

483 USES

OF COMMON ITEMS

**THAT EVERY PREPPER
SHOULD KNOW**

Dear Friend,

Did you know you could reinforce and bullet-proof your house walls using cat litter...

Or that you could draw a chalk line to keep insects such as ants from getting into your home...

And how about the fact that you can make an excellent water filtration system using apple peels...

These are just 3 out of 483 little-known uses of common items we've included in this month's survival report.

PS: I hope you have a wonderful and productive Spring!

Alec Deacon

Survivopedia.com

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483 USES Of Common Items That Every Prepper Should Know

The entire goal of homesteading, at least for many of us, is to find ways to use every day, natural items in place of harmful chemicals or products that you simply wouldn't have access to if cut off from modern suppliers. Fortunately, there are hundreds of household items that you have in your cabinets that can be used for a multitude of purposes.

The purpose of this list is to bring to light some not-so-common uses for these common items that you may not know about. Should SHTF, knowing how to make do with what you have may be the difference between living comfortably and struggling.

Even in every-day life, these uses can save you time and money and can also help you avoid chemical-laden products than can cause harm to your family when exposed to them.

Another advantage to making do with what you have is that you won't be sending as much garbage to the dump.

It's always better to repurpose an item than to throw it away as long as what you're using it for is effective. This saves you money as well as reduces your carbon footprint and that's always a good thing.

They say that NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION. One of the best things about learning to repurpose items is that you begin to look at everything differently. You'll become more creative and you'll teach yourself to think outside of the box when you need to accomplish something. When you look at an item, you'll start to see infinite uses for it.

That automatically puts you a step ahead of most people and will be a valuable asset if you should ever find yourself in a situation where you HAVE to come up with new ways to do things.

Without further ado, let's get to the list!

EDIBLE ITEMS

Aloe Vera

1. **Promotes healing of blisters and different types of burns.** Just smear a bit of the fresh juice onto the burn for instant relief. It promotes healing, too. Whether it's a sunburn or a heat burn, aloe vera is extremely soothing.
2. **Provides hemorrhoid relief**
3. **Helps cure ulcers and soothes stomach upset.** Taking a swig of aloe vera juice daily is often used by holistic health professionals to treat ulcers. Its healing properties extend to your stomach.
4. **Softens and heals psoriasis and other skin conditions.** The antibacterial and softening properties found in aloe vera help it to effectively treat the itch and scale of many skin conditions.
5. **It makes a great shave cream.** The antibacterial properties and slick texture will help you get silky-smooth skin in no time, minus the rash of razorburn.
6. **Freshens Breath.** The anti-inflammatory compound B-sitosterol in aloe vera soothes acid indigestion which is a common cause of bad breath.



Ammonia

1. **For deterring moths** - add 1/2 cup of ammonia to 1 quart of water and spray on drawers, in closets, and any areas where moths might decide to take up residence. Allow each area to air dry before placing clothes or food back in place.



2. **For stain removal** (sweat marks, urine, blood, and non-oily stains from clothes). Mix 50% ammonia with 50% water and dab on the stain, then wash as normal. For non-oil based stains, rub on stain at 100% concentration and then wash. You can also use ammonia to remove pet and other stains from carpets and upholstery. For these applications, add one cup of ammonia to one gallon of water, dab onto the stain, and let the mixture dry.

3. **For plant food**- Add 1/4 cup of ammonia to a gallon of water for cucumbers and other plants that prefer alkaline soil. When using ammonia to boost soil pH, watch carefully for sudden changes back towards neutral or acidic that might cause more harm to sensitive plants.

4. **For deterring raccoons and other animals** - use ammonia around the garden to deter raccoons and other wild animals that cannot stand its scent.

5. **For refrigeration** - Mix ammonia with water and heat up mixture. As ammonia and water cool off, they will recombine and create a lower temperature. Place items to be kept cold in an insulated box with them. This solution will work for about 24 hours before needing to be repeated.

6. **For removing soot from glass** - combine 2 tablespoons of vinegar, and 1 tablespoon of ammonia with 1 quart of warm water. Let the solution sit for a few seconds, and then wipe off. You may need to repeat this procedure two or three times if the stains are set into the glass.

Apple Peels

1. **Clean your pots and pans** – the acid in apple peels helps remove discoloration and stains from your aluminum cookware.
2. **Filter pollutants** from water – we just wrote an article about using banana peels for water purification, and apple peels work similarly. They attract and capture ions and pollutants because they're adsorbent. This won't purify the water or remove biohazards but it will help remove some of the dangerous pollutants.
3. **Making Jelly** – don't want to waste the apple meat on jelly? That's OK. The pectin in the peels will do a dandy job of making delicious (and pretty!) jelly.
4. **Make apple peel vinegar** – just put the peels in a jar and cover with water. Weight them down so that they stay beneath the water. Cover and store in a warm place for about a month. Strain and you've got vinegar!

Baking Soda

1. **For relieving stomach acid** - Baking soda is one of the oldest and most reliable treatments for heartburn or acid indigestion. Simply add one teaspoon of baking soda to a cup of water and drink it. You can also add a few drops of peppermint oil for additional relief.
2. **For emergency treatment for urinary tract infections** - 1/4 teaspoon baking soda mixed in 8oz of water once daily helps to make the bladder environment more alkaline, which inhibits the growth of bacteria. A little dab on a bug bite provides relief from itching and a paste is good for yeast and fungal infections.
3. **For cleaning battery terminals** - To get rid of the acidic corrosion, disconnect the battery. Mix one part water to three parts baking soda and brush onto battery terminals.

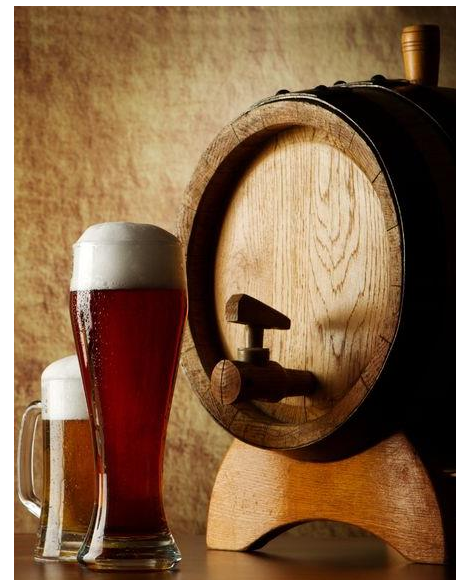


Wipe off with a damp cloth, and then dry battery terminals before reconnecting to system.

4. **For extinguishing small fires** - When baking soda is burned, it produces carbon dioxide. To put out a small grease fire, throw baking soda at the base of the flame. If you are cooking on a stove, try to shut off the electricity or gas if possible. In these situations, using baking soda is safer than water because throwing water on an electric fire can cause the current to arc and jump back to you.
5. **For oral care** - Baking soda can be mixed with water to make toothpaste and mouthwash. If you have full or partial dentures, it can also be used for soaking them. Just add 2 teaspoons of baking soda to a cup of water. To make mouthwash, add one teaspoon of baking soda to a half cup of water. Combine baking soda and 3% hydrogen peroxide to make toothpaste.
6. **For skin care** - add 1 part water to 3 parts baking soda, rub onto skin and then wash off. Baking soda as a body wash is very gentle and can be used daily for smooth, clean, healthy skin.

Beer

1. **Fertilizes your soil.** The carbohydrates in beer are a great source of microbes for your soil. Just pour it on and you've provided instant plant food.
2. **Condition your hair.** The hops and malt in beer are packed with protein. When you put it on your hair and let it sit for a minute before rinsing, it'll leave your hair soft and shiny.
3. **Keeps your skin soft and healthy.** The alcohol in the beer acts as an astringent to kill bacteria that can cause acne and the yeast helps to balance the pH level in your skin. The yeast also helps soften rough spots such as those on your feet.



4. **Tenderize meat.** Since beer is slightly acidic, it will help tenderize tougher cuts of meat. Just marinate in it.
5. **Clean copper pots.** This is another time with the slight acidity works for you. Just pour it on, let it sit for a while and then rinse it off. It'll bring that shine back.

Black Pepper

1. Adds spice and pep to your dishes
2. It has antiseptic, analgesic and antibacterial properties
3. Helps stop bleeding and doesn't sting. If you cut yourself, clean the wound then rub a bit of black pepper into it.

[CLICK HERE to find out more about simple and effective first aid techniques that you need to learn for survival.](#)

Cabbage

1. It is a good source of vitamin C, fiber and beta-carotene that may reduce your risks of cancer.
2. Cabbage's laxative properties are widely known from ancient times.
3. Cabbage juice can also be a good antidote for mushroom poisoning and an effective balm for sore eyes.
4. Cabbage leaves may be a good treatment for rheumatism and sore feet. They relieve sunburns, and treat warts and abscesses.
5. Use cabbage to treat stomach pain, excess stomach acid and intestinal ulcers, but also to reduce



asthma and morning sickness.

Coconut Water

1. Coconut water is a great drink to keep you hydrated when water is not available.
2. It's used to replace human plasma in battle when blood isn't available. Inside the coconut, it's sterile and can be injected directly into the vein without any ill effects. As a matter of fact, even the naysayers don't dispute that it would be an acceptable emergency substitute.

Coffee

1. **Make compost** - Spent coffee grounds can be mixed with lye to make a great composting agent, you can even throw in the coffee filter, too! Worms in compost like to eat the bacterium that grows on the facets of coffee grounds, though the grounds themselves are a food source it also adds grit to the worms' digestive system allowing them to digest better.
2. **Use it for fertilizing** - Small amounts of coffee grounds can be added directly to top soil, especially on plants that like high acidity in the soil like azaleas or roses. Coffee is high in nitrogen, calcium, magnesium, potassium and other trace minerals, spreading around a thin layer of coffee grounds on your soil will allow a slow release of these minerals into your plants. Be aware of which plants like acidic soil (roses), and which plants don't (tomatoes).
3. **Get rid of insects** - Coffee has a very strong odor which many insects and animals do not like. In addition, it's been suggested that mosquitoes, ants, slugs and maggots all dislike the acidity of coffee and will stay away from areas where there is high concentration of acidic soil.

Cloves

1. Spice up your ham or in pie - Use cloves on cuts: the eugenol in it is both an antiseptic and an analgesic so rub a bit of clove powder on a cut to disinfect it and ease the pain.

2. Ease your tooth pain: chew on some cloves or rub some clove oil on your gums.

Eggs

1. **Bandage** - The membrane of an egg can be used as a bandage or a poultice on wounds. It will help it heal faster. It's also good to help stop bleeding. Just remove it from the inside of the egg and apply it straight to the wound. It works well as a drawing agent for splinters or blackheads, too.
2. **Fertilizer** – your plants need the calcium and other minerals in the shells so you can crush them up and mix them into the dirt or you can soak the eggshells in the water that you use for your plants. You can even use the entire shell as a “cup” to start your seeds in if you crack them carefully.
3. **Pest deterrent** – having problems with deer or cats in your garden? Crush the eggshells and scatter them around your garden.
4. **Calcium supplements** – we all need plenty of calcium but in a survival situation, we may not be able to get enough. Thank goodness you thought to raise chickens! Just grind the eggs into a fine powder and mix it into your smoothie or other food once per day.
5. **Feed** them to your **chickens** – that's right – they need calcium to make more eggs so instead of using oyster shells, crush up the egg shells and give them back.
6. **Candles** – if you crack the tops off carefully, you can fill the shells with beeswax, add a wick, and you've got a candle that you didn't need to use another container on.
7. **Seed starter pots** – again, crack them carefully and put your soil and seeds in them. You've got organic seed pots that are already rich in calcium and minerals that your plants need.



Fennel

1. Fennel is great in spicing meat and other dishes.
2. Women are the main beneficiaries: fennel tea suppresses menstrual cramps, increases breast milk, relieves the pain associated with swollen breasts, and treats colic in infants.
3. Fennel is widely used in treating stomach problems, both in human and animals, because it works as a diuretic, and reduces flatulence by correcting the expulsion of intestinal gases.
4. Use fennel tea for those suffering of asthma or bronchial diseases: the syrup is highly effective for chronic coughs.
5. It is perfect to disinfect kennels and stables, as it is said to be disliked by fleas.



Frozen Peas

Need an ice pack but don't have any ice? Use a frozen bag of peas. They break up nicely so that you can form the bag to most any body part. Wrap them in a towel so that you don't damage your skin with the low temperatures. Either hold the bag of peas to the body part or use a towel or T-shirt to secure the bag to your limb.

Garlic

It has a high level of allicin, a sulfur compound similar to that found in onions, and is a great source of vitamin B6 and vitamin C. They make garlic useful in so many ways, in as well as outside the kitchen. Its antioxidants kill bacteria, and help the immune system fight chest infections, coughs and congestion: make a tea with 4-5 chopped garlic cloves in hot water, then strain and drink.

1. It is a great natural remedy for acne and cold sores, and relieves psoriasis outbreaks.

2. It is a natural help for people with diabetes, as it enhances the level of insulin in the blood.
3. It reduces LDL cholesterol level and fights cardiovascular diseases and impotency.
4. Fish are attracted to garlic scent, so you can make you own bait using food scraps and minced garlic cloves to catch fish.
5. It works as a natural adhesive for fixing hairline cracks in glass.

Herbs and Spices

Whether you choose to grow your own, store them dried or both, herbs and spices are going to make post-SHTF life better in a number of ways. We also recommend buying a book on using herbs for medicinal purposes so that you can correctly mix your own concoctions in a pinch.

Remember that just because an herb is natural doesn't mean that it's safe in any quantity. We think that herbs should be stockpiled because:

1. They can help you avoid food fatigue
2. They'll make excellent barter
3. They have nutrients that improve the quality of your diet
4. They can be used for a wide variety of medical purposes, depending on which spices you store.



Honey

This stuff is better than gold in an emergency situation because it's easy to store, it NEVER spoils and it has a ton of practical uses.

1. Has vitamins and minerals so if you're using a sweetener, honey is better than sugar
2. Can be used as an antibacterial on wounds
3. Is a great healing agent for wounds and helps keep the bandage from sticking

4. Barter – sweeteners are going to be way up there on the list
5. Excellent skin moisturizer (if your skin is so dry that it cracks, you're going to have problems)
6. Makes a great burn treatment because of the antibacterial properties and the moisturizing power
7. Soothes sore throats
8. When mixed with vinegar and water is an effective parasite remover
9. Make fly/bug strips
10. Candles. Beeswax candles burn longer and cleaner than paraffin candles and it's relatively simple to render into wax.
11. Honeycombs are what you make beeswax from, as we just revealed. Beeswax is a wonderful ingredient to use when making lotions, lip balms and other moisturizers.
12. Weatherproofing – beeswax will be a valuable tool when you need to waterproof something. Just rub it into the leather, thread, wood, or other porous material and voila! It's waterproof, softened, and even preserved!
13. Thinned beeswax and mineral spirits make an excellent polish for bullets, gun metal and stocks.
14. Beeswax-soaked paper makes an excellent fire starter.



Lemon Juice

1. Disinfectant. Pour a few drops directly on your wound or apply with a cotton ball. It also helps it stop bleeding.
2. Indigestion/stomach upset. Mix a few drops with water and drink.
3. Relieve poison ivy symptoms.
4. Natural decongestant. Helps reduce phlegm and ease difficult breathing.

5. A few drops per day in your water helps prevent kidney stones.
6. Treat diphtheria. Research shows that swallowing 1/2 to 1 tablespoon of lemon juice every hour or so will release the faux membrane that forms in your throat so that it can come out.
7. Disinfect your vegetables and fruits. Just put a tablespoon of lemon juice in your spray bottle and spritz it on your produce.
8. Prevent fleas and ticks. Spray on your pets to keep them pest-free.



Mouthwash

It has a high alcohol content in it and that makes it a great household item to use in medical emergencies.

1. Plain or flavored either one will work though the flavored is a bit sticky. Just pour it right on the wound to kill infection
2. You can use it also for sterilizing equipment or cleaning your toothbrush.
3. Use it to lubricate your bike seat.
4. Disinfect the toilet using mouthwash.
5. Can't get rid of lice? Use mouthwash to kill them!

Mustard

This is one of those items that never needs refrigeration, due to its antibacterial properties. You could use mustard seeds to spice up your food, but it doesn't only belong in the kitchen... but also in your bug-out-bag: you might need it later to relieve pain.

Mustard seeds are packed with flavonoid and carotenoid antioxidants, selenium and magnesium, and also niacin and vitamin B3. Selenium and magnesium make mustard seeds great in relieving rheumatoid, arthritic and muscle pain.

1. It prevents gastric cancer.
2. Mustard can slow down the ageing process.
3. It reduces cholesterol levels and protect the arteries from atherosclerosis.
4. It gives a big helping hand in protecting the body from hypertension.
5. Mustard helps clear many common skin infections, and increase the body's ability to fight diseases.
6. Mustard improves digestion, reduces constipation, relieves symptoms of hemorrhoids and anal fissures.
7. Use mustard seeds to get rid of bad smells: it turns into a perfect skunk smell remover, and used bottle deodorizer.

Oatmeal

Rashes from poison oak, ivy or sumac, or from an allergic reaction can be extremely irritating. This is miserable for an adult but to a kid, the scratching may be uncontrollable. Grinding up a couple of cups of oatmeal and putting it in a bath will help tons. You can also make a paste out of it.

Onions

Onions have 25 active compounds that help combat heart disease, inhibit strokes, reduce cholesterol levels, and boost your immune system. The onion is also known for its diuretic properties.

1. You can relieve bruises, burns and bee stings by placing a raw onion on the affected area. Remove a splinter by tapping a slice of fresh onion on the skin overnight, and use a few lukewarm drops of cooked onion juice to relieve earache.
2. Onion tea is really useful to calm down sore throat, and also in cleaning out acneic skin.



3. Onion juice is known to be a natural moth repellent, and prevents insect bites, when you rub it on your skin.
4. You can use onion to clean your grill, to polish metal or clean bath sponges.
5. You can paint Easter eggs using hard boiled onion skin.
6. Onion skin is used for removing pollutants from water – they act the same way as apple peels and banana peels do.
7. Make stock – when you're making any kind of stock, you typically use onions. Well instead of using the actual meat, use the skins and ends that you cut off. You're just going to drain it off anyway.
8. Grow more onions – the roots of the onion will regrow if you plant them in the soil, just like bulbs of flowers do.
9. Soothe stings – the end of the onion can be used to soothe stings. Just hold it on your skin.
10. Use onion skin to dye your hair a beautiful golden brown, or to color fabrics or Easter eggs a bright purple!
11. Cook onion skin up along with your garlic peels to make an organic pesticide. It stinks, but it works!

Salt

The main purpose of salt for most people is to add a bit more taste to their food.

However, salt can be so much more useful in the kitchen thanks to the many applications it has.

1. **Prevent the browning of fruits and vegetables.** Food storage is one of the main concerns for people preparing themselves for a disaster. Every new technique that preserves food under conditions where electricity is no longer available is welcomed. Salt can be used to stop fruits and veggies from browning. Normally, this is something that can be done with lemon juice or vinegar, but a bucket of salty water will also do the trick.

2. **Preserve food naturally for long term survival.** Salt works by dehydrating the food as well as the microbes present in the food. This way the microbes are prevented from contributing to decomposition. Most especially, mold and yeast cannot grow in food pretreated with salt. Food preserved this way could last for years.
3. **Fresh egg test.** There is a simple way of telling whether an egg is good to eat or not using salt. All you need is a cup of water with two teaspoons of salt in them. If you drop an egg in the cup, a fresh one should sink straight to the bottom while an older one would float. An older egg has more buoyancy because the air cell inside of it increases. However, this does not necessarily mean the egg is bad. You still have to crack it and smell for any foul odors to see if it is truly rotten.
4. **Make cheese last longer.** Another food which has an increased lifespan by using salt is cheese. Even when it is preserved properly in a refrigerated environment, cheese will inevitably spoil due to mold. This cannot be prevented with salt, but it can be delayed. All that is necessary is to wrap the cheese before storing it in a damp cloth moistened using saltwater.
5. **Put out grease fires.** When cooking, a grease fire is one of the most dangerous things that can happen. It can overcome the entire kitchen in just a few moments and, eventually, the entire home. One thing to never do is to throw water on top of a grease fire. The water evaporates instantly and spreads the fire all over the room. Instead, throwing salt on top of the grease fire will create a crusty layer without oxygen, thus smothering the flames. Moreover, the salt also acts as a heat sink, dissipating the heat.



6. **Get rid of itchiness.** Salt can be used for bee stings, mosquito stings, poison ivy and any other types of problems that cause rashes and itchy skin. The salt will not reduce inflammation and will not make the rashes disappear, but it will cool down the skin and get rid of that itchy sensation. What you need to do is apply a cloth which has been soaked in saltwater to act as a compress. Alternatively, you can also dampen the affected area and simply apply a handful of salt to it. For the latter, it is important to make sure there are no open wounds. Applying salt in this case would be really painful.
7. **Treat mouth problems.** Any kind of sores in the mouth such as abscesses and cankers can be dealt with using salt. What you need to do is to rinse your mouth several times a day using warm water with a little salt in it. It will help deal with the pain, but make sure not to put too much salt in it.
8. **Provide tooth care.** When resources are scarce, salt can also be used to look after your teeth. First of all, it can be used to extend the life of a toothbrush by simply soaking it in saltwater. Furthermore, a very efficient solution can be made by combining one part of fine salt with two parts of baking soda. This mixture can be used on a toothbrush to act as a toothpaste replacement. It can also be mixed with water and used as a rinsing solution.
9. **Prevent ant invasions.** If a home is suffering from ant intruders, salt can be of use as long as you know where the ants are entering from. A simple line of salt placed at the doorways or on the window sills is enough to deter the pests. Ants will not cross over the salt.
10. **Get rid of poison ivy.** Another invader which can be dealt with using salt is poison ivy. For this, you will need a mixture of salt and soapy water – about three pounds mixed with one gallon should be enough. This mixture should be sprayed on the leaves and stems of the ivy. However, you need to be careful to avoid the plants that you do not wish to kill.

11. **Get rid of stains.** Salt can be used to get rid of a wide array of tough and stubborn stains. All you need to do in this situation is to soak the fabrics with the stains in cold saltwater. This works for clothes, but also for carpets, drapes and rugs. It should be able to remove blood, sweat, wine, ketchup etc. It can also be used to get rid of certain unpleasant odors from clothes.
12. **Clean around the house.** Refrigerators can be cleaned using a simple mix of salt and soda water instead of using chemicals. Cast-iron pans with grease on them are also easy to clean by sprinkling salt on them and then using paper towels. Wooden tables can be cleaned of glass ring stains using a paste made out of salt and vegetable oil. Sink drains are kept smelling fresh and free of grease deposits by regularly pouring a mixture of hot water and salt down them. Items made of brass and copper can be cleaned using a paste made out of equal parts salt, vinegar and flour.

Sugar

Sugar is delicious in food, but making life sweeter can happen in more ways than one! Here are just a few uses for sugar.

1. **Keep your baked goods fresh longer.** Just add a few sugar cubes to your bread or cookie container and it will help keep your baked goods soft longer.
2. **Get rid of nematodes.** These garden pests will wipe out your crops, including tomatoes. Just sprinkle a bit of sugar onto your soil around your plants in order to deter the bad bugs and create a friendly environment for the good organisms that inhabit your soil.



- 3. Save your cheese!** To keep your good cheeses from getting moldy, toss a couple of sugar cubes into the cheese container. It will help keep the blue fuzzies at bay to help you save waste.
- 4. Kill Roaches.** OK, so sugar won't work on its own to get rid of household pests, but if you mix it with equal parts baking soda, the sugar will draw the bugs in while the soda kills them.
- 5. Treat and heal wounds.** Studies have shown that placing a pinch or two of sugar on an injury or bedsore will help kill bacteria and heal the sore.

[CLICK HERE to find out more about simple and effective first aid techniques that you need to learn for survival.](#)

Vinegar

1. The acetic acid in vinegar tenderizes meat.
2. Dabbing some vinegar onto a fish will help the scales come off easier.
3. Preserve eggs by pickling them in vinegar. White works best because of the distinctive flavor or apple cider, but either will do.
4. Spritz on your skin to relieve eczema and other skin conditions.
5. Kills bacteria on your face that causes acne.
6. Clean and disinfect counters, windows and other hard surfaces.
7. AC vinegar helps with digestion and helps soothe heartburn and UTIs.
8. Mix with baking soda to clean and disinfect water bottles and containers.
9. Helps reduce night sweats associated with menopause.



10. Nutrition: ACV has lots of minerals and enzymes, including calcium and potassium.
11. Mix with baking soda and spray on shelves and in dark corners to deter mice and rats.
12. Mix with water to relieve painful sunburn.
13. Kills mildew.
14. Antibiotic properties help cuts and scrapes heal faster and with less scarring.
15. Kills the itch and odor associated with yeast infection. Drink an ounce or so in the morning to fight the yeast internally and swab/douche with diluted vinegar to stop the itching and kill the yeast externally.
16. Kills dandruff.
17. Antibacterial properties help kill bugs that cause a sore throat when you gargle with it.

Vodka

It's great for drinking socially but vodka has an extremely high percentage of pure alcohol, which makes it a fabulous disinfectant. It's going to sting but pour it over the wound or over the tool to sterilize it.

1. **Disinfect wounds.** In a pinch, vodka works great as a sterilizer and disinfectant. It is, after all, a potent alcohol!
2. **Clean and de-Streak your windows.**

Just spritz some vodka onto your windows, polish as usual, and watch them shine!



3. **Get rid of soap scum and water spots.** The alcohol in vodka will help eat through the soap scum and will have your faucets shiny. Just put a bit on a rag and wipe your sink down with vodka.
4. **Keep your plants disease-free.** Mix some vodka with water and a couple of drops of dish soap. Spritz right onto your plant to kill mold and mildew that will kill your plants if left unchecked.
5. **Kill mold and mildew around the house.** Just spritz some vodka onto your bath tiles or other location where you have to worry about mold and mildew. The alcohol will kill it and make it easier for you to clean the surface.

NON-EDIBLE ITEMS

Aluminum Foil

Around the house it has dozens of uses and is an integral part of food prep and cleanup for many households. When you add these to the survival uses of aluminum foil, this shiny product is a must-have multi-purpose item to keep in your BOB or in your pantry. It takes up little space and is re-usable as long as you buy the heavy duty version.

1. Around the house it has dozens of uses and is an integral part of food prep and cleanup for many households. When you add these to the survival uses of aluminum foil, this shiny product is a must-have multi-purpose item to keep in your BOB or in your pantry. Line your pans or oven to make clean-up easy.
2. Clean your cast iron skillets with aluminum foil and salt.
3. Make a cup.
4. Place petroleum jelly-coated cotton ball on a cupped piece of foil to keep the jelly from melting into the ground. It will burn much longer.
5. Use for signaling.

6. Mark camp with it so that your light reflects off of it. Just stick it to a tree or something at eye level.
7. Sharpen scissors by cutting through a few layers of foil.
8. Make cooking packs for open-fire cooking.
9. Keep your pie crusts from burning.
10. Make a cooking vessel.
11. Hang pieces around your garden to keep birds and critters out.
12. Clean your grill with a wadded up piece of foil.

Ash

Wood ash is extremely alkaline and contains potassium (potash) and calcium, which makes it great for several different purposes around the farm.

It also likely contains sulfur, phosphorus, sodium, zinc, manganese, iron, copper, cobalt, magnesium and molybdenum, all of which are great for your plants depending upon your type of soil.



1. Brains are a common method for naturally tanning the hide into water-resistant, durable leather, but they take forever to get the job done if you don't break down the natural mucopolysaccharides, called ground substance, that protect the hide. The Native Americans used wood ash and water for this. Soak it for 2-4 days and you'll only have to brain-tan it once.
2. You may be hunting or you may be waiting for human predators to invade your space. Whatever the reason, wood ash is a quick, natural camouflage.
3. Sunburn can be lethal and if you don't have any sunscreen, rub wood ash on your skin to block the sun's rays.

4. Almost without fail, alkaline-loving plants such as onions, garlic and leeks will flourish if you add a bit of wood ash to the soil around them. The exception to this is if the pH of your soil is over 7. In that case, you may not want to use wood ash because it contains potassium and is very alkaline. It's great to mix in if your soil is acidic but if it's not, you'll make matters worse.
5. Spread wood ash around your gardens to protect it from certain bugs that are harmful to your plants. It serves as a barrier to slugs and snails and some say that it protects against some beetles, too.
6. Tossing a bit of wood ash into your dirty skillet will produce enough lye (and friction) to get your camp skillets good and clean. Some people even use it raw as soap.
7. Chickens naturally roll in dirt as a way to cleanse themselves. This protects them from insects and pests such as mites and lice. However, if your chickens can't roam, finding a nice dusty place to roll may be a challenge for them. Mix wood ash and sand equally and place it in a litter pan or baby pool, or just dump it in a corner of their pen. The wood ash kills mites and lice and the sand keeps the ash from blowing away.
8. Nothing is more disgusting than the smell of a dog that's been skunked but if you have some extra wood ash, you're golden. Just rub the ash into his fur and it will neutralize the odor.
9. Wood Ash mixed with water produces lye, which can then be mixed with animal fat to make soap. You have to add boiling soft water to your ash, allow it to sit for a few days, and drain the lye out of the mixture. You know that it's alkaline enough to go forward with the soap-making process when an egg will float in it. Once you've extracted the lye, it's just a matter of cooking it down with rendered animal fat. Soft wood ash produces a soft soap and hardwood ash produces a firmer soap. Add salt to make it even firmer.

10. Rub wood ash on pulleys to reduce friction. Just don't use it on anything aluminum because it will eat through it.
11. Use it to clean the soot off the glass on your wood burner door. Just dip your cloth in some ash and rub the soot right off. It's great for cleaning metal, too.
12. A bit of ash rubbed on a fish that you're trying to skin or clean will help with the slipperiness.
13. You can make glue by mixing wood ash and pine tree resin.
14. Mixing wood ash with linseed oil will create a great waterproof preservative for wood.

Bank Cards

Bank cards are just pieces of plastic when you think about it. They do have several uses though so don't ditch them when you run.

1. Removing stingers. Just slide the card in the opposite direction than the stinger went in and it will pull it right out.
2. Starting a fire. They're flammable and will burn for a few moments.
3. To cover a sucking wound: tape it down securely over the wound and it's just as good, or better than plastic wrap.
4. Finger splint: cut it in half lengthways and tape it to either side of your finger.
5. Turn it into a weapon, and use it for your defense.



[CLICK HERE to find out more about using unconventional weapons for your defense.](#)

Bandana

Frankly, I feel kind of silly even mentioning this because it's such a well-known survival item but I would be remiss to skip it!

Here are just a few of the reasons why you should have a few bandanas in your survival kit.

1. Sling
2. Water filter
3. Face mask
4. To carry items
5. Wash cloth
6. Tourniquet
7. Bandage
8. Sweatband
9. Cleaning your gun
10. Toilet paper
11. Feminine hygiene
12. Keeping your neck warm
13. Pot holder
14. Keeping cool – soak it in cold water and place it on your neck/forehead



Balloons

1. Balloons are great for keeping things dry. You can stuff them with an extra pair of socks or a shirt if you're traveling, or you could put your medical kit or fire kit in one to keep moisture out.
2. Though balloons do hold water, you need a pressurized source such as a faucet to force the water in.
3. You could use them to tie things together, such as shelter poles.

4. A larger balloon could also be used as a waterproof pressure bandage by opening the end and just slipping it over the arm or leg. Be careful that it's not too tight, though.
5. Speaking of which, you could use a balloon as a tourniquet.
6. If you fill them with air, they will float, so you can use them as floatation devices or for cushioning.
7. Keep your rifle barrel clean and dry by slipping a balloon over it. You can shoot right through it if need be.
8. Or use them as trail markers.

Belts

These accessories are good for way more than holding your pants up! If you have a survival belt made from paracord, your uses for your belt just quadrupled so think about getting or making one of those!



1. You can use them as a tourniquet to stop bleeding.
2. It's an affordable self-defense weapon: you could easily choke or hit somebody in order to defend yourself.
3. You can use it to tie somebody up.
4. Use it to strap items together.

Bras

Though they're great tools for their intended purpose, bras have a few other uses if SHTF, too.

1. They make good air filters. The bigger the better!
2. Water filters.
3. Face masks.

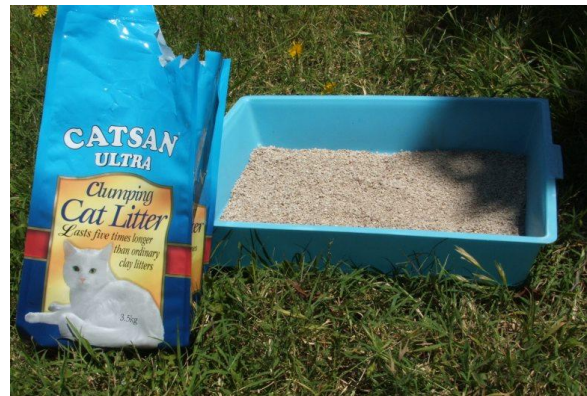
4. Underwires are good for fishing hooks or even weapons.
5. Earmuffs.
6. Elbow or knee pads.
7. A baby's hat (don't laugh – it would work!).
8. The elastic can be used for any number of uses.
9. Bandages.

Cat Litter

Cat litter is absorbent; it doesn't dissolve, and, when wet, dries to something akin to concrete.

There are many reasons why you may want to include it in your kit.

1. Fill your plastic bottles with it to reinforce and bullet-proof your house or walls.
2. Use it to improve traction in wet, muddy, or icy areas.
3. Absorb the odor and liquids in your portable toilet.
4. Keep rats away. They hate the smell of cat litter so sprinkle it where they may come in or where you've seen them to get rid of them.
5. Keep your soil moist in your garden or in your planters.
6. Calcium bentonite clay, the primary component of kitty litter, naturally absorbs radiation and other positive ionic charged substances such as toxins and pesticides. It needs activated with water but when it is, it's almost like a magnet it's so negatively charged.



Chalk

1. Rub chalk on the stained area and let it sit for 10 minutes. This helps absorb the grease. Before throwing it in the washing machine, wipe off the excess dust.

2. Rub the stain heavily with white chalk. The chalk will absorb the oil that holds in the dirt. Allow to sit for at least 10 minutes, then wash as usual.
3. Crush the chalk and sprinkle it on the grease stain. Let sit overnight. Then brush off in the morning. The chalk dust absorbs the grease from the suede.
4. Place several pieces of sidewalk chalk in a resealable plastic bag, and place the open bag in the bottom of the dirty clothes hamper. The chalk will absorb the moisture from the damp clothes, preventing the growth of odor causing mildew. Replace once a month.
5. Keep some chalk in the same place that you store your silver. It'll absorb the moisture and prevent the silver from tarnishing.
6. A piece of chalk in your jewelry box will prevent costume and silver jewelry from tarnishing. The chalk will absorb the sulfur compounds inside the jewelry box before they can turn the jewelry black.
7. Make a paste with a ground-up piece of chalk and vodka. Rub on pewter, rinse it off, and polish.
8. A bundle of chalk in a closet will go a long way in preventing the mustiness that often occurs.
9. Chalk is a great temporary way to mark out a new design on the floor when you're redecorating. You can stand back and see if it will work before you start moving things around.
10. Rub chalk on the surface you are sanding. Continue to sand until it's all gone, and you'll end up with a perfectly even surface!



11. Since chalk absorbs moisture, a handful of chalk pieces in your toolbox will help prevent your tools from rusting.
12. Rub some chalk on the head of a flathead to prevent your screwdriver from slipping when you're turning a screw.
13. For a quick fix of little nicks and scrapes on your walls, find a piece of chalk that matches the paint color and just draw it in.
14. For some reason, ants don't like to cross chalk lines. Draw some on around your doorways, windowsills and wherever else the ants are coming in from to stop them in their tracks.
15. Got a door key that keeps sticking in the lock? Rub a piece of chalk along the teeth and tip of the key, then slide the key in and out of the lock a few times. The chalk coats the dirt particles inside the lock and absorbs any moisture.
16. To get an exact fit for door hardware, coat the underside of the hardware on the door, then shut the door. The chalk will mark the exact location for latches, locks, etc.
17. Temporarily cover up water or scuff marks on the ceiling until you have time to paint or make a permanent repair. Rub a stick of white chalk over the mark until it lightens or disappears.

Condoms

This is an item that both men and women often carry and is an essential for your bug-out bag.

Condoms have many uses and take up very little space so keep a few on hand even if you don't need them for their "intended" purpose!

The unlubricated kind may be best.



1. Water containers. Condoms can hold up to two liters of water if you handle them correctly. Because they're so delicate, put it into a sock to give it protection and

- stability before you fill it. You'll do best if you can find a source of downward-running water such as a small waterfall.
2. Keeping your matches or tinder dry. Just be careful not to break the condom and your stuff will be ready for a fire when you are.
 3. Tinder. A condom is extremely flammable and will burn hot for several moments; long enough to get your fire going.
 4. Thumb loops to put pressure on the top of your hand drill to give enough pressure to start the fire while you're spinning. Use either end as thumb loops and place the middle on top of the stick.
 5. As the elastic in a slingshot – use 3 stuffed inside of each other on either side of your missile launcher then duct tape or zip-tie them to the fork and the missile launcher.
 6. Rubber glove.
 7. Protect the muzzle of your weapon when crossing streams of wading through mud.
 8. Fishing bobber
 9. Tourniquet, to stop bleeding.

Corn Husks

Whether you want to filter water or make some dolls, corn husks have way too many uses to just toss them in the trash!

1. **Filter water** – you can either just let the water drip through the filter, or grind the husk into dust and mix it with coffee grounds and clay. Add enough water to make it “clay-like” and shape it into a bowl. Allow to dry in the sun, then put your water in it and place it over another vessel. The water will soak through the bowl and into the other vessel, leaving contaminants behind. Rinse the corn husk bowl and reuse.



2. **Make baskets** – braid or weave the husks into a basket.
3. **Protect delicate foods** when grilling – if you want to grill your fish or other delicate food but are afraid it will fall apart and be wasted, wrap it in a wet corn husk while cooking.
4. **Treat bladder infections** – boil the husks into a tea for relief. It also works as a pain reliever for some types of joint or muscle pain.
5. **Start fires** – dried husks are extremely flammable so if you don't have any good kindling, don't pitch those husks!

[**CLICK HERE to find more about surviving off-grid, and producing your own energy.**](#)

Crayons

Crayons are something that nearly everyone has lying around the house. They're cheap and have many uses. Here are just a few:

1. **Make a candle.** If you find yourself without a flashlight or candle, just lit the end of a crayon in order to get hours of light.
2. **Start a fire.** Crayons make great candles because they're flammable and they make awesome fire starters for the same reason. Since they're also waterproof, your "kindling" won't get wet. Just put it on your wood and light it so that it melts down onto the wood, then allow it to burn.
3. **Seal envelopes.** Back in the days before lick-and-seal envelopes, a blob of wax would be placed on the letter flaps and then a seal would be pressed into the wax. It's still a cool way to make your envelope stand out.
4. **Cover furniture scratches.** If you've got a big scratch on your wooden table, find the crayon that matches the color of your furniture and color in the scratches. Works like a charm!

Dental Floss

Dental floss doesn't take up hardly any room and it has dozens of uses.

Since it comes in both waxed and unwaxed, we'd suggest buying both. Here are just a few uses for dental floss, besides its intended use:

1. Fishing line
2. Repairing tarps or canvasses
3. Tying up tarps for catching water or to build shelter
4. Stitching wounds
5. Shoe or boot repair
6. Making a bow and drill to start a fire
7. Making a snare or net
8. Clothing repair
9. Lashing your knife to a branch or wooden handle to make a spear (fishing or defense)
10. Use unwaxed to lash your food to a spit to roast
11. Staking plants
12. Barter



Fine Mesh Strainer



In addition to being handy to have in the kitchen, a fine mesh strainer is a great multi-purpose survival tool, too.

You can often pick these up at a garage sale for a little bit of nothing and they're so handy that we recommend having a spare and an heir.

1. Filtering water. Double your power by adding a coffee filter to it.

2. Straining oil to make biodiesel.
3. Straining rendered fat for cooking, candle-making, soap making, etc.
4. Straining herbs from medicinal concoctions.
5. Filtering fresh milk.
6. Separating curds and whey when making cheese.

Hand Mirror

OK so this is mainly a girl thing but if you're a guy, you most assuredly have a mirror above the visors in your car or truck, so they're accessible. Here's what you can use them for:

1. Signaling using the sun.
2. Checking to see if somebody is breathing – place it under their nose and watch for it to fog.
3. Starting a fire. Focus the sun onto your tinder and leave it there until it starts a fire.
4. Cutting rope – again, it's sharp.
5. Weapon – a piece of mirror with a broken edge is extremely sharp and will cut through flesh in an emergency.

[CLICK HERE to find out more about using unconventional weapons for your defense.](#)

Keys

Many people don't think much about how to use a car key or a house key for anything other than its intended use but a key can be used for a few different survival tasks including:

1. A hand weapon – put the key between your fingers when you form a fist and you can do serious damage. Just be sure that the key is flat between your fingers. If you have the teeth facing your skin you'll do damage to yourself, too.

2. Scratching messages – if you need to leave a message for somebody, a key will scratch concrete, wood and even glass.
3. Pry tool
4. Directional marks – if you want to leave a mark somewhere so that your family will know where to find you, a key will mark a tree without being too obvious. Make this part of your meet-up plan.
5. Emergency saw – it won't hack through much but a small branch or rope won't be much of a challenge for a key.



Lipbalm

1. Chapped lips
2. In extreme cold weather, you can rub it on the exposed parts of your face. The thin layer helps prevent heat loss by limiting radiation and air convection.
3. Lubrication for your fire bow drill, etc.
4. It is a great firestarter! It works just like petroleum jelly. You can rub it on a piece of cloth, lint from your pocket, a cotton ball, gauze pad from your first aid kit, or even on natural tinder. I always have a cotton ball or two stuffed in my matchcase to keep the matches from ratteling around and in my little pill vial I use to carry some basic medicines.
5. Emergency waterproofer. You can even use it to plug a small hole in your tent, poncho, or tube tent that is leaking in the rain.
6. Rub it on a hot spot on your foot to help prevent a pending blister (lubricant).
7. Mix it with some black ash and rub under your eyes to keep the glare down (great for desert or snowy terrain).
8. Do the same above to camo your face for hunting, works much better than mud and is kind of water resistant.



9. Not as good as oil, but I think it is a decent expedient rust preventive to rub on carbon steel knives.

Lipstick

Just about every woman over the age of 14 will have at least one tube of lipstick in her purse. In addition to making herself beautiful while she kicks ass, she can also use it to start a fire because its main ingredient is petroleum. Other uses include:

1. Writing a rescue or location message.
2. Lubricant.
3. Start a fire.
4. Sunscreen (many lipsticks have sunscreen in them but even the colored ones will block the sun mechanically in an emergency).
5. Lip balm.
6. Waterproofing small items such as matches

Maxi Pads

These pads are made to be absorbent and they're also wrapped individually so that they stay clean until you use them. They have several different uses that have nothing to do with feminine hygiene, though you should definitely stock them for that purpose too if you have a woman in the house, or even if you don't.

1. Wound dressing.
2. Staunching blood flow.
3. Cut to make an eye patch.
4. Starting fires (tinder).
5. Cold or hot compress.
6. Shoe lining to absorb moisture and add padding.



7. Blocking drafts around windows or doors.

Paracord

1. Secure a tent.
2. Secure a tarp between trees.
3. Hang tools from your belt.
4. Hang tools from around your neck.
5. Secure things to the outside of your backpack.
6. Make a tourniquet.
7. Secure a splint.
8. Make a sling for your arm.
9. Make an emergency belt to hold your pants up.
10. Make emergency suspenders.
11. Replace a broken bra strap (it happens).
12. Replace broken or missing shoe laces.
13. Repair a zipper pull.
14. Secure your boat or skiff to a tree.
15. Make a tow line; double or triple up for extra strength.
16. Create a makeshift lanyard.
17. String a clothesline.
18. Hang something up off the ground.
19. Rig a pulley system.
20. Make traps and snares.
21. Replace damaged or missing draw strings in packs, bags and sweat pants.
22. Keep rolled up items secure.
23. Create a neckerchief slide.
24. Tie objects together for easier transport.



25. Make a rope.
26. Make a hammock.
27. Make a sack for carrying groceries or gear.
28. Bundle stuff together.
29. Tie tall garden vegetable plants to stakes.
30. Make a pet leash.
31. Make a pet collar.
32. Secure a garbage-bag rain poncho around your body to keep you dry.
33. Hang food in trees to keep the bears away.
34. Tie stuff down so it will not blow away in a storm.
35. Create a trip wire.
36. Create makeshift hand cuffs.
37. Tie bad guys or intruders to a tree or chair.
38. Tie people together on a trail so that they keep together.
39. Identify members of a group using different colored armbands or bracelets.
40. Use as sewing thread (inner threads).
41. Use as fishing line (inner threads).
42. Emergency dental floss (inner threads).
43. Emergency suture material (inner threads) when there is nothing else available.

Pantyhose

Pantyhose are extremely inexpensive and have about a million uses, both for survival and for everyday living.

1. **Keep deer out of your garden** - Food may be scarce enough without feeding half of your garden to the local wildlife. Cheap, used pantyhose will work just fine for this task. Fill up



a few pantyhose sacks with some hair clippings and tie them around the perimeter of the garden. Human hair is good, but dog hair is even better. Just put a few clippings in a short length of pantyhose and tie them around.

2. **Keep warm and prevent bug bites and chiggers** - Wearing a pair of pantyhose or leggings is a great way to add a layer of warmth while keeping the bugs from eating you alive. No directions necessary here! They work well to keep off leeches or other water bugs as well if you're going to be traveling through infested waters, though those are uncommon in most of the states.
3. **Prevent Blisters When You Walk** - Because pantyhose are slippery, wearing them under your sock will help keep shoes from rubbing blisters on your feet if you have to walk any distance. Preventing blisters will help keep you free of infection as well as make you much more comfortable when traveling. Just wear a pair under your socks.
4. **Use them as a bait net** - You won't be able to catch larger fish probably, but if you stretch hose over a forked stick then skim it through the water, you may be able to catch some bait fish that you can use to catch bigger ones. You can also use a length of hose to hold your bait if you have nothing else. They may get gill-caught in the netting but at least they won't get away. Just keep the hose hanging in the water and use the bait as you need it.
5. **Use pantyhose as a dust mask** - They're not perfect and won't keep out toxins but if you have to walk through an area with heavy ash or dust in the air, putting pantyhose over your face bank robber-style will help keep out the larger debris so that you're not sucking all of that stuff into your lungs. You can put them over your air filter in your car to **keep it from sucking ash or dust into the motor, too.**
6. **Use them to sprout seeds** - Your seeds are going to be valuable and you don't want to lose them to wind, etc. You also don't want to waste dirt or containers on seeds that don't sprout. Put several seeds in the toe of a pair of pantyhose and wet it twice daily,

then hang them up. Your seeds will sprout in a few days and you can remove them and transplant them.

7. **Use them as a crab net** - Crabs make an excellent meal but are difficult to catch if you don't have your traditional crabbing gear. Just put chicken skins or other food that crabs like in the toe of the hose and dangle it in the water so that it's sitting on the bottom. Crab will get stuck in the netting and you can just lift the hose up and remove the crabs.
8. Filtering debris from water,
9. Tying up plants to keep them off the ground,
10. Bungee cords,
11. Mosquito netting w
12. Works great as an emergency fan belt if yours breaks.
13. Place it in the bottom of your planters to allow water to drain without losing your dirt.
14. **Keeping your soap clean** – just hang your soap in a length of pantyhose and hang beside the water source.
15. **Drying food** – tie your peppers, onions, herbs, or other food that you want to dry up in a leg of pantyhose and hang in the sun.



Pine Resin and Needles

1. Scrape resin from a tree and collect it in a tin container. Press the sap into the container until it is full, and lights the sap at night. The odor will deter insects, and its warm glow will provide light.
2. Resin can also waterproof articles, such as boots, mittens, or tent seams. Heat the resin in a container, and use the resin as glue while it is still hot. Adding ash dust from your fire to the hot resin can help strengthen its waterproofing qualities.

3. If you can't find enough resin on a tree, cut into the bark with a knife so that more sap will seep out. Come back later to collect new sap as it oozes from the cut.
4. Brown or green pine needles provide an excellent bed for a survival shelter. Collect them into a pile, and spread them beneath you while you sleep. Laying pine branches and needles beneath you in a shelter will also form a natural insulation between your body and the ground so that you can stay warmer at night.

Plastic Bags

It's waterproof, clear and a bit stretchy. Plastic garbage bags have so many uses for both survival and everyday living that you should stock several roles.

1. **Maintaining Body Heat** - Garbage bags or yard bags are plenty large enough to use as make-shift windbreakers. They're waterproof and keep out the cold wind while keeping your body heat trapped inside where you need it. You can make a jacket or leg coverings from big ones and you can use small ones for your feet, hands and head.
2. **Bandages and Bandage Covers** - A fabulous survival use of plastic bags is to keep bandages clean and dry for a short period of time. You can also use them to cover sucking chest wounds long enough to get the patient somewhere for treatment. Just tape the bag securely over the wound so that no air can get in around the edges.
3. **Ice Packs** - Since they're waterproof, the ice won't melt and leak out all over the place. To avoid damaging your skin, wrap the ice bag in a rag and remove it every so often just long enough for the skin to warm back up.
4. **Keeping Areas Sanitary** - As long as the bags don't have any holes, you can use them to store hazardous medical waste such as bloody bandages or bodily fluids.
5. You can also use them to line your waste bucket, then just tie it shut until you can get it outside. The odor and bacteria will be trapped mostly inside and will help prevent the spread of disease.

6. **Water Collection** - You can fill the bag up with water to carry back to camp or you can hang it up when it's raining so that water collects in the bag.
7. You can also use a plastic bag to make a water collection unit as described in another article.
8. **Securing Food Supply When Camping** - Though the bears and raccoons love it when you leave your food down, you may not be as happy with the results. To keep animals from raiding your food supply (which can also be dangerous!), place your food in a garbage bag, tie it shut and hang it from a tree limb several feet off the ground.
9. **Building a Shelter** - The only thing worse than being cold is being cold and wet. Use a garbage bag to create a waterproof roof for your shelter that will keep rain and even dew off of you and your possessions. Just string it between limbs using rope or zip-ties and you're set. On the flip side, you can also use it to make shade. Heat stroke is just as dangerous as frost-bite.
10. **Ground Cover** - You can lose a lot of body heat through the bottom of your sleeping bag, and sleeping wet is never a good time. Lay a garbage bag under your sleeping bag and you'll keep your body heat in the bag while keeping ground moisture from soaking up through your bag.
11. **Creating a Quarantine Zone** - Combine garbage bags with the ever-present duct tape and you can make a relatively secure quarantine zone. In a post-SHTF scenario, disease is going to be an issue and you'll need to keep sick people separate to prevent spreading the illness.
12. **Make a Mattress** - Another great survival use of plastic bags is as a mattress. Just stuff it full of dry leaves, old blankets or whatever you happen to have on hand. The super heavy duty ones are great because they'll be less prone to tear and you can



- wipe them down and reuse them if you're traveling. If you're on the run, you'll need to get quality sleep when you can and this will make it much more comfortable than sleeping on the ground.
13. **Lining Your Garden** - Plastic bags have several uses in the garden. You can place them over the soil to keep it warm and moist and to keep weeds out of your garden. You can also use it to line your beds to preserve dirt and moisture. You can even fill them with dirt and grow root veggies such as potatoes in them.
 14. **Flotation Device** - Plastic bags, especially the heavy-duty ones, make great flotation devices in case you need to cross a river. Just fill them with air and tie them securely shut. Duct tape is handy here yet again.
 15. **Blanket** - When you have nothing else and the temperatures are dropping, you can always stuff a large garbage bag full of leaves and use it as a blanket. It may not be perfect but it will work to keep your body heat in.
 16. **Rain Boots** - Walking around with wet feet is not only uncomfortable; chronic wet feet can be a health hazard. If you're on the run and only have one pair of shoes, you want to try to keep them dry. Plastic bags are great to cover up your shoes when you're going to be walking through water or marshy turf. Just step into the bag and tie or tape it around your ankle or calf.
 17. **Patching Tears in Bags or Rafts** - Cut a piece of bag to use as a patch for your bag or tent. Duct tape over it and it will most certainly get you by in a pinch.
 18. **Stretcher** - In a pinch, a big sturdy plastic bag can be attached to two poles for use as a stretcher. You'll have some stretch but as long as the bag is sturdy and you keep it off the ground, it should last for quite a while, especially if you double-layer using two bags.
 19. **Heating Water** - There are a few different methods to accomplish this but the easiest (and safest for the bag and the water) is to simply put the water in the bag, tie it shut and hang it in the sun. You'll be surprised by how quickly the water heats.

20. **Lashing a splint together** - Because the bags have a bit of stretch (but not too much) and are extremely flexible, they're great to use as "rope" to bind a splint together. Simply tie the bags around the limb and the poles and you're done.

Plastic Zippered Bags

You can store hundreds of these in practically no space at all and they have so many uses that they just HAD to make the list.

We suggest stockpiling various sizes from the snack-sized to the gallon-sized.



1. Keeping important documents dry.
2. Storing matches and other staples that must remain dry.
3. Place one over your shoes (or put your feet in them before putting your shoes on) to keep your feet warm and dry.
4. Keeping bugs out of foodstuff.
5. Storing clean wraps and bandages to keep them clean.
6. Collecting water.
7. Patching small leaks by taping the plastic over the leak on the outside.
8. Wound covering.
9. Sealing a chest wound.
10. Solar distillery for water.
11. Pillow (seal with duct tape).
12. Place meat or perishables in baggie and store in snow or icy stream to preserve them.
13. Store pine pitch or other sticky fire starters, etc. in your bag.

[**CLICK HERE to find more about surviving off-grid, and producing your own energy.**](#)

Reading Glasses

Especially if you're getting a bit older, reading glasses should be an integral part of your survival kit. They have a few more uses than just reading though!

1. Starting a fire – use sunlight through the lens. They are, in essence, magnifying glasses.
2. Signaling using light.
3. Eye protection while working.



Sarong

They're typically worn as a dress but when you look at one, it's actually just a large piece of cloth that you can do whatever you want to with. You'll usually find bandanas on survival lists, and this is sort of just a BIG bandana.

1. Making bandages.
2. Making a carry bag.
3. Make a sling.
4. Make a hammock.
5. Use as a light blanket.
6. Make a tent or a shelter.
7. Filter water.
8. Use as a towel.
9. Tablecloth.
10. Curtains for windows or to divide a space.
11. Hang to make a sunscreen.

Sewing Supplies

Oddly enough, we rarely see sewing kits listed on survival lists but if we experience a TEOTWAWKI event, you're going to need one for many different reasons. I'm not talking about just a needle and thread: you need to have several different weights (and materials) of thread and very small to very large needles. Here's why:

1. Repair clothes.
2. Repair shoes.
3. Make clothes.
4. Repair tarps (waterproof thread would be good here).
5. Repair damaged bug-out bags and tents.
6. Make tents from tarps or canvass.
7. Stitch wounds.
8. Having the supplies and at least basic knowledge of sewing will give you a valuable skill that you can use or barter.

Socks

Yep, they keep your feet warm but socks have many other uses as well.

1. Filtering water.
2. Holding your condom so that you can carry water.
3. Bandages.
4. Keeping your hands warm.
5. Carrying stuff.
6. Potholder.
7. To lash things together.
8. Hair tie.



9. Stuff it with leaves and use it for a pillow.
10. As a dust mask.

Spray Bottles and Empty Containers

Though these take up some space, you can safely bet that you're going to need them in a long-term emergency. Empty Bottles/buckets have also a lot of uses for a homesteader:

1. Use to bottle cleaning solutions or disinfectants.
2. Plant misters.
3. Use to hygienically apply medicinal solutions to wounds or sunburns.
4. Water storage.
5. Make water filtration devices from plastic bottles.
6. Storing dried foods if there's a sealed lid.
7. Floatation devices.
8. Solar lamps (bottles).
9. Cut ends off of bottle and place over seedlings to save those small plants from frost.



Steel Wool

These handy little pads are another example of a multi-purpose item that every household should have.

1. Throw a couple of sparks from your ferro rod into a wad of steel wool to get a quick fire going.
2. If you don't want something to reflect, buff it with steel wool to remove the shine.
3. Peel carrots or potatoes by scrubbing with steel wool.

4. Put steel wool around pipes or in seep holes in your house to keep mice and other rodents out. They can't chew through it.

Tarp

Lay on them, curl up in them, and rub them because they have a multitude of purposes.

1. Use tarp to cover the tops of wood piles to promote drying.
2. Use tarp to make tents for the kiddos.
3. Place it under the floor of "real" tents to help prevent soggy wet tent floor action.
4. Use it as a drop cloth for painting.
5. Hold construction debris like plaster.
6. Provide shade for cool weather crops.
7. Packed in your bug-out-bag if you're making a long journey by foot.
8. Used as a makeshift "shelter" for your SHTF home remotely positioned as a sentry.
9. Covering lots and lots of firewood.
10. Constructing rapid shelter for the farm animals you suddenly found yourself keeping.
11. Cover your roof if you sprung an unexpected leak.



Tampons

Clear your head of the gross-out factor and just concentrate on what the product actually is: a compacted wad of sterile, extremely absorbent cotton. Because they're compact, you can store many of them in a small space and a few of them would take up very little room in your first aid kit.

The military has carried unscented tampons in their medic kits for decades. Here are a few uses:

1. Obviously, feminine hygiene.
2. Plugging bullet holes.
3. Stopping nosebleeds.
4. Unrolled, for wound dressing or packing.
5. Water filter to get out "floaters".
6. Starting a fire.
7. The string makes a useable candle wick or soak the whole thing in wax for a small candle/fire starter.
8. Earplugs.
9. Fishing bobber (package with the tube inside).
10. Packing an abscessed or broken tooth.

Tea bags

1. Soak the tea bags in ice cold water then apply over your eyelids, as compresses. The tea will rejuvenate your face, removing the redness and puffiness after a while. This method also works for healing pink eye.
2. Meat tastes great when cooked the right way, but when not prepared properly, it can turn out bland, tough and unappetizing. Here's one way of solving that problem: use tea bags (or even leftover tea) to marinate your meat. The sweetness of the drink will add a savory taste to your barbecue.
3. Tea can effectively remove grease and grime on mirrors, floors and even linoleum, so use your old bags to make a cold brew, then use it as a cleaning solution. Mop your linoleum or wooden flooring, clean your kitchen countertops or your unpainted wooden furniture.



4. Old tea bags are great to remove warts. Soak the tea bags in hot water, then put over your wart for 20 to 30 minutes at a time. Make sure you dispose of the tea bag after using it on the wart.
5. Tea bags soak in water, but they can also soak in the stuffy and stinky smell of shoes or closets. Place a few unwrapped and unused tea bags on a small platter, then put this inside the closet. If it's shoes, place one bag in every shoe.
6. Old tea bags can also be added to your bath, too! If you've got a bad case of acne, or if your skin is raw and red from tanning at the beach, use the old tea bags to provide relief. Wash off the affected areas with cold tea made from used bags. After several applications, you'll feel the cooling and calming effects. (For more sunburn remedies, read how to relieve sun burn)
7. Tea bags can be used as an organic fertilizer for potted house plants, with many stimulant benefits from the nutrients in the ingredients. You can even remove the bags and mix the tea leaves inside with your soil, helping absorb water and retaining moisture. If your problem is leaking bottom holes in the plant containers, you can use teabags to prevent the leakage. This also works well for hanging planters.

WD-40

1. It's great for removing grease, gum and other sticky grime and for preventing rust. Actually, they say that WD 40 has more than 2000 uses.
2. Lube a shovel. Spray WD-40 on a shovel, spading fork, hoe or garden trowel. The soil slides right off—especially helpful when digging in clay.
3. Clean tile. The sprays removes spilled



mascara, nail polish, paint and scuff marks from tile floors, and also help you wipe away grime from the grout lines. Clean up with soapy water.

4. Scrub stains from stainless steel sinks.
5. Soften leather. Oil can help break in a stiff leather tool belt.
6. Get rid of rust. Spray and rub away rust from circular saw and hacksaw blades. It can also clean blades of tar and other gunk.
7. Remove goo. Unstick gooey residue from price tags, duct tape, and stickers.
8. Finally, WD40 is an excellent waterproofing agent and some people swear that a little bit sprayed on a bee sting takes the pain away. Stockpile a few cans of it.