



**INSRA**  
Liberty Justice Patriotism

# MEMBERS UPDATE

November 2022

## BE YOUR OWN BUTCHER: GETTING THE BEST CUTS

Kids And Firearms: How To Begin

Experimenting With Going Powerless

Home Invasion: Prepare For The Worst

**NEXT ISSUE: Less Lethal Options**



Even if your vision isn't what it used to be...  
this high tech piece of gear can  
**DOUBLE** your accuracy...  
almost **IMMEDIATELY!**



## **RED DOT LASER SIGHT**



**GET YOURS NOW! [MYCRISISGEAR.COM/REDDOT/](https://mycrisisgear.com/reddot/)**



# CONTENT



**02**

## **Home Invasion: Prepare For The Worst**

Life, serious injury, or death does not happen in minutes. No - It happens in seconds. In the worst case scenario, life and death are separated by mere tenths of seconds, so let's get you prepared.



**06**

## **Kids And Firearms: How To Begin**

When should the subject of firearms be introduced to kids? When they hit the age where they can quickly process things in the home and the world that can kill them, start gun safety discussions.



**10**

## **Experimenting With Going Powerless**

Power outages have increased by 64% in the last ten years. Is the U.S. electric grid vulnerable to cyberattacks that could result in catastrophic blackouts? Here's how to be prepared.



**16**

## **Be Your Own Butcher: Getting The Best Cuts**

Cutting these critters up will require several different implements that will help you get the job done. Here are the tools and knives you will need to maximize your game meat haul.

**Next Issue:** Less Lethal Options





# Home Invasion: Prepare For The Worst

**Life, serious injury or death does not happen in minutes.**

**No - It happens in seconds.**

In the worst case scenario, life and death are separated by mere tenths of seconds. The large majority of our population is not prepared for a home intruder. The “it will not happen to me” mindset could be looked at as a disease of complacency. However, some will experience these life threatening tragedies. Like a disease, they didn’t expect it, they didn’t prepare for it, and now they are in a life threatening state. Just like that your life can change in a matter of seconds, so let’s get you prepared.



## Accounting For Complications

Introducing children or family members into the home intruder equation changes everything. The factors of them not being able to move as quickly, panicking, inability to be quiet, and being incapable

of defending themselves, causes your processing of information and decision making to be reduced. Coupled with children in different rooms and levels across the home and the dangers you have to overcome are force multipliers not in your favor.

When you add a dog to the equation, while a phenomenal deterrent, they can be a tripping hazard, provide your position to the enemy, and owners may make critical errors to protect man’s best friend when it endangers family members. A reactionary state is already a state of being several steps behind and is the last place you want to have multiple unforeseen adversities to occur due to lack of knowledge and preparations. The feat of overcoming a surprise situation (an ambush) requires precision reaction from a neuromuscular point of view, i.e., ingrained training.



## A Rabbit Hole Of Considerations

Daytime intruders target homes while owners are away to forgo confrontation. Burglars at night are



more likely to confront home owners and willing to harm the owners to forgo being caught.

It is night. Take for example an intruder confronting you and your family, huddled in fear. The intruder requires that you stand. Imagine your children and spouse behind you and the firearm is pointed at your chest. The following processes should occur within tenths of seconds in your mind.

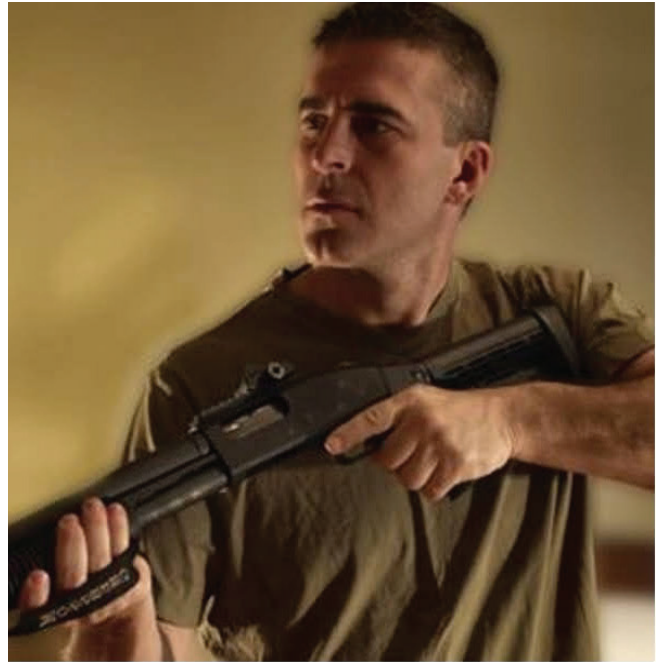
Most untrained people take one second plus from brain to finger to pull the trigger. It takes too much time to disarm the firearm vertically because of the travel from chest to head. Disarm has to occur on the horizontal plane. If the burglar discharges one round my family could be shot.

The burglar is holding a semi-automatic pistol. Disarming requires a technique that clasps my grip around the frame and slide of the firearm so the slide will not cycle and discharge a round. When the burglar commands a movement, that is my opportunity. While the burglar is commanding me to move, he is thinking. Neuromuscularly he has reduced his brain to finger response time (tenths of seconds matter). The burglar is expecting movement and that creates the opportunity of surprise.

I could delve further into the disarm, the response, the possible fight, and so on, however, I think you grasp the thought processes. This example was an exercise of your imagination to illuminate just how many variables and details one scenario can have. Take note of the complexity and years of training one would need in order to have the confidence to know when, how, and the specificity of disarming an adversary while considering family members locations.

## **Close Quarter Combat (CQC) - Not Just An Operator's Skill Anymore**

The knowledge of angles will be key to your success. The understanding of standing off an angle to open your field of view will be imperative. Manipulation of your physique to provide the least amount of your body being exposed when



addressing a danger area will be essential. Distance off a threshold (or “area to clear”) is required to fundamentally set up your body position to have no wasted movement and provide the most economy of motion.

Economy of motion, the efficiency at which someone moves from one point to another, can mean life or death. Limited penetration is the clearing of a room or uncleared area without entering the danger area. This is a skill that has been taught to civilians in the past few years. However, this skill has been mostly known at a tier one operator skill set level. I personally learned this from a mentor of mine who spent most of his career at CAG or The Unit. You may know them to be DELTA. Fanning the door, gathering as much information as possible about a room and its occupants, before partially or fully entering it, is part of the limited penetration clearing and is a phenomenal methodology to see the majority of the room. If conducted with a close approach to both walls you can even be confident knowing if someone is in the room without entering. Never assume it is empty, finish the clear, but those of us who have had countless life experience and force on force training know you can see that room without entering it.

There are multiple methods of completing the clear of a threshold. The Israelis have their method, I have seen SAS have a slightly different one, and U.S. special operations forces have slightly different takes



as well. I personally see several of the finishing clears to be dependent on the environment. Environmental indicators such as sound, visual identification of items out of place or shadows, and other identifications dictate your option. Footwork is sorely underestimated.

Footwork is like hand fighting in grappling arts, it is what makes the good become great. Footwork allows you to see someone when they cannot see you. Footwork provides a clean entry without snagging pockets, gear, belt loops, etc. Footwork also limits your exposure.

Weapons manipulation is as important as footwork. Weapons manipulation opens a field of view otherwise not available. The ability to address a threat with a weapon system not in a perfect flat range grip matters when a real threat of loss of life is on the table. Trigger discipline and safety selector discipline for a long gun is absolutely a professional level behavior. A behavior that will save a family member's life from a negligent discharge.

Field of view with an optic, or scope; this is a big one. Many will keep the optic in their eye line the entire clear, when combat has taught us to just lower the optic slightly to open the field of view of both eyes. If a threat appears, it is a slight rise to address the threat. At such close range, a natural point of aim will lead you to be successful. However, we must all say to see your front sight or red dot weapon light usage, is another sorely underestimated and untrained area.

The light cannot be on during the entire clear. The light must be used to see for a second, then move under the cover of darkness until needed again. It may also be used to blind your adversary. I suggest you keep on the move because they will fire at what they last saw. Trust me on that.

Covered movement will be a necessity for safeguarding your family and your significant other obtaining children from different rooms. Meaning you must cover their movement so they may go to and from safeguarding family members. However, I rarely hear of covered movement being covered in courses. No pun intended. Clearing stairs, elevators, and multiple adjacent angles is a whole other skill

level. Weapon system choice must be a choice dictated by experience.

Many people think they want a long gun, however, they are not trained in primary and secondary malfunctions, weapons manipulation, how far the round will penetrate, and so on. A pump shotgun is the good choice for untrained individuals. Majorly effective without marksmanship knowledge (especially buckshot or birdshot), and any malfunction is cleared by one pump. The same goes for semi-automatic pistols in comparison to revolvers.

## The Intruder Is At The Disadvantage

An intruder does not know the layout of your home. Even if they did know the layout, they are still searching you out. That is a major disadvantage already. An ambush is a fundamentally difficult adversity to deal with. Even if they understand one person clearing, they are at a huge disadvantage. Thus, the reason tactical teams train so much for CQC. Yes, it is that dangerous. Couple this with the





lights out, natural obstacles in the way, and if you have a second level, perched on the high ground with concealment and hopefully cover, well, need I say more.

## Preparations By The Numbers

I will now share with you many, not all, preparations that are needed to defend against a home invasion.

### Fundamental List:

- 1) Blueprint with color coded responses and locations of safety
- 2) Blueprint should include positions of advantage/dominance to counter an intruder
- 3) Tactical training to conduct 1 & 2 person clearing, a unique skill typically found within elite units, recently is being taught to civilians
- 4) Fortification devices like double glazed thick glass for windows, and Door Armor, to provide you more response time against an intruder
- 5) Alarm system/security lighting (glass break, motion sensor, automatic communication to law enforcement, etc.)
- 6) Physical security considerations (weapons), taking into account knowledge and ability
- 7) First aid for many types of injuries - you want to know CPR and basic triage at minimum
- 8) Positions of advantage and escape routes should include primary, secondary, and tertiary options, for different areas of the home
- 9) Rally points family members know to go to for safe harbor, meet up

Note: This is not an exhaustive list. If you want to prepare your family for home safety or any civilian preparedness—like self-defense, close quarter battle, escape/evasion, active shooter, anti-kidnapping, restraint escapes, etc.—we suggest taking a more specialized course, of which there are many online, such as Tier One Tactics.

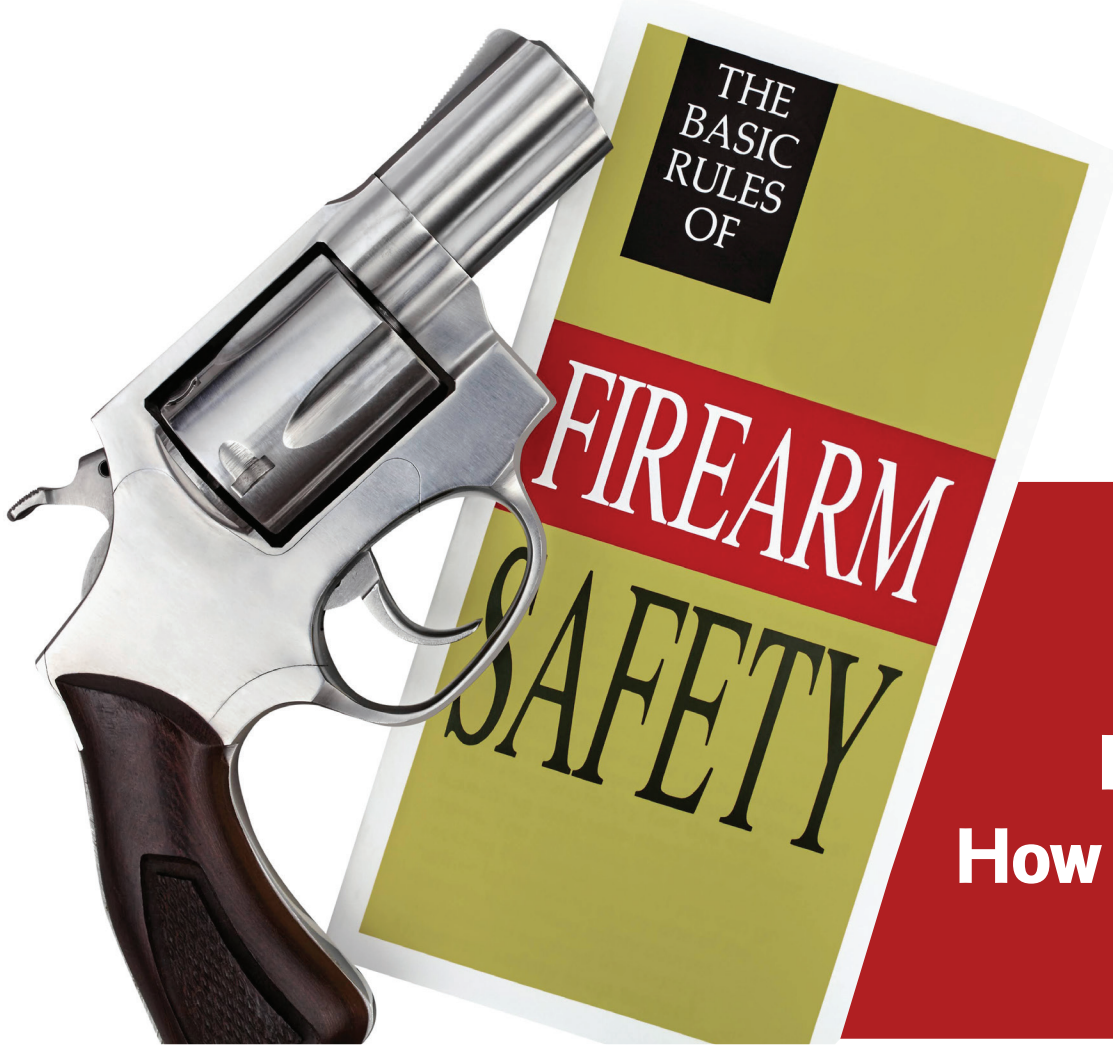


## Final Thoughts

Ensure you do not count on law enforcement arriving in time to save you and your family. Ten to thirty minutes, depending on county versus city response times, is a lifetime to wait for saving in a life and death situation. You are your first and last line of defense. That goes for almost any situation where you are ambushed.

Whatever method you choose to prepare yourself and your family, don't say it won't happen, don't be a victim; be prepared to keep you and your family safe.





# Kids And Firearms: How To Begin

By Eric Austgen

## Age Or Maturity?

One common problem with first-time parents/gun owners is deciding when the subject of firearms should be introduced to their kid. The most obvious answer to that is when they start understanding what is ok and not so ok to be playing around with. Once they hit the age when they can quickly process the variety of things in the home and the world that can kill them, this is the time to include gun safety into that discussion.

Notice I said gun safety. I certainly wouldn't want to be handing a real firearm, loaded or unloaded, to a six-year-old to be handling, although there are shooting schools catering to that age range, more on this later. The Eddie Eagle program through the NRA is an excellent way to teach safety to children too young to understand anything other than guns can kill people. This is why they recommend teaching kids to stop, don't touch, leave the area, and find an adult. A short, easy set of rules for any of the elementary crowd to grasp, and potentially

save a life in the process. I'm sure we have all heard of stories about some kid that found his old man's gun and a tragedy happened. Point being, if there are more kids being inculcated with these rules at an early age, we can all bring down the senseless gun death statistics tremendously by having a few smart kids hanging at the party saying "That may not be a good idea, Skippy."

As kids grow older, they will naturally become more curious about the things they have only been superficially introduced to. They will most certainly want to understand why they needed to retrieve an adult if they happened upon a firearm. The nice thing about this, is you will begin to get a good idea of where their mental maturity is at with the questions they ask, whether they are just merely curious about the subject or if they are interested in having a full blown Algonquin Round Table discussion.

The more curious and in depth the questions about firearms your kids may have could be an



indicator that they may be ready to advance in their education. One nice thing the youth have nowadays is replica firearms that look, feel, and cycle the same as their real counterparts. These are a fantastic alternative to using expensive weapons for teaching drawing, loading, and clearing drills. Another upside is that they can practice at any time and almost anywhere, strengthening their skills and muscle memory to the point where they will easily transition into the real artillery. Build upon the gun safety rules learned early in their lives with the rules applying to safe and responsible handling and discharge, and you will be well on your way to many years of a fun family activity.

getting fed up with all the squirrels getting into the birdfeeder out back, so I popped the screen out of the kitchen window, and patiently waited for the varmints to show up. Even though I was shooting a B-B gun, it helped me to develop my marksmanship, whether it be in a prone, kneeling, or standing position, breath control, rapid reload on a lever action, and it was at this stage I became acutely aware of windage and elevation.

All guns have the potential to be dangerous if improperly handled, but I could think of nothing better to start a kid off with than an airgun. In addition to the benefits gained by you and I starting



## You'll Shoot Your Eye Out, Kid

I'm sure all of you out there have fond memories of your first shooter and the circumstances surrounding it. Mine was the Official Red Ryder carbine action 200 shot range model air rifle, minus the compass in the stock, darn it! My blue steeled beauty went with me every time we packed up for a weekend in the mountains. I collected empty cans after meals or scrounged rusted tin cans from a century old trash pit and unleashed a vicious rain of stainless steel B-Bs upon their tin and aluminum bodies.

I wasn't generally allowed to use my Red Ryder around the neighborhood, however my mother was

off this way, the more gradual the introduction of recoil into a child's shoulder, the better. There is nothing worse than someone literally becoming gun shy over an experience that could have been easily mitigated.

The next ideal weapon to graduate to would be any .22LR weapon. These guys have a recoil that is hardly noticeable and an absolute delight to take to the range for an enjoyable afternoon of plinking. The lack of heavy recoil will also help for your kiddo to concentrate on the fundamentals of shooting the real thing, instead of always thinking and wincing in anticipation of the recoil. What's more, the ammo is still relatively dirt cheap, and an economical choice for target shooting when you



want to hoard your larger caliber ammo, but still have the whole family practicing proper gun control with tight groupings. One should shop around for both a rifle and pistol chambered in .22LR so that the youth can get an all around feel for both options. Make sure that whatever firearm you purchase is a comfortable fit or else fatigue and lack of interest may set in because of it.



On the shotgun spectrum, .410 loads are perfect for young shooters as they are also pretty light on recoil. Savage Arms sells an Accufit model of rifle that “grows” along with the shooter, basically the gun has parts that can be added to the stock as the shooter sprouts up to provide a comfortable fit every time. They have about 44 different Accufit models with a variety of calibers available to help your young shooter acclimate to larger calibers. Prices start at \$628 and top out around \$2000, however, considering this will be a rifle used well into adulthood, the investment will be well worth it.

## Family Range Time And A Little Healthy, Friendly Competition

If you are at the .22 stage of the game, then you will have visited the range as many times as possible to keep your brood sharp. The biggest complaint I often hear from others is that they would like to get to the range more, but just can't seem to find the time. While for some this is a valid excuse, it doesn't release parents or guardians from the responsibility of bringing the youth of this nation up to be a respectable, courteous bunch, and this includes never letting their shooting education lag. In order to help parents out, there are a variety of organizations across this great land focused solely on youth shooting. Having lived in the sticks for a majority of my life, I had always been exposed to 4-H and its members. This organization, in addition to its agricultural orientation, has an excellent shooting program geared towards youth. The programs have categories for archery, air rifle/pistol, muzzleloading, shotgun, and .22 shooting. Youths will learn general gun and hunting safety, marksmanship, and other fundamentals, all while performing community service duties and learning valuable leadership skills to produce well rounded, polite, productive individuals. Another program offering a youth category is the Civilian Marksman Program.





**The biggest complaint I often hear from others is that they would like to get to the range more, but just can't seem to find the time.**







# EXPERIMENTING WITH GOING POWERLESS by Nikki Mulder

## THE NUMBERS DON'T LIE

According to researchers and energy experts at the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, power outages in the United States have increased by a whopping 64% in the last ten years as compared with the previous decade. Furthermore, data gathered by the U.S. Department of Energy, from 2020 to 2021, indicates that the United States experienced 137,865 power outage events that affected 50,000 or more customers each; the predominant amount of which were attributed to “extreme weather.” That number—not even counting smaller outages—means that more than 6 billion people were affected by large scale outages in a single year alone! If that isn’t enough to cause concern, consider this; according to Senator Roy Blunt, “The U.S. electric grid is vulnerable to cyberattacks that could result in catastrophic, widespread, lengthy blackouts and other loss of electrical services.” He goes on to warn that, “Russia, North Korea, Iran, and China currently have the capability to launch cyberattacks that could disrupt critical infrastructure.”



## THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

There’s no substitute for experience and life has a way of preparing us for things that no book, school, or “how-to” video ever could. This is something that I never fully appreciated until the last decade of my life ... especially during the insanity of the last couple of years. For my husband and I, those experiences directly translated into many opportunities to practice living without power—long before we took the leap to move off the grid.



My husband and I—having lived all over the world as active duty marines—faced many natural disasters: super typhoons, category 4 and 5 hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, wildfires, and even the fourth most powerful earthquake ever recorded in history and subsequent devastating tsunami. The result—regardless of the nature of the disaster — was always the same: chaos, destruction, loss of power and water; sometimes for days or weeks. In each case, if we hadn't already prepared, we would have found ourselves in trouble as already-limited resources were quickly depleted when hordes of desperate people flooded local stores. One advantage to each disaster: we gained valuable first-hand experience on how to weather a storm, that we now get to share with you here.



## THE STONE-COLD TRUTH

Upon moving to Idaho, our circumstances surrounding the need to be prepared had changed, but the need itself did not. In some respects, it became even more important. In addition to enduring relentless wildfires, it is not uncommon for a rogue windstorm to blow trees down atop power lines at any given time throughout the year.

When this occurs, not only do many homes in the area lose power, but frequently—especially with a large storm—downed trees and live power lines fall across the roadways making them impassable until emergency services can respond. Depending on how widespread the destruction, this can take more than a day or two. In the meantime, you may find yourself with no viable way to leave home for supplies. Likewise, winter snow and ice storms often knock power out for days and weeks during sub-zero temperatures. It does not take much imagination to realize the potentially deadly ramifications of such an occasion.

## PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

It was after that move that my husband and I realized, while we knew what to do in a lengthy power outage, our children really did not. We decided it was past time to start teaching them to be prepared for the worst and the best way to do that was to practice. We started by discussing different scenarios with them and finding out how much they already knew about the subject. We discussed everything from how to cook meals to whether the toilets will keep flushing. We had them list items they thought might be useful during a power outage. It was interesting to see how creative they were, encouraging to see how much they had gleaned just from our lifestyle, and entertaining to see some of their ideas.

In discussing some ideas on how we would heat our food, my (then) six-year-old ran off, returning with one of my stock pots, some newspapers, and a lighter, intent on using the pot as a “stove” ... on the carpet ... in the middle of the living room! This “sparked” a whole new conversation on the hazards of open flames indoors, smoke inhalation, and carbon monoxide poisoning ... not-to-mention mom’s wrath when he ruins her favorite stockpot. I reminded him that we had a perfectly good woodstove in the kitchen that served as not only a heat source for our home but also doubled as a cookstove. Nevertheless, his idea was not completely without merit, and with a little tweaking—and relocation—it could be a viable option.



After a thorough discussion, we put our knowledge and skills to the test. We chose to cut power to the house for all but the essentials—refrigerator & freezer—for two days and see how we would fare. The boys were still little then—five and six—so while we gathered candles and oil lanterns, and I strategically placed a few here and there, mostly we used flashlights and LED lanterns. The boys thoroughly enjoyed “playing survival” that weekend ... especially during the evening hours. We all cooked, cleaned, and played board games together by lantern light. We cooked our meals and heated water for the dishes on the woodstove. We all slept downstairs in the carpeted living room where we would be nearer to the woodstove and the boys even pitched and slept in a tent to trap their body heat and keep them even warmer ... although, admittedly, their reasoning had a lot more to do with the “fun factor” than the “need-to-stay-warm” factor. Nonetheless, it served both purposes. Not only was that weekend a valuable learning experience for them, but it was also a priceless bonding experience for our family.

## BACK TO THE BASICS

“But Nikki,” you say, “While it’s clear you are a magnet for natural disasters and we genuinely enjoyed the heartwarming story about your kids, what does ‘going powerless’ actually look like in practice?” I’m so glad you asked!! There are many things to consider when you are looking at unexpectedly losing power for any length of time ... especially when that length of time is unknown. So, let’s chat about that.

Like I tell my boys, “While we should always hope for the best, it’s essential to plan for the worst ... not out of fear, but practicality.” When the Marine Corps sends us on deployment, we don’t just pack a few items hoping for the best, we make extensive lists of items we know we need, as well as things we might need, and many items that might seem downright ridiculous to consider needing; I subscribe to the notion, “It’s better to have it and not need it, than need it and not have it” (Franz Kafka). Plus, you can always offload extra “stuff,” but it’s impossible to create something from nothing.

You may be familiar with the Rule of Threes: The rule says that you can survive:

- 3 minutes without air
- 3 hours without shelter
- 3 days without water
- 3 weeks without food

A more appropriate name might be the “Guideline of Threes” as the amounts listed are situational and will vary from individual to individual ... but they are a good rule of thumb and make it easier to remember. But there is more to consider regarding these subjects when we are trying to prepare ourselves for the possibility of a temporary power outage.

## SHELTER IN PLACE

In most cases during an outage, you will be in your home and will shelter in place. The primary exception to this would be winter. If it is below freezing temperatures, you have no backup heat source, and you have the option—or if you are otherwise vulnerable due to age or health concerns—you may want to consider sheltering elsewhere.

The biggest concern for losing power in the winter is the ability to stay warm. If you have a backup heat source like a fireplace or a wood stove, then you are set. If not, things get a little more challenging. Besides lots of warm clothing and blankets, there are a few other options for staying warm. Properly vented propane or natural gas heaters are an option if you have them. Additionally, you would be surprised how much just a few candles or lanterns in a small area can help heat a space. Two words of caution: open flames must be properly situated to prevent a fire and the area **MUST** have proper ventilation to prevent carbon monoxide buildup. (Carbon monoxide poisoning is something we often don’t take seriously enough—I know I didn’t—until someone we know dies or comes close to dying like I did two years ago.) I’m not sure dying from carbon monoxide is preferable to freezing to death—while it may defeat the whole purpose of having that heat source—it is important to have at least one window ajar on each end of the



room to create cross-ventilation; and it is vital to have at least one carbon monoxide detector ... I have several.

You may want to consider moving the members of your household to a single smaller room in the house and stuff towels or rags in any cracks and under doors to prevent frigid air from seeping in (DO NOT do this if you are using any carbon monoxide producing item such as lanterns or heaters!). The collection of warm bodies in an enclosed smaller space will help warm the area. Furthermore, you may want to pitch a tent inside the room to sleep in, preferably side-by-side. Another option is to pitch a smaller tent inside a large tent, creating an additional layer of warmer air that will act as an insulator. Hand warmers are another great resource. Hot food and drink are another fantastic means of maintaining internal body temperature.



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT. AND SURVIVAL

I won't delve deep into the facts surrounding how much food and water you should have on hand—both perishable and non-perishable—to get you and your family through an emergency, but there are a couple of subjects surrounding the two that I would like to discuss.

### Water

So, you have enough water set aside to last you a week in an emergency. That's great! But have you given any thought as to whether you will be able to flush the toilet? Or how you are going to wash dishes, or even clothing, if the outage lasts for any length of time? Without a backup power source, on a well, you will no longer have power to your pump. In most cases, the water in your pressure tank is all you will have for your sinks, toilets, or appliances. If you aren't on a private well, depending on how widespread and long-lasting the outage, you may lose water when city or county pumps fail and the water towers run dry. The good news is that potable water is not necessary for things like flushing toilets, laundry, or even dishes. For the past seven years, we have relied solely on our creek, rainwater collection, and (in the winter) melting snow for all our water needs—although we always properly filter water we drink or cook with.

### Food - Preparation And Perishables

Food preparation without power takes many forms:

- Gas stove (manually ignited as most modern gas stoves have electric igniters)
- Wood burning stove (on the top or inside)
- BBQ grill or smoker
- Fireplace (a cooking rack can be rigged over the fire inside the hearth utilizing some blocks or rocks and your oven grate)
- Camp stove
- Electric burner or Instant Pot® (If you have a backup generator that has a high enough output... but the least practical use of generator power and fuel)

If you have none of the above, you will need to get more creative with your cooking. You could always create a little fire ring outside your home to cook over. This can be inconvenient in winter—if there is six feet of snow on the ground, no fuel for your fire, and times are desperate enough, it may be time to start deciding which of your favorite magazines and furniture you could stand to part with. I think my husband might be tempted to sabotage all our preparations just to have the excuse to help me “purge” some furniture.



## PRESERVING PERISHABLES IN AN OUTAGE

One year, while living in Japan, we experienced frequent scheduled power outages. Often, they announced a block of time where we could expect to be without power and would advise us to plan accordingly. Often, that block would stretch out to be double or more the time stated. On several occasions it lasted more than a full day. Some of my neighbors lost most of their refrigerated items because they relied on the outage only lasting a few hours. To think, these people were forewarned that an outage was coming, and yet they lost much of their food anyway. Call me silly, but I subscribe to the notion that forewarned should mean forearmed. When you consider that most power outages come with no warning at all... preparedness is essential to preserving what supplies you have.

When discussing food preservation here, I'm not talking about putting away canned and dried goods—although that is important too—I'm talking about doing the best we can to preserve as many of those perishable items for as long as possible during a power outage event. Most refrigerators only

remain cold for four hours after power loss; upright freezers, between 24 to 48 hours and chest freezers, between 48 to 72 hours. All the above estimates are based on a fully stocked unit that is not opened after loss of power. Unless it is a scheduled power outage, we rarely know how long we will be without power. That poses all kinds of issues related to preserving perishables ... especially refrigerator items.

### Here are a few basic tips to help extend the life of your perishables:

- If you own a backup generator but need to conserve fuel, or if it is not large enough to power your entire home, forgo the lights and extras and connect your refrigerator and/or freezer directly to the generator. If the surge or draw from the compressors is too much for your generator, alternate power to them, as necessary. Your refrigerator will require more frequent cooling.
- Keep your refrigerator closed! Every time you open the door, the cool air in the fridge drops out the bottom. Without a power source to replenish that cool air, food will spoil quickly. Same with an upright freezer.





- Keep gallon or half gallon jugs of water—as many as you have space for—in the freezer. In the event of power loss, these will extend the life of your frozen items. Additionally, you can extend the life of your refrigerated items by transferring the contents of the refrigerator and several ice jugs to a cooler. Depending on how full the cooler is, this could buy you an extra couple of days.
- If you can get your hands on dry ice, do so! It will significantly extend the life of your food.
- Pack all items in your fridge and freezer close together. The fuller the better.
- Cover your freezer and cooler with insulated blankets or sleeping bags.

We recently had our deep freeze full of food defrost on us. It turns out that we had a malfunction between our battery bank and our solar freezer. It cost us hundreds of dollars in food and an untold amount of frustration. Since then, we keep thermometers—in our refrigerators and freezers—that have a battery powered external temperature monitor. It tells us about the current temperature inside each unit as well as the highest and lowest temperatures. I monitor it and reset the high and low temperatures every day to prevent future loss. At the time of this article, I paid less than \$30 for mine from Amazon. A tiny investment for a huge peace of mind!



### Some Other Items To Have On Hand In Case Of An Emergency:

- First Aid kit
- Battery-operated or hand-crank radio
- Flashlights
- Lanterns
- Extra batteries for all of the above
- Candles
- Lighter/matches
- Baby supplies (diapers, wipes—for everyone—creams, etc.)
- Extra feminine products
- Travel bidet (This especially came in handy during the TP shortage!)
- Local Maps
- Pliers or multitool (to turn off utilities if necessary)
- Small portable power bank for cell phones
- Extra blankets and warm clothing (emergency/heat blankets as well!)
- Cards, books, games, puzzles, and other fun things to pass the time
- Manual can opener
- Hatchet or ax to procure firewood (even furniture if necessary)
- Supplies for pets
- Cash (Even if you can get to a store, they are open for business, and they still have items available for purchase, there is a chance that their card machines won't work.)

It is hard to know exactly what you will need in any given emergency until you are in the thick of it, but that's why it is important to think about these things before we find ourselves in that situation. It's also important to impart this knowledge to our children. With a little practice and prior planning, we can avert most of the danger, fear, and confusion that surrounds an emergency and weather the storm with confidence and even comfort.





# Be Your Own Butcher: Getting The Best Cuts

By Eric Austgen

## Some Tools Of The Trade

Besides your chosen hunting implement, you will need to bring along some tools and knives to maximize your meat haul. One should put together an all inclusive animal butchering kit ranging from steak to buffalo wing providers. A good, sturdy rope will be ideal to have in order to drag large game animals from where they fell to your camp and also for hoisting the animal from any available stout tree branch or high point to dress it out.

Cutting these critters up will require several different implements that will help you get the job done with minimal effort and choice cuts. Beginning on the smaller game spectrum, one should have a pair of shears that break apart, and can cut through the wings, legs, and bones of all sizes of game bird, even the biggest of turkeys.

A pair of multi use kitchen or EMS trauma shears should do the trick for this task. Though normally reserved for use with fish, fillet knives are a wonderful tool for breasting waterfowl and other varieties of tasty birds. Depending on your needs, or how you like to hunt and dress, straight and folding versions are available for those that either like to dress on the spot or wait to get back to camp.

Moving into larger game territory, investment in a boning hook will be of great importance. This tool will allow you to keep your delicate bits away from dangerous areas when the blades get to cutting. It is basically a T-shape handled curved hook that looks similar to the hooks employed in carrying hay bales, a pain in the rear chore I might add. On the sharp steel side of things, a good, tough, corrosion resistant 6" straight boning knife will be essential to your kit as this blade will need to be able to do everything from dressing to boning quarters. It should also be capable of separating the juiciest of roast cuts. A 6" curved boning knife is a perfect compliment to its straight brother, as this blade will deliver delicious backstrap and rib meat, while easily boning out front shoulders.

Last, but most certainly not least, the always reliable butcher knife should be included in your kit, I mean no duh, right? Don't worry, I thought the same thing, and I'm writing this. An 8" version of this knife should be sufficient to tackle game as large as moose or elk, however, if you are only getting tags for smaller guys like white tail and mule deer, scaling down to a 6" blade would be advisable. As with all things that can be purchased in this world, these items can be personally hand selected by you after careful inspection for the utmost in quality for a spot in your kit, or you can just poke fate in the eye and buy a ready made kit, the choice is purely up to you.





## Dressing For Supper

Having felled your quarry, one should always approach the animal with caution, whether it dropped when you hit it or if you had to track it some distance. These bigger animals have been known to take quite a punch from a high caliber round, only to get up and gore the feller that shot him. So be careful and make sure you have another round in the chamber or arrow in the bow. If it has been determined that the animal no longer has any fight left or is circling the drain, their demise can be hastened with a severing of the jugular vein. This will help to drain blood you don't want to deal with later, get rid of any blood wastes you wouldn't want in the edible parts, minimize damage to the hide should one choose to use it, and will facilitate a humane ending for the animal.

The weather will be an important factor that will dictate the immediacy of dressing and butchering your kill. Warmer weather requires the animal to be processed immediately due to the chance of meat spoilage. You will get more of a grace period if you are out in the mountains in the dead of winter with snow up to your armpits, so plan accordingly. If you are hunting in an area that is lousy with firmly branched trees, it will be best to elevate your kill to allow for a faster, more efficient gutting process. However, if the Good Lord didn't see fit to plant some trees in your favorite hunting spot, the animal can be gutted and skinned on the ground. Just remember to skin one side first, roll the meat on to the skinned side to protect it, and then finish up with the remaining side.

Once you have the animal situated, you can begin gutting it by making an incision from between the

hinds legs all the way up to the base of the neck. If you have killed a deer, it would be a good idea to remove its leg glands before any dressing is started, and take care to clean the knife as it may contaminate the meat. You can also remove the genitals at this point with a V-incision, using this as a good purchase point for cutting the carcass open. Care should be taken by the hunter to make a shallow enough cut to get through the hide and underlying membranes, any deeper of a cut and the internal organs will be compromised. When this has been accomplished, open the cavity as wide as you can, if you are by yourself or get a buddy if not, from there you can begin cutting the connective tissue holding the internal organs inside the animal. Consistent use of your T-handled hook would be advised as it gets messy in there and sometimes one's mind can drift from the task at hand, making things even messier, so always err on the side of safety with things that can give you a fatal boo-boo. The fruits of your labor will drop easily out of a hanging carcass, helping you to assess your progress and clearing your field of view to continue working. Ground dressed carcasses will need to be rolled over or have the cavity scooped out. Once you think everything that needs to be removed has been, make a final inspection, and gather up the organs into a neat little pile, more on that in a moment.

## A Versatile Hide

Now that you have sufficiently extracted all of the animals' innards, it will be time to start skinning. To do this, make an incision all the way around the neck, usually mid way between the torso and head. Once you have a good purchase on the hide, insert the knife between the hide and meat, and gently start pulling back as you cut the skin's connective tissue. After you have peeled a few inches off, grip the hide and use your weight to hasten your work. All four legs of the animal are not as simple. Proper removal of the hide from the legs will require you to cut the leg down to the first joint, severing the ligaments and tendons, instead of breaking the leg, allowing you to pull the leg free with ease, and minimize damage to the hide. Once the legs have been dealt with, it should be much easier to strip the rest of the hide.



Depending on the size of the hide, you are faced with some rather pleasant options, such as, what do I want to do with it? Hair on hide sides are very nice as a decoration piece in any home, warm and comfortable over clothing can be made from it, bags, hats, shelters, and a whole host of other things the imagination can conjure up. My favorite hide contribution from antlered animals is buckskin. Buckskin is a versatile leather that acts almost like wool as clothing in that it's very insulating and comfortable in all seasons, and wicks away moisture well. The waterproof nature of the buckskin is also excellent for shelters, for all of you out there that like to take extended vacations in the middle of nowhere, a shelter made entirely of buckskin will be like having a room at the Ritz year round. I should point out that the versatile virtues of this hide do not come straight off the animal, indeed, we will need to resort to a method passed on by the American Indian tribes of old to the Spanish, down to the bewhiskered mountain men, and then on to everywhere in between. The hair removal process via wet and dry scraping is a rather long, laborious task that will require days to complete and will be suited more to the aforementioned backwoods denizens. If you wish to leave the hair on for added sheltering benefits, find a fallen, rotund tree trunk, large flat rock, or stake it out on the ground. The point is that you will need a hard, semi flat surface to help with scraping the fat and membrane from the skin side of the hide. Scraping can be done with a draw knife or a specially designed fleshing knife

that can make light work on your part. Make sure to keep scraping until nothing is coming off with the blade.

When it has been cleaned to your satisfaction, gather up three fairly stout sticks just long enough to form a tripod tall enough to drape the hide over to create a makeshift teepee, leaving enough space at the bottom for oxygen draw. After eyeballing the construction operation, get your fire going to a smoky state, and place the hide over the tripod. The key to this waterproofing method is in the smoke as the carbon byproduct of the fire is needed to cram into the hides pores, sealing them up and keeping the rain out. Therefore the fire should not be allowed to get too hot. Temperature control and increased smoke can be had by placing green foliage chalk full of moisture on the coals of the fire, not too much to snuff the fire, but just enough for the desired effect. This will need to be something to fiddle with until you find that perfect zen zone. Two to three days of this continuous treatment will be sufficient for use in sheltering and bedding purposes for when you are out living like a true mountain man.



## Waste Not, Want Not

Here's the point where we can stop, crack the top off our favorite beverage, and pat ourselves on the back for a job well done. You might as well because there really is nothing to do while we are letting the meat cool down a bit, so let's turn our attention to some of the yummy edible parts of the animal to provide sustenance in any situation. Too many



times the internal organs of large game animals are discarded in favor of the desired meat endgame. I hate to see it, not only because it is wasteful, but also because some of these organs are quite tasty and packed with nutrients that are essential for this survival situation called life.

As we all know, the heart is a muscle as is the steak we eat, so it is a no brainer that this organ should find its way into one of your favorite recipes. Prepping the heart is just like cleaning out a bell pepper. Cut it in twain, scooping the atria and ventricles free of valves and connective tissue, and then remove the aorta to complete cleaning. Kidneys are also an excellent addition to any dish requiring meat. This organ doesn't need too much trimming, unless there is fat or connective tissue hanging around, however, it will need to be soaked in cold water for a few days in order to get rid of the remaining urine the animal was still holding on to.

By far one of my favorite internal organs to feast upon is the liver. I know some of you might be salivating at the prospect, while others may be making some sort of face. Yes, I love liver smothered with onions and gravy, and I make no apologies for it. Sometimes my body starts to jones for iron like crazy and I can think of no better way to satiate that craving than a few slices of liver, topped off with Vitamin C rich onions, and I'm feeling capital again. I know the stigma about liver, but just give it another try, you will love it.

The next edible tasty food is not an organ but is nourishment provided by the bones of the animal. The large femur bones naturally contain the most marrow, however all bones should be harvested for its marrow due to its rich content of fat and protein. Much like nature's own energy bars, bone marrow is great for fueling the body during hard labor without the side effect of having a full stomach. The marrow can be obtained by slicing the bone open lengthwise with a hacksaw or butcher knife. It can be eaten right from the bone or scooped out, eaten raw or with a little seasoning and heat put to it, it's up to you and your tastes.

I would caution you from eating organs such as the stomach, intestines, brains, and lungs. The stomach

and intestines can be made into water carriers by tanning or smoking them. The lungs bring nothing to the table, however, the brain is a subject some people are split on, much like liver. I would avoid it due to the potential the animal had some sort of disease, wild carnivores have systems built to deal with that stuff, humans do not, so don't chance it.

## Carving Out Your Own Perfect Cuts

Cooling of the carcass is paramount for successful butchering as it will firm the muscles and retract the blood back into the meat. Depending on how emergent your need is for food or the demands of your palette, the animal can be left hanging to cool from a period of overnight up to two weeks in length.

Beginning with the front legs, follow the muscle group edges to the shoulder joint, and cut into it. Removal of all the ligaments and tendons will help to pull the leg and shoulder meat off in one piece. For the back legs, start cutting at the tailbone and end at the hip joint, then you can remove the meat in one piece. Tenderloin can be removed from either side of the spine by cutting from the top of the spine and striped off down to the ribcage. Be advised that this will be one long tube of meat if it comes from a large animal, so you will be eating hearty for a while with that kind of yield. Backstrap can be harvested from inside the ribcage, but tends to run on the smaller side. Flank steak is the meat hanging off the bottom of the ribcage and can be grill-ready by cutting along the spine up to the lowest rib.

Once the carcass has been stripped of its meat, you can now set your sights on the neck roasts. Cut above the front shoulder along the spine to the trachea, removing meat as you go. The final step in total meat removal from the animal is to separate the ribs from the spine. This can be done with a saw, pruning shears, hatchet, or a sharp butcher's knife. The meat can be left on the bone or carefully cut off and quartered for juicy stew meat. For the adventurous out there, the tongue may also be extracted and added to the camp menu. I have never personally sampled tongue yet, but it is on the bucket list. To get at it, make a deep V-cut along the

inside of the jawbone until you are able to pull it out the bottom of the jaw, then cut it off the base, and bon appetit! While you are cutting the meat from the animal, you may notice white lines running along the muscles. These lines delineate the muscle groups and should be used as a guide when separating meat cuts. Cutting along these lines will allow you to pull the muscle groups apart while cutting down to the bone, stripping the meat off, and severing the tendon to free the meat from bone. The choice will be yours as to how thick or thin of a steak you want to how juicy that roast will be, the sky's the limit, go hog wild.



## Bonus Time! Bonus Time!

I couldn't leave you without a word on some critters that may be a game changer when it comes to full on survival situations. More often than not, smaller game will be readily available and help to keep you going when food stores are running out. Birds, squirrels, rabbits, and the like are what I am referring to, and fortunately these guys don't need the lengthy attention their larger forest buddies require.

Preparing birds in the field differs little from doing it in the kitchen, except there are a couple of added steps. The feathers should be plucked as soon as the bird is killed or soaked in hot water if left for a time, for easier plucking. Pin feathers should be singed off from any available open flame. Breaking the skin at the breastbone will help you to get your fingers underneath and work around the body to remove the skin. The head and neck should be removed and a cut made on the lower end so you can reach in and remove the entrails. From there, it's time to turn it into a satisfying morsel.

Terrestrial bound critters can be skinned and ready for the spit in less than a half hour. Make an incision around the middle of the torso, insert the first two fingers of both hands under each end, and pull. Next, chop off the head and feet, and lay the animal on a flat surface, belly up. Cut from the tail to the throat, separating the pelvis and hips, and cracking open the ribcage. Take care in avoiding the genitals, instead cut around them and the anus, and use it as a handle to pull the entrails out of the cavity. Once the carcass is devoid of all internal organs, wash out the interior of any remaining blood or icky stuff, season it up, and off to the spit it goes.



# Tactical Laser Sight



No technical expertise required...  
you will have the Tactical Laser Sight on within 45 seconds or less!

- Fits Any Gun With A Picatinny or Weaver Rail... Including Brands Like: S&W, Sig Sauer, Glock, Remington, Beretta, Rugers and many, many more
- 100% shockproof and will stay zeroed in with each and every shot and is even weatherproof!



MY CRISIS GEAR

<https://mycrisisgear.com/laser>

800-370-8660





 **INSRA**  
Liberty. Independence. Patriotism.