

Building a Prepper Pantry Action Plan

This printable action plan is designed to go with the related blog post on building a practical prepper pantry found at TheRevolutionBlog.com/prepper-pantry. This action plan will help you walk through all the steps of the process for creating a prepper pantry and help you identify your goals and needs.

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Step 1: Understanding Situations and Setting Goals

Let's start by defining the most likely to occur situations you would want to be prepared for based on your location and taking into account any current events. Examples of situations to be prepared for include (but not limited to) the following:

Earthquake, hurricane, flood, tornado, wildfire, tsunami, volcano, winter storms, severe weather, power outage, viral outbreak, quarantine mandates, supply chain shortages, sickness, unemployment, compromised food or water sources, chemical emergency, nuclear explosion, terrorist attack, war or civil unrest.

Rank the top five in order of most likely to occur based on your location and current events.

Situation #1
Precautions and Considerations:
Situation #2
Precautions and Considerations:
Situation #3
Precautions and Considerations:
Situation #4
Precautions and Considerations:
Situation #5
Precautions and Considerations:

Finally, use the space below each one you listed to indicate any special precautions or stuff you would like to have on hand for each of the situations you listed. Also, consider what types of food/water supply you would want for each situation. You can use the websites below to help you research and come up with ideas.

<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies.html>

<https://www.ready.gov/be-informed>

Example:

Situation #1 <i>Power Outage</i>
Precautions and Considerations: <i>Convenience food on hand that does not require cooling or heating, flashlights, LED lanterns, candles, blankets, and sleeping bags, an alternative cooking source, power bank or solar charger for charging phones and small appliances, hand-crank radio, alternative heating, and cooking source, consider a generator or other backup power source, keep fridge and freezer closed, unplug appliances,</i>

Now that you have defined what situations are most critical to prepare for, it is time to define your goals and stepping stones for the amount of time you would like to be prepared for food and other necessary supplies. When creating this action plan and taking into account current events, sickness, job loss, forced quarantine, and supply chain shortages are situations we believe everyone should prepare for, and having a prepper pantry is the best way to do that. Our recommendation is to have a minimum of a three-week supply of food and necessities with a target of building up a three-month (12 weeks) supply over time. Decide what the end goal target is for you and put it into weeks.

What is your end goal target for building your food and necessities reserve? _____ weeks

Now that you have your target, it is time to write out your goals and stepping stones. There are other forms of prepping you may also want to consider based on your answers in the last exercise, so feel free to use the below goal-setting table to list out any other prepping goals you may have.

Example:

Target	Priority	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date

Coming up with extra money: I know that coming up with extra money every month can be a challenge for many people, especially those who live paycheck to paycheck. Here are some ideas on coming up with extra money to use to build your prepper pantry. While reading, consider brainstorming a list of ways to make or save extra money for your pantry.

1. **Eat out less.** There is no better way to save for a prepper pantry than to cook and eat more of your meals at home. This includes food delivery and daily coffee house runs. Depending on how often you eat out, you order in, or get coffee out of the house, this could easily save you \$100-\$200 per month.
2. **Cancel unused services.** Go through your bank statement and see what things you get charged for regularly that you either forgot about or don't use. In this day and age where subscription services rain king from music and entertainment streaming to purchasing apps with monthly fees, massage and gym memberships never used, etc., most people can find some money to save by canceling some unused or unnecessary services.
3. **Negotiate monthly payments.** There are many areas people can potentially save some money if they bust out their negotiation skills and or switch service providers. For example, see if your current internet or cable provider will let you in on their newest promotions, so you don't jump ship or if your credit card company will let you have a rate reduction.
4. **Sell unused items.** A great way to get some short-term cash is to sell used items. Whether that is having a yard sale, consigning items, or using online resources like eBay, craigslist, or Poshmark for clothes.
5. **Make more money.** I know this may seem easier said than done, but besides potentially negotiating a raise, consider taking up a short-term side hustle. These days, there are so many options from ride share services, renting out extra rooms, delivery services, taking online surveys, or becoming a part-time virtual assistant.
6. **Dip into savings.** I would never recommend dipping into emergency savings account for unnecessary things like taking a trip or buying a new couch. But since emergency savings accounts are for emergencies, I don't think there would be a better reason to dip into one than create an emergency food and necessity supply to use in disasters or economic hardship. After all, you can't eat money if there is no food available to spend it on. If you go this route, be sure to create a payback plan based on your use.

Step 3: Know your Nutritional and Caloric Needs

Now that you know what you are prepping for, how long you would like to prep for, and how much you have to spend, It is time to clarify your actual caloric and nutritional needs.

Suggested Exercise: Create a food journal either on paper or using an online application to document for a few days or week what you eat every day and what your daily calorie count is. Recommend other household members do the same. If you have younger children, you will probably need to do it for them.

This list will serve two purposes to know what foods you most regularly consume to make sure to have plenty on hand and see what your daily calorie count currently is.

Another way to figure out daily caloric needs for you and your household members is to use the links below. Answering the simple questions will let you know the current daily calories you need per day to maintain your current weight. If weight loss is your goal, then adjust accordingly.

<https://www.lifespanfitness.com/fitness/resources/calories-calculator> (For Adults)

https://www.bcm.edu/cnrc-apps/bodycomp/energy/energyneeds_calculator.htm (For Children)

Use the following table to help you determine how many calories you will need in your pantry to feed your household for the pre-determined period of time. To figure out how many days, just multiply the number of weeks, you would like to be prepared for by seven. For example, 12 weeks x 7 days in a week equals 84 days.

Example:

Name	Daily Calories Needed	Number of Days	Total Calories
Myself	1700	84	142,800
Joe	2500	84	210,000
Sarah	1500	84	126,000
Total Calories Needed For Prepper Pantry			478,800

Household Calorie Counter Table

Name	Daily Calories Needed	Number of Days	Total Calories
Total Calories Needed For Prepper Pantry			

Now that you know your total caloric needs for your household (we will discuss how to keep track of the calories in your prepper pantry), it is time to determine the primary dietary and nutritional needs you would like to follow the following questions.

What dietary restrictions would you like to keep in mind when building your prepper pantry?
What nutritional needs do you want to meet while building your pantry, and how will you meet those?
What are the most important (consumed regularly) foods you would like to keep in your prepper pantry?

Step 4: Create a Meal Plan and Recipe Binder

This next step may seem overkill for some, and if you want to skip it, you can. However, I wouldn't recommend it. Spending the time to map out some meal plans will make your life easier both in and outside a disaster scenario.

Meal planning serves two purposes, the first one being it will help you stock your prepper pantry with things you will use. There is nothing worse than having a prepper pantry full of non-perishables with no idea of preparing them or making them into tasty meals. The second purpose is it will eliminate decision fatigue. Decision fatigue happens when you are faced with too many decisions, and each decision you make deteriorates in quality. Meal planning is a great way to reduce decision fatigue in your day-to-day life (it will also help you eat healthier). In a disaster scenario eliminating decisions, fatigue becomes even more critical.

How do you meal plan?

Following this section and an example menu plan, I include a simple printable meal plan template. Use the template (or another one you like) to map out a week's worth of meals for you and your household. If you and your entire household eat the same things, it makes it easier to plan, but if you each require different meals, you may need to do separate meal plans. The alternative is to list out the names and what each person is eating separately under each meal if you have room.

My advice is to do one to four weeks of meal plans eating relatively normally, keeping in mind that you will have to rely on your freezer instead of fresh foods and possibly some powder replacements for things like milk, eggs, and butter. Next, create a meal plan using primarily non-perishables like canned goods and dried grains. I chose to do three weeks of each for a good rotation. When it comes to meal planning, take advantage of leftovers when creating your meal plans and cook big enough quantities to last you 2-4 days.

When doing your meal plans of normal eating, stick to some of your favorite (and preferably healthy recipes) to rotate through. When doing your meal plans for non-perishables, stick mostly to recipes that do not require ingredients that need to be stored in the fridge or freezer. Although if you have those available, you can add them in. Also, be sure to have a non-perishable alternative if you put that recipe in your meal plan. Example canned chicken and vegetables vs. frozen.

Gathering your Recipes:

After you create your meal plans, I recommend having printed copies and putting them in a binder and printing any recipes that are in the meal plans, and keeping them in there as well (recipe cards are also acceptable). This provides easy access, but if the power goes out and you can't access the internet (where a lot of us access our recipes nowadays), it is good to have a printed copy. Speaking of power outages, you will also want to figure out what your alternative cooking method is going to be and have alternative cooking instructions.

When creating your recipe binder, don't forget basic recipes like how to bake bread, cookies, muffins, and pancakes, as well as recipes and alternatives for your favorite condiments in case you run out.

Here are some links of recipe ideas to be made with non-perishable foods.

<https://blog.thatcleanlife.com/20-healthy-meals-to-make-with-non-perishable-foods/>

<https://www.godairyfree.org/news/dairy-free-pantry-meal-recipes>

Weekly Meal Plan: Non-Perishable Example

Day	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks/Treats
S U N				
M O N				
T U E				
W E D				
T H U R				
F R I				
S A T				

Weekly Meal Plan

Day	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks/Treats
S U N				
M O N				
T U E				
W E D				
T H U R				
F R I				
S A T				

Step 5: Create a Master Pantry List

Now that you have your meal plans and your recipes, it is time to create a master pantry list for all the things you want to make sure you have on hand (as well as backups) in case of an emergency. To create this list, I recommend you first go through your list of most important foods you answered earlier, then your meal plans, and finally your recipes. Use the category list to list out under each category what you want to have on hand.

After you have added everything from your most important items, meal plans, and recipes to the list, it is time to revisit the original blog post I did on [creating a practical prepper pantry](#) and read through each category. This will jog your memory of anything you have forgotten and give you some ideas of other important additions. As you read through each category, write down additional items you want to include under each category.

Use this page and the following pages to create your master list divided by category.

<u>Freezer Items</u>	<u>Low Maintenance Foods</u>	<u>Grains and Dry Goods</u>	<u>Canned and Jarred Items</u>

<u>Baking Supplies</u>	<u>Oils, Vinegars/Condiments</u>	<u>Powders</u>	<u>Salts and Spices</u>
<u>Beverages</u>	<u>Comfort Food & Snacks</u>	<u>Supplements & Meds</u>	<u>Seeds & Survival Foods</u>

<u>Alcohol</u>	<u>Water</u>	<u>Pet Supplies</u>	<u>Cleaning Supplies</u>
<u>Hygiene</u>	<u>Household</u>	<u>First Aid and Medical</u>	<u>Other</u>

Step 6: Figure out Storage

Now that you know what you want to have on hand before purchasing too many items, you will want to figure out where to store them.

When storing your food and water supplies, you ideally want to keep them at cooler stable temperatures and in areas that are less susceptible to pests. That is why I don't recommend garages or storage sheds and if storing in the basement (a popular option), make sure to have items that could get damaged by flooding off the floor and use pest control measures in that space. I discussed many different pest control measures in the original post.

When figuring out storage space, you first want to figure out the area or area you plan to store your food, and second, you will want to figure out what you will need to purchase to make it useful storage space.

For example, if you are using a room in your basement, you probably need shelves (make sure they are heavy-duty as they will need to handle a lot of weight). If you are storing most items under your bed, you will probably need under the bed storage bins and may also want to consider using bed risers for more room. I have also seen people store their items in rooms with other uses but using folding screens to divide the room off from where they keep their supplies.

Idea's for storage areas: Basement storage room, kitchen pantry, and cabinets, plastic bins under the bed, plastic bins stored in closet or corner of a room, linen closet, laundry room with extra shelving or cabinets, furniture built for storage like ottomans or coffee tables, under tables with long table cloths, free standing storage cabinets, storage cubbies, under the stairs, or inside of suitcases when not in use. These are just some ideas. Get creative. I chose a combination of my kitchen pantry, an extra linen closet, large plastic bins in closets, and a 72 hour supply in my car.

What area or areas of your home do you plan on storing your prepper pantry supplies?
What supplies do you need to store your items effectively?

Step 7: Create Inventory and Start Shopping

In this step, you will be working with the original master list you created and turned it into an actual inventory based on the items you want to purchase. The following page has an example and printable inventory sheet you can use with what I feel are the most important things to track via an inventory form. However, my top recommendation is for you to create a spreadsheet to keep track of your prepper pantry inventory via a program like excel or google sheets (preferred method).

I recommend google sheets because it is free and easy to use, but you can also easily access it on any smartphone when you are out and about. I plan on doing a future post that goes into more detail on how to create a prepper pantry inventory pantry via google sheets so stay tuned.

When creating an inventory sheet for your prepper pantry, you will first want to consider what columns you would like to include in your inventory that have the most important to you.

In the example on the following page, I used Item, Category, Current Packages, Target Packages, Packages Needed, Calories, and Best By Dates (Which will probably include multiple).

I base my prepper pantry on total calories. So for every item I multiply the servings by calories per serving for total calories in a package. Then I multiply the total calories by current packages and keep a running total in the calories column. It is helpful to write the total calories on the front of each package in a black marker when doing it this way.

Feel free to use the following Prepper Pantry Inventory Form on the next page as you see fit or create your own based on your needs.

Prepper Pantry Inventory (Example)

Item	Category	Current Packages	Target Packages	Packages Needed	Calories	Best By Dates
Rice	Grains & Dry Goods	5	10	5	16,000	2/22,6/22
Canned Pumpkin	Canned & Jarred Items	7	15	8	1,225	10/25
Canned Chicken	Canned & Jarred Items	20	30	10	4,200	8/22,3/26

Prepper Pantry Inventory

[illegible]

Step 8: Replace, Rotate, and Review

Once you have your prepper pantry fully stocked to your liking, all you need to do is replace and rotate the foods regularly. You can do this easily if you have a system of every time you use an item from the prepper pantry, you put it on your list to purchase a new one. When you place a newly purchased item in the pantry, put it in the back or on the bottom. That way, when you grab an item, it is easier to grab an older one first. I also highly recommend writing the Best By Dates larger in black marker on the front of the packages, so it is easier to see.

Once or twice a year, go through your pantry (and inventory list) in full to see what you should consume quicker (or donate), extend the shelf life of, and fill in any gaps.

I recommend scheduling these days into your calendar at the beginning of each year or set it as a recurring event. I like to do this in the fall to make sure I am stocked up for the winter.

Step 9: Extend the Shelf Life of Foods

In the original blog post, I mention the importance of [knowing how long your food lasts and how to extend it](#).

While I do not think that extending the shelf life of your food is the first step in starting a prepper pantry, I do think to recommend that once or twice a year, when you go through your pantry, start prioritizing what items you want to extend the shelf life on and refer back to that section of the original post for more information on how to extend the shelf life.

Step 10: Moving Forward

Having an adequately stocked prepper pantry is one of the most important things for being prepared for disaster preparedness. However, it does not stop there.

Make sure you follow my [Practical Preparedness Series](#) to continue learning new and practical ways to keep you and your family safe and prepared!

Thanks for reading!

-Elizabeth Hemmings

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