



MEMBERS UPDATE

April, 2017



7 Life-Saving Mushrooms
Growing in Your Backyard

Top 8 EDC Items for 2017

SHTF Cooking Class

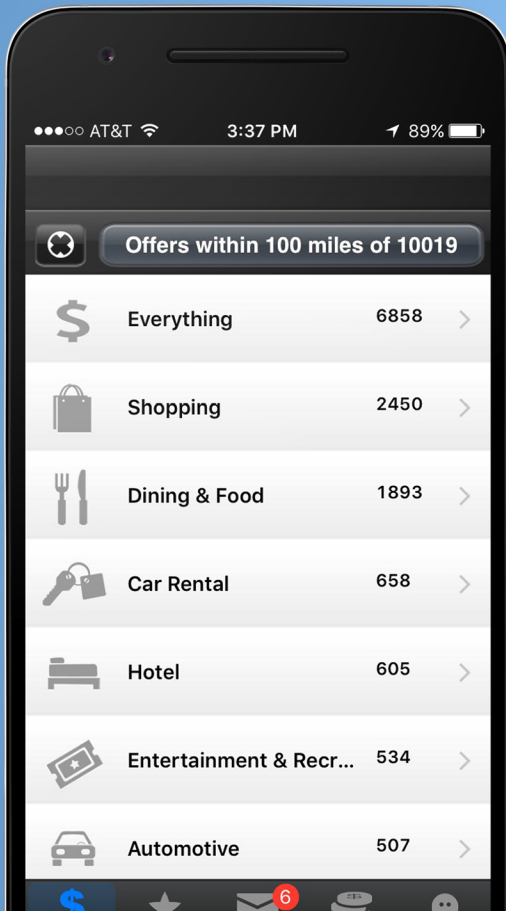
How to Pry Open a Beer with a Dollar Bill



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Your “Everyday Carry” kit is literally your first line of defense when the going gets tough. But EDC as a discipline is vastly more important than the items that make up your kit. Step one is adopting the mindset.



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Pry Open a Bottle with a Dollar Bill

Sure there are a million ways to open a beer bottle without a proper opener. Few, however, will impress your friends as much as popping a longneck with nothing but a dollar bill.



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SHTF Cooking Class

There’s no doubt about it, most of the food sitting in America’s survival pantries ranks incredibly high in both blandness and flavorlessness. We’ve got a recipe to fix all that. In fact, we have 17 of them!



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7 Life-Saving Mushrooms

According to the research, several common mushrooms growing around your neighborhood are actually anti-cancer, tumor killing superfoods. You just need to know how to safely identify them.

TOP 8 EDC ITEMS YOU NEED TO CARRY

Look, we all want to be like the hero in an action movie. You know the one. That guy who has exactly the right tools at exactly the right moment and manages to get out of all sorts of wild predicaments using his made-in-Hollywood arsenal. Of course, we know that this is a farce.

Even a commando in full combat gear couldn't carry all the equipment that the Hollywood hero manages to carry in his t-shirt and jean jacket. And we're by no means advocates for wearing a tactical vest packed full of gear around the office.

A lot of words have been written about the importance of having the perfect "bug-out bag." These bags, no matter how thoughtfully put together, are designed for highly infrequent use. In fact, the hope is to never ever use it at all.

The fact is, if you don't carry around your most necessary tools all day, every day, you probably won't have them when you need them. Thus, the most important kit you can build is a rock solid EDC (everyday carry) kit.

When combined with the most important tool of all, a prepared mind, this simple kit allows you to take on any challenge that dares to rear its head. That's the idea, anyway.

When it comes to the perfect EDC kit, items must be selected very carefully, based not on what you can carry (in theory), but what you will carry on a daily basis. The more purposes each of these tools serves, the better.

The Everyday Carry Philosophy: Distilled

The ideal EDC kit is a product of a certain mindset; a balance between assessing the most critical tools you may need and then questioning whether the item is really all that necessary. You need to be ruthless with this approach.



The philosophy here is the smaller, lighter, and/or more useful each item is, the more likely you are to actually lug it around all day long. Again, for many of us with the preparedness mindset, being diligent with your gear may already be second nature.

If you haven't guessed it yet, the most common mistake we see with EDC kits is not a lack of tools; it's the opposite.

No matter how disciplined you are, time is short and life gets busy. You need to keep it realistic or else your EDC kit will slowly fall out of your daily routine. We see it all the time.

An unrealistic set of items, whether too many or too cumbersome, will eventually destroy your EDC discipline. Time will eat away at it until you eventually stop carrying.

IN 2017

Again, this is why you must be ruthless when pruning your kit. If an item just isn't useful enough or necessary enough, toss it. That decision may be what keeps your EDC routine on track moving forward.

Not to beat a dead horse, but it really is that important to the EDC mindset. Sure, you want to have all your favorite tools in an emergency scenario. But it's way more important that you're never caught completely empty-handed in a sudden crisis or self-defense situation.

There is no pause button. We must assume there will be no time to go grab that bug-out bag in your trunk.

With that in mind, let's get started on the "must-haves" when it comes to a lean and mean EDC.



Light Source

We humans are heavily dependent on our eyesight to gather information about the world around us. It's a good thing that we have relatively strong vision compared to most species.

That strength, of course, turns into a liability every evening as the sun hits the horizon. Is it any wonder that most criminals ply their trade after dark?

That's just a small part of why we believe, when it comes to your personal safety, a solid tactical flashlight might just be the most important tool you can carry. Period.

You may be shaking your head right now; that's fine. We all love our weapons, partly because they make us feel more powerful (and, yes, these weapons do enhance our self-defense capabilities in most cases).

But ask yourself this: When the power goes out, how is your Glock 17 going to help you find your way through the darkness?

How are you going to assess your surroundings in the pitch black? How will your weapon help you assess a potential threat?

Again, for most of us, our eyesight is our dominant sensory tool. The second it's taken away from us, we are incredibly vulnerable. Even the simple act of exiting an unfamiliar building with no light source is difficult and can be very dangerous.

In the event of a threatening encounter in the darkness, a tactical light can give you several major advantages. You can not only spot and assess the threat but also disable his or her night vision.

If you do carry a sidearm, it's all the more critical that you have a light source to locate and identify your target. Anyone willing to fire at a random shadowy figure without assessing the threat probably shouldn't be trusted with a firearm in the first place.



Knife

Why is a pocket knife so important to your EDC? In our view, this question is far too seldom asked.

In the vast majority of EDC lists out there, you'll find that a knife is a given, almost mindlessly included as an essential part of your EDC. So is a folding pocket knife truly that incredibly useful, or is this item just an overhyped article of faith within the self-reliance community?

It's well worth looking into. The fact is, most people think of their knife primarily as a self-defense weapon, not as good as a gun, but a great option when the chips are down.

If you are in this camp, here's a question for you: Have you had any training at all to that end?

We ask this question a lot and the answer is almost always 'none whatsoever.' Look, we're not even trying to be critical. In all honesty, there aren't a lot of self-defense training courses that focus on knife fighting techniques. There are good reasons for that.

One of these reasons is that a knife is much better used as a tool than as a weapon. Knife fighting is a difficult martial art to master. Not to mention, you don't want to bring a knife to a gunfight... or any other fight in which your adversary may be carrying a superior weapon.

Again, there are quite a few weapons that rank superior over a knife in several key areas. A partial list would include: Firearms, pepper spray, tasers, machetes, and long-handled baton type weapons. Any of these would give you a much greater striking range than a pocket knife.

The primary function of your knife is as a cutting tool. It may have to cut through ropes, cordage, clothing, etc.; and for this purpose, there's nothing better. In fact, if your "pocket knife" is equipped with multiple blades and other tools, all the better.



As long as your knife is easy to carry, then it's a worthy candidate. Knives equipped with cord cutters, LED lights, screw drivers, etc. are ideal.

These may not be a replacement for a single-use tool (e.g. a true flashlight), but they can make the knife that much more useful in a pinch. Again, the key aspect is that it's not too heavy or bulky.



Fire on Demand

In any real crisis, one in which you would truly need to build an emergency fire, you need it to happen as quickly as possible. You don't want to be fumbling around wasting precious moments trying to get it lit.

There are a number of ways to accomplish this, sure, but one of the best is to simply carry a Bic lighter and some type of tinder. We recently shared instructions for how to make "napalm" fire starters. Dryer lint is also an incredibly good tinder material, plus it's free. You just need a container or a tiny Ziploc bag like those that watch band pins come in.

Magnesium fire tools are also highly effective for this purpose because they contain both the spark and the fuel in one block. We love these fire tools. In fact, we've struck a deal to provide these at cost to NSRA subscribers via our partners at My Crisis Gear (grab one here: MyCrisisGear.com/NSRA).

But once again, the key question rears its head and only you can answer it: Are you really going to carry a single-purpose tool in you jacket pocket every single day?

Disposable lighters are carried in the pockets of millions 24/7 and for vastly less important reasons.

The advantage of a disposable lighter is that you'll typically find other uses (opening bottles, lighting candles, cigars etc.) that help it earn its place your EDC.



Emergency Glass Breaker

Most people would never think of this item, but in an emergency evacuation this could really save your life... or at the very least, prevent a trip to the ER.

Tempered glass is very hard to break safely. Heck, it's surprisingly difficult to break period. Just search through YouTube videos for a demonstration of how ineffective several "name brand" glass breaker tools truly are.

Thus, if you're trapped in a car or you need to rescue someone who is trapped, and time is of the essence (imagine a car sinking in a flooded crossing), you're going to need a specific, highly effective tool. The same goes if you need to break a window in a commercial building, though your smashing options may be greater and heavier.

Before we go further, allow us stress the point that even many of the tools marketed as "glass breakers" don't effectively break auto glass in real world scenarios.

Inside a typical car or SUV, space is limited and you honestly don't have room to take a full swing at the windows with pointed pick-style tools similar to the one on the Leatherman emergency tool (seen in the table of contents). The angles and geometry make it virtually impossible to shatter auto-glass from within a vehicle.

Specialized glass breakers are your best bet here, especially those equipped with a spring-loaded, center punch-style mechanism. The nice thing about these compact models is that they're lightweight, attach to your key ring, and typically feature a built-in seatbelt cutting tool.

Summing it up, most glass breakers that rely on your arm strength are ineffective when put up against tempered auto glass, which is a pretty serious shortcoming if you ask us. You're better off with a spring-loaded tool that won't fail you when you need it most.



Bandana

Here's an EDC item that generally throws folks for a loop: The common bandana.

The number of survival uses for this genuinely unsexy item is remarkable. With a little creativity, you can come up with almost infinite reasons that a bandana is more than just a nice-to-have EDC item.

Granted, not all of these uses are what you might call "lifesaving" in and of themselves, but we're willing to bet you'll value a bandana more and more as you imagine new uses for it.

For starters, a bandana can be worn to protect your skin from the blazing sun. Overexposure to sunlight is one of the most overlooked weather risks, behind hypothermia.

In a true crisis where the mental and physical stress levels are already ratcheted up to the limit, dehydration, sunburns, and heat exhaustion (including the risk of strokes) are the figurative wolves at your door.

Even if you're simply changing a tire on the side of the road in July, the need for impromptu protection is vital. If you find yourself having to make a long hike through scorching terrain, a wet bandana around your neck or forehead can help your body regulate your core temperature.

Bandanas can also be used to build emergency water filters, crude air filtration masks, bandages, slings, and to tie splints. There are a multitude of first aid uses. Additionally, bandanas make great trail markers.

Coins and Small Bills

Yet another EDC item that's overlooked yet extremely vital is hard currency, particularly coins and small bills. While this is a great safeguard for many common non-emergencies, it's almost certain to pay dividends in a wider emergency situation.

Will you need to buy or barter for something in a serious crisis? Even if it's a simple power outage where credit card machines are offline, having a little cold hard cash can be a lifesaver.

Imagine a major storm evacuation in which blackouts have knocked the gas station's credit card machines offline. Those without cash will simply not be able to purchase the fuel they need. What then?

In addition, there are still quite a few vending machines out there, the vast majority of which do not accept credit cards. You may not think of these machines often in your day-to-day life, but if you are in need of food or bottled water in a pinch, you'll certainly be glad you have a way to access it.

If you need to air up a tire, fill a jug at the water kiosk, get ice from a motel, or even acquire diapers from a bathroom vending machine, cash/change is key. There are lots of useful items you can find in vending machines when stores are closed.



TIP: Dollar bills can also be used to pry open bottle caps. You just need to know the right technique. Here's a quick tutorial:

Step 1: Choose the newest, crispest bill at your disposal. The more rigid the bill, the more effective it will function as a lever. Essentially, you are going to fold the bill, layering it to make a piece of makeshift cardboard.

Step 2: Fold your bill in half lengthwise, then once again lengthwise.

Step 3: Fold the bill in half crosswise, then again lengthwise until it's roughly 1 inch long and .25 inches wide.

Step 4: Grip the bottleneck firmly, just below the bottle cap. Using your knuckle as a fulcrum, use the narrow edge of the folded dollar bill to pry up on the cap.

If you've ever used a lighter or knife to pry off a cap, the mechanics of this maneuver will be familiar to you. The only minor modification is a lifting motion with your hunk of "dollar bill cardboard."

Keep in mind, the guiding principle here is to use physics efficiently, not pinching or hurting your fingers. If you're struggling too much or feeling pain, stop and rework the geometry. This method should be both easy and pain-free when done correctly.

Cordage

So this is another nominee for “most overlooked” EDC item of 2017: Cordage.

String, filament, rope or paracord; anything is better than nothing. And when you need to tie something, cordage is a lifesaver.

Now, if you’re not familiar with the stuff, “paracord” (short for parachute cord) is essentially just a fairly thin, fairly high-strength type of rope. Technically, it’s made from small interwoven nylon threads with a core filament or filaments.

Rope, in the vast majority of cases, works just as well as paracord. The major difference is that paracord is a little more compact and thus fits the EDC profile a bit easier.

In fact, lot of survivalists like to wear paracord bracelets designed to unravel into several feet of cordage should they ever need it. You can even find watchbands made of the stuff.

In the event you need a piece of rope or string, there truly is no substitute for it. It’s just one of those things every survivalist needs. In addition, cordage is incredibly useful when you need to get creative.

Not to mention, one of our favorite uses for paracord is to make custom grips for knives, hatchets and other tools. Customized tool grips improve the tool under normal circumstances. Then if you need a long piece of rope in a pinch, simply untie your paracord grip.

Firearms

It’s true, not all states have concealed carry laws. Some have gone a step further with open-carry and constitutional carry. In either case, this opens the door for adding a lethal force option to your EDC. Even if your state does not have carry laws, you may find that, with a little research, there are permits for personal handguns available with certifications.

When it comes to self-defense, the vast majority of military and tactical experts choose to carry a side-arm. It’s that simple.



Semi-automatic pistols, in specific, are the hands down winner when you put it to vote. And the reasons are many.

Semi-auto pistols offer a great deal of tactical advantages. They’re lightweight, compact, and they hold plenty of ammo. For these reasons, they make an ideal “everyday carry” weapon.



Many compact models like the Glock 19 are suitable for everyday carrying purposes. However, if you prefer a weapon that is even more lightweight and compact, what we sometimes refer to as “shirt pocket pistols,” North American Arms offers the Guardian 32ACP and the Mini-Revolver. Ruger’s LCP .380 is another extremely popular concealed carry gun, both high-quality and extremely compact.

While we would typically advise you to purchase only firearms you love to shoot, this is the time we’ll deviate a smidge. The truth is that almost none of the sub-compact handguns available are what we’d refer to as “fun to shoot.”

But if size and weight are the end-all in regards to your EDC firearm discipline, you sure don’t want to go with a 1911. In addition to the ones already mentioned, Kel-Tec, Kahr, and others make tiny carry guns that are highly reliable for the purpose of riding along comfortably in a boot holster.

Although they’re not the most fun weapons at the range, they are right there when you need them most.



A brief list of paracord uses includes:

1. Makeshift belt
2. Sling for a fractured arm
3. Tying splints
4. Replacement shoelaces
5. Trip wire
6. Handcuffs
7. DIY Rifle Sling
8. Makeshift dog leash
9. Tying bundles of kindling
10. Fishing stringer



Emergency Food Cookbook:

**Delicious
Nutrient-Rich
Meals with Basic
Supplies**

Your SHTF pantry should be full of canned goods, rice, beans and other items that have a long shelf life. Putting this collection together (and maintaining it with good expiration dates) is vital, but what happens when it's time to raid your supplies?

Many people are used to eating at restaurants or popping a frozen entrée into the microwave. When neither of those is an option, you'll need to have a good understanding of how to make something out of practically nothing. By practically nothing, we mean the relatively flavorless and bland, shelf stable foods that are hopefully stockpiled in your survival pantry right now.

Being a SHTF chef is truly a critical survival skill. Otherwise, your body and mind will suffer from poor nutrition, and your taste buds will also become mind-numbingly bored with your food choices.

Fortunately, there are several creative ways to spice up even the smallest number of basic ingredients. And one of the secrets is to invest in some spices and give them a small portion of your pantry space.

Don't forget to also invest in an electric and gas free camping stove. There are options available that use twigs and sticks as fuel, and some of them (such as the BioLite Camp Stove) even charge USB devices at the same time.

Let's begin by looking at some simplistic but nutritious recipes that you can build with nothing more than rice, beans and some spices.

Rice and Beans

Rice and beans is a great combo because it will provide you with some much-needed fuel in the form of carbohydrates and protein. If you don't have a large stash of dried beans and rice in your pantry, it's time to do some shopping. Here are a few recipes using these components that anyone can make.

Bean Patties

1 cup beans

1 cup rice

Onion powder and/or garlic powder

A small amount of oil (optional, but helpful)

Cook the rice and beans separately. Gently mash the beans until they become paste like, and then mix in the rice, spices and any additional ingredients you have on hand (such as peppers or wild onions). Combine everything into a patty shape and then fry it.



PHOTO:

Above: Cliff Hutson

Spicy Rice and Beans

1 cup beans

1 cup rice

Garlic powder

Salt and pepper

Sriracha or Tabasco sauce

After pre-soaking your beans overnight, bring them to a boil. Next, add a 1/2 teaspoon of pepper, salt and garlic powder. You can simmer meat for a couple of hours with this mixture or add in a diced bell pepper or onion, if you have any on hand. Meanwhile, make the rice separately. Then pour the beans over the rice and add Tabasco or Sriracha to taste.

Old Bay Beans

1 cup beans

1 cup rice

1 Tbsp of Old Bay Seasoning

Put all of the ingredients together in one pot and cook until finished. That is it! This is by far one of the easiest emergency recipes, but the addition of the Old Bay Seasoning makes it taste great!



Beans, Rice and Veggies

If you have a garden or an extensive collection of canned vegetables, you can expand even further upon the beans and rice meal options. Not only will the veggies offer a different flavor and texture but they also boost each meal by adding a lot of nutrients. Keep in mind that the amount listed for each ingredient can and should be tweaked based on your personal tastes and the total amount that will be consumed in one sitting.

Vegetable Stir Fry

1/2 cup rice	1/2 cup beans	Cooking oil
Garlic and onion powder		Salt and pepper
Potatoes (optional)		Veggies on hand

Cook the rice and beans. Meanwhile, chop up potatoes if you have them and put them into the frying pan. Next, chop up any vegetables you have on hand (for example, carrots, broccoli, corn, green beans, etc.) and add them to the frying pan. Simmer until everything has cooked to the desired point. Be sure to add spices during the simmering process. Put tougher items in the pan first such as potatoes so that they cook properly. When everything is done, pour veggies over the rice and beans. If you have broth on hand, you can add a small amount to enhance the flavor.



PHOTO:

Above: Chelsea Martin

Rice and Black Bean Salad

2 cups of rice
1 cup of black beans
1 cup chopped tomato (fresh is preferred)
Lettuce leaves

Cook the beans and rice in the same pan. Chop the tomato and add it during the last 5 to 10 minutes of slight simmering. Allow the resulting mixture to cool and then serve it either on lettuce or wrapped in lettuce leaves.



Black Rice Chili

Can of salsa	Diced tomatoes
15 ounces of rice	10 ounces of corn
15 ounces of rinsed and drained black beans	
1 Tsp of chili powder	

Add everything into one saucepan and bring it to a boil. At this point, the heat needs to be reduced to low. If you are cooking over a fire, simply move the pan to the edge of the fire. Allow everything to simmer for 10 minutes.

Stretching Your Canned Goods

If you're like most preppers and survivalists, you have an extensive collection of canned goods. However, over time, even the biggest pantry will become depleted. So how do you stretch each can and ensure that you don't give into boredom? Here are 11 simple but inventive ideas that anyone can bring to life!

1. Vegetable Soup Rice Pilaf

1 can condensed vegetable soup

1 cup rice

Cook the soup and rice separately in the usual manner. Next, stir the soup into the three cups of cooked rice and enjoy a delicious pilaf!



PHOTO:

Above: Rubbermaid Products

2. Chili with Beans and Rice

1 can of chili

1 can of black or kidney beans

1/2 to 1 cup of rice

Cook the rice. In a separate pan, cook the kidney and beans. After everything is done, mix them together for a heartier meal that serves more people and provides a more nutritious burst of energy.

3. Corn Chowder

1 can of creamed corn

1 package of instant mashed potato flakes

4 cups water

2 Tbsp nonfat dry milk

You can make delicious and hearty corn chowder by mixing all of the ingredients together and cooking them until done. This takes a pantry staple that can easily become boring (creamed corn) and turns it into a viable meal that can feed two or more people.





4. Hearty Chicken Noodle and Vegetable Soup

- 1 can of chicken noodle soup
- 1 can of peas
- Bouillon
- 2 cups of noodles
- 1 can of condensed cream of mushroom soup

Chicken noodle soup is one of the classic staples that can help people feel comforted during an emergency situation. But a simple can of Campbell's Chicken Noodle Soup isn't going to stretch very far. Instead, cook two cups of noodles in bouillon. At the same time, mix 1 can each of chicken noodle soup, peas and condensed cream of mushroom soup into the same pan and cook until done. Add the noodles into the resulting mixture for a hearty chicken noodle soup that contains more nutrients than usual and will enable two to four people to have a good meal.

5. Diced Tomatoes and Pasta

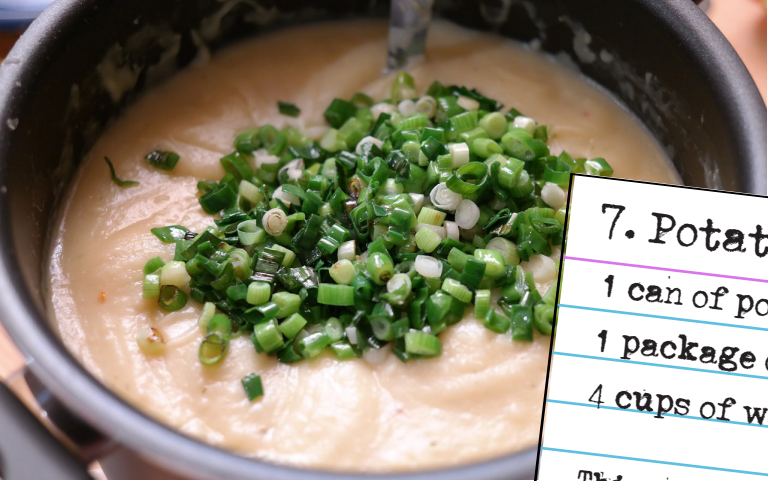
- 1 can of diced tomatoes
- 3 cups cooked elbow macaroni (or any pasta)
- Pinch of onion powder, garlic powder, salt and pepper

Cook pasta in a separate pan. Meanwhile, heat up the diced tomatoes with all of the spices. When the pasta is done, add it to the resulting spiced up diced tomatoes. You can also add vegetables to make this meal even heartier.

6. Cajun Baked Beans and Rice

- 1 can baked beans
- 1 can condensed tomato soup
- 1 cup of water
- 1 cup of rice
- 2 Tsp of Cajun seasoning

Cook the rice separately. Put the baked beans, tomato soup, seasoning and water in another pan and cook as desired. Mix everything together and serve for a spicy, enhanced result that is much tastier and more fortifying than a can of baked beans.



7. Potato Soup

1 can of potato soup

1 package of instant mashed potato flakes

4 cups of water

This enhanced potato soup couldn't be easier to make! Simply pour 4 cups of water into a pan with a can of potato soup and one package of instant mashed potato flakes. This will stretch out both of the components, making it a better option when feeding two or more people after the SHTF. If you have carrots handy, be sure to add some as an optional way to boost the flavor and nutritional value of this soup. You can also substitute the mashed potato flakes with chunks of potato.

8. Mock Escarole Soup

1 can of spaghetti sauce 1/2 to 1 cup pasta or rice

1 can spinach 1 can white kidney beans

Garlic powder, salt and pepper

Make the pasta or rice separately. In another pan, mix spaghetti sauce and white kidney beans with spices. Add the can of spinach during the last few minutes (or as directed on the can to ensure proper cooking time for the spinach). Finally, add the rice or pasta into the mixture to create a mock version of escarole soup.

PLEASE NOTE: escarole soup usually contains olive oil. If you have some available, add a small amount to enhance the flavor.

9. Spaghetti and Beans

1 can of spaghetti sauce

1/2 to 1 box of spaghetti

1 can of white kidney beans

1 can of diced tomatoes

Make the pasta separately. In another pan, cook the sauce, diced tomatoes and white kidney beans. Mix well and pour sparingly over the pasta. Use less pasta if you want the sauce to be richer. With a box of pasta, this could easily provide a serving each for up to six people. The carbohydrates, protein and vitamins in this meal make it the perfect solution for sustaining energy and health after the SHTF. You could also add other vegetables to this dish to make it extremely well-rounded and filling.



10. Hearty Vegetable Soup

1 full 32 ounce container or three to four cans of vegetable broth

1 can corn

1 can green beans

1 can great northern beans

3 to 6 potatoes (optional)

A pinch each of pepper, salt, garlic powder, onion powder, basil, oregano and parsley flakes

1 can diced tomatoes

1 can carrots

1/4 cup of couscous

Rinse the beans. Chop the potatoes. Strain out the corn juice. Use the juice from the cans of green beans and carrots. Put everything into the pot and bring to a boil, then simmer for 20 to 30 minutes. This soup makes 8 servings, so it's perfect for a large group that is riding out the apocalypse together. Feel free to add or remove vegetables as desired. Spinach and broccoli make great additions. Rice can be used in place of the couscous.

Although this uses a lot of canned goods at once, it's a great way for several people to get their daily nutrients. Each cup of soup contains more than 100% of your daily vitamin A needs, along with approximately 25% of your daily fiber. You'll also benefit from 10% or more of your daily carbs, protein, vitamin C and iron. All in all, this is a great way to ensure your family stays healthy and well fed after the SHTE, so make sure you stock up on all of these canned veggies!

11. Broccoli, Cheddar and Potato Soup

1 can condensed Broccoli Cheddar soup

1/2 cup nonfat dry milk (mix with water before adding)

1 package of instant mashed potato flakes

Make your milk. Next, pour it into the condensed soup mix and cook as directed. In a separate pan, boil water and make instant mashed potatoes. Split the potatoes into two or four portions and pour the soup over each portion. This recipe makes two heaping bowls for two people or approximately four 1/2 bowls. Got any fresh broccoli on hand? Or maybe you have canned or fresh green beans, corn and/or carrots? Add these ingredients to make this meal stretch further and keep everyone full for longer! If you have the ability to make baked potatoes, you can substitute that for the mashed potato flakes and pour the soup over potatoes.



PHOTO:

Above: Ernesto Andrade



Prepare Your Pantry Now!

As you can see, there are numerous options for making something hearty and appetizing with basic ingredients such as condensed soup, canned vegetables, rice, beans and spices.

If your pantry isn't ready, though, none of these recipes are going to help you. So make sure you have everything on hand that you're going to need.

Another extremely important step is to put a copy of this cookbook with your emergency food. You now have 17 recipe ideas that can be made from basic items. None of this requires electricity or gas, nor does it require perishable items that need refrigeration. Always remember that

part of your emergency stash needs to be at least two good saucepans, a frying pan, a colander, some large spoons and spatulas, dish soap and a scouring pad. Without these basics, all the food and recipes in the world aren't going to do you much good.

If you find yourself in a rationing situation where you're only able to eat two meals a day, this one cookbook can provide you with enough variety to not eat the same thing for more than eight days. Even if you're getting three squares a day, you can create a menu out of basic supplies that covers almost six days before a repeat occurs (and that's assuming you don't have options outside of this cookbook to take care of breakfast)!

We bring all of this up because boredom can and will cause issues after the SHTF. Humans need a certain level of mental stimulation each day to ward off depression, and part of this includes having a wide variety of food choices. Additionally, using this cookbook will help you keep your nutrition levels up. Be sure to add in fresh vegetables and fruit as much as possible for optimal results.

Also, don't forget that regular exercise is still important for your mental and physical well-being. However, you may need to scale it down so that you don't burn through all of your calories.



Medicinal Wild Mushrooms Have Many Practical Uses

Many survivalists and homesteaders have a love-hate relationship with wild mushrooms. This makes perfect sense when you consider the fact that each unidentified mushroom you find could be deadly instead of nourishing.

Further complicating matters is the discovery that there are actually numerous mushrooms that are not only a viable food source but can also double as medicinal during an emergency situation.

In fact, many common mushrooms growing throughout the United States are both food and super food. TV's Dr. Oz promotes mushrooms as a superfood that should be included in your diet every single day. He

even shared a study that showed eating just one mushroom per day (10 grams) could prevent some types of cancer.

So, how do you know the difference between a mushroom that's deadly and one that could potentially save your life? There's no signage to look at in the woods, nor can you rely on the Internet to be available during a crisis. Therefore, it's up to you to carefully study the mushrooms that are most commonly found in your area. Be sure to expand your scope out at least 100 miles to give you some wiggle room. If possible, learn about the mushrooms in your state and the closest states in every direction.

This may seem like a daunting task, but you don't need to have every single detail memorized. Instead, commit to knowing how to identify at least two or three of the area's most beneficial mushrooms, along with any nearby that are poisonous. Next, keep a wild mushroom identification guide book or a copy of this article in your bug out bag.

If in doubt, never take a risk with mushrooms. But if you can make a positive identification, you can enrich your life through some much-needed sustenance and medical supplies. We're going to take a look at some of the most beneficial wild mushrooms to help you get started, but we encourage you to do research beyond this article after you get the basics down.



PHOTO:

Above: Pethan, Creative Commons

Maitake mushrooms are pictured above at the beginning of the article. As you can see, they have a very distinctive shape and grouping that should help you find them. Maitake is found in several areas throughout North America, and it also grows naturally in Europe and Japan. Due to their long list of useful and unique properties, maitake mushrooms are highly sought after by people from all walks of life.

What makes this particular mush-

room so useful for medicinal purposes? In a nutshell, it's the maitake mushroom's versatility that earns it the top spot on most medicinal mushroom foraging lists. This one simple mushroom has been proven to assist people with issues such as high cholesterol, high blood sugar and even cancer.

We're not medical experts, so we absolutely can't condone or suggest using maitake as a replacement for any current medication you're taking. However, many people use these mushrooms as part of their over-

all treatment plan. Additionally, it's important to know how all of this works in case the SHTF and you're no longer able to access your regular medication and medical care.

Maitake is believed to be helpful for cancer prevention, and it may be recommended to you as part of a cancer treatment program. In other words, if you have a family history of cancer or are dealing with a long list of risk factors, you may wish to incorporate maitake into your regular routine. This could help you reduce your odds of developing cancer in the future.

People who suffer from diabetes or high cholesterol may also benefit from eating maitake mushrooms or making them into a tea. Most people choose to use all of the medicinal mushrooms in this guide as part of a cup of tea. When society crumbles and medication can no longer be found, maitake mushrooms may just be what saves the lives of diabetics and many others.



Turkey Tail is relatively easy to find throughout much of North America. It is named after the characteristic colors and patterns that resemble the look of a turkey's tail. Numerous studies have been done into Turkey Tail's medicinal benefits. There is a lot of exciting evidence that points to this mushroom having anti-tumor properties.

The FDA even approved a trial to help scientists discover exactly how powerful of an agent Turkey Tail's anti-tumor properties actually are. So far, the results are quite promising, and it's becoming increasingly common for people to use Turkey Tail as part of a cancer treatment program.

Again, Turkey Tail is something that should be used in conjunction with any existing cancer treatment plans.

In the future, though, Turkey Tail could potentially help cancer patients who are unable to access medical services.

Although the anti-tumor properties are what Turkey Tail is most well-known for, evidence suggests it can offer several other medicinal benefits as well. Studies have showcased Turkey Tail's antioxidant, anti-viral, anti-bacterial and immune boosting properties.

The best part about Turkey Tail is that it's one of the few mushrooms that can be found and easily identified in North America throughout almost the entire year. This makes harvesting for medicinal mushrooms a lot easier, and it gives you winter-time opportunities that don't exist in most other highly beneficial species.



Birch Polypore

Birch polypore is easily identified due to its characteristic shape, the single form attachment and its placement on birch trees. This particular medicinal mushroom is best ingested as a tea, and you can also use it to create a plaster wrap. Many people turn to birch polypore for a tincture.

Let's face it; when the SHTF, it's going to quickly become impossible to find clean bandages and antibiotic ointments. Therefore, it's vitally necessary to find useful alternatives that can serve a similar purpose. Birch polypore is anti-septic and anti-bacterial, so making a plaster wrap out of it makes perfect sense. Simply wrap the plaster around small wounds to keep them covered, clean and less at risk for developing an infection.

It's worth noting that these mushrooms are typically described as having a slightly sweet but bitter taste. Mixing them with elderberries and making a tea from them helps make birch polypore more flavorful. Sipping on birch polypore tea may benefit you in other ways as well due to the mushroom's anti-parasitic, anti-viral and anti-inflammatory properties. Birch polypore is also a styptic, so it can help you with bleeding. Finally, some studies have indicated that this may be another mushroom species that offers anti-tumor properties.



Enoki



Chaga

Take a close look at the picture, and what you'll probably think you see is burn or scorch marks on a birch tree. You might even think that charcoal is somehow growing off of the tree. Although both of these thought processes make perfect sense due to the appearance of the birch tree, the reality is that the area that looks burned is actually covered in a mushroom called chaga.

Chaga is one of the oddest and, well, grossest looking mushrooms we've ever encountered. Despite this, it's practically worth its weight in gold when it comes to providing medicinal properties. Believed by many to be a superfood, research into chaga has shown promising results in many areas. The most common usage of chaga is to relieve arthritis pain.

Enoki mushrooms, which are also known as enokitake and winter mushrooms, are one of the rare species that bloom during the coldest, harshest months of the year. This makes them extremely valuable because you may not be able to find any other useful mushrooms during this time period.

Enoki has been proven to offer anti-tumor properties that can assist prostate cancer patients. Additionally, there is some evidence that enoki boosts the immune system, reduces cholesterol, is anti-hypertensive and

PHOTO:

Above: Tomas Čekanavičius

Below Left: Mary Shattock

Other reasons to harvest this mushroom include using it as an immune booster, improving blood sugar levels, promoting better cardiovascular health and to increase your intake of antioxidants.

Drink chaga as a tea with maple syrup or honey to make ingesting this mushroom more palatable. During a crisis situation, most people are unlikely to recognize that chaga is actually a mushroom, so be sure to take advantage of this by harvesting as much as possible from nearby birch trees. With any luck, you'll find chaga and birch polypore in the same general area.

anti-lymphoma activity.

You will find enoki fruiting during the winter on willow and elm trees. It's also possible to spot it on other hardwoods. Please note that this particular mushroom requires a very precise identification. You don't want to pick something that looks similar to enoki but actually isn't. Due to this, a wild mushroom identification guidebook should be by your side when you determine whether or not the mushrooms you're looking at are enoki.



Artist's Conk

This is a very common mushroom that can be found on dying and dead hardwood trees. It's most prevalent on maple and large oak stumps and logs, but it may also be found on Douglas firs. Artist's conk is best as a tea, and it's vital to be aware that it's a powerful diuretic/laxative. In other words, you can use it to treat constipation. If you want to take advantage

of its other health benefits, be sure to ingest only a little bit at a time as part of a tea.

Artist's conk is known to have anti-inflammatory and anti-bacterial properties. There is some limited evidence that it acts as an anti-tumor agent as well, but this is still being confirmed. It's also believed that this

mushroom is good for the respiratory system and lungs.

Artist's conk can be identified by its woody, shelf-like appearance. Combine this with the placement of the mushrooms on dead or dying hardwood trees, and it's typically very easy to determine whether or not you have found artist's conk.



Reishi

Reishi has a long history of being used medically. Although it was only more recently that doctors and researchers in North America began looking into this mushroom, other cultures have recognized its medicinal properties for thousands of years. Already, North American researchers have attributed a long list of positive

attributes to reishi, including the fact that it acts as an anti-viral.

There are several other perks of ingesting this mushroom such as its natural ability to reduce stress, boost the immune system, prevent fatigue and reduce insomnia, altitude sickness and asthma attacks. This already

sounds like one of the best mushrooms in the world, right? Amazingly, it offers even more potential medicinal benefits.

Recent studies have focused on the impact of reishi on high cholesterol, heart disease, bronchitis, HIV, high blood pressure and cancer. Some doctors are already using reishi as part of their overall treatment plan for prostate cancer.

Reishi is found in North America on hardwoods. Its color, shape and overall appearance make it relatively easy to differentiate from other mushrooms. Just like several of the other mushrooms on this list, reishi would be a great one to harvest right now as a potential health booster. After the SHTF, reishi may become one of the most important parts of your first aid kit.

The One Mushroom Family You Must Avoid at All Costs



PHOTO:

Above: stanze

Safety is critical when harvesting and ingesting mushrooms. Proper identification is the only way to prevent yourself from making a potentially deadly mistake. In North America, the most dangerous wild mushrooms you could encounter are part of the Amanitin family. In order to help keep our readers safe, we're going to highlight one part of this family now. This is the exact opposite of a medicinal mushroom, so please pay close attention.

The appropriately named Death Caps pictured above should never be ingested under any circumstances. Death Caps are a prevalent member of the Amanitin family, and they are extremely deadly. Sneakily, Death Caps actually taste good and have delayed symptoms. This means you won't even know for somewhere between 6 and 24 hours that you've ingested something poisonous. This is especially insidious because it means your system will fully absorb the toxins before you begin to feel sick.

Initial symptoms of serious mushroom poisoning include nausea, diarrhea, abdominal cramps and vomiting. Depending on how much of the Death Caps you consumed, these symptoms may become extremely severe.

After this period of symptoms, the second wave of insidiousness begins: you'll feel better for approximately 24 hours. That's right; the Death Caps make you sick with something that mimics a stomach virus or a more common (and survivable) form of food poisoning, and then this clears up relatively quickly. But after you fast forward a day, you're going to start feeling the physical symptoms associated with your kidneys and liver beginning to fail.

At this point, even the best medical care may not be able to save you. In some cases, a liver transplant is the only way to survive. Obviously this won't be available after the SHTF, so if you eat Death Caps during the apocalypse, you're going to die. If you're lucky, you'll slip into a coma first so that you don't feel all of the excruciating pain that can accompany this type of death.

It's important to note that Death Caps can be different colors and even have a slightly varied physical appearance. Because this is literally a matter of life or death, take a look at another Death Cap.

As you can see, this particular Death Cap has a fuller head and is more of a yellowish/light green color. This illustrates how Death Caps can masquerade as something else and could cause someone who is starving or looking for natural medicine to accidentally kill themselves.

Harvesting Wild Medicinal Mushrooms

Now that you have a good idea of what not to eat or brew into a tea, it's time to go back to thinking about the mushrooms that could save your life

instead of ending it. We suggest that you look up more information about each of these mushrooms to help you make a positive identification. You can also find out which of these medicinal mushrooms grow naturally in your nearby area.

After you're armed with this knowledge, go into the woods and look for the appropriate growing area. For example, if you want to find birch polypore, you must find birch trees. It's best when harvesting wild mushrooms to have two baskets or containers with you. Label them as positively identified and unsure. Next, take them back to your home, cabin or shelter and take further steps to establish the identity of the ones in your unsure basket. This is best accomplished with a wild mushroom field guide.

After you follow these steps, be sure to discard any mushrooms that you can't conclusively identify as safe for human consumption. Also, take care by disposing of them in a safe way so that no one else in your group accidentally eats one, including any pets that are with you.

Be aware that you should never put mushrooms into a plastic bag while you're foraging for them. Instead, always use a porous cloth bag or a basket. Whenever possible, get a positive identification before you pick a mushroom. The unsure basket should only be for mushrooms that you're 90 percent sure are safe. If you're not at least this certain, it's best not to pick the mushrooms at all.

As always, you or someone in your group could have an allergy to something that is otherwise safe for humans to eat. To avoid issues of this type, it's wise to ingest only a small amount the first time and then wait to see if any complications arise. If all goes well, you'll have found a new free food source and a potential source of medicine.

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



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SANITATION BREAKDOWNS, VIOLENCE AND
RIOTS WILL ALL HAPPEN AT THE SAME TIME**

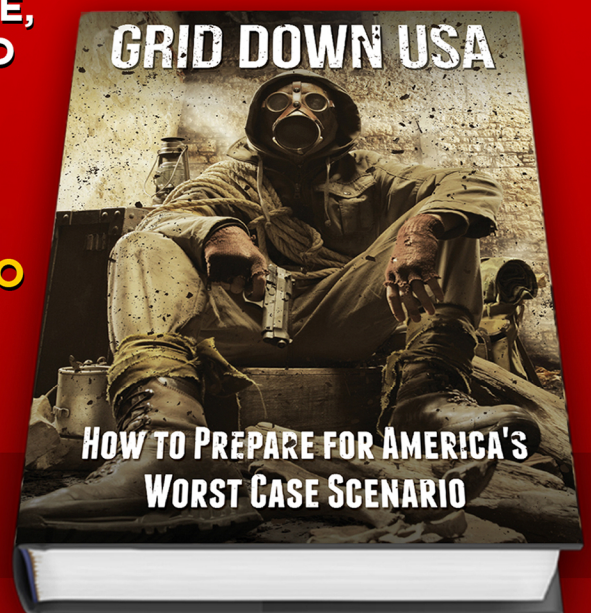
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