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Preparing for a disaster or crisis takes a lot of planning. Here are 25 tips to help you get ready for whatever bad stuff comes your way:

1. **Ditch the Debt.** If a widespread economic crisis hits (like many experts are predicting), you don’t want to be saddled with any amount of debt.

2. **Stow Some Cash.** Strive to have at least six months worth of expenditures saved so that you can handle a financial crisis should it occur.

3. **Pack an Emergency Kit.** Having a bug out bag packed with 72 hours worth of emergency food, water and other supplies for each member of the family is a good idea. That way you can evacuate quickly, not wasting time to gather supplies before hitting the road. This can also help you avoid traffic jams and some of the chaos that will ensue once an evacuation order has been given.

4. **Take Water Storage a Priority.** The average human can only survive three days without water. Always keep a basic stockpile of water on hand and have containers ready to store more if a crisis hits. Remember, if a pandemic occurs or power lines go down, your faucets will not work. Have some rain barrels and other watertight containers ready to catch rain water or store water if needed.

5. **Learn to Garden.** It is amazing how many people have no idea how to grow their own food – or have the tools to do so. If a large crisis occurs that makes it impossible to buy food form the local grocer, you are going to need to know how to grow your own.

6. **Gather Important Documents.** You should always keep your important documents sealed in waterproof bags and stored together in a safe or fireproof container. Keep things like your social security cards, marriage licenses, birth certificates, property deeds, insurance papers and account information together in a place where you can easily grab them if evacuating.

7. **Be Patient.** New preppers often get discouraged when they try to do too much too quickly. Preparing for a long-term disaster takes time. Choose one important thing to do each month to get ready and before you know it you will have the supplies you will need and other preparations made.

8. **Sharpen Your First Aid Skills.** Take a variety of first aid classes to learn the skills you may need to handle all sorts of minor (and major) health concerns during an emergency situation. Be certain to concentrate on injuries like bleeding, bone breaks, shock and more.

9. **Build a Solid Survival Library.** The more resources you have the better. There are plenty of videos, books and other survivalists’ resources available on the market these days. Make a commitment to studying at least one new resource each week.

10. **Prepare For Your Area.** There are some crisis situations everyone should prepare for, but if you live in an area where tornadoes or hurricanes are common, then by all means, tweak your preparations to get ready for that type of disaster too. You don’t need to prepare for every contingency, just be sure you are ready for the crisis you are most likely to face depending on the area or region on which you live.
11. Develop an Evacuation Plan. Everyone should have an evacuation plan. Scout out multiple routes to get out of your area fast and be sure to keep a list of all gasoline stations between your home and your meeting place. Be sure every member of your family knows where to meet in case you are separated (and how to get there). Also, make sure every member of your family has a paper map in their bug out bag in case satellites (and GPS’s) go out during the crisis.

12. Never let your gas tank go empty. Always keep at least a half tank of gas in your car in case of an emergency. That should be enough to at least get you partway to your destination.

13. Practice. Stage a disaster drill for your family at least several times a year so everyone knows what to do in case of an earthquake, tornado, or other disaster. The more practice you all have, the calmer everyone will be if faced with a crisis.

14. Stockpile foodstuffs. There is no need to create a full emergency pantry of food right away, but you should begin building food storage a little at a time. Buy one or two extra items every time you go the store and add it to your emergency food stash. Also, be sure to watch those expiration dates and trade out soon to be expired food from your emergency stash with the food supplies in your main cabinets.

15. Get to Know Your Neighbors. During a disaster, it is very important to know your neighbors. Those you are friendly with are much more likely to help you in a crisis then people you have never paid much attention to.

16. Buy Used. There are plenty of emergency supplies that you can pick up cheaply at yard sales and thrift stores. For example, camp stoves, tents, mess kits and tarps can usually be picked up for pennies on the dollar.

17. Don’t Let Everyone Know You Are Prepping. If you tell everyone you know that you are prepping for a disaster, where do you think they’re going to head when disaster strikes? Be quiet about you preparation. This doesn’t mean you won’t help others in their time of need, but you won’t have people looting your house for supplies in an emergency.

18. Get in Shape. One thing many preppers don’t do is get fit. Being in good physical and mental health will be a big advantage should disaster strike. Exercise regularly and eat well so that you will have the strength and endurance to withstand the stress of an emergency.

19. Be Persistent. Many people get burned out by prepping. It can be overwhelming to think about all of the things that could happen and try and prepare for them. Don’t give up! Just do your best to prepare for what you think is most likely to happen. The odds are good that you will have the right kind of supplies to withstand anything that comes your way.

20. Make Prepping a Priority. Set a few goals every month to help you prepare your family for disaster. Even small goals will help you in the event of trouble.

21. Learn How to Purify Water. Even if you think you have stored enough water, it is always good to know how to purify more in case of a long term disaster.

22. Keep a bug Out Bag in Your Car. It is great to have individual bags for family members in your house for quick retrieval, but what if an emergency strikes when you are away from home? Keep a bug out bag with the main essentials you will need in your car – just in case.
23. Add Some Fun. Don’t just think essential when preparing for an emergency or evacuation. Add some fun items like a deck of cards, books, or other entertainment items for your family to enjoy. Emergencies cause a lot of stress and having something on hand to entertain yourselves will help to alleviate some of that stress.

24. Prepare for Cold Weather. Hot weather can make you miserable, but in most cases it can be handled without much extra preparations. Not so with cold weather. Without the right equipment and clothing, cold weather can kill!

25. Add a Can Opener. One of the worst things that could happen is that you stockpile all sorts of canned goods only to discover that you have no way to open them! Add a hand crank can opener to your emergency food supplies.

26. Rotate Your Food Storage. Be sure to keep foodstuffs fresh by watching those expiration dates carefully!

27. Only Store Foods You Like. One of the biggest prepper mistakes people make is storing food items that they don’t like. Yes, there are some staples that make more sense to store regardless of personal tastes (like powered milk), but be careful not to store up on lima beans if no one in your house can stomach them!

28. Learn New Survival Skills. Take time to learn at least one new survival skill every month. Some may include things like gardening, automotive repair, plumbing, livestock are and more.

29. Go Camping. What better (and fun) way to keep your survival skills sharp than camping? Take your family camping on a regular basis to help keep their skills sharp and make the entire situation more comfortable.

30. Learn the Art of Fire making. It’s easy to build a fire with a bunch of matches. But when you are in an emergency situation you may need to know how to do it without that luxury. There are many techniques that can be sued to start a matchless fire, learn and practice several.

31. Pack Multipurpose Tools. When you are on the go you didn’t want to have to carry a large toolbox with you. Instead, choose a few small multi-purpose tools for your family to carry that contain the essentials like a solar powered radio that also contains a compass, lantern or electric charger.

32. Learn to Hunt and Fish. Being able to catch your own dinner may mean the difference between eating and going hungry in a disaster situation.

33. Learn to Recycle. Those who know how to reuse items and improvise will be able to handle almost any emergency.

34. Learn to Cook. Many people today simply do not know how to cook their own meals (from scratch). If food supplies become scarce, you may need to rely on old fashioned cooking skills to feed your family.

35. Peace Is In the Preparation. Many people look at preparers and think they are paranoid or overly fearful. That is simply not true. Preppers are simply people who have mastered self sufficiency. It is in their confidence to have what they need in an emergency that brings a sense of peace and calm. They don’t have to worry about how they’ll handle a crisis – they know exactly what they’ll do.
What You’ll Need In a Disaster

Surviving a disaster really comes down to having what you will need to handle the situation. The items you will need will vary depending on whether you evacuate or are staying home; how many people are in your family (and what are their needs); and what your prepping experience is. Still everyone should begin by putting together a Bug Out Bag that can be grabbed in the event of an evacuation. In most cases, every member of the family should have their own bag which includes:

- flashlight (solar is best but if you choose a battery operated one, be sure to include extra batteries in your bag)
- Para cord
- duct tape
- compass
- knife
- map of your area
- multi-tool
- waterproof matches or a fire starter kit (tool, flint, magnifying glass)
- basic first aid kit
- sewing kit
- whistle
- water filtration tablets
- signal mirror
- survival blanket
- cook stove
- toilet paper
- Poncho
- Zip ties
- Ziploc baggies
- Mess kit
- Change of clothes
- Extra socks
- Sunglasses
- Work gloves
- Plastic tarp
- Toiletries
- Medicines

The following is a list of items that you should try and stockpile to last your family for an extended period of time (how long is up to you):

Water: it is suggested that you keep one gallon of water per person for each day (2 quarts for drinking and 2 quarts for cooking and washing). A 30-dya supply is recommended.
Which means a family of 4 should have at least 120 gallons of water stockpiled for a crisis.

Food: at a minimum you should have a 72-hour supply of food ready. If you are preparing for a long term emergency, plan on giving each member of your family 2,000 calories of food per day for optimal health. Everything should be canned, boxed or dehydrated. Some of the best items to stockpile include:

- dehydrated meals
- white/brown rice
- dried beans
- white sugar
- iodized salt
- powered milk
- oats
- flour
- corneal
- canned fruits and vegetables
- canned meats
- dried fruits
- Peanut butter
- Powered drink mix
- Power bars
- Coffee and tea
- Salt, pepper, spices
- Hard cheese (wax coated)
- Beef jerky
- Honey
- Canned gravy
- Alcohol
- Baking powder baking soda
- Means of gathering more food (fishing gear, rifle and bullets)

Cooking Methods:
You should not count on having just one way to cook food in an emergency. Be sure you have several alternatives (a cookstove, propane grill, fire, etc). Here are some supplies you may need:

- waterproof matches
- fire starter tool
- flint and steel
- tinder (cotton ball, lint, etc)
- steel wool
- boil stove
- soda can stove
• fire resistant cookware
• grate, hook, stand for cooking over an open fire

Clothing:
Be sure everyone has at east these basics:
• 3 changes of outerwear
• 2 changes of sleepwear
• 1 pair of long underwear
• 7 changes of socks
• 7 changes of underclothes
• 1 pair of waterproof boots
• 1 pair of backup shoes
• Weatherproof gloves
• Hat
• Scarf
• Extra shoelaces

Energy:
• dry firewood
• propane tanks
• rechargeable batteries
• generator (and fuel)
• extension cords
• Coleman fuel
• extra flashlight (and batteries)
• rechargeable solar powered or hand cranked lanterns, headlamps and flashlights

Communication:

Being able to communicate with each other and the outside world is very important during an emergency. Therefore have these on hand:

• walkie talkies
• cell phone (with alternative power source)
• calling card (long distance)
• satellite phone
• laptop computer
• battery operated AM/FM radio
• contact information for family, survival network
• USB drive with important info
Defense/Security:

Securing your property is important during a crisis. Be sure you are ready with:

- Home security system
- Camera monitoring system
- fence
- motions floodlights
- firearms
- ammo
- alternative weapon (bow and arrow)
- gun cleaning kit
- smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- fire extinguishers

Personal Hygiene/Medical Supplies

Be sure to have the following packed for each member of your family:

- Sun block
- Insect repellent
- Toilet paper
- Toothbrush/toothpaste
- Soap
- Antibacterial soap
- Dental floss
- Razor
- Moistening lotion
- Baby wipes
- Nail clips
- Small scissors
- Prescription medicines (a 30-day supply is recommended)
- Multi-vitamins
- Pain relievers
- Anti-nausea/antacids. Anti-diarrheal
- Antifungal creams
- Inflammatory medications
- Allergy medication
- Instant heat/cold packs
- Women’s hygiene products
- Tweezers
- Quick dry towelettes
- Gauze and bandages
- Hydrogen peroxide
• first aid knowledge

Documents:
Some of the most important documents you should keep sealed in a water proof bag include:

• copy of passport
• driver’s license copy
• insurance information
• credit card numbers
• social security information
• car title
• money in cash form
• silver or gold currency
• marriage/birth certificates
• property deeds

Miscellaneous:
Here are just a few other things you may need to include in your bug out bag:

• can opener
• saw
• hatchet
• candles
• cards
• aluminum foil
• ziplock bags
• siphon
• pump
• chocolate
• alcohol
• vinegar
• condoms
• assorted nails and screws
• book
• GSP device
• Wore
• Fuses
• Hammock
• Baby items
• Pet items
You can never be fully prepared to handle every contingency that may occur, but you can be prepared for the basics. Stockpiling is important to get you through those first few days and weeks of a disaster, but having the skills to continue caring for your family are more important than how many cans of food you can stash or rolls of toilet paper hidden in your basement. Learn how to build fires, plant a garden and cook with fresh ingredients. The things listed here are meant to give you a chance at survival; the rest is up to you. Good Luck and God Bless.