



MEMBERS UPDATE

March 2022

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Top 5 Tactical Knives for 2022

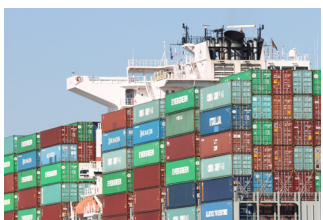
When your constitutional right to carry is infringed upon in specific areas, you can take comfort in knowing you can carry a well honed and razor sharp rib tickler to continue your non-victim status in the world. We've got you covered with a look at the top fixed blade knives to carry when firearms are prohibited.



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Sneaky Hiding Places for Home Defense Firearms

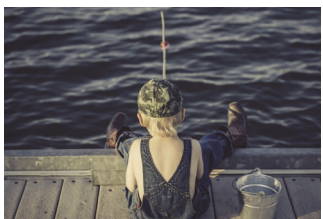
Around 2,500 years ago, Sun-Tzu wrote a guide to warfare that has been used by people ranging from wise military commanders up to captains of industry. Sun-Tzu writes “The general who is skilled in defense hides in the most secret recesses of the earth; he who is skilled in attack flashes forth from the topmost heights of heaven. Thus on the one hand we have the ability to protect ourselves; on the other, a victory that is complete”. It is with this tactic of deceit in mind that we explore some of the various places in your home where you can hide your firearms.



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Supply Chain Hacks: How to Overcome “Shippageddon”

If you're like us at the NSRA, you're probably keeping an eye on what the heck has been going on with the supply chain lately. It seems like every time we turn around there's another supply crisis to deal with. The thing is, these situations provide opportunities for people who are prepared so we're here to help you do just that.



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What Should Survivalists Do During Spring?

If you're a survivalist, the odds are high that you already have a list of tasks to take care of during every season. But are you focusing on the right things for spring? This article will take a close look at the spring season and what tasks you'll want to accomplish!

Top 5 Tactical Knives To Carry In 2022: Fixed Blade Edition

By Eric Austgen



As much as I like to carry a firearm for personal defense outside of the home, there are some municipalities or certain places that are not so friendly to that idea. In my neck of the woods this occurs frequently in the “People’s Republics of Denver and Boulder” and most college towns up north. That is why, when my constitutional right to carry is infringed upon in specific areas, I take comfort in knowing that I carry a well honed and razor sharp rib tickler to continue my non-victim status in the world. We will have a look at the top fixed blade knives to carry when firearms are prohibited. They are in no particular order and all have met and exceeded the rigorous specifications set forth in the internationally recognized “Dundee Standard” concerning what is and is not a knife.

A Time Honored and Tested Weapon of War

Before the widespread use of firearms on the battlefield, warring nations relied principally on the sharp hardened steel expertly produced by local swordsmiths or blacksmiths learned in that trade. The artisanship and functionality of these weapons attest to the skill and attention to detail the craftsman put into his work. Indeed, the durability of the various swords, knives, daggers, and other edged weapons from the “Iron Age” excavated from all over the European continent, also attest to the quality of materials in constructing the users daily life or death tool. The Vikings are known for having very well constructed and ornate blade inlays. They are also known for employing these blades to full pillaging and conquering effect as well. Genghis Khan is also another example of where the blade has been used to devastating consequences.

The topsy-turvy times we’re living in now have consistently shown that when firearms are off the table, most people, when left to their own devices, usually choose a knife or some sort of blade as a backup. This is only natural because when that survival instinct kicks into overdrive, humans will instinctively do whatever it takes to preserve self or others, with and by whatever means possible. Therefore, with all this insanity going on in the world, CYA is the way to go and preparing for any eventuality would be a marvelous idea. In this case, knife fighting and a quality blade would be useful tools for the self defense arsenal.



WW2 Ka-Bar on Vietnam era combat straps

Semper Fi, Marine!

When it comes to the simple no frills delivery of death, the U.S. Military has that market cornered. Interestingly enough, the Ka-Bar was not designed for the Corps but for the Navy. The Army and Marines had been bellyaching about getting a new fighting knife during the interwar years between World War One and Two. The trench knife from the first war was far too heavy and cumbersome to the warrior using it and was also a cost headache, in the form of brass, for the War Department. The Marines decided to go with a knife similar in style to the Fairbairn-Sykes manufactured from metals

that were non-essential to wartime production. The Navy took possession of the Ka-Bar in 1942 and then scuttled it the next year as it was inferior for their needs. The Marines picked it up after many in their ranks were buying Bowie style bladed knives for use in and out of the combat area, the stiletto blade being incapable of duties other than a thrusting or silent death. The knife was beefed up for its dual purpose as a fighting and utility knife. The blade is pretty hefty, measures out to 7 inches in length and a width of 1 ¼ inches, and has a straight clip point. While sitting around shooting the breeze one afternoon, talk turned to the Ka-Bar, and an old school Marine in the bunch regaled us about the time he got his first knife. He received it in basic training and immediately upon issue, the recruit platoon were instructed to sharpen it to a razor edge, both the main cutting blade and the semi-concave clip blade located on the spine, just to the rear of the clip point. The factory had shipped them with a semi sharp main edge, but left the clip blade dull. As it was later explained to him, when the knife is worn on the chest in an upside down manner, commonly attached to the chest straps of combat web gear, and if attacked from behind, the Marine could easily slip the knife from the sheath with a free hand, thrust into the enemy, and then instead of pulling the blade back out, one just extracted it by pulling up and backwards, letting that small but lethal clip blade inflict as much damage on the way out. This icon of the Corps and battle tested warrior is available from the full sized model to the neck knife jobs. The sheaths for these knives will vary from company to company, ranging from the traditional leather to plastics and composites. Ka-Bar Knives, Inc. would be a good place to start if you're in the market for one. The Ontario Knife Company out of Naples, New York, also has a couple of excellent models for sale, one with a plain edge or a plain serrated edge combo. Original knives from the "Big One" up to now can be found and safely used without worry of breakage, when used within the parameters of its intended design.



Bayonet. The sharpening stone is on the back of the sheath

Underrated Bad Boys

When looking at the diverse amount of blades to own out there, most consumers rarely give a second look to military issue bayonets, as they should. The ones developed for rifles and carbines were just there to thrust and develop in the enemy and served no utilitarian purposes. A truly multi-functional bayonet came into being along with the weapon it was paired with, the AK-47. Not only could it be used on the business end, but also used as a hand to hand knife and with the small oblong hole at the end of the blade, it could be fastened to a corresponding stud on the sheath and used as wire cutters. Our military developed a similar looking and functioning bayonet for the M-16 in the mid-Eighties, designated as the M-9. It has a standardized thick polymer resin sheath with a sharpening stone built into the back, two 1 ¾ x ½ inch slots on each side for attaching to web gear, and lug for the wire cutter configuration, in the bottom. The blade is 7 ⅞ long 1 ½ wide steel, the spine having fine saw grooves cut at a diagonal angle to the rear of the blade. The bayonet's OAL is 12 ½ inches.



Spyderco Street Bowie

Love For Local Blades

I didn't need to search too hard to find the next blade up for consideration, as a matter of fact they were right in my own backyard. Spyderco Knives in Golden, Colorado has been producing fine blades since their operations located there in 1978. In fact, they are credited with turning the knife world on it's collective head with the introduction of their first folding knife model, the C01 Worker. This knife was the first of its kind to have a hole in the blade for one handed opening, a clip on the handle allowing for quick pocket retrieval, and an optional serrated blade to tackle the most difficult of cutting jobs. Since then, Spyderco has expanded above and beyond that initial concept and produced some of the finest everyday carry folders and fixed blade tacticals. Out of all their tactical offerings, the "Street Bowie" is your best bet for a great EDC fixed blade. The blade is a classic Bowie design, 5" long and is made from black ceramic coated VG-10 stainless steel, with textured grooving on the spine that blends into the handle for added control and to keep your thumb safe from sliding forward and getting sliced open. The handle is designed with contours and a deep index finger choil that gives the user increased control. The sheath that comes with it is adjustable to wear in different canted positions on your person and the clip mount allows for inner and outer waistband carry. At 165 smackers, this is a reasonably priced and sized weapon to put into action when use of a firearm isn't permitted or when you're lacking a good steak knife in the back 40.



U.S. Air Force Survival Knife

The Ka-Bar's Little Air Force Cousin

The Air Force Survival Knife came about in the early Fifties and, after receiving the contract, were primarily made by the Camillus Knife Company. Over the years, both Camillus and Ontario have made this knife for the Air Force, Ontario has also done some modifications to the knife to keep up with the changes in aircraft manufacture. The original knife was designed with a clip point to pierce and saw grooves machined into the spine to cut through the aluminum skin of the aircraft. Since the advent of Kevlar in the building of aircraft panels and bulkheads, the original design has been rendered obsolete for aircraft self extrication, however they're perfectly suited to survival in and out of the urban jungle. The blade is about 5 1/8" long, 1-1 1/8" wide, and constructed from parkerized 1095 steel with a straight clip point and saw grooves on the spine. The handle is made of stacked leather "biscuits" and topped off with a hefty metal head that can be used for hammering nails or ringing the bell of the scumbag that marked you as a target. I fully understand what the intended purpose of this knife was for, but when this baby has it's main and clip blade edge razor sharp, with the added bonus of the saw grooves, you'll be treating your attacker and his trauma surgeon to the most challenging day of their lives. Ontario Knives are still producing this outstanding knife in its original and updated designs. The original design comes with the metal reinforced leather sheath, belt slits, and holes in the top and bottom for lacing paracord through to lash to any available extremity. A sharpening stone is attached to the front in it's own little pocket. They are retailing, new, in the mid-fifty range and, as with the Ka-Bar's, originals can be had for a nominal price.



Gerber Mark II

Gerber Updates One Of Their Classics

Gerber's Mark II was introduced in 1967 and saw service as a fighting knife during the Vietnam War. Bud Holzman designed this knife based on the Roman Mainz Gladius sword. Gerber matched the blade with, originally, a textured all aluminum handle, and then switched to Armorhide, all capped off with a generous amount of aluminum pommel for hitting sensitive areas hard and quick. The handguards quillon's are slanted forward and the guard is curved on the handle side to give the thumb a good purchase and pressure point when thrusting. From the time of it's introduction up until the late Nineties, the Mark II went through several changes in style concerning the type of steel used in the blade, as well as the profile and the addition of serration. The handle material, coating, and color also underwent changes during this period. The current incarnation of this gnarly piece of weaponry is of all metal construction, the blade being of black oxide coated 420HC steel and the handle out of aluminum. The OAL of the knife is 12 3/4 inches and the blade measures 6.5". Like most military surplus and antique sporting equipment, these knives can be found but they do command a high price especially amongst the collect and display crowd. The more current knife is decently priced at anywhere between \$100 to \$150 and that's if you can find it. Even though the length of this knife might seem a bit much for EDC, believe me, this is the one weapon you'll want within reach when you need to expeditiously dispatch the criminal elements of the world, with or without extreme prejudice - your choice.



WW1 Trench Knife. Guard flare ground off and missing original skull spike

A Couple Of Alternatives

I had earlier mentioned the First World War trench fighting knife and felt that you, as an informed consumer, should have the skinny on this blade and its lethal capabilities. The handle is basically a set of brass knuckles with spikes on each knuckle and a flared handguard almost reminiscent of the ones found on swords. The 6 3/8" blade is a full tang stiletto that goes through the handle and is topped with a "skull crusher" spike pommel that, in theory, was supposed to penetrate enemy helmets of the day. I will caution that these knives are absolutely positively a no-no in every state when you take them out of the house. Individuals are permitted ownership but they are classified as collectibles and are expected to remain on the shelf, and they should, as it would be a damn shame to have a nifty piece of history confiscated just because you took it outside. But if - and that's a huge if - the collective cow patties start hitting the oscillating oxygen rearranger, then all bets are off and game on, I say. Better to have the tactical advantage and absolute lethality at your disposal to protect you and yours when law and order has become meaningless to all of society. The second knife I offer as an alternative came to me quite by accident, and I feel it should be included not only because it's a handy little thing, but also because it's a hearty tool to have when the chips are down. The knife is nothing more than one side of a scrap horseshoe hammered out straight and given an edge. I happened upon one while clearing pine needles in the yard, it was spotted with some rust, but cleaned up well and I was able to hone it razor sharp. I did some research on the subject and found

that there were few big box knife retailers offering these types of knives. Only a handful of sellers online are actual blacksmiths or farriers peddling their wares, thus ensuring a level of competence in construction and quality. The others look to be mass produced and rather thin and weak. The one that I found in the yard has a full heel, well made edge, and an incredible balance when handled. It does lack a handguard, but the way it was made and the razor edge, makes it a handy slashing weapon and an impromptu hammer. I usually keep it in my back pocket with my wallet so if someone tries to make an unauthorized withdrawal from me, I'll make it seem as if I'm going for the cash and then retaliate with complete surprise. A deep open wound will make your assailant forget about abusing you and give you the opportunity to either give them a wholesale whooping or make good your escape.



Horseshoe knife with pocket holster/sheath

When it comes down to personal defense, outside of a firearm, a nice sharp piece of hard cold steel to drop the predators of the world is an outstanding insurance policy to have when things start to go south real quick. Paired with a competency in knife fighting, you will become a force to be reckoned with when challenged in real world situations. So, until next time, dear reader, stay safe and let's be careful out there.





Sneaky Places For Home Defense Firearms

By Eric Austgen

Somewhere in the neighborhood of 2,500 years ago, a fellow by the name of Sun-Tzu wrote a guide to warfare that has been used by people ranging from wise military commanders up to captains of industry. The 7th passage of the chapter concerning tactics seems germane to the topic at hand. Sun-Tzu writes “ The general who is skilled in defense hides in the most secret recesses of the earth; he who is skilled in attack flashes forth from the topmost heights of heaven. Thus on the one hand we have the ability to protect ourselves; on the other, a victory that is complete”. It is with this tactic of deceit in mind that we explore some of the various places in your home where you can hide your firearms and claim complete victory over those who foolishly challenge you on your turf.



A Word Of Caution

Since we are delving into the subject of firearms and their use in self defense, I would like to offer some cautionary specifics as it pertains to our subject. As

always, gun safety is absolutely crucial to everyone involved with the storage of guns around the house. If you have small children, please use the utmost of caution and store your firearms where little hands can't find them. If you have kiddos that are bigger and you are a family that shoots together, then I will leave it up to you as to how to proceed. Those without children, same rules apply, especially if you have people visiting your home who are lacking in proper firearms instruction. I would like to note that the suggestions in this article are purely for backup purposes or for theft prevention, and should be used for firearms that will serve as a last ditch weapon or for convenient reloading stations, if that scenario should ever play out. One should feasibly be carrying at all times, when and where applicable, in and out of their domicile. That is your best bet in successfully fighting off an intruder that visits while you are in a part of the house without a firearm.



Putting A Plan Together

I often hear the joke about every gun owner having a “boating accident” when the feds show up for the mass gun confiscation attempt; “Damned if they ain’t on the bottom of the lake, Officer”. It gives me a little titter when I hear it, but there is definitely some truth in the whole matter. A situation like that would dictate having your entire arsenal secured either in a bug-out location or in one or multiple

sealed PVC pipes buried in a secure place far from your residential property. In the meantime, before total anarchy reigns, you should put into place a procedure known to all inhabitants in what to do and where the guns are should a break-in occur. That is if you do not carry full-time, then these hiding places would be ideal for emergency ammo reloads, should your attacker have a desire for a gun battle. Depending on what kind of pad you’re living in, you will no doubt draw up a plan that is simple for all to follow and implement smoothly which will come with time and practice. The size and variety of your arsenal will also be a factor in where and which guns will be stored for defense or from theft, in the event you are unable to have a cabinet sized gun safe. Fortunately for the safe deprived, there are an abundance of everyday household items that can be converted into a convenient cubbyhole for your firepower. Some of these items will be obvious as to whether they are safe to put into play in a household with small kids. Tables, chairs, couches, sofas, lamps, chest of drawers, and night stands are all pieces of furniture commonly found throughout most homes and are all good hiding spots, but are more likely to be rifled through when the most obvious hiding places come up empty. It is while formulating a plan that one must outwit the second story and backdoor types, from novice to expert, and find imaginative places to stow your artillery or valuables, if applicable.



Deadly Furniture Disguises

Apartment dwellers seem to draw the short end of the stick when it comes to living space and rooms available to fall back to in order to take up a defensive position. Condo and townhome owners have a bit more space to breathe and for the homeowner, the sky’s the limit. A closet is a perfect place for consideration when hiding defensive

weapons. Whatever you store in your closet can be put into service, from shoe boxes to garment bags. As a matter of fact, Skinner Sights LLC crafts a 1000 Denier heavy duty cordura garment bag which hides 2 handguns, a rifle or carbine up to 40 inches, 8 handgun or 3 30 round rifle mags, and pockets for any extras you would like to keep private. This bag is also fully functional for its intended use and can be folded with clothes and guns together, sans rifle, of course. Have a glance in your closet and identify areas or items that an intruder wouldn't give a second thought. Adjacent to most closets is the bedroom, the room you will more than likely be in when most burglaries occur, usually when you're in the throes of a deep REM cycle. A company called Gun Bed has solved the problem of defensive shotgun storage and helps you to literally call down the thunder on your opponent when your beauty sleep is interrupted. They built a headboard that contains an upper cabinet and a spring-loaded access door that, when pushed in, drops the shotgun into the hands of the pusher and is ready for action. A stand alone shelf is also offered as well; the front flips open for easy access to your weapon. The interior of the shelf is big enough to accommodate a shotgun or act as a suitable ammo dump. Both of these products come with a hidden key lock located on the bottom for camouflage purposes and to keep your 2A gear secure while you are away from home. American Concealed Furniture has a fine collection of sturdy handcrafted pieces that would fit nicely into your existing decor without attracting unwanted attention. They also offer a headboard design using a panel that slides down for access to a roomier storage area holding a long gun and two handguns. Other furniture options include a nightstand, chest of drawers, bookcase, Hi-Boy dresser, hall tree, and hunters chest; all have vertical drawers that slide out on both sides, revealing a compartment on the slide out drawer and in the furniture itself, meaning if you were to pop the drawer out, either facing it from the side or front, you would still have access to all of your available firepower. A fireplace mantel and floating shelf are wall mounted options with a sliding top panel and spacious storage area. The lock system is a metal pin inserted into a hole drilled through from the exterior of the furniture into the drawer, keeping it in place until a rare earth magnet key is used to extract the pin. The quantity of weapons each will hold varies and the models available should satisfy whatever you're looking for.



Deceitful Interior Design

We all have things in our respective abodes that we're proud of and like to show off for all to see. These things can be related to personal achievement or hold a sentimental place in your heart, for whatever reason. Some people love fixtures in their home that provide any visitor with a quick CV of their accomplishments. Many of them can be converted for concealment use, however you will be limited in storage capacity of weapons. Trophies with large bowls, fake or hollowed out books, large pieces of pottery, and taxidermy could fit one handgun and that's about all. If you recently purchased your first handgun, live in an apartment, or have need for only one (these critters do exist) and don't currently own a drawer safe, this might be the best route to take. If you're known as a tech savvy type or an electronics collector, and have broken computers or old tube TV's lying around, they can be looked upon as reliable concealment sources, only remember which one is the hiding spot if you have more than a few. If you don't want to risk the possibility of your prized possessions being scuffed up, Liberty Home Concealment has a line of room fixings that will be just the thing for those looking to spruce things up and hold some serious firepower. They specialize mainly in 2-3 compartment wall art with patriotic themes and humorous quips appealing to all of our inner smart-asses. In addition, they do make a lamp stand that is big enough to house an interior shelf, a beautifully stained solid oak single handgun mantel clock, a sliding top panel coffee table, coat rack, 2 sizes of picture frames, and even a tissue box. Liberty ditched the traditional tooth key for a magnetic key system with all of their products, the only exceptions being the tissue box and mantel clock at this time. I would like to caution that the cost for

materials have currently already skyrocketed to the point where the consumer will be paying more for quality handcrafted items. For all of my self reliant DIYers and reverse engineers out there, these types of concealment furniture could easily be replicated and improved upon by the home craftsman, an added bonus being you can make whatever you like conforming to your exact specifications and needs without breaking the bank.



Backup Hiding Spaces

There are some places where primary storage of your firearm is not advisable, usually in places where it is impossible to control the surrounding environment consistently. Plumbing systems and air ducts are examples of these areas that should be avoided, but can be used if you have no other alternative. If you are to hide your firearm near water or engage an actual pipe for concealment, you will need to make sure your gun is cleaned, well oiled, and placed in a plastic bag before stowing. The frequency of your firearms maintenance program will increase if you should choose this storage method. The same can be said for the air duct system as well. These areas should, realistically, be used as a theft prevention concept, rather than rely on it as a defensive one. Many of you across the fruited plain might not have the funds to own the arsenal of your dreams and because of this, the firearms you do own are very well cared for and kept in the best operating condition, as a replacement may not be readily available when everything goes to hell (and there are certainly no “time-outs” in life). Another spot semi-lacking in conditions conducive to proper weapon functioning would be underneath the floor, as this area will collect the most dirt and moisture.

10 If these choices sound like a big pain in the rear

and constant maintenance will be a hassle, you may go with the option of building false hiding places yourself. This will be an easy task if you're a homeowner, especially if you're handy around the house. Landlords may not be so receptive to unauthorized modifications to their property, so renters should proceed with caution. Building a small space into the wall to hold a firearm or ammo and then covering it with an air register or large electrical switch plate, is a wonderful alternative to the real thing. Throw in a couple of large desiccant pouches to suck up surrounding moisture and you're good to go. Have a look around your place and see where a custom built hidey-hole may be of the most benefit, you may be surprised as to how sneaky you can get. If you are not skilled in the art of engineering and like to keep expenses low, you might consider items like empty storage boxes, laundry hamper, between linens or towels, loveseats, window curtains, a breaker box, between the mattress and box spring, gym bag, and virtually any thing that has the capacity for at least one handgun and a reload. Kitchen drawers, cabinets, and empty food boxes are good, but not very safe places unless they are well out of reach of small untrained hands that share the home (and any who visit). For those that have money to burn and don't want to wade too far into the logistics of things, Secret Stashings has a complete line of products from concealment furniture to clothing and jewelry, providing a little something for everyone, no matter your income bracket.



What The Laws Have To Say About This

I think we can all agree that laws and the subsequent enforcement thereof, are good things put into place helping to protect us and properly

mete out justice when necessary. We also know that these laws can be perverted to do more harm than good, putting the law abiding citizen in great peril. Gun laws have always been the cudgel used to hammer away our right to self defense, and in my home state, the legislature passed House Bill 1106 that went into effect on July 1, 2021. Per the Bill, Coloradans who own guns will be required to store their weapons in a gun safe or with a trigger or cable lock when the owner knows or should reasonably know that a “juvenile or a resident who is ineligible to possess a firearm can gain access to the firearm.” Violation of the new law is a Class 2 misdemeanor offense, which carries penalties of fines and, in rare instances, time in the slammer. This is common sense that should not be codified. Critical thinking is not strong with those who are so completely divorced from reality and the way that people live outside of their beloved echo chamber cities. For some, the idea that this country has more wide open beautiful spaces per capita than its urban cousins, is completely inconceivable. This country has rural areas in spades and consequently, people

charged with the crime can argue that the gun wasn't safely stored because a juvenile properly trained in its use needed to gain access to the weapon for the purpose of eliminating human and animal predators in defense of life and property. Since we are living in some strange times, please be vigilant and confer with local and state law concerning your weapons of choice. It's best to fly under the radar and stay within the parameters of the law, even if you don't have others depending on you for defense, you will still need to defend yourself and a criminal record will most assuredly scale down the choice of weapons you would be legally allowed to own.

This is but a small offering of what you can press into service as a firearms concealment system. Getting creative as to what you can use and thinking light years ahead of the ne'er do wells of the world, will turn the place you call home sweet home into an intruder's house of horrors. So, until next time, dear reader, stay safe and let's be careful out there.





SUPPLY CHAIN HACKS: HOW TO OVERCOME "SHIPPAGEDDON"

If you're like us at the NSRA, you're probably keeping an eye on what the heck has been going on with the supply chain lately. It seems like every time we turn around there's another supply crisis to deal with. The thing is, these situations provide opportunities for people who are prepared so read on to do just that.

WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON?

The global supply chain mainly depends on a distribution process known as Just-in-Time or JIT for short. And it doesn't really work well when there aren't perfect distribution scenarios and optimistic levels of supply & demand variations. Factors like politics, the global pandemic, and labor shortages and disputes threw a monkey wrench into the JIT system that saw lean businesses only order what they needed and not build up inventory stores.

So in November, hundreds of container ships backed up the California port of entry. Other ports around the country are experiencing it too, but not on the scale that the Golden State is experiencing. Many industries were affected by the slowdown and saw their inventories dwindle down to nothing.

As a result, people waited in long lines at grocery stores, pharmacies, and even restaurants because they were unable to get their supplies due to shortages. Many people who have long grown accustomed to the convenience of online ordering, found themselves waiting longer than usual or found many of the things they ordered fall into the black hole that is known as "backorder."

However, the supply chain crisis that has been devastating the planet because of the pandemic and labor shortages is likely not over.

PLAN AHEAD

If there's anything that preppers know how to do, it's to plan ahead for emergencies. It's very important to be prepared for a possible crisis in the future, but it's even more important to use your supplies wisely and not waste them on non-essentials that will only go bad before you can use them up.

GO OVER YOUR INVENTORY LIST

It's easy to purchase items at random when there are shortages everywhere, but it's important to be

strategic and only buy what you need. Go over your inventory list and make sure that you're still stocked up on the essentials. If you're low on any of these items, now is the time to stock up.

WATCH FOR PRICE GOUGING

There have been reports of price gouging happening in some areas because of the earlier supply chain crisis. If you see any signs of price gouging, make sure to report them and only pay a reasonable amount for your necessities.

KEEP AN EYE ON POTENTIALLY HARD-TO-FIND ITEMS

Some items that are always in demand may become hard to find during this time because there's such high demand for them. If there are any items on your inventory list that could potentially fall into this category, it's important to keep an eye on them and stock up as soon as you can.

STAY POSITIVE

It can be tough during a time of crisis, but it's important to stay positive. The situation is not going to be easy for anyone, but with a positive attitude, you can get through it.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT COME WITH A CRISIS

It's important not to get overwhelmed by all of the problems this crisis has brought. There are some potential opportunities in these times if you know where to look for them and act quickly on your ideas when they come.

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

When it comes to a crisis, it's important to think outside the box and come up with new ways to get what you need. If something isn't available in your area, see if there's a way to get it shipped in. There are many ways to get around shortages and shipping delays.

LOOK FOR DEALS ON SHIPPING SERVICES

It's understandable that you don't want to spend more money, but depending on where you live, it may not be as expensive as you think. In fact, there are some bargain deals out there if you know how to find them at the right time of year.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP

Do you know someone who is in the military or law enforcement? They are usually more than willing to help their neighbors out when times get tough. If your husband, father, relative, etc. has some extra protection they can offer, let them know how much it means to you and maybe even ask them to help you out with some goods.

FIND A WORKAROUND

Do you really need those impossible-to-find frozen pizza pies if the fresh stuff like yeast and tomatoes you use to make a pizza are readily available? Grab some food staples to make the things you love to eat and don't rely on processed ready-made food all the time.

However, that doesn't mean not to stock up on MRE meals. They aren't as delicious as filet mignon, but they will fill you up and give you the energy to keep going when needed.

In addition, they store for a long time - some as long as 10 years under the right conditions. Many can also be eaten without heating them up if needed.

Here are a few other workarounds to consider:

LEARN TO CAN FOOD

Instead of going hungry, learn how to can your own food. It's not that hard, and there are plenty of resources out there for you if you need some help learning the basics. You'll be able to enjoy fresh vegetables all year round without having to spend your time in long lines at grocery stores or pharmacies.

TAKE A COOKING CLASS

Cooking is becoming a lost art, and with the current pandemic, it's important to know how to cook food safely. Many are surprised at how much better freshly cooked food tastes than fast food and how much better it is for you. Even if you're not a prepper, taking a cooking class is a great way to spend your time. Not only will you learn some valuable skills, but you'll also get to eat delicious food while you're at it.

GROW YOUR OWN FOOD

Another option is to grow your own food. Even if you don't have a lot of space, there are plenty of ways to do this. You can start with container gardens or even indoor plants. If you have the time and inclination, you can also get into raised bed gardening or hydroponics.

START YOUR OWN BUSINESS

If none of these ideas appeal to you, why not start your own business? Many people are taking advantage of the opportunity to make money now. You don't have to take on a full-time job if that's not what you want, and it can be an excellent source of income for anyone who is looking for one. One to think about: Teaching people how to be self-reliant.

PRESS YOUR POLITICIANS TO RESHORE

America was once a manufacturing powerhouse, and now we can't even produce the things we invented. When there are high tariffs on imports and shortages on things we need to survive like medicine and food, reshoring starts to look a little more attractive.

Press your politicians to rethink their positions on free trade. It's time for them to think about bringing jobs back home instead of shipping them overseas where they can't be monitored or regulated properly. Also, there won't be possibilities for "shippagedons" of epic proportions when items are produced and shipped inside your own country.

TAKE UP WOODWORKING

The Amish don't care if furniture inventories are low, do they? They just make their own. If you have

woodworking skills, take advantage of the situation and make some extra money for yourself in the process. It's a win-win in so many ways!

USE A SAVVY VENDOR

If you own a business and need furniture or are just someone putting together a home office to telecommute, work with a furniture supplier who works with multiple vendors. That way, things are likely to be available and you don't have a long lead time. This can work with other things like equipment, too.

SHOP SMALL BUSINESSES

If you're worried about the supply chain this gifting season, there's often no need to if you shop at small businesses. A lot of times, these mom & pop stores will often have something that is out of stock at Amazon and big box retailers.

DIVERSIFY YOUR TASTE BUDS

What is it they're saying? "Beef - it's what's for dinner (if the rest of the week you eat ramen noodles)." Meat prices are really being hit by inflation, so if you don't want to spend your retirement savings on it, try stocking the pantry up with things like canned beans and fruit that aren't so expensive until the market recovers. A meal of rice, beans and some herbs can stick to your ribs about as well as steak and potatoes, and it's nowhere near as expensive.

MAKE YOUR OWN BEER AND WINE

What about your drinking habits? Are you a wine connoisseur who is going to give up on that and switch to beer? Well, why not start making it yourself? You can even do this with hard cider or root beer if you don't want alcohol! There are plenty of recipes out there for those who want to give it a try.

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE TOILET PAPER?

It seems one of the heaviest hit commodities in the early "shippageddon" and pandemic days was, strangely enough, toilet paper. Here's what you can do when you have a looming TP shortage: Get the

garden hose and spray where the sun don't shine if it comes to it. That, or invest in a bidet.

Kidding aside, there are things you can do like order toilet paper or use less of it so it lasts. There are cups of warm water you can pour on your backside that make that toilet paper last that operate on the same principle as the water hose or bidet.

Also, a lot of times when stores were out of toilet paper, the janitorial supply companies had plenty. They have those huge rolls like the store bathrooms use too (gold mine!) Here, and everywhere, it pays to be creative and find alternative solutions.

OK, WHAT IF THINGS GET REALLY BAD?

We all hope it doesn't come to this, but what if things get really bad? There are a lot of people that have been considering prepping for years and never got around to it. This would be the time to do so rather than during an emergency situation because things will already be chaotic.

The first thing you want to do is make sure you have a plan. What are you going to do if the power is out for an extended period of time? How are you going to get food and water? What about medical supplies?

The last thing you want to do is buy while in panic mode. You know, like the times when gas reserves are low and people start hoarding it. That causes gas station owners to start hoarding it, too. It's a bad situation all around and you don't want to contribute to that kind of panic buying.

If you don't have all the answers, that's ok. There are plenty of people who are more than happy to help. Just reach out to your social media networks or online groups and you'll be able to find help.

The most important thing is not to panic. It's going to be difficult, but if you have a plan and stay positive, you'll make it through.

TRY TO LEAVE MAJOR CITIES

If there is a societal collapse, you want to avoid major cities (read up about the 'golden horde' sometime if you really want to be alarmed). They are usually the first places that get hit by natural disasters and supply chain shortages, and there's always a shortage of basic supplies, like food and water. If you can leave before it gets bad, do so because things will only go downhill.

If you've been working on being self-sufficient, it will really pay dividends at this time, as you can wait it out at home. But if you haven't been, at least consider stocking up on food and other basic supplies now while they're still available.

Remember that everyone is trying to get the same things right now so prices may be high or even worse, unavailable altogether. Plan ahead of time for this eventuality by going with a prepper supplier who has a good reputation.

BE PREPARED FOR ANYTHING

One of the most important things that you can do is be prepared for anything though, no matter how hard it may seem. JIT has already failed us, and this will cause some problems in various areas around the world until we get back on track with what works best for our global economy. In the meantime, be sure to stock up on some things for an emergency 'just in case' scenario to make your life a tad easier.

These are just a few tips that can help you stay safe and be prepared!



What Should Survivalists Do During Spring?

If you're a survivalist, the odds are high that you already have a list of tasks to take care of during every season. But are you focusing on the right things for spring? This article will take a close look at the spring season and what tasks you'll want to accomplish!

Gardening

One of the most important things to work on is your garden. Whether you've got a big garden that grows annually or this is your first year planting vegetables, you'll definitely want to take some time to put your gardening area in order.

Before it gets too warm, you'll need to get your compost pile ready and buy some supplies for the garden. Additionally, you'll want to take the time to ensure that your garden has been weeded.

Next, it's time to plant some of your vegetables for the year. Spring is the perfect time to get your colder air veggies into the ground! Each of the following items will need to be transplanted into your garden during the spring. However, you'll begin by planting them in a container in your garden

- Lettuce
- Potatoes
- Onions
- Beets
- Carrots
- Peas
- Cabbage
- Swiss Chard
- Kale
- Broccoli

As you can see, this list includes a lot of favorites. Planting them too late could cause you to miss out, so make sure you get started right away! And remember - if you don't have enough space for an outdoor garden, there are plenty of things that can be grown in containers indoors or even in a hydroponic setup. If you get committed and creative, you can enjoy fresh garden goodies even if you have limited space and/or resources.

Physical Fitness



Although you should have been working on physical fitness all winter, the odds are high that your routines have slipped a bit. Fortunately, it's now starting to get warmer, and you can go back to working on yourself outside.

The great thing about physical fitness is that you can achieve it in a wide variety of ways. For instance, taking the time to weed and plant your garden will definitely help you get into shape. Other ideas include going for a jog, hiking, or walking a long distance.

Of course, if you've put on some weight during the winter, you'll need to start by being smart. Going from nothing to 100 right away will cause you to be in a lot of pain (in other words, don't start off by walking or jogging for five miles). Instead, start with a mile (or even $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile) and work your way up from there.

Don't forget about stretching. After all, being bulky isn't going to help you as much as you'd think unless you're also able to stretch. You'll want to be able to bend over at the waist and ideally touch your toes.

It's always a good idea to get yourself in shape for any potential SHTF situations. Remember, the better shape you're in today, the better chance you'll have of surviving tomorrow.

Spring Cleaning

The term spring cleaning usually refers to cleaning up your entire house. While this would be an excellent use of time, for right now, we're just going to focus on your garage (or other storage areas).

If you're like most survivalists, you store many of your SHTF items in your garage. Spring is the perfect time to assess what you have versus what you need. You should also take some time every spring to make sure your food supplies have been rotated. This is the best way to avoid letting a lot of food go to waste.

One thing that a lot of survivalists fail to note is the importance of keeping everything well organized. Yet how will you be able to survive a SHTF situation if you keep fumbling for your stuff? Taking time to sort your items out, and to make sure you know where everything is, will save you so much heartache if the S ever does HTF.

Get-Together with Your Neighbors

This one might surprise you, but it's wise to have a get-together with your neighbors at least once or twice per year. You don't have to let them see all your survivalist secrets, either. Whether you host a party or simply put some extra emphasis on hanging out with them for a bit, this will give you the opportunity to determine who might be helpful after the SHTF.

Another perk to spending some time with your neighbors is that you'll figure out who can — and who can't — be counted on during an emergency. That way, you'll know who you should — and shouldn't — open your door to when the going gets tough.

Dedicate Yourself to Learning Something New

There are invariably several new things you'd like to learn. Instead of biting off more than you can chew, though, pick one project and stick with it.

Whether that's learning how to garden, how to sew, or how to homebrew your own beer, be sure to pick something that will come in handy after the world as we know it ends. It might be interesting to learn a new language or finally dedicate yourself

to drawing, but neither of these things are likely to help you stay alive in the long run.

Be sure to pick at least one thing that will make your life better during an emergency.

Repair, Repair, Repair!

Another thing that springtime is good for is renewing your interest in keeping everything in operational shape. Some of this may have fallen by the wayside during the dreary days of winter. Now, it's time to check your "to-do" list, put your items in order (from most to least important), and begin busting them out. Don't worry about getting everything done at once. Simply stick with your list and work through it whenever you have some spare time.

Practice Shooting

When springtime is in the air, you're going to be much more likely to feel like shooting off a few rounds. Since practice makes perfect, take advantage of the better weather to begin firing your gun again.

You don't need to practice daily, either. Try to shoot at least two weekends a month, and this will make you more adept with your weapon. If you're able to shoot every weekend, that's even better! Of course, you probably need to get everything done on the weekends, so take a look at this list and decide what you're going to get done and when.

Don't forget about your other skills. If you're handy with a bow and arrow, practice shooting with that, too.

Go Fishing

Many people look forward to the spring so that they can go fishing again. This is not only a relaxing hobby, but it's also a survivalist skill that should be honed as much as possible.

Going out on a boat can be a lot of fun, and you should of course do so if you have access to a boat.

fishing skills from the shore to make sure you're ready for whatever the world throws at you.



If you have children, this is a very handy skill to pass on to them. It will teach them about patience, along with how rewarding it is to finally land their first fish.

Clean Out Your Bug Out Bag

Your second cleaning job for the spring involves your bug out bag. First, we'd like to say that if you don't have a bug out bag yet, this is the perfect time to make one. Hopefully, though, you have one that's just waiting for its spring cleaning.

Make sure your bag still has everything in it that's necessary. As survivalists, we may sometimes have a tendency to borrow from the bag without putting essential items back.

Double-check your bag for:

- Hand sanitizer/hygiene items
- Bug spray
- Cash
- Fire starters
- Important documents/personal identification
- Cell phone charger
- Batteries
- Water purifier
- Local maps

- Utility knife
- Duct tape
- Food
- Pepper spray
- Sunglasses
- Flashlight
- First aid kit

Then, depending on your specific situation, you may also want:

- Medication
- Warm clothes/ponchos/sleeping bags
- Sunscreen
- Lightweight tent
- Collapsible canteens
- Small tools
- Pet food/carrier
- Diapers/formula

You should make certain that each item in your bag is still well dated. It's not going to do you as good to have a formula that's expired, for instance. It also won't help if your tent has become damaged. By checking every item at least once a year, you can help minimize these disappointments.

Boost Your Mental Attitude

When the SHTF — or when we get an even worse pandemic to deal with — your mental attitude will make a big difference. For example, if you spend your time moaning and complaining about the restrictions that have been put into place, this is going to affect you and your odds of survival. Instead, try to remain upbeat and level-headed.

There's actually a name for the type of mental attitude you should aspire to. It's called the "party-on attitude," and it can make a huge difference. Don't have any more bread left? Party-on by eating something else. Did you run out of batteries? Party-on by turning your attention to something else.

The basic idea is that there's nothing you can do about the items that have run out. Therefore, you simply need to party-on with whatever items you do have. Learning to take this approach will put you in a better position to survive anything that happens.

Technically, this is something you should be working on all the time. But if you became a little more negative over the winter, it's time to put that behind you. Start fresh and party-on!

Put Together a Rainwater Capture System



This is something that you can do once and get a lot out of. If you haven't done it yet, this spring is the perfect time to make it happen!

Every drop of rain that falls from the sky has the potential to be harvested. Whether you purchase one barrel or several, be sure to set them up in appropriate areas of your yard.

Doing this is illegal in some states, so check your local laws before you begin. Even if you never need to use the water for drinking, you can always get something out of it by watering your vegetables or using it for cleaning purposes.

Collect Firewood

Putting together a large cache of firewood could make the difference between freezing to death and getting through the winter without too many heating difficulties. Most people aren't going to cut firewood during the winter, which makes this the perfect springtime activity.

Collecting firewood during the spring isn't too difficult, especially if you live near the woods. You could begin by simply picking up smaller wood off the ground. Then you can move onto bigger projects, including cutting up trees that have fallen to the ground.

Be sure you know your local laws to ensure you're able to remove trees from the woods. There will most likely be size restrictions, and you should work within them. Until the S officially HTF, you can be held responsible for removing trees above a certain size.

Prepare for Severe Spring and Summer Weather

There are several types of weather associated with a spring storm. For example, there could be severe wind, hail, lightning, and flooding. Preparing for a storm in advance is the best way to survive with everything intact.

Put a family survival plan in place. Be sure that everyone knows where they're supposed to meet up. Make sure to secure everything in your yard before a severe storm hits. You should also check your fire extinguishers to be sure they're good to go.

Other things you can do when you know that severe Spring weather is coming:

- Fuel your vehicles up
- Get backup cash
- Fill backup gas cans for your generator
- Fill your bathtub with water
- Charge all electronic devices
- Move some firewood inside if you have a fireplace

Once the weather hits, stay home. If you have to go out, don't drive into any areas that are covered with water. Always remember that the water could be

20 much deeper than it appears.

Final Thoughts

You can focus on many other things as well, just don't take on so much that you get nothing done. The most vital thing to do is ensure that you and your family have the basics you need to ride out any catastrophe for this time of year and beyond.

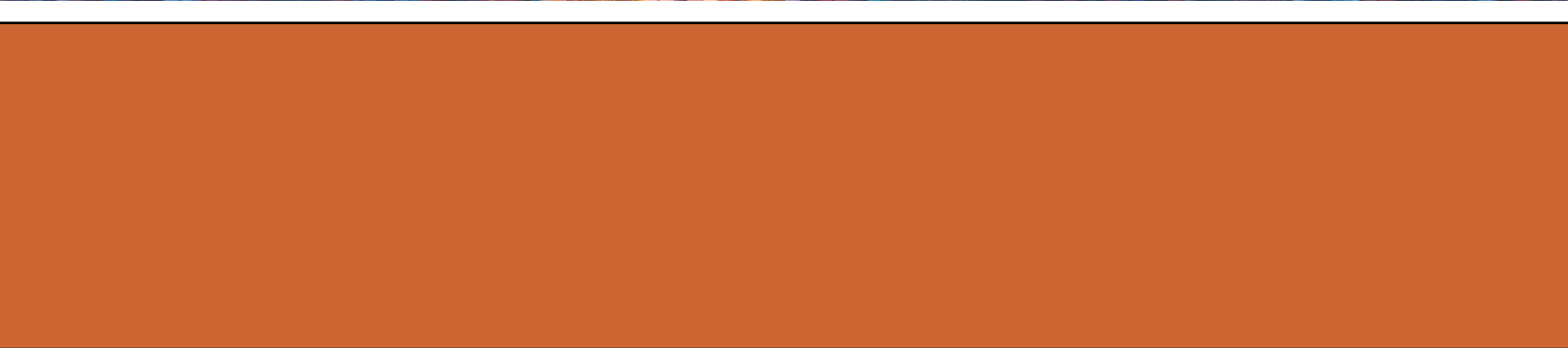




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