



MEMBERS UPDATE

February 2022

TIPS FOR SURVIVING A TORNADO

Defensive Shotgun Shells

Guide to Being the Gray Man

Survival Rifles From Air Force Conception
To The Civilian AR-7 Model

NEXT ISSUE: Top 5 Tactical Knives for 2022



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Defensive Shotgun Shells

The idea that the biggest size will always overcome the odds has been disproven many times, so what are the best defensive shotgun rounds for you? When it comes to shotgun shells, you will have a greater variety of loads and lead to sling, even in a smaller gauge, than one would have with a handgun so let's unpack what's best for when.



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Survival Rifles From Air Force Conception to the Civilian AR-7 Model

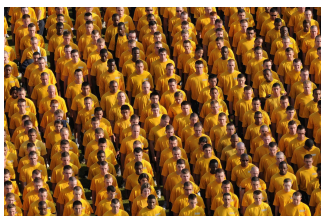
During World War Two, the U.S. Military didn't have standard issue survival weaponry within its inventory. The desire to give downed aircrews a fighting chance behind the lines necessitated the need for a compact weapon that could be used not only for small-game hunting but also for last ditch self defense measures while on the dodge from enemy soldiers. The military asked and the citizen gun-maker responded in fine style as revealed here.



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Tips for Surviving a Tornado

Since the US has the largest number of tornadoes per year, it makes sense to stay prepared. For the most part, the National Weather Service does a fantastic job of predicting storms. However, when it comes to tornadoes, there's really no way to know for certain whether they'll form until it's almost too late. On the plus side, we've shared a couple of things you can keep an eye out for.



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Guide to Being the Gray Man

Reveal why you should choose to be the gray man and enjoy top tips for becoming one. Learn how to look, act, move, and carry gear as the gray man. We'll cover the rules, the pros, and what the gray man is and isn't to make sure we've got you covered.

NEXT ISSUE: Top 5 Tactical Knives for 2022



DEFENSIVE SHOTGUN SHELLS: THE HEAVY HITTERS AND THEIR LESS THAN LETHAL ALTERNATIVE

BY ERIC AUSTGEN

As a homeowner, you take great pride in the place that you live. Whether it be a new home, cute little fixer upper, or inheriting the old family home, your domicile is your castle and the thought and very act of the violation of that “sanctus sanctum” is enough to turn your stomach. Preparation for such events will turn that fear of the unknown into a confident assurance that any home invasion will be dealt with in a most expeditious manner. We’ll take a look at some of the most effective shotgun gauges and loads for interior home use and also non-lethal rounds for when the mob gathers outside.

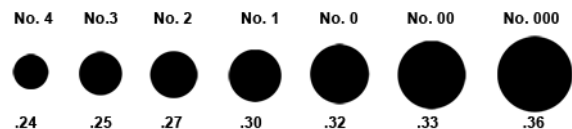


Shotshell Chart. LtoR- .410, 28Ga, 16Ga, 20Ga, 12Ga, and 10Ga

SO, WHAT GAUGE TO USE?

I’m sure you’ve heard the tired saying “go big or go home” at one point or another. It’s usually offered as a piece of advice at times where it doesn’t apply nor is it helpful to the situation, and often by someone who has made questionable life choices. The idea that a grandiose size will always overcome the odds has been disproven many times. David and Goliath could be considered a benchmark for this type of thinking. When it comes to shotgun shells, you will have a greater variety of loads and

lead to sling, even in a smaller gauge, than one would have with a handgun. Gauges of shells are measured in the same way as I.V. or professional piercing needles, the smaller the number the bigger the load and the recoil that comes with it. The most common sizes available include: 10, 12, 16, 20, and 28 gauge. Although not entirely rare, 10 and 16 gauge are still manufactured but not nearly as popular as the 12 gauge and, to an extent, the 20 gauge. As they are purposefully loaded as such, 12 gauge shells have been favored as the go to for home shotgun defense, but ultimately it will be down to your own research and what you think you can possibly handle in terms of weapon size and recoil. A 12 gauge is also the smallest that can be handled without risk of knocking your shoulder off. The 10 gauge will pack quite a punch but the recoil will diminish as you go higher in gauges. The .410 is classified as a round since it is measured in caliber, however it’s still considered to be a shotshell due to its plastic shell construction and delivery system.

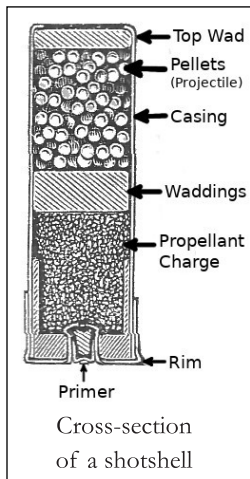


Size chart for buckshot

IT’S RAINING LEAD! HALLELUJAH!

When I was growing up, guns were never romanticized in our house. Oh sure, I was outside every Saturday with my friends playing cowboys

and Indians or war, blazing away at each other with our cap guns, pretending to die hundreds of times, but we were kids and we knew it was all fun and games. When it came to the real thing, my father and all the males of the family were deadly serious about the subject. Outside of revisiting gun safety rules every time we went shooting, I was taught to understand that a gun was nothing more than a tool, a tool whose only function is to destroy. But a destruction to be used only to defend life and put meat on the table. These tools are like any other and come in different varieties to choose from for whatever task is at hand. With the minor exception of the .357 Magnum/.38 Special and the .45 Colt/.410 shotshell pairings, one is limited to relying on a single caliber for self defense. So, it really was a no-brainer to use what is traditionally a hunting and sporting gun and its loads as a defense weapon. Buckshot is the preferred load used for defensive rounds as birdshot will just irritate someone. Buck comes in the following sizes: #4/.24, #3/.25, #2/.27, #1/.30, #0/.32, #00/.33, and #000/.36 and are most often made of lead, however it can also be lead covered with steel, tungsten, bismuth, or copper. Virtually all of them can cause cancer, at least, according to the folks in charge of California.



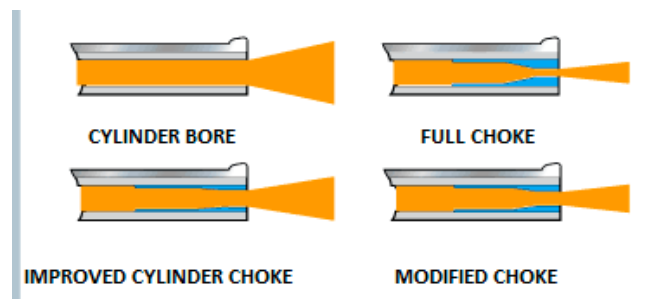
The amount of pellets in a shell will depend on the length of the shell. Generally, 12 gauge shells employed for defense are 2 3/4", and the length is measured before crimping of the shell. How much buck of an effective size that you can fit into the shell will also dictate your choice. A 2 3/4" shell will usually hold 8-9 pellets of 00 and 0 with a max of 12, 12- 16 pellets of

#1 and #2, and 21-28 pellets of #3 and #4 buck. Now with the sizes and amount of pellets packed in these shells firmly in mind, you can begin to conceptualize the type of damage that could be wrought by some of these loads.

VELOCITY AND LOAD PERFORMANCE

As with handguns, the powder charge and weight of lead in your shotshells will dictate the speed at which your projectile(s) cruises along. Too much

and you risk punching a good sized hole through someone and the wall behind them. Too little and it becomes a Looney Tunes cartoon, buckshot stops short of its target and falls to the ground. I kid, of course, but if your velocity isn't cutting the mustard, you will not reach a desirable penetration depth on your target and as putting the threat down permanently is paramount, you want to be very confident the shell you are using will deliver a devastating payload. Loads that have a velocity between 1100 and 1200 fps are often called "low recoil" and more manageable. These types of loads have been used by law enforcement for years and are quite effective in close combat situations. A load of 00 buck with this velocity will penetrate about 18-20 inches into your target, any more velocity and over penetration will become a concern. Use of #1 buck will penetrate 15-18 inches at the same velocity, so this load will be unlikely to go through your threat. You may wish to bulk up your velocity to 1400-1600 fps with your #4 buck loads, due to their smaller size and overall weight. This would be an ideal load for places with shared walls, such as an apartment or townhome, to decrease the chances for total wall penetration when shooting an attacker. The velocity behind the #4 buck- load will be enough to take down an assailant but will still penetrate walls and pose some danger to those behind them if poor marksmanship and a wide shot pattern is in play. When it comes to a proper home defense load, the evidence would suggest #1 buck is ballistically superior to #00. Although their penetration in ballistics gel varies only by inches in depth, both are very well suited to the job of keeping you and yours safe. The only problem is that #1 buck loads are not as popular as their #00 cousins and unless you are a reloader, are rather difficult to find.



Shotgun Choke Chart

SPREADING YOUR LEAD

The proper pattern of your shot is another thing to consider when planning for home defense. Many shotguns come equipped with either a replaceable or fixed choke set in the barrel. The replaceable ones allow you to change tubes and thus the spray pattern of your buckshot. Ones with a fixed choke don't have that luxury so you're basically stuck with the factory settings. An alternative would be to have a gunsmith replace the fixed choke for an interchangeable choke system, but not many people have the time, nor cash on hand, to pay for competent services or do it themselves. The chokes function is to tighten patterns and allow for shooting at a distance, which is more for sport shooting and hunting. However, a choke will be necessary for home defense in order to keep drywall repair and collateral damage to a bare minimum. The cylinder or open choke is generally preferred in a home or close quarter situation. This choke spreads the shot openly at a greater diameter, meaning you will have multiple points of penetration spanning the target's center mass, instead of unloading all your buck in one place. For those of you who prefer a tight pattern, then a full choke would be recommended as it makes the spread pattern more restrictive. Both chokes will be disastrous to any criminal unfortunate to be looking down the barrel, but you will need to take careful aim with a full choke because of its use in long distance shooting. Cylinder chokes negate the need for aiming at close distances since the shot pattern immediately spreads out, leaving the assailant absorbing the full load of buck. Another advantage to the cylinder choke is being able to shoot all shot shell loads available, slug, bird, and buck shot. A trip to the range will determine what loads and choke are right for you. Experimenting with both of these variables at predetermined distances will give you a precise idea of where you need to be in relation to the predator for the shot to count. This experiment is one worth having fun with and if you are tired of shredding paper targets, there are a great many sites on the internet and some YouTube videos that have recipes for homemade ballistics gel. In all, you will get some range time, be better prepared, and gain a greater appreciation and understanding of what firearm projectiles will do to soft tissue; a fun time will be had by all!



Bean bag "Less Than Lethal" shotshell used for riot control

CONTROLLING CROWDS AND SENDING AN IMPACTFUL MESSAGE

Since the interior defense of the manor has been addressed, we can now move on to what to use, in conjunction with lethal rounds, when the "peaceful protestors" show up in the neighborhood with the bricks and Molotov's. The exact origins can not be properly nailed down, however, the concept of the less than lethal shotgun shell can be traced back to the 20's and the ensuing unrest caused by Prohibition, The Great Depression, and the "Bonus Army" march on D.C.. Well known ammo manufacturer, Peters, designed a shotshell made of brass with a paper wrapped front adapted for use in the Thompson Submachine gun. The birdshot filled shells were used in riot control and when used with the "Tommy" Gun's modified 50-round drum magazine, the user could fire bursts of stinging birdshot into a charging crowd, thereby dispersing the gaggle, without risking serious life threatening injuries. The bean bag round was developed, along with rubber projectiles, during the unpleasantness in Northern Ireland. The larger bean bag idea of this round was shrunk down to manageable size for the 12 gauge and has been employed by law enforcement for crowd control. The only downside to this shotshell is that it does not cycle well in semi-auto pump action and must be fired from a retooled shotgun. Rubber bullet and solid slug projectiles have been found to be lethal in certain circumstances, depending, of course, on the density and weight, and have either been discontinued or scaled back in use by some agencies. The majority of commercial "less than lethal" rounds are loaded with rubber shot comparable in size to its deadlier

lead relative, although there are some loads on the market that have solid slug projectiles bearing the same weight as some handgun rounds and all carry disclaimers that particular projectile can cause death in certain circumstances, but have been made to inflict blunt force trauma and corresponding pain to the individual and, hopefully, incapacitate them.



“Less Than Lethal” shotshell with rubber buckshot load

BRINGING THE FAVORS TO THE PARTY

If you own a firearm of any sort, then you obviously love things that give off one helluva roar and a little fire spitting to boot. Many ammunition and firearms dealers supply a rather nifty line of “less than lethal” shotshells that have a very “shock and awe” value to them that will leave a lasting impression. Currently on the market is a flash-bang round giving off a deafening 182dB explosive coupled with a flash producing 1.5-2 million candle power and generating overpressures of 1.5- 2 ATM’s, which is 22-29.4 PSI of air pressure and then decreases. So if your personality doesn’t suck the air out of the room, there is ordnance readily available to do just that for you. Another neat little shotshell that is bound to irritate and annoy the unruly pitchfork and torch bearers, is basically pepper spray delivered via firearm. This little honey gives a generous cloud of cayenne pepper that will cause irritation to the eyes and respiratory tract, incapacitating the threat, allowing you to safely escape. Just make sure you don’t pop this round off if it’s a particularly windy day or if your target is upwind of you. Confined space or home interior use is not recommended for either of these shot shells as you are risking a fire and injury from the flash bangs and accidental inhalation from the pepper spray. All of you who find yourself at an age where you have become your parents, myself included, will be delighted to know that rock salt shotshells are still available and ready for all those

damn kids who won’t get off the lawn. I jest, but these loads are just right for good sized varmints and critters to give them a good welt and some pain enough to make them reconsider coming around your property again. Rock salt loads should only be used in breech loading single and double barreled shotguns due to lousy cycling and the salt residue isn’t something you want screwing up your pump action receiver and barrel. It should be noted here that you should always check your local statutes concerning purchase and possession of these “less than lethal” shells; this only applies to citizens living outside Alaska, California, Hawaii, Massachusetts, New York, and Washington D.C.. These states absolutely restrict sale and possession and all cities in Illinois, with the exception of Chicago, require the purchaser to hold a FOID card.



Flintlock Blunderbuss

REBOOTING THE BLUNDERBUSS

For those of you who like to push the envelope and see just what you can put down a shotgun barrel, there are some websites and YouTube videos that have people loading some of the oddest things into shotshells. Copper wires deployed as death giving flechettes, a rolled up strip of lead slug that unfurls slightly to give a little extra penetration and aids catastrophic wounding, “armor piercing” steel darts, slugs designed like hollow-point handgun ammo to mushroom upon impact, and the “bolo” and “cheese cutter” loads, which are basically a piece of buckshot attached at each end of a length of wire (the “bolo”) and a piece of wire with buckshot attached at different intervals (the “cheese cutter”). Certainly bizarre and imaginative loads, but very effective if ever used against an attacker, subject to local law, of course.

Hopefully you and your family will never have to face the nightmare of a home invasion, but with the employment of some of the shotgun ammunition discussed here, you will increase your families odds of survival with proper training and the load to get the job done. So, until next time, dear reader, stay safe and let’s be careful out there.

SURVIVAL RIFLES: FROM AIR FORCE CONCEPTION TO THEIR CIVILIAN COUNTERPARTS

BY ERIC AUSTGEN

It's no secret that the U.S. Military is well known for having some of the coolest toys that go kaboom and pew-pew. Short of nuclear weapons, the MOAB is an excellent piece of ordnance to use when leaving a calling card for cave-dwelling terrorists or just to scare the hell out of the neighborhood. Mid-Range weapons, such as jet mounted missiles and cannon, howitzer, and gatling gun equipped C-130's, are just the ticket for swatting away annoying enemy planes and ground troops. The traditional workhorse of war-faring nations has always been small arms and it is these types of weapons, developed with the ingenuity of America's firearm pioneers, that have faithfully served all branches of our armed forces since their respective inception. The desire to give downed aircrews a fighting chance behind the lines necessitated the need for a compact weapon that could be used not only for small-game hunting but also for last ditch self defense measures while on the dodge from enemy soldiers. The military asked and the citizen gun-maker responded in fine style.



Air Crews Are Vital For Victory
YOUNG MEN, 18 TO 26 INCLUSIVE, CAN BE
AVIATION CADETS FOR AIR CREW TRAINING
AS BOMBARDIERS, NAVIGATORS AND PILOTS.
APPLY AT ANY U. S. ARMY RECRUITING AND INDUCTION STATION

KEEP EM FLYING AND SAFE

During World War Two, the U.S. Military didn't have standard issue survival weaponry within its inventory. Aircrews had to make due with the 1911 Colt or .38 Smith and Wesson revolver to cover every eventuality when shot down. Even though most areas of engagement within the European and Pacific Theater of Operations were lousy with combatants and the chances of being captured outweighed foraging situations, training in behind the lines tactics focused more on escape and evasion techniques with a pinch of survival thrown into the mix. There are exceptions, of course, to the crowded combat areas, namely the Arctic, North African desert, and the thousands of small islands littering the South Pacific, places in which a stowable rifle would give an airman a fighting chance against the enemy and elements. It was during the postwar game analysis that the air force decided it needed a break down or foldable weapon to place in the survival packs installed underneath each seat on its fighters and bombers. America's capable and storied armory, Springfield, was handed the task of designing this weapon. They inspected many civilian model hunting rifles and drew up specifications for a bolt action rifle chambered in .22 with a folding or collapsible stock, removable barrel, and magazine fed.

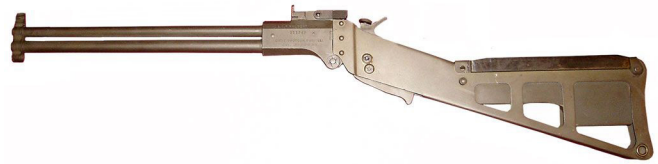


H&R M4 Survival Rifle

CIVILIAN CONTRACTORS SWING INTO ACTION

The Harrington and Richardson Firearms Manufacturers of Worcester, Massachusetts were given the contract to produce the survival rifle by the Pentagon in 1949. The company itself was founded in 1871 by Gilbert Harrington after inventing his version of a top break shell-ejecting revolver. In order to develop his invention and make it a reality, he brought on William Richardson. Together they produced finely made pistols and

shotguns of superior design and function. Their reputation led to their wartime contribution of the M-1 Garand, a weapon of unquestioned repute that earned its place amongst the weapons achieving battlefield supremacy during the world war. The only failing was the distinct “ping” sound heard when the empty 8-round clip was ejected, alerting the enemy that it was re-load time for the Americans and attack time for them. H&R was later sold to the Marlin Company in the 2000's, but not before introducing the military world to a very utilitarian weapon that would change the approach to survival in hostile and not so hostile real world situations. This weapon was designated as the Type M-4 Survival Rifle. It was a basic affair following close to specs and was nothing more than a stripped down M265 bolt-action hunting rifle made by H&R at the time. The top and bottom receiver were fitted into a sheet metal frame that had slots in the bottom to accommodate the trigger guard and opening to the magazine well. The 14” barrel unscrewed to facilitate storage. To the frame, a skeleton pistol grip and adjustable telescoping wire shoulder stock were added, the stock being akin to the ones found on M3 “Grease” guns. The detachable box magazine held five rounds of .22 Hornet. The overall length, with extended stock, came in at 32”. In all, 29,344 of these puppies were delivered to the air force and were supplemented in the mid- Fifties by the M5/M6.



Ithaca M6 Over/Under .22-410 Survival Rifle/Shotgun

MILITARY LEAVES COMFORT ZONE; TRIES VARIETY

The Springfield Armory was once again behind the design of the next survival rifle and did a little borrowing on their part to obtain it. The M5/M6 was loosely inspired by the Marble Game Getter, a light over-under barreled handgun with skeleton stock made by Marble Arms in Gladstone, Michigan. The unique feature to this weapon was the fully contained break top breech loading system that prevented sand and debris from entering but allowed

quick and easy cleaning, and relieved the headache of clearing a bolt-action from the same gritty affliction. The M/5 was the earliest design and made by Harrington and Richardson. When Springfield finalized plans for the “Aircrew Survival Rifle Type M/6”, the production contract was given to Ithaca, a name synonymous with quality in handgun, rifle and shotgun manufacture. Ithaca was the perfect choice for making the M6, they had the facilities and know-how to throw it all together and make, what one would view as a drab spartan looking metal blob, into a classic piece of firearm eye candy. The marriage of an upper rifled barrel and lower smoothbore shotgun barrel gave the downed crewman a choice in small game hunting ammo, .22 Hornet and .410 shotshell. This choice was made through a firing pin selector built into the hammer. Because of Strategic Air Command’s main area of operations occurring in the arctic during the “Cold War”, pun totally intended, the M6 eliminated the traditional trigger and replaced it with a trigger bar recessed into the underside of the handgrip of the butt stock. This was so the weapon could be used when mittens or gloves were worn. To engage the hammer, one simply squeezed the bar releasing the sear, firing the weapon in a single-action fashion. The barrel was still 14” and fixed to the breech due to the loading method. Packaging inside seat survival kits was accomplished by either removing the hinge pin connecting the barrels to the frame/stock or breaking the breech and folding the weapon in half. The butt stock had a plastic compartment built into it that held 9 rounds of .22 and 4 rounds of .410 and space for a small oiler.



Eugene Stoner's AR-5 .22 Hornet Survival Rifle

ARMALITE'S ALMOST STUNNING DEBUT

While the M/6 was enjoying its “in case of emergency” service in the skies over the United States, a man was toiling away on a survival rifle design specifically for the XB-70 nuclear strike bomber that sadly, for him, never came to fruition.

Eugene Stoner was chief engineer for the ArmaLite Division of the Fairchild Aircraft Company and was tasked with designing a new type of survival weapon for a revolutionary type of bomber. The AR-5/MA-1 was a 14” barreled, bolt-action rifle with an eight round detachable box magazine. It was chambered in .22 Hornet as was its predecessors, but where it deviated from previous designs was its ability for the user to break the weapon down and store the components in a butt stock that could float. At the time the bomber contract had been cancelled, only 12 AR-5/MA-1's had been delivered to the air force inventory. This was a minor setback for ArmaLite as they went back and fiddled with the design, lengthening the barrel to get around NFA regulations and successfully entering the civilian gun market as the go to compact survival gun, truly a must have for backwoods adventurers and a welcome asset in your car, should you break down or find yourself imperiled in nature. The AR-7 and its design variants have been in continuous production since 1959 and made by companies such as ArmaLite, Survival Arms, Charter Arms, and currently, Henry arms. Stoner had a string of AR designs that never saw production but would achieve legendary status as a visionary firearms designer and take his place in history with giants like John Browning and Mikhail Kalashnikov. The weapon that secured his place was the AR-15. The most popular and harangued privately owned firearm to ever exist, a design that was monkeyed around with by Colt and introduced to the military as the Type M-16.



Colt GUU-4/P .221 Fireball Bullpup SMG

THE MILITARY LOOKS TO A CIVILIAN COLONEL

Towards the end of the Vietnam War, survival rifles were being phased out of service. The brass at the Pentagon reasoned that air search and rescue was much more efficient in plucking downed aircrew from their positions within a matter of minutes or

hours, depending, of course, on location and that a safe extraction zone could be set up or found. Another well known secret is that politicians don't actually actively participate in the wars they send people to fight in, so it's no surprise that American airmen from all branches began carrying their own personal handguns and modified shotguns and rifles. The most popular handgun carried was the .357 Magnum with hollow-point rounds. This was war and the guys fighting it didn't give a tinker's damn about Hague Convention restrictions on certain ammo or any objection from top brass. Colt showed up to the party and submitted 5 prototypes of a firearm called the "Individual Multi-Purpose Weapon", the GUU-4/P per military nomenclature, and the IMP-221 to everyone else. It was a bullpup sub machine-gun chambered in .221 Fireball and had an overall length of 13 inches and effective range of up to 300 feet. Sights were placed at the 10, 12, and 2 O'clock positions of the barrel in order to accommodate the rotating pistol grip and trigger housing placed underneath the barrel and about 1-2 inches to the rear of the muzzle. The grip could either remain in the neutral position or be rotated 38 degrees to the left or right for ease of use. The 10 or 30 round detachable box mag was housed in the stock of the weapon, which rested on the shooter's forearm, instead of shoulder, while firing. The gas operated weapon fired from a closed bolt in semi and full-auto mode, with an inertia type rate reducer to handle the 500 round per minute rate of fire.



Bushmaster Armpistol 5.56mm

AMERICA'S ORIGINAL DIVERSITY: THE FREE ENTERPRISE OPERATION

The spirit of healthy competition led to Gwinn Firearms taking the original design and tweaking it around. The new model of the "Individual Multi-Purpose Weapon" was a stunted bullpup pistol that

had many features identical to the issue infantry weapon of the day, the M-16. The rotating lock bolt head, barrel, flash suppressor, grip, trigger housing, magazine, and lower mag well, all look suspiciously familiar. Gwinn had been manufacturing this semi-auto version of the GUU-4/P for the civilian world after the air force passed on the Colt prototypes in '72. The Bushmaster Armpistol was 20.63 inches long and chambered for 5.56. The air force took delivery of very limited quantities of this firearm and one of the few remaining examples can be found, along with the Colt GUU-4/P, at the Eglin Air Force Base Museum and National Firearms Museum. Even though the military never picked these weapons up for full-time production, it allowed for the civilian contractors it dealt with to re-think firearms design and thereby attract new customers with the "outside of the box" thinking valued by firearms collectors and sport shooters. Bushmaster continued to build a commercial model in semi-auto and after production ceased in 1988, they made a very lucrative move to producing firearms based on the AR design.



GAU5/A Aircrew Self Defense Weapon Ready To Stow

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Fresh from extricating itself from a long brutal war resulting in 58,220 Americans dead, still unaccounted for POW/MIA's, and untold numbers of veterans suffering from the horror of it, the powers that be wanted to do nothing more than to forget its costly mistake and coast blissfully, on fumes, into the malaise of the Carter years. Meanwhile, aircrews were still left to their own devices when it came to self defense behind enemy lines. Service issued weapons were the only ones available for use and very hard to stow anything bigger than a handgun in a fighter cockpit or cramped workspaces on bombers and reconnaissance aircraft. The post Vietnam military had a stick shoved up their keister when it comes to personal ownership and storage of firearms while on post. So, from the Carter to the Trump

Administration, the air force was devoid of any combination survival/self defense weapon and certainly wouldn't have authorized the use of private handguns not approved by the Hague. It wasn't until 2019 that a weapon, which had been undergoing design for several years previous, was introduced for aircrew use. The GAU-5/A, or "Aircrew Self Defense Weapon", has a folding pistol grip and a quick detach 14.5" barrel/handguard that can be assembled in less than a minute and has an effective range of 660 feet. It's packed in the bail-out kits with four 30 round detachable box mag for the 5.56 round. When it was unveiled in 2019, the plan was for 2,137 to be constructed in house by the U.S. Air Force Gunsmith Shop at Lackland AFB in good ole San Antone. These weapons would be disseminated to all of the current front-line fighters and bombers in the arsenal.



Charter Arms AR-7 Fully assembled

GOOD NEWS FOR CIVILIAN OWNERSHIP

Gun owners are like classic car collectors and admirers. We love the lines, look, functionality, bells and whistles, and the sound they make when used is enough to make one misty with joy. When politicians and their echo chamber army unhinge their jaws, wailing like a banshee and furiously worrying over the reason why anyone would want to own an "assault rifle", they display their aloofness to the way things work and how people operate. The explanation is really quite simple and even a 6 year old could understand. If I wish to own a weapon similar to the type in use by our fighting forces, from any period of history, either because I dig the look of the weapon or just to honor those that carry them to defend our nation, that is my right to do so and you have a long walk scheduled on a short pier. Fortunately for us, there are gun makers that would agree with that assessment and have produced some of the aforementioned weapons for the citizenry. Henry is the only company currently making the AR-7

for mass consumption. Charter and Survival Arms no longer produce this model however they can be picked up for a decent price at gun shows and from private sales. They are generally around the mid-three to four-hundred range, about the same range for the three different choices of Henry's AR-7. Chiappa and TPS Arms both have an excellent version of the M/6 on the market that offer more variety in caliber choices than the air force models. Chiappa offers models chambered in .22 WMR/12ga, .22 LR/12ga, .22 WMR/20ga, and .22 LR/20ga. TPS doesn't pack quite the shotgun power that Chiappa does, but makes it up with a choice of five different cartridges paired with the .410 shotshell. The over barrel can be had in .17 HMR, .22 LR, .22 WMR, .22 Hornet, and .357 Magnum, one model is chambered solely in .410. Not to be outdone, Midwest Industries out of Wisconsin got on the stick and started making a clone of the current issue GAU-5/A. The look and feel is pretty darn close to the original gun but as with all military clone ordnance, it has been civilianized. Retail on this guy is hovering around fifteen hundred greenbacks.



Charter Arms AR-7 broken down for buttstock storage

I encourage you to check these weapons out and consider adding them to your home arsenal, throw one in the backpack when going on a walkabout or stash one in the bug-out bag for when it's time to "get outta Dodge". So, until next time, dear reader, stay safe and let's be careful out there.



TIPS FOR SURVIVING A TORNADO

Because tornadoes can form so quickly, it's imperative to ensure you'll learn about the warning before it hits. There are a few ways to do this, including keeping weather alerts turned on for your phone. Even better, you can turn on a NOAA Weather Radio whenever conditions seem prime for a twister. Additionally, turning on a local TV channel should keep you informed, and you should always listen for tornado sirens.

MAKE A PLAN

Everyone in your family should know what to do when a tornado hits. Make sure even the youngest ones in your household know where to go when a twister is in the forecast. Teach them the best places to take shelter. Also, ensure they know where to go to meet up with you if home is no longer safe.

REMAIN AWARE

If you're in a tornado-prone area, you must never let your defenses down. Always check the weather at the start of the day, and keep a radio turned on in the background. Whenever you hear about a tornado watch, it'll become time to pay even closer attention. As soon as the watch turns into a tornado warning, you'll need to put your tornado preparedness plans into motion.

MOBILE HOMEOWNERS MUST TAKE ACTION

You've read that you must move to a small space in your house. This is true in a regular home, but it can prove to be deadly if you live in a mobile home. The best thing to do if you're in a mobile home is to get out fast. Take shelter in a ditch, get to a neighbor's non-mobile home, etc. DON'T try to ride the storm out inside a mobile home. Approximately half of the people who die from a tornado every year remained in a mobile home, so don't let that become you.

PUT AN EMERGENCY KIT TOGETHER

Some people may wonder why they'd need an emergency kit for a storm that passes through the area so quickly. After all, this isn't like a hurricane that keeps battering your home for an extended period of time. However, it's still imperative to keep an emergency kit together, especially because you don't know how bad the storm will get.

- **Food and Water** – Make sure you have enough non-perishable food to last each member of your family for a minimum of three days. You

should also have at least one gallon of water per day, per person. Be sure to add additional food and water if you have any pets.

- **Prescriptions** – Keep an emergency supply of your medication in your kit. Again, make sure you have enough pills to last a minimum of three days.
- **Home Use Devices** – If you need an asthma inhaler, blood sugar monitor, Epi-pen, or other assistive technology (eyeglasses, contact lenses, walker, wheelchair, hearing aids, etc.), make sure it's in an area where it can be grabbed quickly.
- **First-Aid Kit** – Don't just grab a first-aid kit and consider it to be good. Instead, make sure it's stocked with items you'll need. Consider adding the following: Blood test strips, nasal cannulas, syringes, catheters, antibacterial wipes, antibiotic ointment, scissors and/or tweezers, gauze and waterproof bandages, digital thermometer (with replacement batteries), non-latex gloves, and a first-aid reference card.
- **Infant Supplies** – Be sure to pack some formula for an infant, along with diapers.
- **Learn to Stay Safe** – One thing that Covid has given us is the ability to wash our hands really, really well. This will be important during an extended outage of any type. You may also want to learn how to perform CPR. This could make the difference between life and death.
- **Power Sources** – This is an imperative part of any emergency kit. Include a flashlight and extra batteries. Other items to consider include a refrigerator thermometer, a generator, and a battery-backed up carbon monoxide detector.
- **Warm Blankets** – Whenever you're going to be stranded for a little while, it always makes sense to have warm clothes and blankets. An emergency blanket or a sleeping bag will also help.
- **Paperwork** – Make a copy of your insurance card, vaccination records, birth certificates, etc. and keep it in a locked box. You'll also want your driver's license, passport, and social security card, as well as a copy of any personal care plans.

- **Cash** – Once the tornado passes, it might take a little while to get everything back online. Therefore, keeping some cash with you will help you buy gas and other necessities.

COMMON DOS AND DON'TS OF TORNADO SAFETY



There are some tips for surviving a tornado that may not work as well in practice as they do in theory. Fortunately, we've got this list of do's and don'ts to help you make adjustments, as needed.

Outdoors

DON'T seek shelter under a bridge or near cars or trees. Instead, find a nearby building or lie flat on the lowest ground possible.

Truck or Car

DON'T try to hide under a bridge, even if you're in a car or truck. DO try to drive at a right angle away from the storm. If it's moving too fast, get out of your vehicle and find shelter in a building. Alternatively, lie flat on the lowest ground possible.

School

DON'T try to take shelter in an auditorium or gym. You should follow the instructions of your teacher and go to an interior room or the hallway.

Store or Office Building

DON'T ignore the store or office leader. They are likely to know the building better than you do. DO go to the center of the store to minimize contact with windows.

Condo, Apartment, Dorm Rooms, etc.

DON'T hide in an elevator. This is the easiest way to get trapped. Instead, move away from the windows and make your way to the lowest level. If you're in a high-rise, go to a stairway or hallway located in the middle of the building.

Mobile Homes

DON'T stay in your mobile home. Even if it's tied down for safety, a tornado can destroy it. Find a safer shelter or lie flat down outside.

House – No Basement

DON'T be near windows or glass. Instead, choose an interior hallway or a stairwell, and cover yourself with blankets.

House – With Basement

DON'T go down to the basement and sit underneath heavy objects (think a refrigerator, piano, etc.) on the floor above. They could easily end up squishing you if they fall through the floor. However, DO make sure you use a workbench or heavy table in the basement to protect yourself. If there's nothing big enough to get under, then use blankets.

EXTRA TORNADO TIPS

Now it's time to dig even deeper into what you should do before, during, and after a twister.

Phone List - Before a tornado hits, people usually have approximately 13 minutes of lead time. With this in mind, develop a phone list of up to three people. Call each of them quickly to let them know what's going on.

Avoid Flying Debris – The best way to do this is by covering your entire body with a thick blanket. Additionally, if you have access to a motorcycle or football helmet, be sure to wear it.

Utilities – Turn all your utilities off, especially the gas line.

Never Light a Match – Natural gas tends to fill up certain pockets of the home as a tornado rips through it. Therefore, never, ever light a match. Instead, be sure to have a flashlight.

Exit Carefully – Once the twister ends, you probably think it'll be safe to merely exit your

shelter. You need to be more careful, though. Avoid power lines and watch out for your neighbors.

Check Everyone Over – With shock being such a major factor, never simply take someone's word for it if they say they're fine. Be sure to look them over carefully.

Don't Go in Standing Water – The major issue here is power lines. However, there's also a lot more to fear from standing water, so never go into it.

Never Enter a Damaged Building – Unless you happen to be a structural engineer, steer clear of any building that looks damaged.

Assist the Injured – There may be a lot of people injured. If you're qualified to help them, please do so. If you're not, please call 911.

Mark Your House – Using spray paint to mark your house will be very helpful to first responders. After all, most normal landmarks will probably be gone.

Check Your Entire Home – Is there a big split in the foundation? Has the roof got a hole in it? Are your shutters missing? These are important items to get a feel for. Taking a picture can make it even more obvious what's wrong with your house.

BE CAUTIOUS WITH CELL PHONE USAGE

The odds are high that everyone in your local area will be trying to contact someone. This can easily jam the circuits. As a result, you should be judicious with your time if you need to use your cellphone.

WHAT IS THE STRENGTH OF A TORNADO?



You won't know what type of tornado your area had until after it's over. This means you **MUST** take tornado warnings seriously and put your survival plan in place immediately. After the storm, though, you can learn a lot about what type of peril you were actually in.

EF-0 – These storms include winds that are 65-85 miles per hour. Your neighborhood will receive minor damage such as branches broken, shallow trees being uprooted, damage to siding/gutters, and shingles blown off.

EF-1 – In an EF-1, there will be moderate damage. Winds will blow between 86-110 MPH. Mobile homes will be badly damaged. Windows will be broken, and exterior doors may be lost. There will be more severe damage to the roof.

EF-2 – Considerable damage occurs once the wind speed reaches 111-135 miles per hour. Mobile homes will be completely destroyed. Well-built houses can lose their roofs or be shifted from their foundation. Cars can be tossed, and large trees will be uprooted.

EF-3 – Once the wind reaches 136-165 MPH, the damage will be severe. If your house has a weak foundation, it could be blown away. Significant damage will occur to large buildings. Smaller buildings could have entire floors wiped away.

EF-4 – With winds between 166-200 miles per hour, you're going to be looking at extreme damage. Top story walls of masonry will fall, cars will be thrown a far distance, and well-constructed homes will be destroyed.

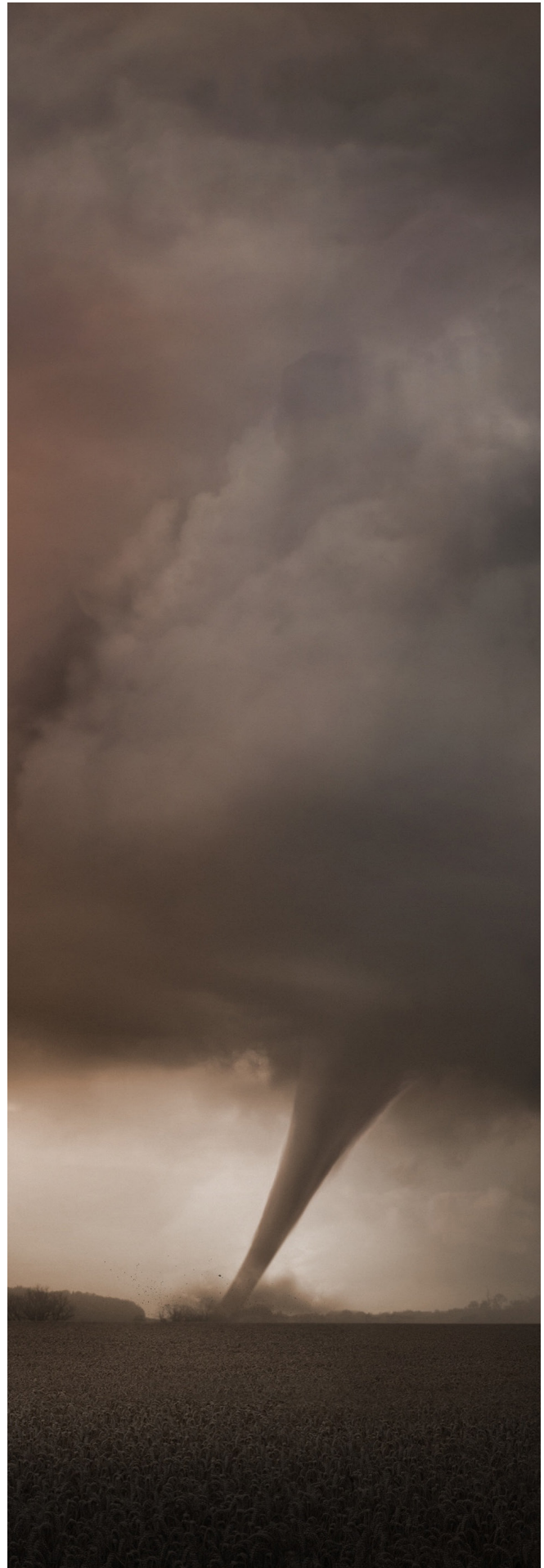
EF-5 – Once the winds exceed 200 MPH, you can expect incredible/massive damage. Trees will be debarked, well-constructed homes are swept away, high-rise buildings are facing severe structural damage, and even steel-reinforced structures will be critically damaged.

As you can see, a tornado has the capacity to out blow a hurricane, so take them very seriously.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Tornadoes are no joke, but some people still choose not to take preparedness measures. Don't be like those people: always be prepared and keep an eye

14 on the skies, especially around 5pm.





GUIDE TO BEING THE GRAY MAN

Take a look at the above photo. Does anyone stand out? If the answer is no, then you've already got a bit of an understanding of what the gray man is. To take it further, though, being a "gray man" means doing your best to blend in. This might sound like bad advice – especially in America where individualism trumps all – but it's actually a good idea if the SHTF.

First, let us say that being a gray man doesn't require actually being a man. Instead, it's a term that encompasses people of every gender and age group. Second, let's take a closer look at what it means to be a gray man.

WHY SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TO BE A GRAY MAN?

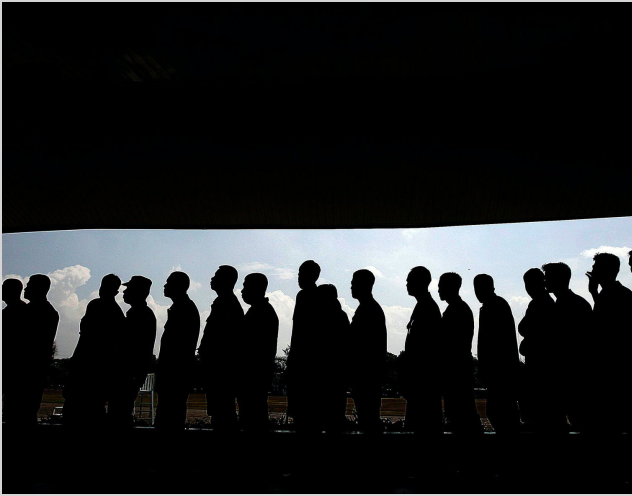
When the SHTF, you've basically got two things you can do. You can either be the gray man or the tactical man. There are pros and cons to both approaches. However, if you're in a crowd when things turn bad, your best bet is to act like everyone else. This means looking confused and scared, even though you're probably not.

The reason you should act like everyone else is so that you don't stick out like a sore thumb. Think about it: there's been a major issue and people are scared out of their minds. They're desperate, and that's bad news for anyone who looks prepared. In fact, looking prepared in a crowd could easily lead to people attacking you.

You've probably got the skills to hold off some of the attackers, but what would you do if twenty or thirty people turned on you at once? Instead of going through this, commit to being a gray man. This will allow you to move through the crowd without being accosted. After all, if you look just like everyone else, why would anyone think to attack you? They're looking for items that can help them survive. And the gray man appears to have zero items.

By not showcasing that you're prepared and know what to do, you should be able to happily blend into the crowd. When it all comes down to it, taking on the persona of a gray man should help you protect yourself and your loved ones.

THE PROS OF BECOMING A GRAY MAN



Once the SHTF, everyone's going to be looking for somewhere to go. You will already have somewhere in mind, but most people won't. The trick is to put aside your natural tendency to help. This may be difficult, but it's the only way to increase your odds of survival. Put your head down, act like others near you, and you'll make it home.

Again, the absolute best way to navigate this situation is to NOT help anyone. As hard as it may be, especially if you see others you know, it's imperative. The more information you give away, the less you'll seem like a gray man. And that can get you into serious trouble.

As long as you can pull this off, the pros of becoming a gray man are abundant. First, and most importantly, by hiding the fact that you're prepared, you'll be in a much better position to protect your family. This should provide you with a relatively easy path home, so that you and your family can bug out together.

This is the essential method behind the theory. Therefore, as long as you make it home, it worked. And that's a pretty big pro right there.

BECOMING A GRAY MAN

Becoming a gray man is easy in theory. The most important thing you can do is not leave an impression on the people around you.

- Becoming a gray man means learning how to blend into your surroundings during a dangerous situation.
- Although it's called being a gray man, anyone can do it. So, whether you're male, female, non-binary, old, middle-aged, or young, you can become the gray man.



TIPS FOR BEING A GRAY MAN

There are a few different tactics that you'll want to get down now. For instance:

- You must be discreet when surveilling an area.
- Wear muted colors, as this will help you blend in.
- Move or walk naturally (or as naturally as possible).
- Leave your military-looking gear at home. This isn't the time to be wearing tactical gear or waving a gun around.
- If you have weapons on you, do not let others see them.
- If you have survival gear on you, hide it.
- If you're walking with a crowd, go with the flow.
- You want to appear as non-threatening and average as possible.

You will want to specifically address four things to become a gray man. How you should move, how you should act, how you should carry any gear, and how you should look.

HOW YOU SHOULD MOVE

The best thing you can do is know your local landmarks. This will give you an advantage when

the SHTF, and it'll also make it easier to avoid hordes of people. However, if you do get stuck in a crowd, you'll need to blend in. This requires not moving with urgency (unless the crowd is doing so, of course).

Rather than showcase your urgency and call attention to yourself, make sure you make gradual progress. This is the easiest way to move to the outer edge of a crowd without attracting attention. Also, always mimic the crowd. This means that if something makes them all turn around and gasp, you should do the same thing.

Breaking away from the crowd will require you to be careful. Are there any smaller groups that are also breaking away? This is ideal, as you can make your escape using them as cover. Don't get too close to them, but don't stay really far away, either. This will convince others you're part of the group, but it's not likely to alert group members.

If you can, wear mirrored sunglasses. Doing this will render your surveillance as innocuous. Of course, if it's nighttime or there's a storm, wearing sunglasses could easily call attention to you. Therefore, only do it when it makes sense to do so.

Use white noises in the area to your advantage. For example, if you must break into a building, be sure to choose one that's got a very loud air conditioner. Alternatively, wait for a loud bus to pass before you break a window.

HOW YOU SHOULD ACT



This step goes far beyond a SHTF scenario. You must make yourself seem harmless, which can take a lot of prep work. A good starting point is to keep any antagonistic ideas to yourself. You can be heavily political, for instance, without letting others know about it. Sticking with non-controversial talking points will help convince others that you're a sheep, instead of a wolf.

Avoid looking around too much during an emergency. After all, if it seems like you're looking for a way out, others will take notice of you.

The single most important thing you can do is avoid eye contact. Of course, if someone stops you to talk, you'll have to make at least a bit of eye contact but try to avoid this scenario. Keeping your eyes down will make you less memorable.

HOW YOU SHOULD CARRY ANY GEAR

Want to fit in while still carrying your survival gear? Choose a backpack or other bag that's used by everyday people. You can also choose a jacket that has hidden pockets.

The basic idea is, once again, to not be noticed. Another way you can do this is through using a tactical pen, a compact flashlight, or a discreet knife.

HOW YOU SHOULD LOOK

The most important thing is to not wear clothes that stand out. In other words, unless you're on a hunting trip, don't wear camo. Again, choose subtle colors to wear such as gray.

Using the section above, be sure to conceal your weapons. Don't have anything that's bright or shiny exposed. This includes anything on your person that's not a weapon. This isn't the time when you want to wear reflective clothing or have handcuffs visible.

Whenever possible, carry an extra clothing item with you. This could be a jacket, sunglasses, a hat, etc. The idea behind this is that you can slip the item on to fall off of someone's radar.

One last note: don't wear any distinctive colognes. Scent is heavily tied into our memory, and you don't want to be cataloged by anyone.

RULES FOR EVERY GRAY MAN

There are several rules you'll need to follow if you want to be seen – or should we say unseen – as a gray man. These include:

- Don't tell anyone outside your family that you're prepared for a disaster.
- Look normal. In other words, don't wear tactical clothing.
- You'll probably make big purchases, but you must hide them. Drive into the garage before you unpack anything.
- If you're going to the shooting range, be very discreet when you put your weapons in your vehicle.
- Look as desperate as everyone else. This means asking questions you already know the answer to (What's happening? We're almost out of food. Where is help? etc.).
- If everyone's power is out, keep your home dark too.
- Be aware of how to go off-the-grid. This means giving up social media, smartphones, etc.
- Stay concealed by always blending in. This means putting your jacket away in the summer.
- Do things to make your backpack appear less desirable. Put duct tape on it, scuff it up, etc.
- Avoid confrontation at all costs.
- Make each movement or discussion as mundane as possible.
- Carry your important documents on you in an encrypted flash drive.

- Always clean up after yourself during an emergency. In other words, don't leave poop sitting around.
- Moving at nighttime will give you some natural camouflage.
- Don't use fire. Instead, use a JetBoil system.
- Be quiet at all times. If the power goes out, your noises will carry farther than you think.
- Avoid smells by eating your food cold.
- Be aware that there may come a point when you have to drop the gray man disguise. Be aware of your situation and decide when it's best to cut your losses and run.

BEWARE: WHAT THE GRAY MAN ISNT

The gray man isn't about simply hiding or not being noticed. Instead, it's about fully committing to being as innocuous as possible. If you get into confrontations, it's going to be difficult to blend into the crowd.

WHAT THE GRAY MAN IS

The psychology of others will play a major role in how you prepare to be the gray man. The Reticular Activating System (RAS) is a big part of how a successful gray man actually succeeds. This system, which is part of the brain, takes typical background noises – even really loud ones – and makes them stop sticking out. This allows people to sleep when they live on a noisy Air Force base, for example.

The RAS also picks up immediately on things that are different. Therefore, if you're the only person wearing a t-shirt and jeans in a crowd of businessmen, you're going to stand out (or vice-versa).

But the cool thing about the RAS is that you can kind of hijack it, too. You can convince people that your facial structure is a bit different than it is or that your hair is darker, etc. This comes with wearing similar clothing to everyone around you.

Another important piece of the RAS puzzle is to act like you belong, even if you don't. This will help you blend in even more.

The tricky part is getting the demeanor right, and this is where a lot of people make a mistake. You have to act naturally to fit in, and that's a lot harder than it sounds. With some practice, though, you can figure out how to make it work for you.

People watching provides great examples for how to act. When you go out, test yourself by asking the following questions:

- Who is military/ex-military?
- Who is a police officer?
- What is the relationship between two people that are talking?
- Any undercover cops?

Once you've determined these things, you can focus on individual people and answer:

- What do they enjoy doing as a hobby?
- What do you think they do as a living?
- Why did they come to this exact spot at this exact time?

You can also run an experiment like this the next time you watch a movie. Does the character blend in or do they stand out? Does the character seem to know what they're doing or are they just faking it?

If you can answer these questions with some success, you should have a better idea how to mimic others to fit in. And doing that, ladies and gentlemen, is the main key to being the gray man.



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