

- Harvest Right (harvestright.com) - Home freeze dryers
- Excalibur (excaliburdehydrator.com) - Dehydrators
- All American (allamericancanner.com) - Pressure canners
- Ball (freshpreserving.com) - Canning supplies

Fire and Light

Fire Starters

- Light My Fire (lightmyfire.com) - Ferro rods
- Exotac (exotac.com) - Fire starters, tinder
- UCO (ucogear.com) - Matches, candles
- Zippo (zippo.com) - Lighters, hand warmers

Lighting

- Black Diamond (blackdiamondequipment.com) - Headlamps
- Petzl (petzl.com) - Headlamps
- Fenix (fenixlighting.com) - Flashlights
- Streamlight (streamlight.com) - Flashlights
- UCO (ucogear.com) - Candle lanterns
- Goal Zero (goalzero.com) - Solar lights

Shelter and Warmth

Sleeping Gear

- REI (rei.com) - Sleeping bags, pads
- Kelty (kelty.com) - Bags, tents
- Big Agnes (bigagnes.com) - Bags, pads
- Thermarest (thermarest.com) - Sleeping pads
- SOL (adventuremedicalkits.com) - Emergency bivvies

Tarps and Shelters

- Warbonnet (warbonnetoutdoors.com) - Tarps, hammocks
- Kelty (kelty.com) - Tents, tarps
- Aqua Quest (aquaquestusa.com) - Waterproof tarps
- Snugpak (snugpak.com) - Compact shelters

Emergency Warmth

- HotHands (heatmax.com) - Hand/body warmers
- Grabber (grabberworld.com) - Warmers
- Mr. Heater (mrheater.com) - Portable heaters
- SOL (adventuremedicalkits.com) - Emergency blankets

Medical Supplies

First Aid Kits

- Adventure Medical Kits (adventuremedicalkits.com) - Complete kits
- North American Rescue (narescue.com) - Trauma supplies
- MyMedic (mymedic.com) - Premium kits

- Be Smart Get Prepared (besmartgetprepared.com) - Budget kits

Individual Components

- H&H Medical (gohandh.com) - Tourniquets, hemostatic agents
- QuikClot (quikclot.com) - Hemostatic gauze
- SAM Medical (sammedical.com) - Splints
- Celox (celoxmedical.com) - Hemostatic products

Communication Equipment

Two-Way Radios

- Midland (midlandusa.com) - GMRS/FRS radios
- Motorola (motorola.com) - Consumer radios
- BaoFeng (baofengtech.com) - Amateur/GMRS radios
- Kenwood (kenwood.com) - Amateur radios
- Yaesu (yaesu.com) - Amateur radios

Emergency Communication

- Garmin (garmin.com) - InReach satellite communicators
- SPOT (findmespot.com) - Satellite messengers
- ACR (acrartex.com) - Personal locator beacons
- Icom (icomamerica.com) - Handheld radios

Weather Radios

- Midland (midlandusa.com) - NOAA weather radios
- Kaito (kaitousa.com) - Hand-crank/solar radios
- Eton (etoncorp.com) - Emergency radios

Tools and Gear

Knives and Multi-Tools

- Benchmade (benchmade.com) - Fixed and folding
- ESEE (eseeknives.com) - Fixed blades
- Mora (morakniv.se) - Budget fixed blades
- Leatherman (leatherman.com) - Multi-tools
- Victorinox (victorinox.com) - Swiss Army knives
- Gerber (gerbergear.com) - Multi-tools, fixed blades

Axes and Saws

- Husqvarna (husqvarna.com) - Axes
- Fiskars (fiskars.com) - Axes, saws
- Bahco (bahco.com) - Folding saws
- Silky (silkyaws.com) - Folding saws

Cordage and Rope

- Paracord Planet (paracordplanet.com) - 550 cord
- Titan (titansurvival.com) - Paracord with survival features
- SGT Knots (sgtknots.com) - All types of rope

Power and Energy

Solar

- Goal Zero (goalzero.com) - Panels, power stations
- Jackery (jackery.com) - Portable power stations
- Bluetti (bluettipower.com) - Power stations
- Renogy (renogy.com) - Solar panels, components
- Anker (anker.com) - Portable chargers, panels

Generators

- Honda (powerequipment.honda.com) - Premium generators
- Champion (championpowerequipment.com) - Dual-fuel
- Westinghouse (westinghouse.com) - Inverter generators
- Generac (generac.com) - Standby generators

Books and References

General Preparedness

- "When All Hell Breaks Loose" - Cody Lundin
- "The Prepper's Blueprint" - Tess Pennington
- "Emergency" - Neil Strauss
- "One Second After" - William Forstchen (fiction, but educational)

Skills

- "Bushcraft 101" - Dave Canterbury
- "SAS Survival Handbook" - John Wiseman
- "98.6 Degrees" - Cody Lundin
- "Hawke's Green Beret Survival Manual" - Mykel Hawke

Medical

- "The Survival Medicine Handbook" - Joseph Alton
- "Where There Is No Doctor" - David Werner
- "Wilderness Medicine" - Paul Auerbach
- "Special Operations Forces Medical Handbook"

Food Production

- "Square Foot Gardening" - Mel Bartholomew
- "The Encyclopedia of Country Living" - Carla Emery
- "Ball Complete Book of Home Preserving"
- "Storey's Guide" series (various animals)

Navigation

- "The Essential Wilderness Navigator" - David Seidman
- "Be Expert with Map and Compass" - Björn Kjellström
- "Land Navigation Handbook" - W.S. Kals

Training Resources

Online Courses (Free)

- FEMA Emergency Management Institute (training.fema.gov)
- Red Cross online courses
- NOLS Wilderness Medicine videos

- CDC emergency preparedness

Certifications

- American Red Cross - First Aid, CPR
 - NOLS/WMI - Wilderness First Aid, WFR
 - CERT - Community Emergency Response Team
 - HAM Radio license - ARRL
-

Appendix K: Glossary of Terms

72-Hour Kit: Emergency supplies to sustain a person for three days; also called a "bug-out bag" or "go bag."

Bug-In: Decision to shelter in place during an emergency rather than evacuate.

Bug-Out: Decision to evacuate from your location to a safer place during an emergency.

Bug-Out Bag (BOB): Portable kit containing essentials for 72 hours of survival away from home.

Bug-Out Location (BOL): Pre-determined safe location to evacuate to during an emergency.

CERT: Community Emergency Response Team; FEMA program that trains citizens in basic disaster response.

EDC: Every Day Carry; items a person carries daily for preparedness and convenience.

EMP: Electromagnetic Pulse; a burst of electromagnetic energy that can disable electronic devices.

FRS: Family Radio Service; license-free radio communication for short-range use.

Get Home Bag (GHB): Smaller emergency kit kept at work or in vehicle to help you get home during an emergency.

GMRS: General Mobile Radio Service; radio communication requiring a license but offering more power than FRS.

Gray Man: Concept of blending in and not attracting attention during emergencies.

Grid Down: Scenario where electrical power grid is non-functional.

HAM Radio: Amateur radio; licensed radio communication with much greater range than consumer options.

INCH Bag: "I'm Never Coming Home" bag; comprehensive kit for permanent relocation.

MRE: Meal Ready to Eat; military-style complete meals with long shelf life.

NOAA: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; provides weather alerts and forecasts.

OPSEC: Operational Security; practices to protect information about your preparations from others.

Preps/Prepper: Supplies for emergencies / person who prepares for emergencies.

Shelter in Place: Remaining in your current location during an emergency.

SHTF: "S*** Hits The Fan"; slang for major emergency or disaster scenario.

TEOTWAWKI: "The End Of The World As We Know It"; slang for civilization-ending scenario.

WROL: "Without Rule of Law"; scenario where normal law enforcement is absent.

Appendix L: Skill Development Guides

L.1 Fire Starting Mastery

Friction Fire Methods

Bow Drill Technique

Component	Specifications	Tips
Fireboard	Soft, dry wood (cottonwood, willow, cedar)	Flat surface, stable base
Spindle	Same wood as fireboard, 12-18" long	Straight, smooth, dry
Bow	Sturdy curved branch, 2-3 ft	Slight natural curve
Cord	Paracord, leather thong, natural cordage	Should not stretch
Socket	Hardwood, bone, or stone	Smooth depression
Nest	Dry grass, bark fiber, cattail fluff	Loose, fine, dry

Process Steps:

1. Carve notch in fireboard to collect coal
2. Place tinder bundle under notch
3. Loop cord around spindle, secure in bow
4. Apply downward pressure while sawing bow
5. Maintain consistent speed (not too fast)
6. Look for smoke, then coal in notch
7. Transfer coal to tinder, blow gently
8. Build fire progressively (tinder → kindling → fuel)

Hand Drill Technique

- More difficult than bow drill
- Requires softer woods and perfect conditions
- Spin spindle between palms while pressing down
- Master bow drill first before attempting

Ferrocerium Rod (Ferro Rod) Technique

Striker Type	Effectiveness	Notes
Dedicated striker	Excellent	Included with most rods
Spine of knife	Very good	Use at 45° angle
Broken hacksaw blade	Excellent	Sharp edge essential
Ceramic (from spark plug)	Good	Very fine sparks

Best Tinders for Ferro Rod:

- Cotton balls with petroleum jelly (easiest)
- Birch bark (contains flammable oils)

- Fatwood shavings
- Char cloth (pre-prepared)
- Commercial fire starters
- Dryer lint (good but burns fast)
- Steel wool (0000 grade)

Flint and Steel Method

Traditional fire starting:

1. Strike hardened steel against sharp flint edge
2. Direct sparks onto char cloth
3. Transfer glowing char to tinder bundle
4. Blow to flame

Creating Char Cloth:

- Cut 100% cotton into 2" squares
- Place in metal tin with small hole in lid
- Heat in fire until smoke stops
- Cool before opening
- Store in waterproof container

L.2 Water Purification Methods

Boiling Protocol

Elevation	Boiling Time	Notes
Sea level to 5,000 ft	1 minute rolling boil	Minimum safe time
5,000 to 10,000 ft	3 minutes rolling boil	Lower boiling point
Above 10,000 ft	5+ minutes rolling boil	Adjust for altitude

Energy-Efficient Boiling:

- Use lid to retain heat
- Start with warmest available water
- Pre-filter to remove debris
- Use dark container in sun to pre-warm
- Insulate container sides

Solar Disinfection (SODIS)

Clear plastic bottles + sunlight:

1. Use clear PET bottles (1-2 liter)
2. Fill with relatively clear water
3. Shake to oxygenate (improves process)
4. Lay horizontally in direct sunlight
5. Expose for 6+ hours (sunny) or 2 days (cloudy)
6. Reflective surface underneath speeds process

Limitations:

- Does not remove chemical contamination
- Less effective in cold weather
- Requires UV-transmissive containers
- Water must be relatively clear

Chemical Treatment Comparison

Chemical	Dosage	Wait Time	Effectiveness	Notes
Bleach (5.25-8.25%)	8 drops/gallon clear, 16 cloudy	30 min	Bacteria, viruses	Slight taste
Iodine tablets	Per package	30 min	Most pathogens	Not for pregnant/thyroid issues
Chlorine dioxide	Per package	4 hours (crypto)	All pathogens	Longer wait, more complete
Water purification tablets	Per package	Varies	Varies	Follow specific instructions

Improvised Filtration

Gravity Filter Construction:

Layer (top to bottom):

- └ Grass/cloth (captures large debris)
- └ Fine sand (removes smaller particles)
- └ Charcoal (adsorbs chemicals, improves taste)
- └ Gravel (supports charcoal)
- └ Large rocks (supports system)
- └ Collection container

Notes on Improvised Filters:

- Does NOT purify water (removes particles only)
- Must still boil, chemically treat, or UV treat
- Pre-filtering extends life of commercial filters
- Charcoal should be from hardwood, crushed fine

L.3 Shelter Building Fundamentals

Natural Shelter Types

Debris Hut

- Best for temperate forests
- Requires no tools
- Provides excellent insulation
- Construction time: 2-4 hours

Construction:

1. Find/create ridgepole (9-12 ft, sturdy)
2. Prop one end on support (stump, rock, forked stick) at shoulder height
3. Other end on ground
4. Create ribbing (branches along both sides)
5. Add smaller sticks perpendicular to ribs
6. Pile debris 2-3 feet thick (leaves, grass, pine needles)
7. Add more debris inside as bedding
8. Block entrance (removable debris plug)

Lean-To Shelter

- Quick construction (1-2 hours)
- Good for mild conditions
- Reflects fire heat toward sleeper
- Less insulation than debris hut

Construction:

1. Find two trees 8-10 feet apart
2. Lash horizontal ridgepole at hip height
3. Lean branches against ridgepole at 45°
4. Cover with boughs, bark, or debris
5. Build reflector wall opposite opening
6. Fire between shelter and reflector

Snow Shelters

Type	Best For	Construction Time	Temp Inside
Quinzee	Unpacked snow	3-4 hours (plus settling)	Near 32°F
Snow cave	Deep drifts	2-3 hours	Near 32°F
Snow trench	Emergency	30-60 minutes	Near 32°F
Igloo	Hard-packed snow	2-4 hours (skilled)	Near 32°F

Quinzee Construction:

1. Pile snow in mound 6-8 ft high, 10-12 ft diameter
2. Insert 12" sticks throughout mound
3. Let settle 2+ hours (critical for safety)
4. Hollow from one side
5. Stop digging when you reach stick tips
6. Create ventilation hole at top
7. Smooth inside surfaces (prevents dripping)
8. Block entrance with backpack or snow block

L.4 Navigation Without GPS

Celestial Navigation Basics

Finding North (Northern Hemisphere)

Using Polaris (North Star):

1. Locate Big Dipper constellation
2. Find two "pointer stars" at end of dipper's cup
3. Extend imaginary line through them 5x their distance
4. Line points to Polaris (within 1° of true north)
5. Drop line from Polaris to horizon = north

Using the Sun:

- Shadow Tip Method:
 1. Place vertical stick in ground
 2. Mark tip of shadow
 3. Wait 15-20 minutes
 4. Mark new shadow tip
 5. Line between marks runs east-west
 6. First mark = west, second = east

Using Watch (analog):

- Northern Hemisphere:
 1. Point hour hand at sun
 2. Bisect angle between hour hand and 12
 3. Bisecting line points south
- Southern Hemisphere:
 1. Point 12 at sun
 2. Bisect angle between 12 and hour hand
 3. Bisecting line points north

Natural Navigation Signs

Indicator	What It Suggests	Reliability
Moss on trees	Often (not always) grows more on north side	Low - many exceptions
Snow melt	Melts faster on south-facing slopes	Moderate
Spider webs	Often built on south side of trees	Low
Tree growth	May be fuller on south side	Moderate
Satellite dishes	Point south (Northern Hemisphere)	High
Sun position	East morning, south midday, west evening	High

Map and Compass Skills

Taking a Bearing

1. Hold compass flat and steady
2. Point direction-of-travel arrow at target
3. Rotate bezel until needle aligns with orienting arrow
4. Read bearing at index line
5. Record bearing for navigation

Following a Bearing

1. Set bearing on compass bezel
2. Hold compass flat, rotate body until needle in orienting arrow
3. Look up, identify landmark on bearing line
4. Walk to landmark
5. Repeat process

Triangulation (Finding Your Location)

1. Identify 2-3 known landmarks on map
 2. Take bearing to each landmark
 3. Convert to back bearings (add/subtract 180°)
 4. Draw lines from landmarks on map at back bearing angles
 5. Where lines intersect = your location
-

L.5 Basic Trapping and Fishing

Legal Considerations

- Most trapping requires licenses and follows seasons
- Emergency survival is generally exempt but verify local laws
- Practice skills legally before emergency need
- Learn regulations for your specific area

Simple Snare Construction

Basic Rabbit Snare

- Materials: Wire or strong cordage
- Size: Loop diameter 4-5 inches
- Placement: Game trails, gaps in brush
- Height: 4 inches off ground (hand-width)

Construction:

1. Form loop in wire/cordage
2. Create sliding noose mechanism
3. Attach to sturdy anchor (tree, stake)
4. Position in natural funnel point
5. Use guide sticks to direct animal into snare

Deadfall Trap (Figure 4)

- Uses weight to kill/trap prey
- Requires practice to construct reliably
- Components: Upright, diagonal, trigger stick
- Bait placed on trigger stick

Fishing Without Rod

Hand Line Fishing

- Line wrapped on wood or bottle
- Single hook with bait
- Cast by swinging weighted line
- Feel for bites, pull to set hook

Fish Traps

- Funnel-entry trap (minnows, small fish)
- Weir trap in streams (blocks and funnels)
- Gorge hook (ancient technique)

Natural Baits

Bait	Target Fish	Notes
Worms	Almost all	Universal, find under logs/rocks
Insects	Trout, panfish	Match local hatches
Minnows	Bass, pike, walleye	Catch with trap first
Crayfish	Bass, catfish	Find under rocks
Cut bait	Catfish, carp	Pieces of fish
Berries	Some panfish	Seasonal option

Appendix M: Emergency Medicine Deep Dive

M.1 Wound Care Protocols

Wound Classification

Type	Characteristics	Primary Concern
Abrasion	Surface scraping	Infection
Laceration	Smooth cut	Bleeding, infection
Puncture	Deep, narrow wound	Deep infection, retained foreign body
Avulsion	Tissue torn away	Bleeding, tissue loss
Incision	Clean surgical-type cut	Bleeding
Crush	Tissue damage from pressure	Internal injury, compartment syndrome

Basic Wound Care Steps

1. Control Bleeding

- Direct pressure (first choice)
- Elevation (assist direct pressure)
- Pressure points (if direct pressure insufficient)
- Tourniquet (life-threatening limb bleeding only)

2. Prevent Infection

- Clean hands before touching wound
- Irrigate wound with clean water (pressure flush)
- Remove visible debris
- Do not scrub wound bed
- Apply antibiotic ointment if available

3. Close Wound (If Appropriate)

- Small, clean cuts: butterfly closures or steri-strips
- Larger wounds: may need sutures (advanced skill)
- Some wounds left open: infected, punctures, bites

4. Dress and Monitor

- Cover with sterile dressing
- Change dressing daily or when soiled
- Monitor for infection signs

Infection Warning Signs

- Increasing redness
- Spreading redness (red streaks)
- Increased pain
- Warmth around wound
- Pus or discharge
- Fever
- Swollen lymph nodes

Emergency Wound Closure Options

Method	Best For	Notes
Butterfly closures	Small, straight cuts	Available in first aid kits
Steri-strips	Clean lacerations	Remove after 7-10 days
Super glue	Small cuts, shallow	Medical-grade preferred
Sutures	Larger wounds	Requires training, supplies
Staples	Scalp wounds	Requires stapler, training

M.2 Fracture and Sprain Management

Fracture Recognition

Sign/Symptom	Fracture Likely	Sprain More Likely
Deformity	Yes	No
Crepitus (grinding)	Yes	No
Inability to bear weight	Strong indicator	Possible
Point tenderness	Yes	Possible
Rapid severe swelling	Yes	Moderate swelling
Bruising	Common	Common

Splinting Principles

General Rules:

- Immobilize joint above and below fracture
- Pad all bony prominences
- Splint in position found (unless no pulse below)
- Check circulation before and after splinting
- Secure firmly but not too tight

Improvised Splint Materials:

- Magazines, newspapers
- Boards, straight sticks
- SAM splints (commercial, versatile)
- Clothing (padded roll)
- Pillows (for ankles)
- Buddy taping (fingers, toes)

Specific Splinting Techniques

Arm Fractures:

- Sling and swathe for upper arm
- Padded board splint for forearm
- Buddy tape or padded roll for fingers

Leg Fractures:

- Padded board on both sides for lower leg
- Pillow splint for ankle
- Traction splint for femur (advanced)

RICE Protocol for Sprains

Step	Action	Duration/Notes
Rest	Avoid using injured area	As needed
Ice	Apply cold pack wrapped in cloth	20 min on, 20 min off
Compression	Elastic bandage, snug not tight	Remove if numbness/tingling
Elevation	Raise above heart level	When resting

M.3 Burn Treatment

Burn Classification

Degree	Depth	Appearance	Sensation	Healing
First	Epidermis only	Red, dry	Painful	3-5 days
Second (superficial)	Into dermis	Blisters, wet	Very painful	2-3 weeks

Second (deep)	Deep dermis	Mottled, less wet	Moderate pain	3-8 weeks, may scar
Third	Through dermis	White, waxy, charred	Painless (nerve damage)	Requires grafting

First Aid for Burns

Immediate Actions:

1. Stop the burning (remove from source, cool with water)
2. Remove clothing/jewelry from area (unless stuck)
3. Cool with running water 10-20 minutes
4. Cover with clean, dry dressing
5. Treat for shock if significant

Do NOT:

- Apply ice directly (causes further damage)
- Break blisters intentionally
- Apply butter, oil, or ointments to serious burns
- Use adhesive bandages on burns
- Remove stuck clothing

When to Seek Medical Care

- Burns to face, hands, feet, genitals, joints
- Burns larger than palm of hand (2nd degree)
- Any third-degree burn
- Burns that encircle a limb
- Chemical or electrical burns
- Burns in elderly or very young
- Burns with other injuries

M.4 Environmental Emergencies

Hypothermia Stages and Treatment

Stage	Core Temp	Signs	Treatment
Mild	90-95°F	Shivering, confusion, poor coordination	Remove wet clothes, add insulation, warm drinks
Moderate	82-90°F	Violent shivering → stops, severe confusion	Handle gently, active rewarming, no cold drinks
Severe	Below 82°F	Unconscious, no shivering, weak pulse	Gentle handling, slow rewarming, medical emergency

Rewarming Methods:

- Passive: Remove wet clothes, add insulation, shelter from wind
- Active external: Warm packs to armpits/groin/neck, warm water bottles

- Active internal: Warm humidified oxygen, warm IV fluids (medical setting)

Heat Illness Spectrum

Condition	Signs	Treatment
Heat cramps	Muscle cramps, sweating	Rest, stretch, electrolyte drink
Heat exhaustion	Heavy sweating, weakness, nausea, headache	Move to cool area, fluids, rest
Heat stroke	Hot dry skin (or sweating), confusion, temp >104°F	EMERGENCY: cool rapidly, call 911

Cooling Methods for Heat Stroke:

- Remove clothing
- Apply cool water to skin
- Fan while misting with water
- Ice packs to neck, armpits, groin
- Immersion in cool water if available
- Do not give oral fluids if altered consciousness

Appendix N: Extended Scenario Planning

N.1 Complete Scenario: Power Grid Failure

Timeline and Response

Phase	Duration	Priority Actions
Immediate	0-2 hours	Assess situation, secure home, gather family
Short-term	2-24 hours	Conserve phone battery, listen for info, check on neighbors
Extended	1-7 days	Rotate food from fridge/freezer, establish routine, conserve resources
Long-term	1+ weeks	Community cooperation, alternative solutions, rationing

Hour-by-Hour Guide (First 24 Hours)

Hour 0-1:

- Confirm extent of outage (neighbors? neighborhood? city?)
- Turn off/unplug sensitive electronics (surge protection)
- Locate flashlights, candles, batteries
- Check phone for emergency alerts
- Assess food and water supplies

Hours 1-4:

- Do not open refrigerator/freezer unnecessarily
- Account for all family members
- Check on elderly/disabled neighbors
- Fill bathtubs with water (before pressure drops)

- Turn off main water if there's concern about contamination
- Set up alternative lighting

Hours 4-12:

- Plan meals using perishables first
- Establish security awareness
- Set up manual ventilation if needed
- Consider traffic light impacts for any travel
- Pool resources with trusted neighbors

Hours 12-24:

- Move refrigerator contents to coolers with ice
- Begin using freezer items
- Establish regular check-in schedule with family
- Monitor news for restoration estimates
- Assess fuel for vehicles, generators

Week-Long Scenario

Day 1-2:

- Use perishable food
- Maintain normalcy for children
- Limit trips (conserve fuel)
- Establish communication plan with distant family

Day 3-4:

- Transition to non-perishable food
- Assess remaining resources
- Coordinate with neighbors for security
- Consider relocation if situation warrants

Day 5-7:

- Strict rationing of supplies
- Community coordination essential
- Evaluate staying vs. relocating
- Document losses for insurance

N.2 Complete Scenario: Major Earthquake

Immediate Response (During)

- DROP, COVER, HOLD ON
- Do not run outside during shaking
- Stay away from windows, heavy objects
- If in bed, cover head with pillow
- If outside, move away from buildings, power lines

Post-Quake Actions (First Hour)

1. Check for injuries

- Treat serious injuries first

- Do not move seriously injured unless immediate danger

2. Assess structure

- Check for gas smell (leave if detected, don't use flames)
- Look for structural damage
- Check for fire

3. Turn off utilities if damaged

- Gas: at meter if smell detected
- Water: at main if pipes broken
- Electricity: at breaker if damage visible

4. Prepare for aftershocks

- Move to open area if structure damaged
- Stay away from damaged buildings
- Expect aftershocks for days/weeks

Family Reunification Protocol

Priority	Action
1	Account for household members
2	Text (more reliable than calls) out-of-area contact
3	If separated, meet at pre-designated location
4	Leave message at home if evacuating (chalk on door, note)
5	Check school pickup procedures

Home Assessment Checklist

- Foundation cracks?
- Wall cracks (especially at corners)?
- Chimney damage?
- Gas smell?
- Water leaks?
- Electrical damage/sparks?
- Blocked exits?
- Items fallen that need securing?

N.3 Complete Scenario: Wildfire Evacuation

Preparation (When Fire Reported in Area)

Immediate Steps:

- Pack go-bags in vehicles
- Back vehicles into driveway (ready to leave)
- Close all windows and doors

- Remove combustible items from near house
- Put ladder against roof (for firefighters)
- Turn on outside lights (visibility in smoke)
- Shut off gas at meter
- Open fireplace damper, close fireplace screen

Evacuation Decision Matrix

Situation	Action
Voluntary evacuation issued	Prepare to leave, monitor closely
Mandatory evacuation issued	Leave immediately
Fire visible from home	Leave immediately
Heavy smoke making breathing difficult	Leave immediately
Only one evacuation route and fire approaching	Leave early

What to Take (Priority Order)

1. **People and pets** (nothing else matters if you don't get out)
2. **Medications** (prescription, essential OTC)
3. **Important documents** (pre-assembled in go-bag)
4. **Phone/charger** (communication essential)
5. **Wallet/keys** (identification, access to resources)
6. **Eyewear/contacts** (ability to function)
7. **Go-bag** (pre-packed essentials)
8. **Laptop/hard drives** (if time permits, irreplaceable data)
9. **Sentimental items** (only if time permits)

Evacuation Route Planning

- Know at least two routes out of neighborhood
- Know at least two routes out of area
- Consider roads that may be blocked by fire
- Know where evacuation centers are located
- Have maps (don't rely on GPS)
- Keep fuel tank above half full always during fire season

N.4 Complete Scenario: Pandemic Response

Early Phase (Outbreak Reported)

Assessment:

- How transmissible is the disease?
- What is the mortality rate?
- What is the incubation period?
- How is it transmitted?
- Is there treatment or vaccine?

Initial Actions:

- Increase hand hygiene
- Stock up on supplies (before shortages)
- Review home isolation capability
- Identify essential vs. non-essential activities
- Establish information sources (avoid rumor)

Social Distancing Phase

Home Preparation:

- 30-90 day food supply
- 30-day medication supply
- Sanitation supplies (soap, sanitizer, disinfectant)
- PPE (masks, gloves)
- Entertainment/education materials
- Communication tools (stay connected)

Interaction Protocols:

Situation	Approach
Essential shopping	Mask, sanitize cart, maintain distance, off-peak hours
Package delivery	Contactless delivery, sanitize packages
Medical appointments	Telehealth if possible, mask if in-person
Family gatherings	Virtual when possible, outdoors if must meet
Work	Remote if possible, strict protocols if essential

Home Care for Sick Family Member

Isolation Setup:

- Designate one caregiver if possible
- Separate bedroom for sick person
- Separate bathroom if possible
- Sick person wears mask when others present
- Caregiver wears mask and gloves
- Increase ventilation (open windows)

Monitoring:

- Temperature checks twice daily
- Symptom diary
- Know warning signs requiring medical care
- Have pulse oximeter if respiratory illness
- Stay in contact with healthcare provider

Appendix O: Psychological Preparedness

0.1 Stress Response Understanding

Normal Stress Responses in Emergencies

Response	What It Looks Like	Is It Normal?
Fight	Anger, aggression, taking charge	Yes (can be useful)
Flight	Urge to escape, restlessness	Yes (survival instinct)
Freeze	Inability to act, feeling stuck	Yes (temporary is normal)
Fawn	People pleasing, excessive agreeableness	Yes (coping mechanism)

Stress Continuum

Zone	Signs	Function Level
Green (Ready)	Normal sleep, appetite, energy	Optimal functioning
Yellow (Reacting)	Irritability, difficulty concentrating	Reduced functioning
Orange (Injured)	Sleep problems, anxiety, withdrawal	Impaired functioning
Red (Ill)	Panic attacks, depression, inability to function	Requires intervention

Managing Acute Stress

Grounding Technique (5-4-3-2-1):

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

Box Breathing:

- Inhale: 4 counts
- Hold: 4 counts
- Exhale: 4 counts
- Hold: 4 counts
- Repeat 4+ cycles

Progressive Muscle Relaxation:

- Tense muscle group for 5 seconds
- Release and notice relaxation
- Move through body systematically
- Takes 10-15 minutes for full sequence

O.2 Children and Trauma

Age-Appropriate Reactions

Age	Common Reactions	Support Strategies
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0-2	Clinginess, sleep disturbance, regression	Maintain routines, physical comfort
3-5	Fear, regression, magical thinking	Simple explanations, reassurance, play
6-12	Questions, worry, physical complaints	Honest answers, involve in tasks, maintain school
13-18	Risk-taking, withdrawal, adult responsibilities	Include in planning, acknowledge feelings, maintain limits

Talking to Children About Emergencies

Do:

- Use age-appropriate language
- Answer questions honestly
- Acknowledge their feelings
- Reassure about safety measures
- Maintain routines when possible
- Let them help with appropriate tasks

Don't:

- Lie or make promises you can't keep
- Share excessive details
- Dismiss their fears
- Overload with information
- Let them watch repetitive news coverage
- Hide your own feelings entirely

Building Resilience in Children

- Model calm behavior
- Practice emergency drills regularly (make it routine)
- Teach age-appropriate skills
- Praise coping efforts
- Connect with support network
- Return to normal activities when safe

O.3 Leadership in Crisis

Decision Making Under Stress

OODA Loop:

- Observe: Gather information
- Orient: Analyze situation
- Decide: Choose course of action
- Act: Implement decision
- (Loop: Repeat continuously)

Avoid Decision Paralysis:

- Set time limit for decisions
- Accept "good enough" when perfect unavailable

- Delegate when appropriate
- Trust your preparation
- Act, then adjust

Group Dynamics in Emergencies

Challenge	Management Approach
Panic	Calm voice, clear directions, break tasks into steps
Conflict	Address privately, focus on common goal, establish roles
Apathy	Assign specific tasks, connect actions to outcomes
Information seeking	Regular updates, designate information gatherer
Scapegoating	Redirect to problem-solving, reinforce teamwork

Communication in Crisis

Effective Communication Principles:

- Be clear and concise
- Repeat key information
- Verify understanding
- Use simple language
- Provide context for decisions
- Acknowledge concerns
- Update regularly

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