

WINTER SURVIVAL GUIDE



Your Ultimate Guide to Get Through the Winter Safe and Healthy

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The SHTF Survival Guide for the Winter

Winter can bring some harsh weather in its wake, but you can prepare for it so that you and your family aren't caught by surprise.

There's no way that this list is going to be conclusive, so we're using it as a starter list to help get your brain thinking "winter."

This list is going to change by region and by situation, and please feel free to add to it your specific needs.

Tip: Find out more about water related illnesses on [The Prepper' Blueprint - Chapter 4.](#)

Maintain Sanitation

The importance of personal hygiene and compound sanitation simply can't be overstated. You can protect yourself from invading people, animals, or even zombies if that's your particular scenario but if you let killer bugs in, you're done.

As a matter of fact, many survivalists are convinced that disease will be the downfall of the majority of SHTF survivors.

Especially in winter, when everybody is going to be living in close quarters, you need to maintain extremely high sanitation standards.

Frequent hand-washing is paramount to sanitation but so are the following:

- Maintaining adequate distance between waste areas and food and water supplies;
- Adequately sanitizing your water before you drink it;
- Ensuring that new arrivals or strangers passing through follow your hygiene laws
- Maintaining the sanitation of cooking



Tip: It doesn't matter what kind of soap you use. It's the scrubbing action under water that removes germs.

Be sure to scrub all sides of each finger, between fingers, and underneath your fingernails.

and eating vessels and utensils.

This is a cursory list and we're sure that we've left things off, but our goal is to get you focused on the killers that you CAN'T see as well as the ones that you can. It's much easier to avoid disease than try to get rid of it once it strikes.

Tip: Find out more about creating a food supply without breaking the budget on [The Prepper' Blueprint - Chapter 2](#).

Canning and Storing Enough Food Properly

It may seem like a no-brainer but you're not going to make it through the winter if you don't have plenty of food stored. For your food independence, store what you use, but use what you store.



Tip: During the canning process, vegetables lose some nutrients; but once they are canned, the nutrient levels stay the same for at least 2 years.

However, in this case, it's far better to have too much than not enough, especially if you're bugging in. Extra food can always be shared or used as barter for fuel, weapons, clothing, hygiene items, or medicine so that's something to keep in mind.

We stated that it needs to be stored properly. Learn how to store food, because it is cost effective, simple to understand and is a life saver in case of emergency.

If you're canning, make sure that the food seals properly because if it doesn't, it won't be edible and can make you and your family sick or even kill you.

If you're drying food, make sure that it's completely dry and free of mold before you eat it for the same reasons.

Check your canned and stored foods regularly for spoilage because there would be nothing more disastrous in a SHTF scenario than to find out too late that you didn't store it properly.

Include Winter Items in Your Bug-Out-Bag and in Your Home



There's no guarantee that disaster is going to strike in the summer or that it's only going to last a short time.

If you live in a place that gets cold, don't forget to throw in your bug-out-bag a couple of extra spare blankets, extra warm socks, boots, a heavy coat, gloves, a warm hat, and maybe some long underwear.

Extra matches may not be a bad idea, either since you'll want a fire for heat if possible.

Just like with your food, check your winter supply items regularly to make sure that they still fit and that they are in good repair.

If you've put on a few pounds or have growing kids, make sure that you check sizes once a month or so. Including sizes on your checklist will keep you from unpacking your bag each time.

Tip: Find out more about essential clothing and footwear for a bug-out situation on [The Prepper' Blueprint](#) - Chapter 7.

Firewood

Yes, this seems logical but there's a bit more to firewood than just sticking a few cords away for a rainy day.



Tip: Well-seasoned firewood generally has darkened ends with visible cracks or splits. It is relatively lightweight and makes a sharp and distinctive "clink" when you broke it.

For one, don't use pine if you're using an indoor fireplace. The sap in it will gum up your chimney and help you burn your house down. Not exactly the goal that you're shooting for, right?

Oak, hickory, walnut, maple, ash and poplar are all good choices, with the first few being the densest.

To burn properly, wood needs to be at about 20% moisture, so chopping down a tree and dragging it inside when you're freezing isn't going to work for you.

Wood dries from the surface inward, so it takes months

for wood to dry to this state, but splitting it will hasten the process for you. It will also make the wood more manageable when you're carrying it, burning it, or stacking it.

Finally, don't forget that wood rots and rotten wood burns quickly. Store your wood outside, in a place sheltered from the weather, with sides uncovered, to optimize air circulation. Rotate your woodpile just as you do your rations.

Oh, and don't forget to store kindling, too, because you will need them for sure.

Never burn the following type of items in order to start fire:

- plastics,
- plywood,
- household garbage,
- fabrics made of synthetic materials.

They release toxic chemicals into the air, and can be harmful for your health, and also damage your stove.

Defense for Your Home

Another consideration that may be a factor is that in a SHTF situation, not everybody is going to be honest.

Keep your food and wood supplies in a defensible location, preferably out of site.

Tip: Find out more about multiple layers of defense on [BulletProof Home](#) - Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Make sure that windows in your home do not divulge what may be inside either.

If your family is sitting at the table eating a home cooked meal and someone can see this event from the window there is a good chance they will try to join you; invited or not.

If you leave your home for the winter holiday, fortifying all the entry points into your home can keep attackers at bay long enough for someone in the neighborhood to notice the intruders, and call for help.

Installing a security screen door adds an additional layer of protection.

Like we said in the beginning, these are just a few basic, beginner tips to help you get your thinking cap on.



Tip: *Install surveillance cameras, put timers to turn on the lights, and suspend newspaper delivery during your absence from home, when you leave town.*



Natural Remedies to Stay Healthy and Survive the Winter

We're going to talk now about the importance of staying healthy if you find yourself in a SHTF scenario in the winter.

In addition to staying warm, there are a number of other concerns including colds and the flu that you need to consider if a SHTF scenario happens during the winter months.

Cold weather can be lethal to the old and the sick so your main priority is to remain healthy.

Throughout the following paragraphs, we're going to review several natural remedies to help you stay healthy and survive the winter.

Eat and Store Plenty of Vitamin C



Tip: *Rose hip contains 5-6 times higher amounts of vitamin C than citrus fruits. It also reduces the need of painkillers, and discourages white blood cells from accumulating in the joint areas, improving joint mobility.*

Vitamin C is one of the main tools that your body uses to maintain a healthy immune system and absorb iron. You need it to survive so make sure that you have plenty stored.

Citrus is, of course, the most well-known source of vitamin C, but there are many others that you may not even know about.

- Rose hips
- Bell peppers
- Guava
- Kiwi
- Strawberries
- Brussels sprouts
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Kale
- Nasturtium leaves and flowers

The list goes on and on. Can your foods or dry them and make sure that you're getting plenty of vitamin C as a natural remedy to stay healthy and survive the winter.

Men need about 90mg/day and adult women need about 75mg/day.

Thyme

In addition to making your food taste delicious, thyme has been used forever as an expectorant.

In other words, when you cough, thyme helps to break things loose so that they come up, instead of sitting in your chest and causing pneumonia or infections.

Thyme is easy to dry and can be either eaten in your foods or brewed into a tea. To make the tea, just add 2 teaspoons to boiling water and steep.

Garlic

We would be totally remiss if we didn't include garlic in our list of preventative herbs. Seriously folks, this pungent little clove is so mighty that it can help you avoid colds, high blood pressure, and any number of other aches.

It's an anti-inflammatory, anti-viral, anti-fungal and anti-bacterial agent so eat as much as you want!

Since it stores well either fresh or dried, it's a great addition to your winter stockpile. Keep it in the cellar and it will stay good for months, just like your onions.



Tip: Along with fresh sprigs of parsley and bay leaves, thyme is included in the French combination of herbs called bouquet garni used to season stock, stews and soups.

Licorice Root

For centuries, licorice root has been used to treat colds and other illnesses. It contains a chemical call glycyrrhizin that we now know has some pretty potent antiviral properties.

As a matter of fact, it's so powerful that it's being studied as a tool to fight such whoppers as AIDS, SARS and the Avian Flu, in addition to the regular flu. It's also an expectorant so you're getting a double bang for your money.

Licorice root may interact with other medications so if you're taking anything, talk to your doctor now about it.



Tip: *Echinacea was widely used by the North American Indians: the Kiowa used it for coughs and sore throats, the Cheyenne for sore throats, the Pawnee for headaches, and many tribes including the Lakotah used it as an analgesic.*

Echinacea

You've probably taken Echinacea in pill form at home but this is also an easy plant to grow if you'd like to make it part of your herb garden.

The leaves are great to treat bug bites if applied topically and to boost your immune system if made into a tea.

The roots have antiviral and antibacterial properties and have been used in holistic medicine

for centuries to treat coughs, colds, bronchitis, tonsillitis and the flue.

It's even good for ear infections.

Elderberry

You can grow these fresh and store them or you can stock up on the extract from your local herbalist. Either way, elderberries can shave up to four days off of a bout with more than 10 different strains of the flu.

In addition to the extract, there's also a liquid supplement called Sambucol that you can order from several different places.

Tip: Find out more about emergency medical supply on [The Prepper' Blueprint](#) - Chapter 4.

The bottom line is that if you lose your health in a SHTF situation, your chances of survival plummet. Keeping these herbs on hand will help keep you healthy and many of them are also multi-purpose, so it's just good prepping to include them in your stockpile. Remember to rotate them just as you do your food unless, of course, you're growing them fresh.

We'd like to stress again the importance of hand washing and maintaining good personal hygiene in the fight against disease.

Many of those in the know swear that it will be the mass spreading of disease that will be the downfall of most of our race in the case of a long-term SHTF situation, so keep that in mind and make sure that you have plenty of soap, bleach and other sanitation items stored.

It will literally save your life.



How to Protect Your Farm Animals and Chickens from Extreme Weather

Just like us humans, animals are susceptible to suffer when exposed to extremes in temperature, so they need to be protected.

Regardless of whether it's extreme heat or cold, there are some steps that you need to take in order to keep your animals alive. Since you're going to be relying on your livestock for food and hides, you need to know how to protect your farm animals and chickens from extreme weather.

Water

During extremes in temperature, animals use more energy to either cool down or stay warm. As a result, they will be drinking more water in order to stay hydrated.

Make sure that water supplies stay full and that the water stays fresh in order to keep your animals healthy and to keep your milk and eggs coming.

In the winter, freezing is going to be a problem so make sure that your animals have access to water at all times even if you have to go knock holes in the ice throughout the day. Chicken waterers freeze especially fast because they're so small so check them every few hours when the temps are below freezing.

Food

Since your animals are using more energy in extreme weather, they're logically going to need more food to maintain their weight and keep producing milk and eggs.

If it gets extremely cold, you can always make a warm mash for them if you're so inclined. Just like people, hot food warms bellies.



Tip: Feed a little canned pumpkin to all the older pigs a couple of times a week to avoid constipation.

Make sure that your hay is mold-free when you feed it. Cows don't like to eat it with mold and it can literally kill your horse.

The easiest way to make sure that your hay remains fresh is to give it plenty of drying time after you cut it but before you bale it, and store it in a cool, dry place.

Shelter

Most cows and horses are pretty hardy but they still need good shelters to protect them from freezing winds and blistering sun. Animals can get sunburn and frostbite just like people can. You don't have to have anything fancy but you DO need to



Tip: *Keeping your coop lights on for 15-16 hours each day will encourage hens to lay. Keep the schedule tight: even a delay of 20-30 minutes can affect the birds.*

provide something serviceable to protect them.

For your large livestock, a well-built barn is fabulous but if you don't have that, make sure that they at least have a shed or lean-to that they can use to get away from rain, wind, and sun.

Chickens usually do OK in the heat, but they need a little extra care in the winter, and enough light to lay eggs, in the winter.

Build the coop off the ground and make it as airtight as possible. Make sure that they have plenty of perch space so that they don't fight. They're not big fans of walking in snow so you may want to throw down a tarp or something else that's easy to sweep off so that they have somewhere to walk. Fresh hay in the laying boxes will help keep them warm, too.

Finally, if you have chickens with longer beards or combs, they will be more susceptible to frostbite.

Exercise

Animals need exercise just like people do. Chickens won't produce eggs if they're constantly cooped. Horses will start to develop bad habits such as cribbing or weaving if they don't get exercise daily.

In a survival situation, you're not going to be keeping coats in show condition so they'll have longer coats to keep them warm. Let them out even if it's only for a couple of hours.

Poaching

We ARE talking about protecting your farm animals and chickens in extreme weather and in a survival situation, when poaching will likely be an issue.

People will be scavenging for food and if your livestock or chicken coop is easily accessible and undefended, you're going to be easy pickin'. Think about that when you build your coop and barns, if possible. Build them so that you can see the doors.

Tip: Find out more about protecting your outer perimeter on [BulletProof Home](#) - Chapter 5.

Make sure that your fences are strong and in good repair. If you can, bring the herd into a corral at night and lock your barns and chicken coop.

Posting some signs may not be a bad idea if your animals are visible, though they won't keep many people out if they're starving. Still, knowing that the place is being defended may make somebody think twice. A big dog or two in the barns won't hurt, either. Just do the best that you can.

How best to protect your farm animals and chickens in extreme weather is going to depend on how large your herds are, what type of animals you have, and how extreme the weather actually gets.

Providing the basics – food, water, shelter, and protection from poachers – will go a long way toward keeping your meat, milk, and egg suppliers safe in a SHTF situation.

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