



# MEMBERS UPDATE

**November, 2016**

**SHTF Wilderness Shelter Building 101**

**Top 8 Revolvers for Shooters on a Budget**

**The World's Deadliest Animal Lives in Your Yard**

**Gun Cleaning Secrets the Pros Don't Want You to Know**

When this single most vulnerable resource you use every single day is taken out,  
**Life for everyone will fall apart and chaos will reign.**



**ECONOMIC MELTDOWN, SYSTEMIC COLLAPSE,  
PANDEMICS, FOOD SHORTAGES, WATER AND  
SANITATION BREAKDOWNS, VIOLENCE AND  
RIOTS WILL ALL HAPPEN AT THE SAME TIME**

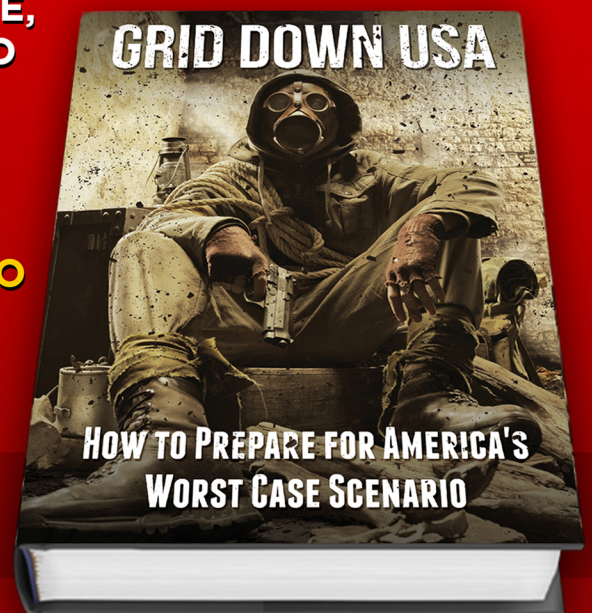
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# CONTENT



02

## TOP 8 REVOLVERS ON A BUDGET

There are many here among us who feel that nothing beats a good old “wheel gun.” Most of them began this obsession with one of these classics.



09

## GUN CLEANING SECRETS

There are two types of gun owners in this world, those who know their way around a bore brush... and those who go to the gunsmith for a simple cleaning.



14

## WORLD'S DEADLIEST ANIMAL

It's time to take a second look at how high the stakes really are, what to expect, and how to stop these nasty bloodsuckers dead in their tracks.



17

## SHTF WILDERNESS SHELTER BUILDING

Anyone can get stranded in extreme cold conditions. Fortune favors those who know how to quickly build one of life's essentials: Shelter.



# Top 8 Best Revolvers

## On a Budget (*under \$500*)

Semi-automatics seem to be soaking up all the limelight these days, and often for good reason, but there's no shortage of innovation or excitement in the revolver-first camp. When it comes to carry-ability, affordability, and, of course, shooting enjoyment, wheel guns are truly second to none.

For many shooters, there's just something about the feel of a big ol' honking revolver that's equal parts excitement and nostalgia. We've all been raised on movies that feature cowboys, rogue detectives, and vigilantes that carry big nasty revolvers.

But are revolvers really relevant to today's shooters, or do they belong in the past?

If you've ever watched a cowboy action shooting competition, you know that revolvers deliver accuracy and speed that is virtually untouched by semi-auto shooters.

If you're a big game hunter, you probably already know that the calibers and range you need to take down a deer or hog is basically unknown in the semi-auto world.

Some of the revolvers on the market today are more like mini carbines. They're long and come equipped for mounting optics.

These super-sized revolvers offer a completely different shooting experience, one that focuses on marksmanship and requires a rest, or even a tripod. Many shooters are shocked when they discover how many "hand-cannon" enthusiasts there are out there.

Other shooters are drawn to the safety provided by the exposed hammer, single action shooting, or the ease of knowing when a weapon is cocked or not. Shooters who value simplicity tend to like revolvers in general. Similarly, shooters with disabilities or issues racking a slide like revolvers.

But for those who are hooked on innovation, the revolver class has plenty for you folks, too. Upgrades in production methods and technology, along with the concealed carry movement, have contributed to the development of a new breed of lightweight, internal hammer revolvers.

At the same time, the old classics remain as useful and accurate as ever, albeit with some modern day refinements.

Whether you're looking for a gun that loves plinking at the range, a budget-friendly concealed carry gun, or just an all-around classic, you don't have to break the bank.

### **Charter Arms 63820 Undercover .38 Special**

Charter Arms is an interesting little company that has been around since the '60s, closed its doors due to bankruptcy in the '90s, changed hands a few times, and then re-emerged with an updated take on its lineup in the 2000s.

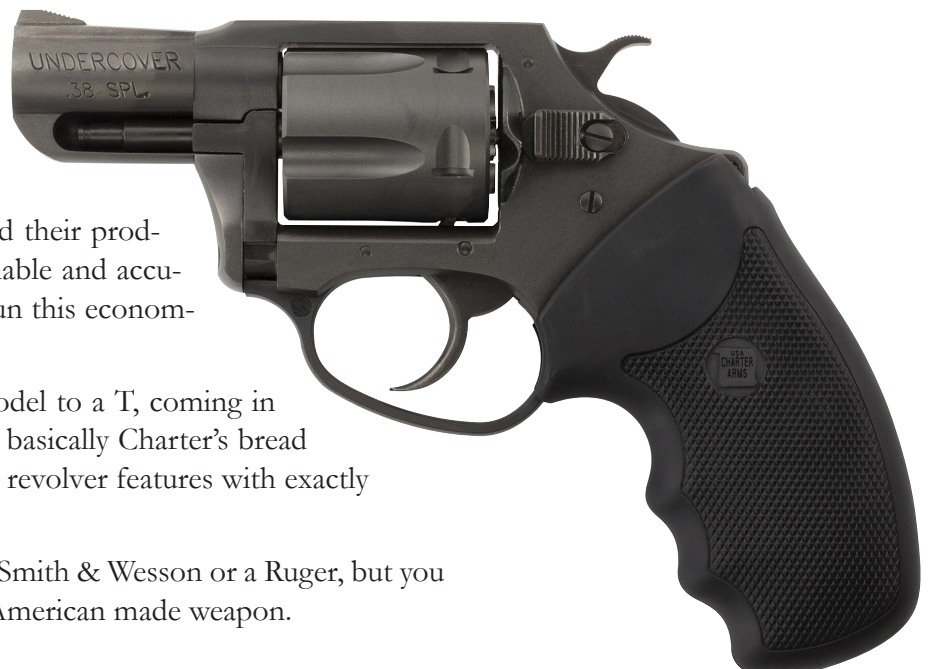
Despite the turbulence, the quality of their revolvers never seemed to suffer. Many concealed carry permit holders carry these guns, mostly because these weapons are compact and, of course, have a good reputation.

Charter manufactures revolvers exclusively and their products have a reputation for being extremely reliable and accurate, which is a very nice quality to find in a gun this economical.

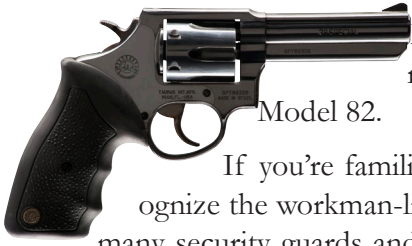
And economical describes the Undercover model to a T, coming in well beneath our budget cutoff. This model is basically Charter's bread and butter, delivering all the key double-action revolver features with exactly zero frills.

The finish isn't as high as you might get with a Smith & Wesson or a Ruger, but you can't beat the price, especially for a well-built American made weapon.

RETAIL: \$325



## Taurus Model 82 .38 Special



For another very solid plinkster at the bottom of the price range, Taurus offers a really nice package here with its updated Model 82.

If you're familiar with security and service revolvers, then you will likely recognize the workman-like Model 82. Not only has it been around a long time, serving many security guards and police (particularly in Brazil where Taurus is headquartered), but it's been a mainstay for budget minded shooters in the US.

Due to its relatively large size to caliber ratio, this gun is very pleasant to shoot and has less recoil than many of the smaller revolvers designed for concealed carry.

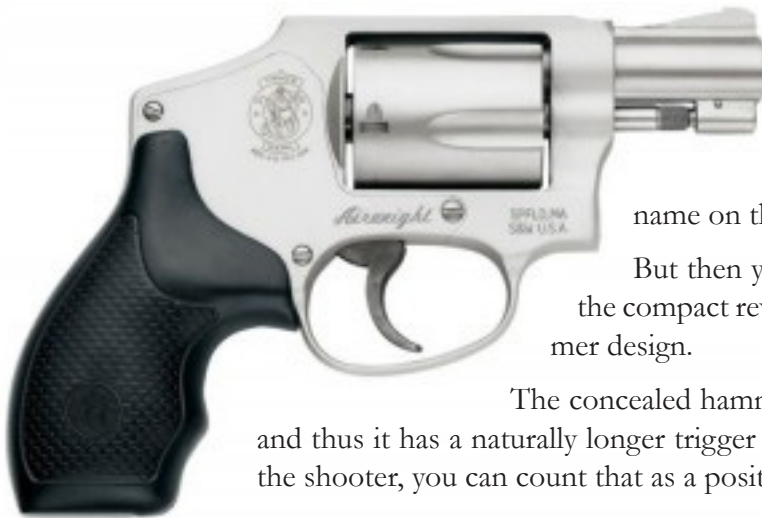
The Model 82 is a true .38 Special instead of a .357 Magnum, unlike many other of the revolvers on this list. Still, it's almost as if it was designed to withstand the higher pressures of the .357 Magnum. In addition to the 82's heft, the 4" barrel helps to group those shots a little tighter.

Due to its size and weight, the Model 82 isn't one of the best options for a conceal carry gun, but we suppose it's possible to carry it comfortably and conceal it reasonably well.

This revolver, with its combination of shoot-ability and simplicity, is an excellent option for first-time gun buyers. It's not the flashiest gun, but it's such a nice all-around weapon at such an affordable price that it will serve you well as you ponder your next purchase.

RETAIL: \$350

## Smith & Wesson J-Frame - 642



When shopping for a budget-friendly revolver, it might seem like a bit too much to ask to get your hands on a candidate with great concealed carry credentials, that's also fun to shoot and has a trusted name on the side.

But then you discover the S&W J-frame series, a modern take on the compact revolver with a concealed carry focus and an internal hammer design.

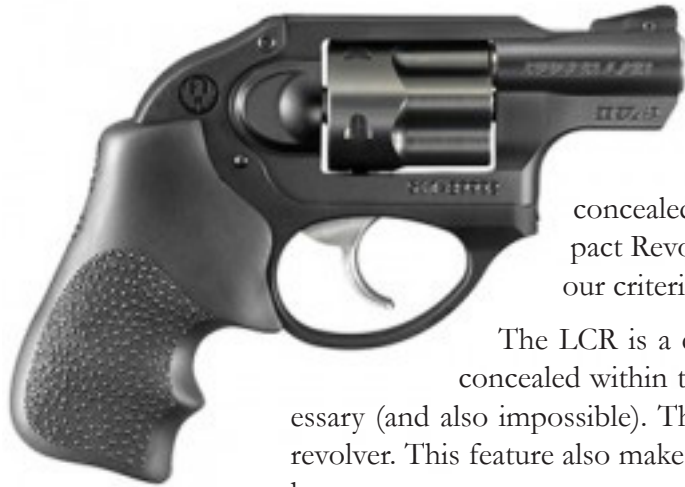
The concealed hammer on this gun makes it double-action only, of course, and thus it has a naturally longer trigger pull than a revolver with single-action functionality. As the shooter, you can count that as a positive or negative depending on your own preferences.

For many carry guns, particularly the semi-autos that this gun is competing with, the longer trigger pull is a stand-in for a true safety mechanism. In self-defense situations, most experts say you should never cock the hammer (for courtroom defense purposes) because it indicates an intention to shoot. Take this second hand legal advice at your own risk, however, because it's your safety that's at stake.

All in all, the Model 642 is a nicely finished out revolver, and it's plenty lightweight for carrying purposes. It's also got some fairly light recoil if you're planning to put in a lot of practice with it at the range.

For a 5-shot snub nose, the 642 is surprisingly shootable and accurate. With practice, you can get comfortable and shoot some decent groups with it.

RETAIL: \$429



### **Ruger LCR .38 Special**

The Ruger LCR gets high marks as a “dual threat” revolver, hitting the sweet spot for those shopping for a concealed carry revolver that’s also fun at the range.

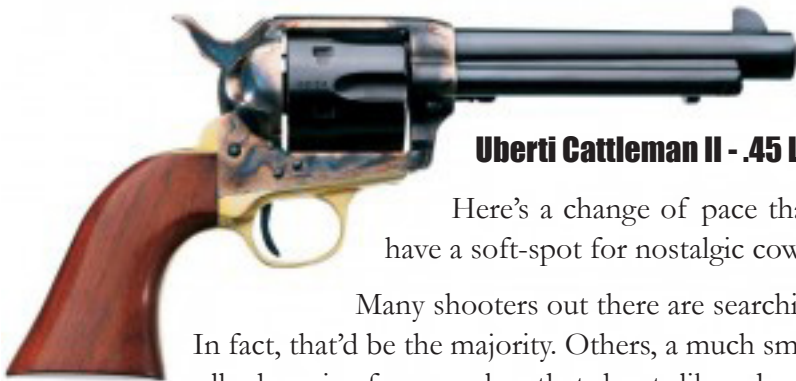
In fact, Ruger designed this pistol specifically for the growing concealed carry revolver market. LCR stands for “Lightweight Compact Revolver,” which would lead you to believe it fits at least a few of our criteria right off the bat. And it does!

The LCR is a double action only revolver with the hammer and firing pin concealed within the frame’s handle, which makes cocking the hammer unnecessary (and also impossible). This is beneficial if you have difficulty cocking a single action revolver. This feature also makes carrying and drawing an LCR easier with no hammer to get hung up on.

As for recoil, this revolver gives you plenty of options to choose your own recoil threshold. The LCR is available in a number of calibers ranging from .22lr, .22WMR, .38 special, to heavier loads like .357 Magnum, 9mm Luger, and .327 Federal.

At a weight of just under 1LB for most models, this gun is light enough for most users. At this size and weight, it’s hard to imagine the recoil involved with putting .357 Magnum rounds through this small, lightweight revolver (that’s why we select the .38 Special). These features, along with the Ruger name on the side and reputation that brings, provide you with a very strong candidate for many senior or disabled shooters.

RETAIL: \$449



### **Uberti Cattleman II - .45 LC**

Here’s a change of pace that we just can’t resist. We have a soft-spot for nostalgic cowboy guns.

Many shooters out there are searching for a revolver to carry. In fact, that’d be the majority. Others, a much smaller percentage, are actually shopping for a revolver that shoots like a dream. Well, look no further...

For shooting enjoyment, there’s virtually nothing like plinking targets with a big ol’ single action .45 Long Colt. And while a Colt single action is far beyond the \$500 mark, several “spaghetti western” competitors are right there in range. Both Uberti and Pieta make very faithful cowboy action pistols that are dead ringers for the classic John Wayne style Colt.

The Uberti even has the 4-stage (“C-O-L-T”) hammer spring set up that supposedly was the mark of a true Colt. If shooting at the range is your passion, and you have your bases covered in terms of self-defense, check out one of these old West revolvers.

RETAIL: \$499

## Taurus Judge .45 LC/.410

For another complete change of pace, we give you the extremely popular Taurus Judge.

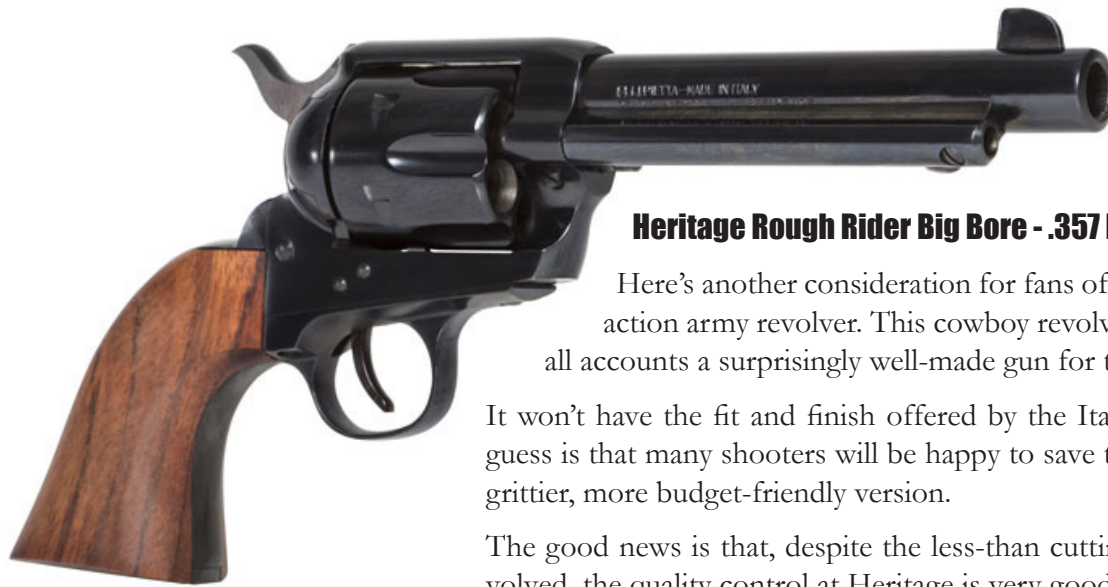
Like many judges out there in the court system, this revolver is no lightweight (1.76 pounds). The Judge also packs an interesting versatility, firing both .45 LC and .410 cartridges (5 of them). Also versatile is the number of configurations and barrel lengths offered by Taurus.

As of this writing, there were 13 different configurations of the Judge listed for sale on the Taurus website, some with very long barrels, and some with large comfy grips.

Customizations will probably inflate the price tag a bit, but some upgrades may be worth the money.

With a 3-inch barrel, the Judge isn't going to replace your shotgun. It will turn some heads at the range, however.

RETAIL: \$479



## Heritage Rough Rider Big Bore - .357 Mag

Here's another consideration for fans of the "old west style" single action army revolver. This cowboy revolver, Made in the USA, is by all accounts a surprisingly well-made gun for the entry-level price.

It won't have the fit and finish offered by the Italian-made Uberti, but our guess is that many shooters will be happy to save the \$100+ and go with the grittier, more budget-friendly version.

The good news is that, despite the less-than cutting edge manufacturing involved, the quality control at Heritage is very good and reliability very high.

Heritage makes a single-action revolver in several different calibers, but we chose the .357 Magnum because of its ability to fire plink-friendly .38 Special ammo, which is inexpensive with less recoil. The more rounds you're putting down range, the more you'll appreciate the lighter recoil.

Most of the SAA replicas out there get high marks for accuracy due to the relatively long barrels. The Rough Rider is no exception, you just need to spend time plinking, which is where these single action guns really shine.

RETAIL: \$407



## Rossi Revolver 462 - .357 Mag

We had to include this revolver, not only because it's a quality revolver at a bargain basement price point, but also because so many of our readers have either asked about it or heaped praise on it. In that way and others, it's a lot like the Charter Arms Undercover.

If your loved ones sometimes refer to you as frugal, there's a very good chance you'll see either the Charter or the Rossi as an excellent value. They are.

The Rossi may actually be a better value than the Charter even. This revolver, made in a very high tech factory in Brazil, is very well-known and well-liked, especially by the concealed carry crowd.

Much like Taurus, Rossi's lineup is on par with any of the household names like Smith & Wesson or Ruger. The Rossi 462 has a very nice finish, plain jane sights, and can reliably shoot through pretty much any type of ammo you feed it.

The rubberized grips are good if you hate recoil, but not so good if you're annoyed that they may catch on clothing in a conceal carry situation. Another common gripe is that there's relatively little selection out there for accessories (holsters, replacement grips, etc.) when it comes to Rossi products.

If you pick up the Rossi and it feels great in your hand, take it home. It will definitely feel great in your wallet.

RETAIL: \$330

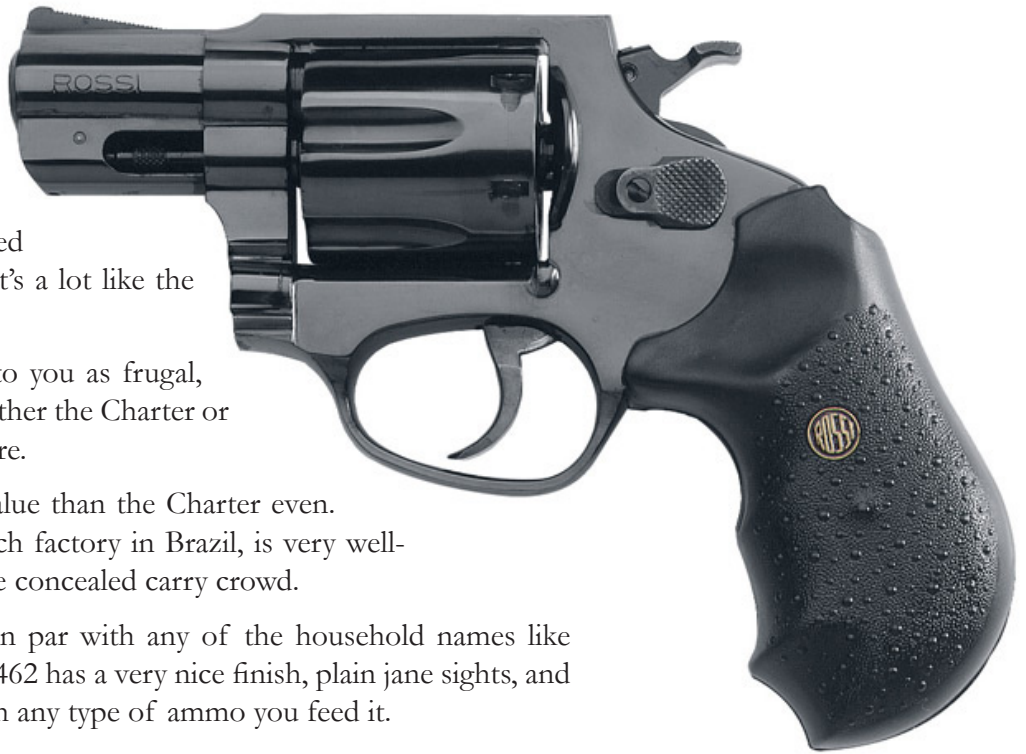
## Top Revolvers to Pick Up on the Used Market

As we were working on this list, it became obvious that many of our favorite revolvers of all time were purchased for well under \$500. That's because many of them were bought used. And why the heck not?

If the original owner doesn't have the smarts to hang onto a great revolver, it's their loss and your gain. That's why we've included these excellent revolvers, all of which have an MSRP north of \$500, as our top revolvers to snatch up in a heartbeat in a resale situation.

Obviously, firearms you find at pawnshops or gun shows can vary widely in terms of condition, and it's always good to keep a buyer beware mindset when shopping. If you suspect that a gun you're looking at has any issues, take it to a gunsmith for at least a quick inspection. If the seller makes any bones about that, deal's off.

The thing with revolvers is, though, that these guns are extremely solid and you have to work pretty hard to screw one up. The entries on this list are especially proven and solid in that regard, so barring any ridiculous negligence or obvious damage, you can feel pretty confident that they're going to be extremely reliable.





### Ruger Super Redhawk .44 Mag & .45 Long Colt

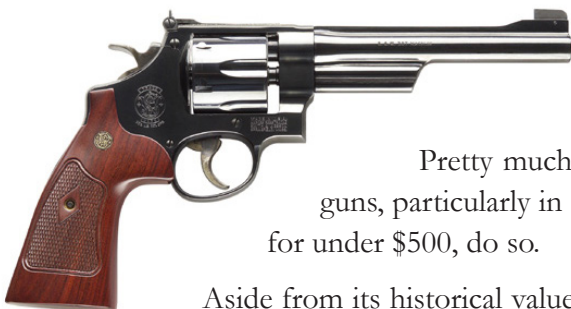
The Redhawk and Super Redhawk are both rock solid revolvers from one of the most highly regarded manufacturers. Period. So there's the reliability component for you to fall back on right there. But that's not actually the unique selling point that puts these revolvers on the "get list."

The bulk of Ruger's revolver lineup is designed for cowboy-action shooting, self-defense, and open-sights plinking fun. The Redhawk line caters to the tack-driving target shooter and/or big game hunter.

In fact, the 7.5-inch "Hunter Model" comes with Ruger's trademark scope mounts along the top rail. If you're shopping for a revolver to carry to the deer blind, this model is your best bet right out of the box.

This revolver comes chambered in .45 Auto, Dirty Harry's favorite .44 Mag, and .41 Mag. All of these are great rounds, of course. If you opt for the "Hunter Model" you get the choice between .44 Mag and .44 Mag. The term "hand cannon" applies very well.

### Smith & Wesson Model 27 - .357 Mag



This revolver is the "original" .357 Magnum, as in the first gun ever manufactured to fire the extra hot version of the .38 cartridge. So that's pretty historic.

Pretty much any of the older numbered S&W models are all great guns, particularly in a .357 Magnum. So if you get a chance to purchase one for under \$500, do so.

Aside from its historical value and very highly regarded finish, the Model 27 is pretty much your standard double action revolver. Functionally, it's an excellent revolver that's a joy to shoot, but it's a bit on the heavy side if you're looking for something to carry.


### Ruger GP 100 - .357 Magnum



Look, it's really hard to go wrong with a Ruger or a Smith & Wesson revolver. It's pretty damned close to impossible, in fact, and the GP 100 in a .357 Magnum is a testament to that fact.

This is one of the best shooting revolvers out there, sturdy as heck and with accuracy that outmatches most shooters. This gun is a slightly more modern take than the S&W .686 (also a great gun to pick up on the resale market), and there are plenty of these floating around out there.

Again, the .357 Magnum is optimal because it's extremely powerful, yet it can also load the very pleasant shooting .38 special rounds if you're looking to lighten the recoil.

The GP100 .357 Mag is a bit on the pricey side, retailing for north of \$700. If you can find a used model that fits your budget, you'll have a lifelong friend and not a "starter" gun that you'll likely trade in later. 

# GUN CLEANING TRADE SECRETS

## *the Pros Don't Want You to Know*

In the world of modern firearms, and particularly here in the post-Glock era, the value and pride once placed on cleaning firearms has definitely been on the slide.

We blame all the videos, torture tests, and hoopla about polymer guns getting dropped in the mud and still firing like normal and refusing to jam up.

We don't blame Glock specifically, but the wave of semi-automatic handguns that the Austrians ushered in has really taken the emphasis off of maintenance. The only thing is, this off-the-charts low level of maintenance still only applies to polymer semi-auto handguns, if it really exists at all.

All guns need cleaning. All guns need lubrication to function optimally, even Glocks.

Powder fouling is inevitable. Primer residue will build up over time, mix with gun oil and moisture and make a kind of mud inside your machinery. It's gross and it's difficult to remove. Even worse, it hardens over time and effectively changes the shape of your gun's components.

This gunking up effect is what bends, breaks, and damages components inside your firearms. It can change the angles and derail ejection components, cause misfires, all kinds of bad stuff. Problems that are more serious than the frustration they cause, but damage your gun permanently as a result.

So, after even a cursory overview of what's going on in a firearm, it's obvious that the contemporary mindset is really just a fantasy and the product of wishful thinking, as usual.

It's tempting to let gun cleaning slide right off the list of priorities. It certainly enables the shooter to focus on more fun activities like shooting and shopping, while sweeping the entire maintenance component under the rug.

But not only do your guns suffer as a result of



failing to clean them and remove harmful corrosives but you do as a shooter. There's no doubt that handling your firearms more, inspecting them and disassembling/reassembling them provides a huge learning opportunity. If you're gonna study guns, why not start with the ones you own, right?

The other downside is that while shooting guns and flipping through gun catalogs is fun, cleaning your weapons is actually a very gratifying experience as well. Not doing it deprives you of the benefits, and it leaves your guns that much closer to frustrating trips to the gunsmith.

To help inspire you to take a more aggressive approach to cleaning your prized firearms collection, we've collected some of the most effective, cost cutting, and time-saving methods you can use to make your job easier and impress your friends.

### *Brake Cleaner (Non-Chlorinated)*

When you start shopping for gun cleaning products, it's likely you'll feel a bit overwhelmed at the sheer number of cleaners and price ranges. Cleaners that lubricate, cleaners that penetrate, cleaners that can walk your dog, it's a lot to take in all at once and it's hard not to assume that the more you pay, the better the product.

That's not necessarily the case, however. One of the insider secrets most gunsmiths will reveal without even batting an eye is that non-chlorinated brake cleaner is one of the best substances out there for cutting the crud out of your gun's inner-workings.

This is especially true of semi-auto guns, double-barreled shotguns, or any other type of set-up where the action is concealed and hard to get at with a cloth or brush. Consequently, it's these guns that traditionally get gummed up and have firing pin issues or problems ejecting shells.

That being the case, it quickly becomes obvious that removing all of the oily building on all of the parts is incredibly time consuming, but also nearly impossible to do without a potent solvent.

### *Attack Rust With pre-1981 Pennies\**

Eventually, it happens to everyone. You're out shooting in damp conditions and you forget/neglect to clean your gun properly after a fun day of popping caps.

Then, the next time you open your gun case, you get a sinking feeling in the pit of your stomach. There's rust right there, corroding your favorite gun away to a piece of metal scrap.

OK, don't panic; it's probably not that bad. Rust is more or less inevitable, and the bigger your collection is, the more likely you are to run into it.

The good news is that one of the best rust re-

moval tools out there costs only a penny. In fact, that's because it literally is one. The disclaimer here is that it must be a copper penny, rather than the current ones made with zinc.

Pre-1981 US pennies will do the trick. Simply rub one of these pennies up against the rust spots and wipe with a cloth and a touch of gun oil/cleaner. The rust will rub away without damaging the steel and finish.

This is because copper is harder than the rust, yet softer than the gunmetal. It's a good idea to use plenty of your lubricant/cleaner compound in this process, to prevent any errant scratches.

Step one, apply plenty of gun oil using either a piece of cloth or your finger. This will help soak the corroded areas, making them easier to remove. It will also help you to determine where the deepest corrosion is.

Step two is to simply rub the gunmetal with your pre-1981 penny, then wipe at it with a cloth or a trusty finger.

To remove any residual copper left by the penny, just wipe it lightly with a very fine piece of steel wool (#000 or finer). Go light on the steel wool, however, as it has the ability to hurt your bluing.

Lastly, wipe your gunmetal clean with a dry piece of cloth. Feel along the gun metal with your fingers for any trouble spots that may need additional work. Once you've knocked out all the rust, finish it out with your typical cleaning routine.



### *Baby Wipes*

When it comes time to wipe down a dirty, gunked up 1911, step one is usually to simply wipe off all the excess oil that you can, before you even begin your typical cleaning process.

Believe it or not, baby wipes are one of the



cleanest ways to wipe the oily residue off your gun's internal parts. One of the best things about baby wipes, instead of those expensive "gun wipes," is that they're cheap. And the nice part about them being cheap is that they're also disposable.

Wipe, scrub, and throw away; it's a beautifully simple process. This will save you a lot of shop towels, and it's also more effective at wiping off the oil than a dry towel.

You may be wondering, what about all the moisture from the baby wipes? That will come off easily when you apply your solvents and gun cleaners.

The main benefit is making the job a lot cleaner and quicker by doing a lot of the heavy cleanup on the front end with your baby wipes. In the end, this will drastically reduce the amount of cleaning solvents, shop towels, and muddy mess involved in your cleaning session.

### *T-Shirts and Makeup Pads*

Ok, so here's another cost cutting method that's as much about eliminating the BS surrounding cleaning products as it is about improving the process.

Gun cleaning towels and gun cleaning patches are both sold at a premium. Most shooters simply accept the prices associated and quietly assume that these glorified paper towels are "engineered" and "designed" in a firearms cleaning laboratory.

Sure, that's a possibility. Or, it could simply be the product of naivety, wishful thinking, and some fancy marketing copy used to sell the product.

Very little works better than an old cotton t-shirt, when it comes to wiping down a gun after cleaning. No need to invest in any high performance micro-absorbent firearm towelettes.

Similarly, cheapo makeup pads from the dollar store are just as good as any patches out there. They're even round and shaped like some of the fancy bore patches out there.

Simply cut the pads in half or quarter them, depending on the size of the bore you're cleaning and run them right through. They're sturdy and don't leave fuzz balls in your gun.



### *Pipe Cleaners Are Your Friend*

The older the gun you're cleaning, the more likely you'll be dealing with a frustrating maze of nooks and crannies filled with gun mud (we're looking at you, Mister 1911).

When you try to clean these indentions with a cloth, you'll find that you just can't jam enough material into the crevice to remove the crud. We've seen people attack these things with all sorts of unconventional tools like toothpicks, tiny jeweler screwdrivers and pocketknives.

We submit that the best tool for the job is an old school pipe cleaner. If you've ever smoked a pipe, you know that the weird liquefied residue that accumulates in a pipe is every bit as nasty and hard to remove as gun mud.

Likewise, the nooks and crevices you're trying to clean are almost impossible to get at with anything other than one of these pipe cleaners. Well, the same logic applies to your gun cleaning.

Other tools like toothpicks crack and break off. If a chunk of toothpick gets lodged in a tight space in your gun, now you've really got problems.

The nice thing about pipe cleaners is that you can both fit them into tight spots AND pull them back out. They're coated in bristles that are designed to grab oily residue, and, last but not least, they're inexpensive.

### *Windex for Corrosives*

If you're shooting a lot of military surplus ammo, the priming compounds tend to leave corrosive compounds in your weapon. These corrosive salts coat the bore of your rifle and they absorb moisture.

You don't have to be a chemist to know that's not good for your firearm's longevity. It's not a hopeless situation; it just requires a different cleaning process designed to dissolve those corrosive salts.

That's where the Windex comes in. The ammonia in most glass cleaners (make sure it contains ammonia) helps to break down these salts. Just spray your bore brush with Windex, run it through the barrel a few times, let it soak for a minute or two, then run a few patches through until they come out clean.

Finish up with your normal cleaning routine and your rifle should be clean as a whistle.

### *Get a Good All-in-One Magic Potion*

Gun oils are like guns. Everyone has their favorites and they think the other ones are garbage. Call it brand loyalty or whatever, the truth is that there are several do-it-all products on the market that are all excellent.

These products can clean, lubricate and even protect most traditional finishes. Rather than purchasing a potion for each specific task, you can just pick up one of these and be done with it.

While the guys at the gun store make say otherwise and give you a dismissive look when you don't blindly convert to their cleaning methodology, it's OK. Frankly, it's far more important that you clean your firearm regularly than exactly what specific product you are or aren't using.

The most highly regarded all-in-one products out there are Ballistol, Break-Free CLP, and Rem Oil. There are a few others out there and most are fully adequate. The nice thing is that these products clean and lube your gun.

Otherwise, every time you sit down at your tool bench, you'll be running out of oil, solvent, or another critical single-purpose liquid. It's frustrating to have to go to the store for one stinking bottle of solvent, and it's not necessary.

One of these cans will set you back less than \$10 and you'll be able to tackle any job thrown at you.



### *Ballistol "Sportsman's Oil"*

So, Ballistol is a very popular do-it-all product with an interesting backstory and a lot of advantages in its corner. We'll try to give you the highlights.

As for the backstory, Ballistol was developed for the German high command in WWI. The German Army literally set out to develop a single cleaning, lubrication, and preserving agent, because they were sick of having multiple chemicals to deal with. It was just too much headache.

The result was a formula known today as Ballistol. It worked so well that it's still one of the top formulas on the market, not only for cleaning guns but for use on knives, leather, marine equipment, etc. Ballistol has been incredibly popular in Europe for years, only recently catching on here in the US.

One of these reasons for this is that Ballistol is non-toxic, mostly made up of mineral oil, and it is biodegradable. Many of the cleaning agents are toxic to humans, whether inhaled, absorbed through the skin, or ingested. Ballistol is not, which can't really be overstated.

Ballistol is highly regarded for cleaning, but also protection, especially when it comes to shielding against moisture. It prevents oxidation about as well as anything and it lubricates well too.



### *Break-Free CLP*

Let's start with the #1 testimonial for Break Free CLP: It is the cleaner of choice for the US military. So, that speaks volumes for its effectiveness.

This stuff is an all-purposed gun oil, preservative, and cleaner in one bottle. It doesn't matter whether you're tedious and detail-oriented with gun cleaning or quick and dirty, Break Free CLP is the stuff for you.

Break Free might just be the best widely available 3-in-1 gun product out there. Again, this is probably why the US military adopted Break Free CLP; it's hard to mess things up when using this formula.

The only downside versus Ballistol is the fact that CLP does include some petrochemical distillates that are considered toxic. To be fair, Break Free contains a minimal amount of toxic ingredients.

The more you clean your weapons, the more important the level of toxic materials should become to you. There's really no way to fully avoid exposure to these toxins, so managing them is key.

Once gun oil gets on your hands, you can smell it for hours. Break Free is much less toxic than others, but still it's not something you want to get on your sandwich.



### *Rem Oil*


Remington has been making great firearms for 200 years, so it's safe to say they understand the principles of gun maintenance.

Rem Oil is third on this list because, well, in our opinion it's the third best on this list. That's not to say it isn't good stuff. Because of the power behind the brand name, it is also available nearly everywhere sporting goods are sold.

In fact, the availability of Rem Oil is mostly why it made our list. With that said, this stuff is dead simple to use and is a pretty decent cleaner and lube.

Where it falls a bit short, based on our experience, is in the protection category. It just doesn't seem to last as long as Ballistol or Break Free CLP.

Rem Oil is also petroleum based and thus flammable and toxic. So there you have it, Rem Oil is probably what your granddaddy used, and his guns may be rust-free because of it.

As with most things, however, there are alternatives out there today that are both safer, easier to use, and more effective than what your forbearers used. Rem Oil will get the job done, but you might have to do the job more often, though. 



**CONTINUED**

# ZIKA SURVIVAL

You may think it's odd for a self-reliance magazine to focus multiple articles in a year on a tiny insect whose bite is not even particularly painful. Then again, you know as well as we do that you can truly only rely on yourself these days to safeguard your health.

Of course, you're probably already worried about the Zika threat if you have pregnant family members. If not, bear with us; you'll soon see how it applies to you too.

## Mosquitoes Spread Deadly Diseases

Zika is a virus that usually has few symptoms. Maybe a low fever and rash in grown-ups, but it is devastating to pregnant women.

It can cause miscarriage and microcephaly in fetuses. Now, evidence is coming to light that it affects memory and thinking processes in adults too. This is a new terrifying wrinkle in an already alarming public health situation.

The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito carries Zika, Dengue, Chikungunya and Yellow fevers. A mosquito that bites an

infected person can then spread the disease by biting other people.

The mosquito lives in cities and suburbs as well as rural areas that range across much of the southern US. It bites in the daytime and can breed in a bottle-cap's worth of rainwater, according to the CDC. So, keep an eye on your rain barrels or other water sources.

## The Warmer Winters Effect

Here in the United States, these mosquitoes were once confined to the southern and southeastern states, but that's changing, and the pests are on the move. With more temperate weather patterns migrating northward in many parts of the US, more areas of North America will become attractive mosquito habitats.

Some think that *A. aegypti*'s spread won't cause epidemics of dengue and other diseases because developed countries already have protocols to fight mosquitoes.

Nevertheless, in a long-term crisis situation, spraying for mosquitoes will cease to be a high priority. Besides that, the aerial spraying is creating another problem. It's killing honeybees. (More about that later.)

Drought conditions may encourage an increase in *A. aegypti* mosquitoes if people start collecting rainwater for use around the yard. Water collection containers are breeding grounds for these mosquitoes.

## Tick-borne Illnesses Increase

As a side note, like mosquitoes, ticks are finding new habitats. Their diseases take up residence as they spread. For example, babesiosis is a tick-borne illness caused by the parasite *Babesia microti*.

This disease occurs in the summer in the Northeast and the upper Midwest in the states. Extended summer weather gives more opportunity to contract babesiosis.

Lyme disease may show up in new areas as the tick habitat expands north. *Ixodes scapularis*, the primary carrier of Lyme disease, will increase its habitat in Canada by 213% by the 2080s. The ticks will move from the southern states to the central part of the country.

The efforts to control these pests can have unforeseen consequences.



# *Protect Yourself From the Deadliest Animals on Earth*



## **Bees Slaughtered**

This scenario will be repeated around the country. Just a further example of how the country's attempts to take care of everyone creates problems on the individual or specific group level.

Death came suddenly to bees in S.C. The insects tried to flee but dropped in piles at hive entrances. Colony collapse disorder was not the cause.

The killer was pesticide poisoning. At one farm, 46 hives died instantly, which totaled an estimated 2.5 million bees. The bees were casualties of the war on mosquitoes.

Trucks followed by pesticide clouds are not unusual. Aerial spraying is new and different, though. Sure, the municipalities warn everyone... Everyone but the bees.

Local beekeepers felt things should have been done differently. For many homesteaders, their bees are a source of income.

Pesticides sprayed from the skies are in use in Florida and possibly in Puerto Rico. The insect neurotoxin can't tell the difference between honey bees and mosquitoes. A profile of the chemical used in Cornell University's Pesticide database warns Naled is highly toxic to bees.

The threat can be reduced if the drops are at night when honeybees aren't gathering pollen. Beekeepers can shield their hives and protect the bees' food and water from contamination if they have enough warning.

In this case, hot weather created a unique situation among the bees. When the temperature climbs above 90, bees often leave the hive to cool down. They form a beard, clustering outside the hive in a ball. This exposed them to the deadly mist from the plane.

The bottom line is, if you keep bees, pay attention to your local government's notifications.

## **What Is Zika?**

The Zika virus is named after Uganda's Zika Forest. Zika is an epidemic in Brazil. The Brazilian government estimates over 1.5 million were infected in this year alone.

Up to 80% of the people infected with the virus experience no symptoms. It's a different story for newborn babies who are born to infected women.

These babies can be born with microcephaly (an abnormally small brain). It causes death or cognitive impairment. In two years, the number of cases of microcephaly in Brazil has increased by a factor of 15 times.

Officials fear the virus will spread fast in the states, particularly in the Gulf Coast region. Travel advisories are even in place for countries in the Caribbean:

- U.S. Virgin Islands
- Puerto Rico
- Barbados
- St. Martin

Over 20 countries report Zika cases. No vaccines or medications are available to treat Zika.

No known instances of the virus have originated in the states, but cases have been reported in returning travelers. A baby born with microcephaly in Hawaii was infected with the disease.

Health officials here and in places like the Caribbean are working to educate residents on the virus and on emptying outdoor water storage containers, flowerpots and drip pans, tires or other places where water could collect to reduce breeding grounds for the mosquitoes.

### Did You Know?

Don't look now. The world's deadliest animal may be in your hot tub. The world's deadliest animal is the mosquito, which causes 725,000 deaths a year.

That may be a low estimate; some sources estimate mosquito-related deaths are more than one million yearly.

Besides Zika, mosquitoes may infect you with:

- Malaria
- Dengue fever
- Chikungunya
- Encephalitis-causing viruses
- West Nile virus (WNV)
- Yellow fever

This list is just the more common diseases, and it's a forgone conclusion that new mosquito-borne diseases will show up in the future.



### How Do You Avoid Them?

Here are some standard suggestions:

- Wear insect repellent (oil-of lemon eucalyptus is a natural one)
- Cover your body
- Stay inside (especially during dusk and dawn)
- Get rid of stagnant water

Many naturally occurring living organisms can eat or harm mosquitoes, including fish (mosquitofish, carp, minnows and tilapia), dragonflies, bacteria, nematodes, fungi, bats, lizards, birds and frogs.

All this time you probably just thought mosquitoes were an irritating annoyance. The world's most dangerous animal may seem small and trivial, but it carries big, life-threatening weapons. Mosquito season is expanding, and who knows how many of them will be carrying Zika.

### How to Mosquito-Proof Your Yard


Here's the lowdown on how to protect your home from things that go buzz in the night.

During mosquito season this year, people in the United States were inundated by news reports that the Zika virus is rapidly spreading through America.

Here's a list of things you can do:

- Check air conditioning drip pans
- Clean gutters on your home
- Get rid of anything that can catch rainwater
- Fix leaky faucets and hoses
- Check screens on your windows and doors
- Keep drainage areas clean
- Keep grass short
- Don't put your faith in candles
- Don't waste money on wristbands

You can also add mosquito netting for each family member to your survival kit. These nets aren't just a decorative accent; they could save lives. In an extreme crisis, you could lose your screens or even your windows. Netting is available for windows, for camping and even to enclose your patio.

Another thing you can do is talk to your neighbors. Adequate mosquito control is achieved when everyone pitches in, which is why you should encourage your neighbors to also adopt mosquito control habits to keep your neighborhood safe. 

# Life Saving

## DIY WILDERNESS SURVIVAL SHELTERS

According to the survival rule of 3s, you can go 3 weeks without food, 3 days without water (which is definitely debatable), and only 3 hours without shelter in a harsh environment.

Most people seem to drastically underestimate the need for shelter in an outdoor survival situation. Sure, in a mild weather pattern, it's easy to overlook. Then suddenly a massive cold front sweeps down from the arctic...

And interestingly enough, the advantage shelter provides is residual. All mammals need a den of sorts to rest, avoid exposure to the elements, and be safe.

If you're unable to get a good night's sleep, it will be hard for you to keep warm the next day. Your body requires the recuperative boost that only a deep sleep can provide. This is true whatever the season.

### *The Ridgepole Shelter Concept*

Ridgepole shelters are widely regarded as one of the best and simplest shelters to build in an emergency. Here's the basic outline:

Find a small dead tree about 10 to 12 ft. long to serve as a ridgepole. Lean it against a boulder, stump or the branch of a standing tree 3 to 4 ft. off the ground.

Next, lean as many small branches as you can find

against the ridgepole, then crisscross them with smaller sticks. Finally, add a thick layer of leaves and grass, plus more sticks on top to keep the wind from blowing away your "roof."

You can also use leaves provided your underlying structure is tightly spaced. The image shows a very basic version with a bare floor. But assuming you have your go pack (If you don't, why not?), lay down some plastic to keep your clothes dry.

If time is short, a quick, if less elegant solution, is making a big pile of leaves and grass. Make a poncho from a trash bag and just dive in.

### *Outdoors On The Road*

Last winter, a family went missing for a couple of days after a trip to go play in the snow. Everyone was surprised that they managed to stay warm and survived despite the frigid temperatures.

Part of the trick to staying warm is attitude. Understanding the importance of your frame of mind is a critical step, managing it is another matter. See our article "CIA Techniques for Extreme Mental Toughness" (April 2016 issue) for specifics.

If you don't want be outside, then this advice won't alleviate the emotional misery that much. Nobody ever wants to be stranded in the cold or lost. But many have survived it and much of the credit must go to keeping a positive attitude and retaining optimistic thoughts.

This is not to say that the attitude portion is easy, far from it. Having the right knowledge and backup equipment can help greatly, though. Here are some tips that'll have you feeling more confident in the cold.



## *Say No to Cotton*

Cotton is a great everyday option during the summer. But cotton has no place in your winter wardrobe when you're facing extreme cold. Cotton is downright dangerous. It not only loses all its insulation properties when wet... but it will actually draw the warmth from your body like a heat-sink.

## *Grab Some Wool*

The ultimate miracle fiber is wool. It is also a renewable resource available from sheep everywhere. Tough, warm and provides insulation when wet. Trust me... you'll get wet no matter how hard you try not to. Wool will remain supple when frozen, it withstands exposure to a campfire, and it's strong enough to take a thrashing.

## *Get Down*

Goose down has been the favorite insulation for winter travelers for centuries. Lightweight and highly compressible, down is still better than those synthetic fills for ultimate performance. It is high maintenance, though, and if it gets wet, it's totally useless. Keep it safe and wrapped in a waterproof bag until you need it. As an extra layer, it will top off your system and keep you nice and warm when you're just sitting around camp.

## *Seek Out the Proper Fit*

The right size gear makes a difference. If you choose layers that are too tight, you'll never get warm. Constrict the body's blood circulation, and it'll have a tough time warming up, especially the extremities. Loose fitting layers over a synthetic fiber covered body is the way to keep warm.

## *Put a Lid on it*

Even your Mom knows this. If your feet are cold, put on a hat. You lose a



lot of heat off your head. Pack both a light synthetic hat and a thick wool one. The best secret for sleeping warm in the winter: wear your thickest hat to bed.

## *Be a Lumberjack*

Here's the thing; if you're going to have a fire, you're gonna need wood. Even if you don't plan to have a fire, a saw in the pack is a good survival item in case you do end up needing to make one. The best, most effective tool for getting wood fast is a saw. You will be cutting dead wood, and nothing cuts dead wood better than a bow saw. Building a good, warming fire is fast becoming a lost art. Fire building is still the primary survival skill everyone should master.



## *Don't Sweat*

Manage your core temp so you don't sweat too much. Layers allow you to regulate your temperature easily by adding and removing a layer as needed. A zippered inner layer as well as front buttoning tops will allow you to vent when you feel as if you'll overheat.

## *Good Sleeping System*

Research this. If you don't get a good night's sleep, it will be hard for you to keep warm the next day. Your body requires the recuperative boost that only a deep sleep can provide.

Which brings us to these tips on building a super shelter in case you're out for the day and get stranded in cold weather. The shelter gets very hot inside, so you want to be cold before you resort to using this type of shelter. The shelter is great for an emergency overnight, and it will keep you warm for the short-term.

The shelter is basically a rope ridgeline between two trees. The shelter requires a mylar blanket affixed to a plastic tarp or drop cloth. You'll notice you need a space blanket with the metallic coating. You will have some type of tool to process wood for stakes.

## *Vapor Barrier Shelter Design*

This design combines a plastic tarp with the warming properties of a metallic blanket to form a vapor barrier that keeps you warm and dry. The material provides you with an all in one shelter.

Plastic tarps and or plastic sheeting, up until recently, were the basis of all wilderness shelter-building techniques. With the rise of the interest in survival techniques, and the growth of the marketplace, there are

loads of mylar/tarp (see photos below) combos out there. These kits even come equipped with ropes and stakes sometimes.

These will stand up to heavy snow, wind, and rain. They roll up compactly at home and only add about a pound to your go-bag or backpack if you're on foot.

Our focus is, of course, survival shelters, but this shelter can replace a tent on a regular camping trip. The mylar allows you to use it in the winter, but this shelter is useable year round. The size gives you a lot of options, and you can even use it as a super shelter for extreme weather conditions.

A 12' by 10' foot tarp is more than enough, in combination with a long sticks or saplings, to construct a fairly windproof shelter. A mylar space blanket to reflect heat is also ideal when using a standard tarp in very cold conditions.

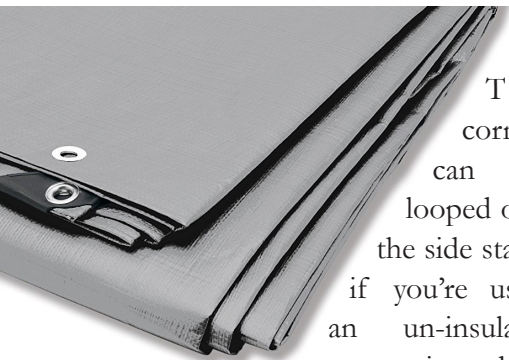
Prepare a debris bed of boughs. Cover it with moss or leaves to keep from poking holes in the plastic. You'll need to build up a bed of leaves about as thick as your clenched fist when it is compacted. This will insulate you from the ground.

Tie a rope between 2 trees, keeping in mind the size of the tarp you're using.



Of course, it would be ideal if you could sit up inside your shelter, but extreme cold conditions will require a tighter configuration for maximum heat retention.

Lay about 2 feet of your tarp over the debris bed and stake that down best as possible. If you're using a plastic tarp, gather the excess plastic around a medium-sized rock to provide re-enforcement and added strength where you've used the stakes.



The corners can be looped over the side stakes if you're using an un-insulated tarp, creating a door.

This gives you maximum heat retention while maintaining the ability to get out quickly if there's an emergency. If you're using a reflective-insulated material for the structure, a door may not be as critical for heat retention.

Then drape the tarp material up and over the rope. The "flap" side of your triangular shelter should be facing your campfire if you plan to have one. This set up will allow the heat from the fire to reflect off the opposite shelter wall.

When you hang your tarp, you want to arrange the shelter so the mylar is at a 45 degree angle and the plastic hangs vertically in the front. This prevents flying sparks from your campfire from laying in a dip and burning holes. Even if you get small holes, you will normally stay dry if you set it up properly.



If you're using a 10'X12' plastic tarp to build this shelter, you will have plenty of excess material in order to seal up your structure.

Find a tree branch or sapling that is roughly as long as the shelter. You can roll it in the tarp at the bottom front to draw it taut. It gives structure to the shelter and keeps the heat inside. But at the same time, it is still easy to get out through the front.

You can close up the end openings with clothespins to keep from marring your plastic and collecting a sticky residue from tape. You want to leave some opening to allow air to circulate and cut down on condensation.


You can make a door from tree branches for a super shelter. Fashion a triangle, and cover it with three other sticks vertically.

Make 2 of these and they become a little door on both ends of your super fort. Remember, you need to maintain some airflow into the shelter. You'll fill it full of carbon dioxide breathing in and out; so you'll need the oxygen replaced. You end up with convection occurring inside. Thus, being 100% airtight isn't the goal.

### *Of using a plastic tarp:*

Build a fire one large step away from your shelter, roughly 1 yard, in order to provide an external heat source. You'll want to build the fire in an elongated shape, lengthwise parallel to your shelter.

### *Of using a mylar insulated survival tarp:*

Orient your fire roughly 2 yards from your tent's opening. As mylar is designed to reflect heat, an opening is the only effective way to draw heat in if needed. 

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