



MEMBERS UPDATE

July 2021

10 FACEBOOK ALTERNATIVES FOR THOSE WHO VALUE PRIVACY

The Truth About .223 Rem vs. 5.56 NATO

Should YOU Join a Militia?



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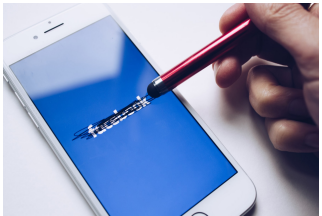
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.223 Rem vs. 5.56 NATO

It's one of the most pressing questions in the wide world of tactical shooting: Which platform is superior, .223 Remington or 5.56 NATO? In this article, we'll take a very fine scalpel to this hair-splitting debate to determine if one of these extremely similar rounds, in fact, gives shooters an edge.



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10 Facebook Alternatives

We've suspected it for years, but recent revelations have made it clear just how much your privacy is constantly and consistently being invaded by Facebook. Big Tech controls an extraordinary majority of the internet, but there are still plenty of social networks that exist apart from or outside of its clutches.



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Should YOU Join a Militia?

Several isolated incidents over the past year have turned the mainstream media's predictably unfair spotlight back on militias. While there are, no doubt, a few bad examples, these in no way define the extensive and growing number of patriotic, lawful and peaceful groups operating across the US.



SHOOTOUT: 5.56 NATO VS .223 REM

A question we get a lot from our readers is, which is better, the 5.56 NATO vs .223 Rem? Other questions we get are which came first? And why the heck are these two cartridges similar to the point of redundancy anyway? These are all reasonable questions to kick around in your mind as you shop for guns and ammo.

Given the fact that these are two of the most common and widely used centerfire cartridges in the world... there sure is a lot of mystery, misinformation, and confusion surrounding the .223 Rem and 5.56 NATO.

So, what's behind the confusion? That's one of the primary questions we'll tackle in this article, along with sifting through the mountain of misinformation about these zippy cartridges and their supersonic performance. Yes, there are some very critical differences, and a whole lot of critical similarities. But the most important factor is that you understand the how whole picture fits together.

Any experienced shooter knows that the .223 Remington and 5.56 NATO rounds are very, very

2 closely related. And most of us also understand

that these rounds are, in many cases, somewhat “interchangeable” (but NOT entirely so).



The funny thing about this type of incomplete knowledge is that it's 100% completely unhelpful when you need it. It reminds us of an old Steve Martin quote where he recalls some key advice he learned from the Maharishi: “One thing he taught me, I'll never forget. ‘Always...’ no wait- ‘Never...’ no wait.”

The fact is, our memories are far from perfect. Thus, if you're not 100% certain that you can always safely fire a 5.56 NATO from a weapon chambered in .223 Rem, or if you should never attempt it... then you're better off sticking with the ammunition specified in the owner's manual.

AN IMPORTANT HISTORY LESSON



Both of these cartridges were developed to meet a US Continental Army Command (CONARC) request in 1957 for a modern rifle platform that would replace the aging M1 Garand and M1 Carbine. Spoiler alert: That rifle platform set the stage for our main topic.

But, here's the thing: The military's requirements didn't just specify how the weapon should perform, it also placed guidelines on the ammunition. The ammunition, as you might have guessed, would need to be invented too.

CONARC's requirements called for the following:

- .22 caliber
- Bullet exceeding supersonic speed at 500 yards
- Rifle weight of 6 pounds
- Magazine capacity of 20 rounds
- Select fire for both semi-automatic and fully automatic use
- Penetration of US steel helmet through one side at 500 yards
- Penetration of .135-inch steel plate at 500 yards
- Accuracy and ballistics equal to M2 ball ammunition (.30-06 Springfield) out to 500 yards
- Wounding ability equal to M1 carbine

As the story goes, a working group was formed to complete this project. Eugene Stoner and his team at ArmaLite went to work on designing what would become the AR-15. Meanwhile, Remington Arms and company went to work on the ammunition side of things.

The work on this platform is now the stuff of legend, as is the weapon that resulted. But lo and behold... the AR-15 did not win the contract.

An improved version of the M1 Garand, named the M14 was selected for the next generation platform (which proved to be a historically significant blunder). Thus, the ammunition and firearm developed for the 1957 CONARC platform languished. The .223 Remington sat in a state of limbo for years and ArmaLite, frustrated by the lack of progress, famously sold the designs to Colt.

In 1963, Remington released the consumer version of the ammunition it had developed as part of this project, the .223 Remington. It was a hit with hunters and target shooters who loved the flat ballistics and light recoil.



Unfortunately, the error of the M14's adoption became painfully evident in 1964. When the M14 faced off against the AK-47 in Vietnam, it proved to be uncontrollable in full-auto mode. It also jammed, a lot. Suddenly, it was time to scramble and find an adequate rifle platform to take on the AK-47.

Enter the AR-15 platform, which had been passed over only a few years before. After being re-evaluated, the AR-15's bona fides were readily apparent and it was eventually adopted as the M16. Along with the M16, the military also accepted the cartridge developed for the CONARC project and renamed it the "Cartridge, 5.56mm Ball, M193." This military specific variant became the 5.56 NATO round we all know and love.

Thus, within a very short time, both the .223 Remington and the 5.56 NATO entered the shooter's

vocabulary. They were never exactly identical, but were both derived from a common CONARC ancestor, so to speak. The complicated part is, they weren't very different, either.



We love history here at the NSRA, but even more so we love the perspective that it can give us. Without the history, you'd be hard pressed to explain just why these confusingly similar cartridges came into existence at roughly the same time. It was never meant to be this confusing to shooters; .223 Rem was for civilians and 5.56 NATO was for the military.

And so it went for quite a while, until military surplus ammunition began to crossover into the consumer market. When that trend began to accelerate, it was suddenly very important to know the differences between .223 Rem and 5.56 NATO. In fact, it's possible that using the wrong ammo could potentially damage your firearm.

PRESSURE



One of the key differences between these two calibers is the pressure created during firing. The .223 Remington was certified at a lower chamber pressure rating (55,000 PSI) when it was standardized in 1962. These specifications were created and published by SAAMI, the organization tasked with ensuring firearm manufacturing standards and interchangeability.

The US Military wanted the capability to fire a heavier round at full automatic, and thus designed both 5.56 ammunition and chambering to withstand greater pressures, around 63,000 PSI. While that is a considerable difference in PSI, the question gets much more nuanced when you consider the differences between the civilian and military testing methodology. The PSI ratings are considerably different and very hard to compare.

The key thing to remember is that 5.56 NATO chambers are built to withstand greater pressures, so in theory they are the universal choice, whereas weapons chambered for .223 Rem are built for lower pressures.

BRASS



Because 5.56 NATO is designed for higher working pressures, it must have a thicker, stouter shell casing, right? Not necessarily. There are cases where 5.56 NATO shells weigh more than .223 Rem and vice versa.

The shells without markings would be very hard to distinguish, even if you weighed them, cut them open, etc.

The primary difference, aside from the manufacturer's markings that identify the round, is the primer pocket. The 5.56 NATO has a crimped primer pocket that ensures that the primer won't move out of position in the casing during full auto firing. That's really about the only major difference.

CHAMBER DIMENSIONS

Another point of difference between these twin rounds is the chamber specs. While the differences in the chambers are minute, only a couple of thousandths of an inch in most cases, the specs for the 5.56 NATO are larger in almost every dimension.

Some shooters will refer to this as “slop” in the chamber, leading to lower accuracy potential. While true, this also helps the rounds cycle through reliably in rapid firing situations. Regardless, the largest difference in these dimensional variations is the freebore (the smooth bored area between the chamber and rifling) portion. The 5.56 NATO’s freebore is twice as long as that of the .223 Rem.

While that sounds drastic, the .223 Rem calls for a freebore of .0025 inches, while the 5.56 NATO calls for a 0.005 inch freebore. Experts point to this difference as being mostly responsible for those infamous pressure differences.

INTERCHANGEABILITY

As we alluded to in this article’s introduction, the most practical and important piece of information for most shooters to know is: Is it safe to shoot 5.56 NATO in a firearm chambered for .223 Rem? Or is it the other way around?

Over time, the consensus view has become that it is safe to fire .223 Rem in a weapon chambered in 5.56 NATO, because it’s built to handle higher pressures.

Additionally, most experts believe there is some risk, slight though it may be, in firing 5.56 NATO from a .223 Rem chambered weapon. In theory, it could be a safety risk but it’s more likely to result in damaging your rifle over time.

Is there controversy surrounding this? Of course there is, there are many shooters who maintain that they’ve shot 5.56 NATO rounds in their .223 rifle for years and never had an issue. In our view, there’s really just no reason to take even a calculated and infinitely small risk here. It’s a safety issue.

Good News: If you’re shopping for a modern sporting rifle, most new models are equipped with

hybrid chambers to fire both rounds interchangeably. Thus, many new rifles will be officially chambered in .223 Rem, but their manufacturer will be explicit about the rifle firing both cartridges interchangeably. These cases are where it pays to read your owner’s manual.

WHAT’S A .223 WYLDE?

The .223 Wylde is, thankfully, NOT another cartridge in the already crowded field of .22 caliber contenders. Instead, it’s a chamber designed by Bill Wylde to bridge the gap between the .223 Remington and 5.56 NATO.

As we alluded to, the 5.56 NATO chamber can be looked to as the universal chamber, able to chew through either type of ammunition. And it does this effectively, but not optimally. The lower pressures created by the .223 in a chamber designed for the 5.56 NATO will result in lower muzzle velocities and generally lower performing ballistics.

That’s why the .223 Wylde chamber was invented. This chambering is designed to shoot both rounds safely and optimally. Thus, there is none of the loss in performance that you experience when shooting a .223 Rem from a 5.56 NATO chamber. You get the best of both worlds, essentially.

As usual, your mileage may vary, based on the quality and workmanship of the .223 Wylde chamber. Always go with the manufacturer with the best reputation and track record.

BALLISTICS



If you really love to split hairs, then discussing the differences in the ballistic performance of these two rounds should get you all hot and bothered. For everyone else, we’ll cut to the chase: It’s a tie.

The tolerances are tighter on the .223 Rem chamber, which means that theoretically you can shoot tighter groups with it. The 5.56 NATO has a bit more powder and produces slightly faster muzzle velocities than the .223 Rem (3,100 feet per second vs 3,250 feet per second). Both are very fast relative to other rounds.

In the end, it's fair to say these rounds are ballistically equivalent, not exactly identical but equivalent. The bullet weight, ammo quality, and precision of your rifle are equally significant (if not more so) in these calculations than whether your rifle is chambered in .223 Rem or 5.56 NATO.

CONCLUSION



Let's answer the most important question first: Is it safe to use 5.56 NATO in a weapon chambered for .223 Rem?

Answer: No. Unless it's specifically stated by your weapon's manufacturer, we wouldn't recommend it. There's a lot of conflicting data out there, to be sure. But the fact is that where your safety and your weapon's longevity are concerned, it's simply not worth the risk. You won't be gaining any advantage by loading 5.56 NATO into your .223 Rem rifle anyway, just more wear and tear.

Question 2: Is the 5.56 NATO superior because of its military credentials and higher pressure?

Answer: No, not really. The modifications made to the 5.56 NATO cartridge and chamber by the US Military were made mostly to facilitate fully automatic firing. Remember those jamming issues we mentioned regarding the M14 rifle? One of the

strengths of the M16 was that it was three times more reliable than the M14.

The 5.56 NATO chamber was designed to be biased towards reliability in rapid fire scenarios – not accuracy. Thus, the higher pressure and higher muzzle velocity come at the expense of accuracy. Again, your mileage may vary.

Question 3: OK fine, but which one should I choose if I'm shopping for a new rifle?

The most important feature of any tactical rifle is build quality, and in this case it's no different. Buy a high-quality rifle from a reputable manufacturer that stands behind its work. That way, all you have to shop for is ammunition and not a good gunsmith.

Choose the chambering based on what works best for you. If your favorite place to buy ammo consistently has tons of .223 Rem at jaw-dropping low prices, then why not go .223 Rem? If you happen to have a stockpile of 5.56 NATO, go with that. If you want to hunt game with your rifle, .223 Rem gives you greater flexibility in terms of game loads.

If there's one thing we want to make sure you come away with after reading this article, it's this: These cartridges are more than similar in almost every way. The primary difference comes in the chambering.

Many manufacturers (as is the case with the M&P 15 Sport 2) are producing chambers that are completely compatible with both rounds, a testament to how similar the .223 Rem and 5.56 NATO truly are. With these newer weapons, you can mix up these cartridges in a magazine and plink away and you would never know the difference.



10 facebook Alternatives for Those Who Value Privacy

Businesses, marketing agencies and people (including preppers) use Facebook for a wide variety of reasons. It's fun to use for anything from keeping in touch with friends and family to buying a cute T-shirt, to joining one of the many prepper groups and comparing notes.

With all that in mind, most would agree that Facebook is an unparalleled tool for making social connections and staying entertained. Unfortunately, the same massive scale that makes it so useful and fun also comes with some heavy baggage in the way of constant tracking, privacy issues, security breaches, etc. There is also their alarming world dominance and influence to consider, as well.

Alternatives to facebook

Facebook has access to things like text messages on your cell phone and your mobile phone number. While we are at it, it also has access to everyone's phone number in your cellphone's contact list. So not only is your sensitive data exposed, your friend's data is laid bare, as well. That's just the tip of the iceberg, and it's completely insane how much personal information they have!

People who use Facebook want to feel safe and secure while they are on it, but it doesn't seem to be that way for the most part. And, with their recent run-in with Cambridge Analytica and its associated data breach, it would probably be wise to look for alternatives where your data is never shared or sold and your privacy is respected.

Since all those unappetizing factors go against what you are probably wanting to get out of a social media website, it may be high time to look for Facebook alternatives. The good news is that there are a great number of social networks and messaging apps that you can use instead.

facebook's Targeted Ad Strategy

If you ever try to get in touch with someone about any issues you encounter on Facebook, good luck. Their customer service is virtually nonexistent. Why is that? You may ask. Facebook's explanation for their customer "no service" is that it doesn't charge people to use its platform, which is true. Then again...that's only half the story.

The social media giant DOES collect a lot of personal data about you, and the simplest explanation for that is they use your information to make MONEY.

No, it doesn't sell your data outright. However, they do sell access to you...or more specifically...they give access to your News Feed, which then uses that data to show you specific advertising they think you'll enjoy looking at or will prompt you to click through and buy something.



This targeted advertising equates to big revenue for Facebook, with the company reporting advertising revenue of \$40 billion in 2020 alone; and the cash is only going to keep rolling in. That, my friends, is an astounding figure that you are helping with, and all without one single “attaboy!”

How facebook Makes Money from its Users

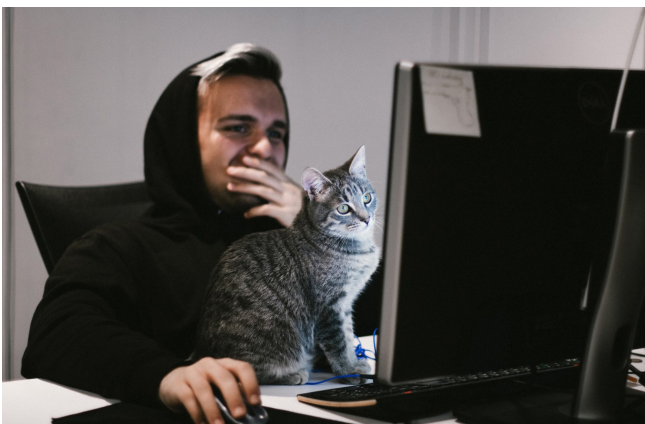
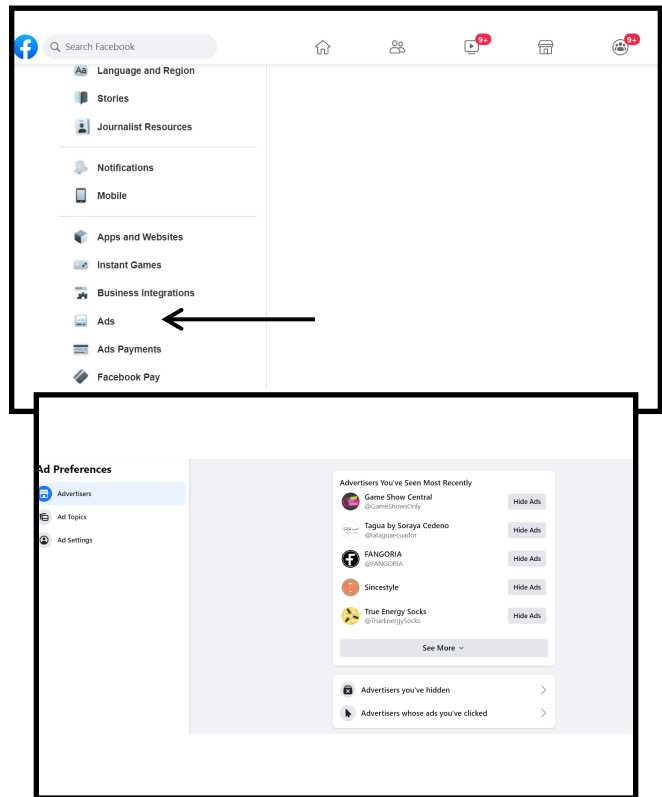


Photo credit: Ga@neringa, Unsplash

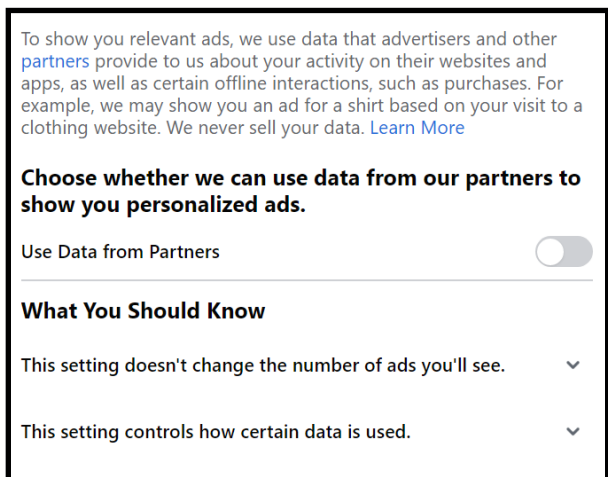
As mentioned above, Facebook uses your data to sell access to you by placing an ad in your News Feed. It doesn't peddle the data you provide to outside buyers, and that makes perfect sense if you really think about it. Their business is so valuable because

it contains a wealth of personal data about its users, and selling that data to advertisers would make their value significantly decrease.

You can identify where your information is heading by going to Settings & Privacy and then on to the Settings menu. On the left side, you'll notice a column with options, and you can scroll down to “Ads” and click on that.



From Settings, you can also change your ad preferences.



How facebook Shares your Personal Data

Outside businesses are allowed to collect your personal data if you specifically grant them permission. For instance, have you ever used your Facebook account, or another social media account, to log in to a third-party app like Spotify? If you did, that's one way to guarantee you gave them access.

The Main Problem with Big Tech

For a lot of us, it's hard to imagine going through a day without doing a Google search, checking Facebook's News Feed, or getting a package on our doorstep from Amazon. That convenience comes with a massive price tag, though, and a large number of Americans who rely on these goods & services have growing concerns about the profound influence of the Big Tech companies that make all this convenience possible.

In fact, a survey recently conducted by Consumer Reports indicates that roughly 3 out of 4 people in the U.S. worry about the power wielded by today's biggest tech platforms.

We've entered a time in history when there is a very liberal slant in news media and social media, thereby leading to an uneven bias in the information we digest. Of course, for every Huffington Post, there is a Breitbart or similar conservatively focused news outlet. Neither situations of bias are ideal, and to make sound decisions, it's best to avoid bias and consider other people's point of view at times.

But, when one of the major influencers gets involved in the opinion mix, the balance can tip. When that happens, we can be subjected to influencers that can give us propaganda that is far-reaching and suits their special interests. Many people are saying it's safe to call foul in these circumstances, no matter what side of the political fence you're on.

News should be balanced, and the majority of Americans are in agreement that hate speech should be removed, along with incitement to violence. All the social network sites are subject to this kind of vitriolic hate, and most people and politicians think

these sites must do their due diligence to control it. Nonetheless, there is a fine line between restricting free speech and clamping down on what goes too far.

Parler Goes Dark

Popular with right-wing-leaning conservatives, alternative social network Parler suffered a backlash after the U.S. Capitol riot on Jan 6. After the riot, there was a huge push to remove violent content and calls for insurrection from social media. Facebook, Twitter and other hugely popular sites were not immune from the pushback, but many said that social networking sites that are outside of the Big Tech circle, especially those that were right-wing-minded, were being unfairly targeted at the time. Facebook alternatives are often smaller than the Big Tech social networking sites, and thereby don't wield as much influence.

The argument Parler had that they were being targeted unfairly was moot, as they were temporarily shut down after an investigation showed that the planning of the storming of the Capitol were in their parlays (messages). In the end, critics of Parler said they didn't do enough to restrict the storming of the Capitol, and the organizations that were mostly responsible for the Twitter clone going dark were three of the "biggest" in Big Tech: Apple, Alphabet-owned Google and Amazon.

Tips for Making the Switch

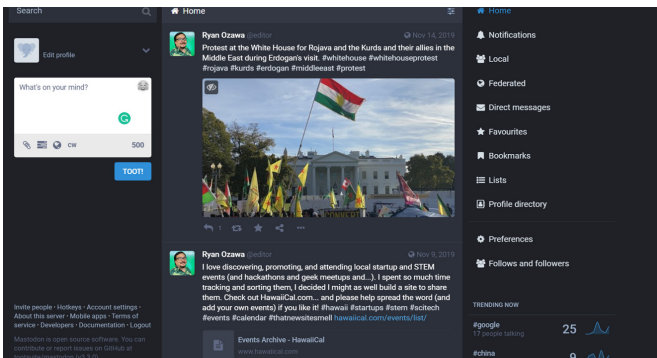
No matter what your political affiliations, or lack of are, it's smart to value your privacy. Before making the migration, ask yourself, "Should I move away? "And if I do, what am I getting myself into?" Social media sites can be vastly different, with different political ideals and functions. Luckily, many of them have filters and other controls to mitigate extreme ideologies and influence you find distasteful.

Although anti-Facebook platforms are presently gobbling up social media migrants like candy, one of the first things you'll probably find out while you're shopping for alternatives is that they seem almost deserted in comparison to the big guys, as Mark Zuckerberg's blue baby has 2.80 billion monthly active users. If that statistic fails to impress, Facebook also has 1.84 billion users that visit it daily.

In light of all that, the best tactic is probably going to be joining a group. You only have to keep up with a small group of people that way, and pretty much any of the FB alternatives listed below will work for you. So, if you're looking to diversify your social media portfolio, these 10 Facebook alternatives, tiny as they are in comparison, are some pretty good bets.

10 facebook Alternatives

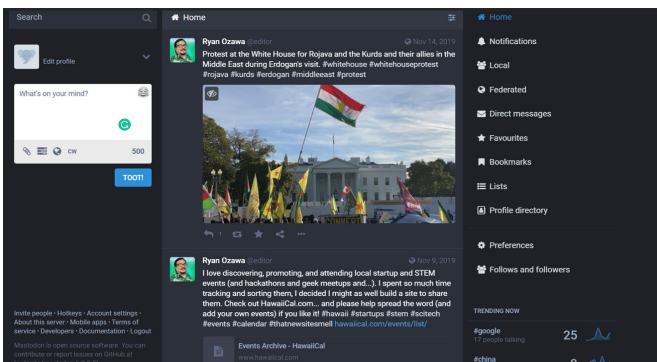
1. Mastodon



In case you haven't noticed lately, Twitter has been getting kind of shrill and "judgy." Luckily, it's not the only way to tweet in town. Enter Mastodon, which, like Parler, is very similar to Twitter in the way it looks and functions. It earns a spot among top Facebook alternatives because of its relatively sizeable community (4.4 million with 1.2 million active), user-friendly features and effective community moderation services.

Mastodon is also part of decentralization services known as the Fediverse, and that means that the site runs an open-source software standard that lets people host servers, thereby keeping control of their data.

2. Diaspora

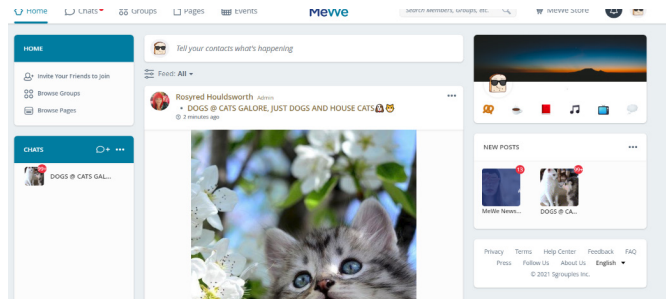


Diaspora has grown to 800,000 total users since it was started a little over a decade ago. It is one of the oldest Facebook alternatives, and like Mastodon, it is a part of the Fediverse. The site is also open source and available to everyone to use and host.

How it works: Users choose a "pod," based on the ratings and information at Pod Uptime, to set up an account and store account information. If you want maximum control, you have the option of hosting one of your own pods if you have system admin skills.

Once your data is on the server, you can interact with any other users on the network, regardless of the host location. There are no ads, tracking or data selling. The downside of Diaspora is that it isn't very user-friendly and can be a little clunky at times.

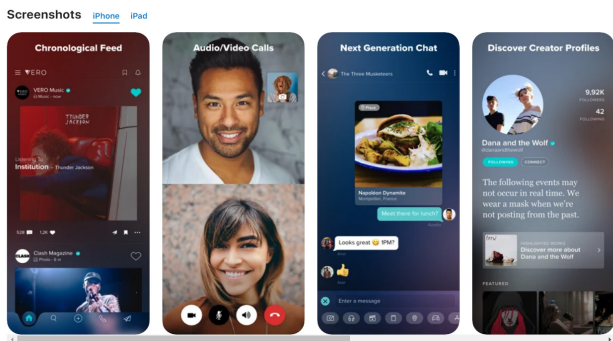
3. MeWe



Launched in 2016, MeWe is considered a fledgling in comparison to long-established social media sites like Facebook, Snapchat and Twitter. During Parler's shut down after the U.S. Capitol incident (it has since opened back up), many alternative users migrated to this anti-Facebook site. Their social media platform is a clone of Facebook, but with greater personal data protection.

If you're going off of the sheer quantity of users, MeWe is a feasible Facebook alternative. Only 2.8 million of its 8 million users are active, though, which leads to complaints about its lack of other members. MeWe has many of the same features as Facebook, such as groups, tagging, private chats, content permissions, along with some extras, like custom profiles for various groups and cloud storage.

4. Vero

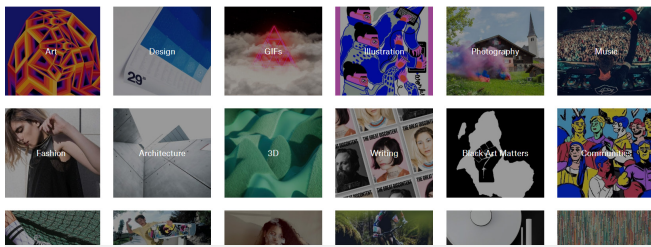


Vero is an ad and algorithm-free social app. They have been around since 2015, but the user population has recently really taken off, growing from only 200K recently to over 3 million users. The company presents itself as “a social network for anyone who loves anything enough to share it – and wants control over who they share it with. Just like we do in real life.” It’s a totally different business model to Facebook in the sense that FB needs user data to make money.

Vero does collect some usage data, but it’s only used to see how frequently the app is used. Note that this option is off by default in Vero, whereas with FB they have everything turned on by default. You have to go into your FB settings to turn this default setting off. If you like viewing your social media on a PC, you may not find Vero to your taste since it’s entirely app-based and only compatible with iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch.

5. Ello

Pick what you're into. Slow down & check out some cool ass shit.

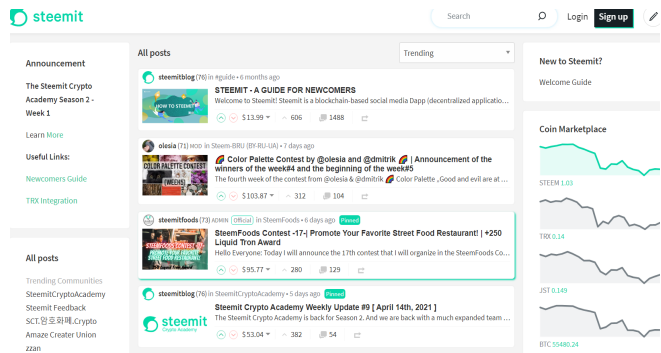


Ello currently has 1 Million+ members, and you can safely say they haven’t quite gone mainstream yet. They promise never to sell their users’ personal information to third parties. Also, it is growing rapidly now that the #deletefacebook movement is gaining traction.

The website originally presented itself as a “Facebook killer social network,” but since then it has transformed from its original Facebook-like

incarnation to more of a Pinterest-like design. The social media site features a minimalistic style and a big focus on content. Now Ello is mainly home to artists and other creatives, but it has the tools to embrace all kinds of members. For instance, preppers with photo-capable drones could really have some fun getting into the photography category and sharing their pics with friends. On the downside, it doesn’t have a private user-to-user chat and other handy FB features.

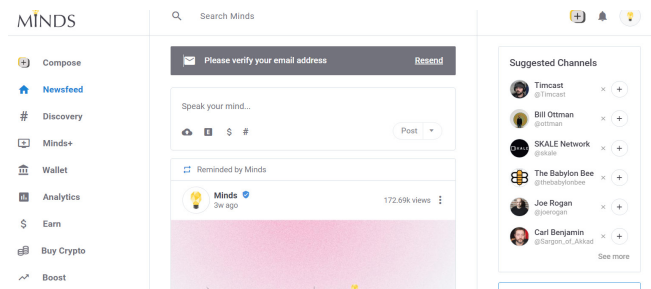
6. Steemit



Imagine Reddit and Quora had a baby, and you’ve got the Steemit social app. With Steemit, you can publish posts, and other members can up or downvote on the thread – depending on whether they like it or not in much the same way you do on Reddit and Quora. Steemit has about 10 million visits/month, which in comparison to FB is kinda small. Meanwhile, it is growing and doesn’t take your personal data and peddle it to third parties.

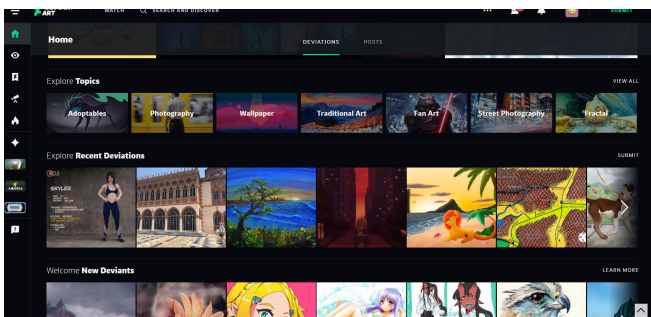
There’s a twist that comes with Steemit, though, that you don’t see with many of the other social media networks: They compensate users for spending time using their platform. When you get upvotes, you get Steem crypto tokens. That feature is particularly attractive to people that know their way around cryptocurrency and open source enthusiasts. You are not required to post anything unless you want, and you can simply use it as a news aggregator or to get involved in conversations related to specific interests. You get a Steemit wallet and Tron Public Key for sending tokens once you sign up.

7. Minds



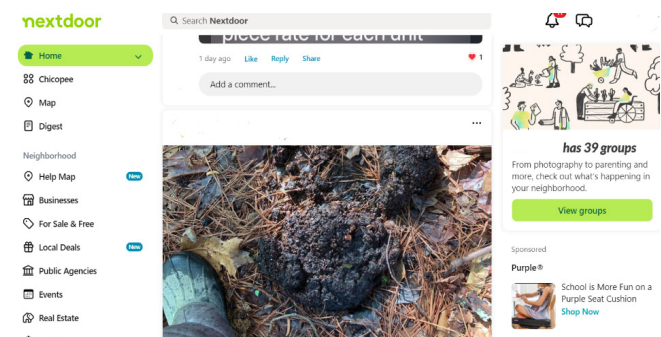
If you're starting some kind of online community or meetup, consider using Minds as your meeting place. Minds is an anti-establishment FB clone (but not too close since Facebook can sue for that) that went public in 2015. The social network is open source with a no censorship policy. It is built on a foundation of democratization, transparency and privacy. Like Steemit, Minds rewards its users in crypto for their online activity and views on posted content. Savvy users can also generate income via networking and get monthly support for monetized ad sharing or posts. When you go to join Minds, you can take advantage of the “migrate from Facebook” feature.

8. Niche Social Networks



For people interested in a hobby or career-related social networking, there are hundreds of niche social networks available. Out of the bunch, you'll need to research which are ad-free, don't sell your personal information, etc. Four worth mentioning are BlackPlanet, a social network for African-Americans for job postings and discussion forums, Care2 for the environmentally conscious and Dogster and Catster for pet lovers. Additionally, there is DeviantART for artists and photographers and Musical.ly for music enthusiasts. Other niche networks are age-targeted such as Snabbo for networking baby boomers. Parents might want to look into Lego Life, an Instagram-styled app for kids under 13.

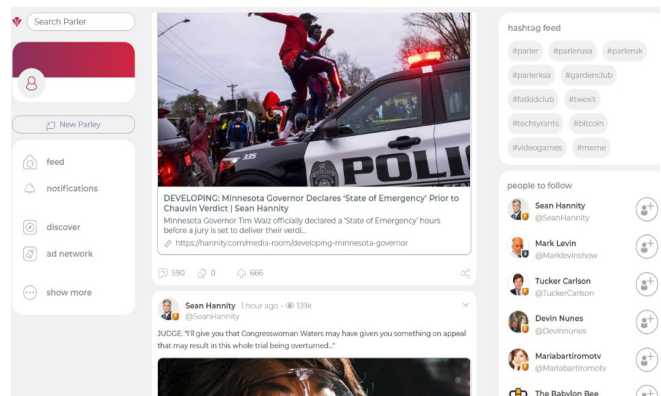
9. Nextdoor



If your interests lie more in connecting with your local community than in building up a global web of contacts, Nextdoor is the best social network for you. And, besides providing a forum to send messages to your community, Nextdoor has groups you can join, for sale & free categories, event announcements, lost & found and much more.

Nextdoor has ads, but they aren't as spammy as the ones on Facebook. It's also a great source of entertainment, as you can't make up some of the stuff people say on there. You'll be privy to anything from whose dog is barking until midnight to knowing if a deposit in someone's yard is bear poop or not, to how good the burritos are at the new Mexican restaurant down the street – all without having to nosily peek between your window blinds to get the scoop.

10. Parler



Parler rounds out the list, but keep in mind it is very controversial.

Created in 2018, Parler is fairly new to the game, and CNN describes it as a “mashup of Twitter and Instagram.” Tweet like “parleys” are limited to 1,000 characters and you can echo or vote the posts of other users in much the same way that “retweets” and “likes” of Twitter work. Parler has about 2.3

million active users out of 20 million. Parler says they don't sell your information to third parties, and they "allow you to monetize your content, following and goodwill."

Wikipedia sums up what many think about Parler here:

"Parler markets itself as a free speech-focused and unbiased alternative to mainstream social networks. [Parler] has a significant user base of Donald Trump supporters, conservatives, conspiracy theorists, and far-right extremists. Posts on the service often contain far-right content, antisemitism, and conspiracy theories such as QAnon. Journalists have described Parler as an alternative to Twitter, and users include those banned from mainstream social networks or opposing their moderation policies."

After Amazon, Google, and Apple dropped access to Parler in January, citing its alleged use in the coordination of the D.C. insurrection, the Trump-friendly platform relaunched a month later with a new platform. Apple reinstated the Parler App on April 20 after a review indicated that Parler put safeguards in place that detect unlawful hate speech better.

Be sure to familiarize yourself with Parler's privacy policy because it does things like track your information and use your data for vendors when you give permission.

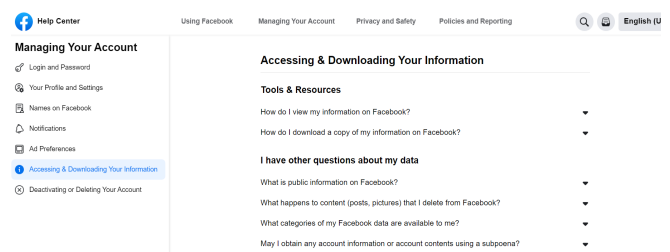
What Happened to Myspace?



Myspace is still around. So why isn't it on the list? You may ask. Myspace was revolutionary when it started, and at its pinnacle, it was king, representing the largest social networking platform in the world. News Corporation acquired the social networking site in 2005 for \$580 million. Today, it is still active, but it isn't the same go-to platform for social media that its former 100 million users a month were used to seeing and loving.

Don't shed a tear for former Myspace "first friend" and founder Tom Anderson, though. He sold the company for a pretty penny and is pretty much making the world his oyster. Feel free to enjoy his hilarious burn against @polotapia below.

Tips for Staying on facebook



Many Internet companies are jockeying to become the next hit social media sensation. There's no perfect substitute at the moment, though, and the best you can probably hope for if you are staying on FB is to use anti-tracking extensions such as Facebook Container or turn on Messenger encryption. Also, try to stay private while shifting to alternative networking services.

Final Thoughts

According to a Ponemon Institute survey, trust in Facebook took a 66% nosedive in 2018. People are starting to catch on to what the social media titan is doing with their data. If you didn't know about all this, the NSRA hopes that we've helped you with that somewhat and pointed you in the right direction.

Whatever Facebook alternative you go with, always be wary of how your personal data is collected and used. Read the privacy policy thoroughly of any social media network you use, and be careful about what sort of information you make available there. If you are unsure, the best policy is to keep sensitive information off your online social profiles.



10 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU JOIN A MILITIA

If you are a prepper, survivalist or even a homesteader, the thought may have crossed your mind to join a militia. After all, the way they are depicted in Hollywood makes them seem so large and in charge. One of the most extreme examples of this is depicted in Netflix's recent offering, "Manhunt: Deadly Games," which showed a large North Carolina militia group helping serial bomber Eric Rudolph elude authorities for five years while hiding out in the wilderness.

THE TROUBLE WITH HOLLYWOOD

The movie and TV industry often make their money by making events much more interesting than they actually are. Such is the case with "Manhunt," and the creative minds behind the show took many liberties with the truth. For instance, there is no evidence that anyone helped Eric Rudolph while he hid out in cabins, caves and campsites, or scavenged food from restaurant and grocery store dumpsters to survive.

did exist in the area, indicating that there were people who sympathized with the man who set off two bombs in Atlanta and a bomb in Birmingham in the late 90s.

MILITIAS ARE EVERYWHERE

Militias aren't unique to the U.S., and almost every country has some form of one. At face value, joining a militia seems like a perfect way to meet and interact with others who likely share the same interests. They also provide the opportunity to pick up the skills needed in combat and an outlet to practice these same skills within a group. Many militia groups claim they have strict membership requirements and say that they require members to go through a background check. However, you can't say with utter certainty how stringent this screening process really is because each group is very different.

14 However, bumper stickers that read "Run Eric Run"

MILITIAS MAKING THE NEWS



The idea to write this article about the militia came to my mind before the Capitol Riot on January 6. As I was writing the introduction, a family member called me and told me to check out the news and there it was: The Storming of the U.S. Capitol by right-wing extremists. “Oh, that’s not good,” I thought as I watched hordes of people scale the Capitol’s walls.

As to why I thought it wasn’t good, it may not be for the reasons you think. I figured they might be tied to a militia, but as with most lone wolves, they probably didn’t represent the true values these groups hold dear. Of course, the media would make it seem like they were, which can potentially cause trouble for the law-abiding ones. That’s the downside of it all.

In case you haven’t noticed, the media often tends to portray the militia, along with preppers, survivalists and gun owners in a very bad light. “Certainly, what the Capitol rioters did will set them back,” I thought to myself. It’s as if news outlets and Tinsel Town get the biggest kick out of painting a nutty picture of them, whether warranted or not. Hey, whatever sells the papers or gets the clicks, even if it is an embellishment or a downright lie.

THE MILITIA CONNECTION

Known as “Buffalo Boy,” “QAnon Shaman,” “Q Shaman” and “Yellowstone Wolf,” Jake Chansley instantly became the poster boy of the Capitol riot on Jan 6 when he donned a fur hat with horns, slapped on some American-flag inspired face paint, and whooped it up for the press and smartphone cameras while stomping around in Nancy Pelosi’s office.

Buffalo boy wasn’t a militia member, as far as we know. Nevertheless, he may be forever associated with them for a very long time, and this article largely

explains the reasons why. To explain, another capital rioter who said he has militia ties spoke out when he was arrested during the DC chaos. The man, Leonard Guthrie of Cape May, New Jersey, didn’t participate in storming the Capitol but, instead, crossed a police line.



Guthrie was arrested the day of the riot and charged with unlawful entry. He said the protesters who stormed the building were stupid and that how they acted was not what the protests were all about. It wasn’t about kicking doors,” he said, emphasizing he didn’t believe Trump incited the violence.

In some of his public posts, Guthrie talks about the purported threat of Antifa writing, “We may be called tinfoil hat groups, but I’ll wear my tinfoil knowing my family and militia family is ready just in case.”

There it is – the militia connection. All the crazies were lumped in with the sane ones that day. People that subscribe to the militia connection notion argue that any group that calls themselves a member of

a militia is almost certainly radical, violent and racist. They also argue that militias are hell-bent on overthrowing the government vs. being a bulwark against the threat of tyranny as they were originally meant to be. It can all be pretty confusing.

GETTING TO THE TRUTH

If you want to know whether or not to join a militia organization, you must get past all the smoke and mirrors popular culture and the media have put in place about them. You need to get at the root of what they really are and what they stand for. In other words, what is the militia, truly, once you get past the BS? To find out the answer to that question, we have to dust off our history books and go back to the beginning.

FACT SHEET: WHAT IS A MILITIA?



In broad terms, a militia is a body of citizens enrolled for military service and called out periodically for drills. They are supposed to only serve full-time in case of emergencies. The basis of needing a military has historical precedence, and it was actually an important aspect of forming our nation.

Our founding fathers went so far as to plan for the necessity of a well-regulated militia, and they outlined this in the Second Amendment to the Bill of Rights. They reasoned that a militia could one day be necessary to the security of a Free State.

In other words, we might need to rally our own defensive forces to step in and defend us from tyranny from mobs and the government if the SHTF. At that time, each state was responsible for forming and maintaining its militias. State Militias still exist, but they are nothing like the forces they once were.

GOVERNMENT MILITIAS VS. PRIVATE MILITIAS



Federal and state laws formally recognize a militia as all able-bodied residents between certain ages who may be called forth by the government to defend the U.S. or an individual state. That definition is not to be confused with unauthorized, private militias that aren't sanctioned by the government. The two groups are pretty much apples and oranges, but the latter is what we are discussing when talking about whether or not you would want to join a militia.

Militias not called forth by government organizations are often referred to as the “unorganized militias” or “unlawful militias.” Almost all belong to the “patriot movement,” a broad coalition of organizations that share a resentment of the U.S. government. Also, most of them have a disdain for politicians they believe are interfering with the second amendment and their right to bear arms.

These unorganized, private militias are defined as private groups of armed individuals that participate in law enforcement functions or paramilitary activity without being called forth or otherwise sanctioned for duty by the federal government or governor. And when a private militia tries to activate itself for duty, independent of the authority of the state or federal government, they are considered illegal entities.

SO, WHY ARE THEY ALLOWED TO EXIST?



Despite all 50 states outlawing private paramilitary activity, the law is seldom enforced. They are left alone, for the most part, unless they behave in ways that warrant unwanted suspicion. Those who form militia organizations cite the constitution and various references in state and federal law as granting them legality. They are even given subtle nods at times by conservative politicians, who know that militia members may be a part of their political base and may vote for them and influence others to do the same.

Former President Trump didn't condemn militia members during his term, and when Republican congressional candidate Marjorie Taylor Greene and Senator Kelly Loeffler pushed their way into the crowd at a rally in Ringgold, GA last year, they were escorted by heavily armed militia members. The group mentioned is the Georgia III% Martyrs, a newly organized private militia that is among 20 active private militias in the state. Greene later posed for photos with the militia members.

However, this article isn't a deep dive into what the words our founders sacrificed so much for or political grandstanding; it's about learning what private militias are and what they stand for.

Most militias envision themselves and operate themselves as legally legitimate organizations, while other more radical organizations ascribe to the

“insurrection theory,” a philosophy that describes the right to rebel against the government in cases of tyranny. In other words, militia members believe they are the last line of defense against a tyrannical federal government. And the federal government is a much more powerful entity now than it was back in the days of our founding fathers.

ARE MILITIAS VIOLENT?



Two of the biggest militia incidents that happened recently were the Bunkerville standoff and another standoff in Oregon. In the first case, hundreds of militia members ran federal officials off a rancher's land because they believed the federal government was there to seize their cattle. In the second case, militia members took over a wildlife refuge and protested the fed's interference in rancher's lives.

Both incidents were about government overreach, and a judge even dismissed the case against the Nevada ranch hand at the center of the Bunkerville standoff with prejudice, meaning the case can never be tried again.

These violent scenarios and the appearance of heavily armed groups at BLM protests recently suggest a strong and direct link between militia membership and violence. On the whole, lone wolves, or solo extremists that are more dangerous than their organized patriot entirety, typically are the ones that perpetrate violent acts.

INSURRECTION THEORY AND WATCH LISTS

Going back to Leonard Guthrie's case, it's probably safe to assume he had the insurrection theory in mind when he quipped in true gotcha fashion that he, his family and militia family were at the ready should Antifa decide to get a little rowdy.

Unfortunately, such radical statements can get you on the radar. And, yes, egging on Antifa can be considered quite radical to many, especially when it comes to government watchdog groups. We'll discuss that in more depth later.

SHOULD YOU JOIN OR AVOID A MILITIA?



Suppose you are an average person who is worried about the way things are going and want to be involved with like-minded people who are ready to defend the group if necessary. After researching, you come across a militia force with members that participate in paramilitary training. Furthermore, the members are mainly ex-military veterans that train and practice in preparation for TEOTWAWKI events like you do with your family. That sounds, good so where do you sign up, right? Not so fast; for whatever reason you are thinking about joining a militia, you need to ask yourself some questions before making a decision you may come to regret.

Some militia organizations can be kind of dodgy about answering questions, too, so consider that as a potential red flag. Reluctance, of course, can simply mean they are being selective or membership has swelled to capacity. Then again, it can mean they have something to hide.

After you get your questions answered, research, research and then research some more. The difference in being informed can mean the difference between being in a militia group that can help you when the SHTF and being in one that does crazy stuff like the Wolverine Watchmen, who, if you'll remember, are the ones whose members allegedly plotted to kidnap (and probably kill) Michigan Mayor Gretchen Wilmer last year. Also, there is the leader of a New Mexico militia group who allegedly boasted he had plans to take out former President Barack Obama. Yikes!

If you don't want to get caught up in those kinds of tangled webs, here are 10 questions you should get answered before joining a militia:

1. What are members' backgrounds? – Is this militia made up of former military group members or regular people who feel compelled to act and preserve the rights and liberties we still have? If they are former military, what role did they play in the service? What was their length of service? Where did they serve? Why did they leave the military? Are the group members physically fit or are they grossly overweight? Are you certain they know how to handle firearms enough for you to feel comfortable around them? Are the members mature, or are they just Special Forces wannabees with all the gear and no real concept of how to really use it?

2. Does this militia group share my values? – Do the members of the organization publicly and privately exhibit the values you hold dear? Most groups don't have ethical problems and are pretty upstanding, but you wouldn't want your good values compromised. Do their words and actions line up with your standards of conduct, or do you often find yourself changing yours to fit in with theirs?

3. Why do I want to join a militia? – Have you really given this a lot of thought or is joining a kneejerk reaction because you are angry or frightened? Are you merely looking for fun? If so, there are probably other options.

4. Is this group fairly open or are its details secretive? – Does this militia group have a public website where you can find out about what they believe and what they stand for. If so, you probably encounter fewer surprises. If you can only hazard a guess at why they are together and their principles, it's worth researching the group further.

5. What do they talk about on their own social media pages or in conversations? – You can tell a lot about a person by what they post on Facebook or alt-sites like Parler. Have you researched the group’s old posts? What have they linked to? Do the members’ pages have questionable content on there? Are the conversations with the members rooted in conspiracy & fear, or is the dialog focused on assistance, camaraderie and improvement?

6. Would you feel comfortable bringing your family to a meeting? – Would you feel uncomfortable bringing your family around the militia or is it for “big boys” only? What kind of vibe do you get from them? If you are called into action with this militia, would you trust them with your family’s lives? What do your instincts tell you?

7. Could your membership come back to haunt you if you leave? – Do you feel some militia members might incite hate or violence? Have they already? Could you leave easily with no strings attached if your membership leaves you feeling uncomfortable? If so, what information id you share with this group of armed and trained people that could potentially harm you if used against you?

8. Will I be put on some sort of watch list? – The short answer is that you can most definitely be placed on one if you join certain militias. No matter which group you join, if they are active on social media or, on the internet and have the word militia associated with their actions, you could be placed under scrutiny. Is your desire to join a militia strong enough to have you potentially face questioning by the FBI about your affiliation with them?

9. Are they all Donald Trump supporters? – This is a myth, too, and no doubt, many armed militants were delighted and emboldened by a president who shares their scorn for the federal government. After all, one of his mottos was “draining the swamp [of career politicians].” However, militia members are not all Trump supporters.

10. Am I better off starting a militia of my own? – If you don’t want to join a militia, but daydream about starting your own instead, that

curb some of the unsavory aspects found with lone wolves and militias behaving badly. It would be more headaches, for sure, but if your militia “startup” works out, you could provide great benefits such as teaching people basic first aid, trauma first aid, wilderness survival, vehicle & weapon maintenance, HAM/CB/RTLSDR, food preservation and finance.

Generally, you could start a two meeting a month on Saturday deal where you host adult Boy Scouts events such as creative shooting competitions. For that last part, we recommend requiring memberships.

ALTERNATIVES TO MILITIAS

Private militias can be vital, and the necessary role they can play in defending our country may be critical someday. However, any association with them should be taken with restraint and maturity. Militia organizations are designed for serious business, not for playing GI Joe in the woods.

Additionally, most militias are on the up and up and are serious groups of individuals who are truly working toward making a positive difference. But as you can see, there are plenty of downsides to joining one. Your name and association with seedy types if you join one are things you may not be able to control. Thereby, it is something you may only want to consider carefully.

That doesn’t mean there are not good ways to meet and grow groups of friends who think as you do and can do the same thing militias do. Instead of joining an existing militia, first, try to start organizing your own group of people you know and trust. Rather than skimming the internet for people who say they think like you do, try to engage with people that are already in your social circle.

Start with a friend or two who can meet with you and practice any skills that militias do. You’ll have the advantage of not having any baggage associated with militias, and being small and conducting yourself ethically means you likely won’t wind up on a government watch list. Your group can meet regularly and brainstorm your own preparedness plans. You can also train in areas where you need to be able to defend your families.

7 Survival Uses for Aluminum Foil



Necessity, as they say, is the mother of invention. In a SHTF situation, where supplies are severely limited, necessity appears just about everywhere you look. That means that knowing a multitude of survival hacks is the mother lode of problem solving...

Ideally, your survival stockpile should be filled with what we call hyper-multipurpose items like duct-tape, hydrogen peroxide, and of course aluminum foil.

Aluminum foil falls in right behind duct tape and bailing wire in terms of usefulness. We've compiled a list of 7 unusual uses for the stuff. If you get creative, we're sure you could think of dozens more uses for this very flexible stuff.

1. Fix Battery Connections

If one of your battery powered gadgets is only working intermittently, that could mean you have a loose battery connection. Springs can lose tension after a period of time, which allows your batteries to bounce around inside and lose contact. To fix this problem get a small piece of aluminum foil fold it until it is thick enough to fill the slack.

2. Makeshift Frying Pan

You can use an aluminum foil to make a frying pan in case you need to cook a meal, but you don't have anything to cook on. Making an improvised frying pan using aluminum foil is easy: all you need is aluminum foil and two large sticks. Wrap the edges of aluminum foil around the sticks and voila! You now have a frying pan.

3. Keep Your Bedroll Dry

Wet bedding materials can really put the kibosh on your much-needed sleep. To protect your sleeping bag from rain or morning dew, put some heavy-

duty aluminum foil under your sleeping bag, or even drape it on top (the dew will form on the foil instead of your bag).

4. Keep Tinder/Matches Dry

This one's simple. To keep your matches and tinder dry, wrap them with aluminum foil and crimp your tinder pack tightly at the edges.

5. Lure a Fish

Many species of fish are attracted to shiny objects. Wrap some aluminum foil around your fishing line or construct a makeshift foil lure near your hook. The reflective foil lure around your hook will entice fish to strike.

6. Make a Funnel



When you need a funnel but you don't have one or can't find one, use an aluminum foil to make a funnel. Get some aluminum foil then roll it until you get the proper shape.

7. Trail Marker

You can use aluminum foil to signal for help by placing pieces of aluminum foil in the branches of a tree or just by simply holding it up.





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