



MEMBERS UPDATE

August 2023

7 Primitive Cooking Methods You Still Need To Know Today

How To Find Preppers Near You

Starting At Square One: A Firearms Primer

36 Practical Uses For Duct Tape & Aluminum Foil

Keeping Your Irons Protected: The 6 Best Gun Safes For Home And Travel

NEXT ISSUE: Women's Guide to Guns

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

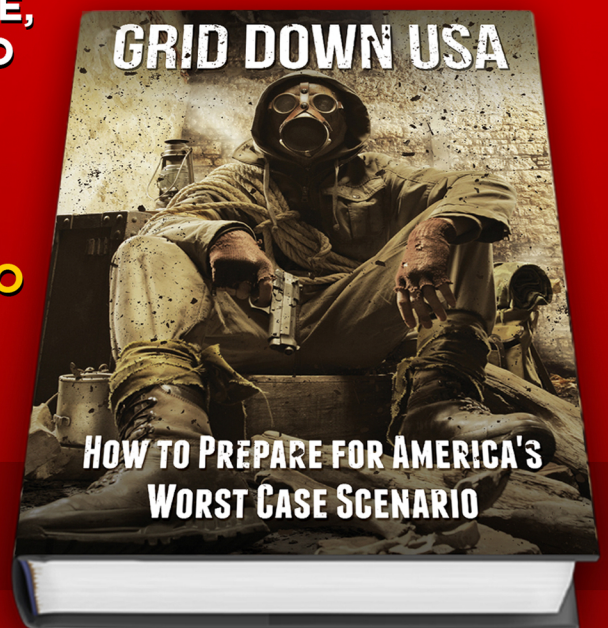
**ECONOMIC MELTDOWN, SYSTEMIC COLLAPSE,
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SANITATION BREAKDOWNS, VIOLENCE AND
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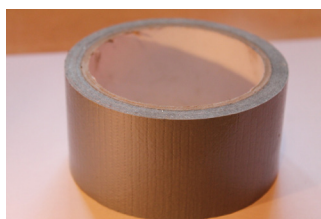
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There are two types of mindsets: the prepper group mentality and the lone wolf mentality. Obviously, if you're the type who prefers to play the lone wolf, then the following article won't mean much to you. But if you're looking for a community, we can help!



KEEPING YOUR IRONS PROTECTED: THE 6 BEST GUN SAFES FOR HOME AND TRAVEL

By Eric Austgen

A while back, we discussed some sneaky places to stash firearms around the house for quick access when besought by individuals bent on doing wrong. This time around, we will have a look at the best gun safes one can purchase for home use or while traveling this great country of ours. These selections are based on durability and budget, two very important things to consider when stowing deadly hardware. We will also discuss what kind of research you will need to do to find the right safe.

CHOOSING WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOUR NEEDS

The type of safe you purchase will depend on how much you want to spend, how many firearms you own, space and weight limitations, safe construction, and how often you will be visiting the contents.

The general rule of thumb in deciding the size of the safe is to take inventory of the firearms you

currently own, then add all the ones you want to buy; don't forget to add all the accessories to the mix as well. While it makes for a good chuckle, this is actually sound advice, as you would naturally want to store everything having to do with firearms in a convenient one-stop shop. You may also want to store valuables other than weaponry, so plan accordingly if this is a peripheral desire.

The quality of the safe construction is a huge factor when it comes to purchasing. You don't want to buy a safe with the outward appearance of durability and security, only to have it fall apart with a good whack from a claw hammer. Some people recommend nothing thinner than 12 gauge steel when it comes to the safe's manufacture. However, a determined person with an ax can make their way inside without breaking much of a sweat, so I think 10 and higher gauge steel would suit you better to keep the riff-raff out. Look at how the safe was put together to see if there is any possible way it can be opened other than the way the manufacturer intended.

You might find yourself living in a place where firearms storage is mandatory, *cough* California *cough*, or you may just want it for insurance purposes. Those facing prison time if they don't lock up their hardware should check to see if the California DOJ has put their seal of approval on it, in addition to the seal telling you the safe will give you cancer. In the case of insurance, you will need to get a hold of Jake over at whomever you carry insurance with, and ask him what gun safes are OK by them before they insure your arsenal.

Safes may also have an RSC-I burglary rating applied to them after undergoing a 5-minute assault by one dude with a quarter-inch drill bit and some hand tools, whoopy freakin doo. These safes can command prices between \$500 and over \$10,000. However, there is little proof to show that the more expensive end of the RSC-I safes are any better or can withstand a prolonged onslaught better than their cheaper brethren.

Weight and size will narrow the field down when factoring in your immediate living situation. As I have mentioned before, those who dwell in smaller spaces will want to invest in a small draw-

sized safe or a skinny cabinet affair that could fit in a closet. And for those frolicking in wide open spaces around the house, you can park a bank vault in the basement or dig a hole in the backyard for one. Whatever your situation, make sure you plan accordingly and get the exact dimensions and weight from the factory, as those facts are known to be embellished to keep up with the competition.

SentrySafe QAP1Be



This offering from SentrySafe is a neat safe with all the components necessary to keep your shooter soundly secure without expending an exorbitant amount of cash.

Made from 12-gauge solid steel, the QAP1Be is a popular, easy-to-use model, especially when you have three choices of entry methods to keep the safe from being breached by unwanted hands. It has a biometric pad for fingerprint scanning, a backup digital keypad, and a good old-fashioned key. The lid of the safe pops up with the aid of a single compressed gas strut.

The interior compartment measures 9.7 X 6.7 X 2.2, which will easily accommodate a single handgun and two magazines, or a few speed loaders. This would be an ideal safe for bedside storage, given its capacity and for the fact that it can be bolted down in an easily accessible yet covert spot to prevent outright theft of the whole thing. Unfortunately, it is not waterproof or fireproof, meaning this safe will need to be installed where there is no chance for these elements to wreak havoc on the finish of the safe and gun.

The \$155 safe comes with a one-year factory warranty. And for what they are soaking you for it, the quality and technology are comparable, so you won't feel cheated in the long run.

Vaultek Lifepod 2.0



As the name implies, this is an improved version of the original Lifepod travel safe. The safe has a more spacious interior to house full-sized handguns up to nine and one-quarter inches. There is also a removable tray that can be used as stackable storage for accessories that will fit. And with an interior LED light, the contents can be viewed in low to zilch light. Much better than fumbling around in the dark for something you needed a minute ago.

It is made from a tough, lightweight material that features dual side compression latches that team up with an interior rubber gasket to keep it airtight, dust-proof, able to withstand a depth of three feet of water for thirty minutes, and it floats.

The case requires a 9-volt to operate the lock system and LED illumination, which will last for a year under normal use. If the battery expires without your knowledge, a hidden USB port in the front can be used to juice up the lock pad so you can access your gun. You may forgo using it as a secure pouch, rather opting for an unlocked, weather-resistant residence for your shooter. In that case, a battery will not be needed.

The case can be opened and secured via a touch-sensitive LED keypad or manual key, of which the

keyhole may be disabled by the user to prevent any lock-picking tomfoolery. The whole package weighs in at about 3 pounds, comes in a choice of seven different colors, and starts out at \$150, depending on where you shop. Overall, for the space and price, this case is definitely one to give a trial run without regret.

Vaultek VT20i



Much like the SentrySafe offering, this safe isn't water or fireproof either. However, it does sport a thick 16 gauge steel construction, topped off with a nice powder coating, and that is what drives the selling point of the VT20i, the durable, long-lasting performance. Well, that and the \$289 price tag.

Another selling point is the upgraded anti-theft protection in the form of anti-pry bars, interior hinges, two-point anti-impact latches, and interior security brackets. Quite a dizzying array of security measures to deter any pry/bar-wielding thug shopping for a new hand cannon.

The main security system is the biometric lock which can store up to 20 fingerprints of the people you trust to access your firearm. That seems a bit excessive as I can count on one hand whom I trust with access, and it doesn't always add up to 5. I understand the reasoning, but the potential for evil shenanigans to be carried out is too great, and the number of prints should be decreased.

On the other hand, the safe boasts a combination pad that supports up to 40,000 different combinations, plus 2 backup keys. Battery life on the full two-and-one-half hour charge is 4 months, so keep an eye on it.

The interior is large enough to hold two full-size handguns or three sub-compacts, all with extra magazines, which means that this arrangement will leave little space for storing other things such as jewelry, passports, money, and wax-sealed documents.

Rhino Ironworks CIWD6030X



I will warn you right out of the gate; this safe is expensive, but it is so damn cool looking and tough that I had to mention it. Each of these safes is antiqued and distressed to showcase the natural variations in the steel. Coupled with the construction, it looks as though someone had refurbished a safe they hauled out of some long-forgotten ghost town.

The 12 gauge steel body and composite door, with the aid of a ball-bearing drill plate, repels all nefarious drilling attempts. There are 13 one and one quarter inch bolts on all four sides to eliminate the possibility of getting in by way of any type of metal leverage bar. The safe maintains some tradition by retaining a dial combination lock and three-spoke hand wheel, but it also adds its futuristic digital electronic lock ancestor to make things faster.

The safe is fire rated for 85 minutes of full exposure at temperatures up to 1,400 degrees. This is due in part not only to the thickness of the steel, but also the 5/8 inch thick fireboard on the inside, three layers being used in the ceiling and door,

and two in the floor and walls. There is also a heat-activated door seal that expands to 7 times its size to block out all the nasty crap that burns in a structure fire.

This particular model safe will hold up to 35 long-barrelled firearms and 6 handguns, in addition to the door-mounted accessories organizer to hold any additional goodies you want protected. The interior also has a factory-installed USB outlet for lights, dehumidifiers, and other electronics.

At a price of \$4200, this is definitely a bucket list item, but if you are of the disposable income jet set crowd, your only worry will be which metallic-colored credit card to use.

Vaultek RS500i



This safe is truly a safe for the modern world, in that it has wifi and Bluetooth technology built into it, but we will get to that shortly.

The biometrics on this safe is like its other Vaultek relative, too many fingerprints to store, although it does offer a digital keypad with a built-in proximity sensor, and 19 million possible combos. As with other safes, there is a set of backup keys, and an easily hidden nano key gives you a single press “panic button.”

The wifi capability allows you to monitor the safe and what’s going on with it, much like any other wireless security system. This will enable you to check the lock status, internal temps and humidity, keypad tampering, and battery power levels. It will also alert you if the safe takes any hits or bumps,

indicating possible tampering or unauthorized removal from the home.

The interior has built-in modules that allow for customization with a variety of options. These options include barrel mounts, barrel mount extensions for optics/sights, different pistol or magazine holsters, and additional shelf space. The door will also accommodate a hanging accessories organizer to cram even more stuff.

The price tag might sting a bit at 1600 greenbacks for some, but for the techno types across the fruited plain, this may be mere pocket change. The fact that this safe is open to possible hacking could be off-putting for others, but everything in life has pros and cons; the trick is finding something that makes you happy without much negative impact.

Fort Knox PB1



The relatively straightforward approach of this safe to firearm security and the fact that it requires no batteries is a great selling point for those who don't want the bells and whistles that come with the electronic versions.

The hinge for the lid is placed on the underside to prevent tampering. There is a single gas strut on the inside that lifts the beefy 3/16 inch thick steel door with ease and expedience and holds it open. Simplex provides a push-button keypad that can be programmed for up to 1,800 different combinations.

There are pre-drilled holes in the bottom of the box so that it can be mounted to something solid either in a dwelling or a vehicle, that is, if your state's laws demand such things from you. Make sure that there is nothing in the way of the lid's fast momentum wherever you mount it.

The interior is lined with an egg crate-looking foam to protect whatever you choose to store in it. Depending upon the size of the weapon to be stored, you will be able to get away with one large-frame handgun or two smaller ones. One could also change out the foam to make more room, but that will be entirely up to the individual.

This box actually carries a lifetime warranty from the manufacturer, and with an asking price of around \$400, that combination is hard to beat. It also has the California DOJ's blessing as the box meets or exceeds its firearm safety requirements, a fact that no one outside of that state really cares about.

IN CONCLUSION

You may have noticed that Vaultek dominated the field in this list. The company has only been around for a few years, but in that short time has consistently improved on each safe successfully produced. Its MXi series is a testament to that fact, as it incorporates all the goodies from its previous safes into a spacious, rock-solid unit that can hold 4 handguns and other accessories. That is the reason why the company took up half the list. I assure you, I play no favorites and shill for no one. I have always liked the Fort Knox because of its simplicity and durability, and frankly, I have always liked the hammered metal finish that was all the rage around the mid-twentieth century.

Whatever your reasons may be for purchasing a safe, whether it be for your enormous arsenal or to keep unauthorized hands off of them, I hope this serves as yet another board in which you can spring into the deep end of the gun safe market. There are many varieties to choose from, and it would be a safe bet to assume that just one safe will not have everything you want or need; but you never know, that's something you will have to find out. So, until next time, dear reader, stay safe and let's be careful out there.



We have touched on many subjects concerning firearms and all the neat toys that go with them throughout our journey together. But I just recently realized that we had not properly explored the 4 set-in-stone rules for gun safety, nor had we actually discussed the basics of firearm mechanics, and the proper terminology when talking about firearms and their accessories. Well, we shall set out to correct that oversight, setting the stage for you to become thoroughly familiar and compliant with the safety and speak of the firearm world. Yeah, this is kind of like putting the cart before the horse, but after this read, we will have the whole tangled mess sorted out, and a starting point or refresher entered into the record for any and all wanting to know more about firearms and the safe handling thereof.

FOLLOW THE FIRST TO AVOID DISASTER

The first rule when it comes to gun safety is that you treat every weapon as if it were loaded. Seems pretty simple, easy to remember, and maybe even a common sense thing. You would think that to be the case; however, we are all human and very prone to errors, especially when one gets all out of sorts and isn't performing at their peak. I get it, but taking the extra second or two to clear the weapon before advancing with your plans for it will save you and others from unimaginable headaches and horrors that may leave all involved with a variety of problems for the rest of their days. So, whenever there is a firearm around, it is loaded, it is ready to

fire, and it will do damage if improperly handled. Don't take anyone's word for it, even if someone clears a weapon before handing it to you; repeat the same action after receiving it. This rule will also help you not to primarily depend on your firearms safety switch all the time. Getting into the conscious, not by rote, habit of treating every firearm as loaded and clearing it accordingly will help to properly practice the next three important rules.

MUZZLE DISCIPLINE AND TRIGGER DISCIPLINE

I know I bag on Hollyweird and their inaccurate portrayal of firearms handling and physics, and rightly so. However, I must admit that there are a few gems that get by wherein the actors actually display proper firearm discipline to the point I verbally congratulate them out of sheer gratitude. This is, of course, annoying to the other theatergoers, but in the interest of honesty, I don't care, and besides, the movie is probably a bouquet full of loser A-D list actors anyway. The second and third rules of gun safety, at least for me, are automatic whenever I pick up any firearm. Never have these two rules been separated in my mind.

We have talked about the importance of muzzle discipline as it pertains to concealed carry, in that a weapon's muzzle should never be put into a position where it is pointing in an unsafe direction.

This applies when preparing to sight and fire at a target; the muzzle should always be pointed away from animate objects you don't wish to do harm, unless those animate objects become a threat, then point and click.

That leads us to trigger discipline. Keep your finger off it until you have sighted your target and decided to facilitate a meeting between them and their maker. Practicing this discipline in conjunction with muzzle direction and the first rule will become paramount in case one acts human in the heat of the moment and points without thinking. As long as your finger is off the trigger, there will be less chance of unleashing the dogs of war and a moment to correct your error. Trigger discipline should be practiced at all times, even when the weapon is just hanging out on your person. I should also note that the trigger guard was never designed to be an area to grip when picking up or carrying the weapon, so keep the area free until your finger starts paying rent for it.

THIS IS WHERE CALIBER COMES INTO PLAY

The final universal rule of gun safety is to be sure of your target and what is behind it. Important all the time, but doubly important for those with a penchant for hot loads that will do a number on the human body and a couple of walls behind them. That is why an appropriately loaded caliber and correct target identification will be necessary to cut down on any collateral damage to innocent bystanders. This rule does not hinge on the caliber factor alone, but applies across the board to all calibers like the other 3 rules. There are so many variables at play in the world that it is not worth being complacent at any point of handling a firearm, lest one tempt fate and suffer the consequences of being careless.

SOME OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Some of these might be filed under the category of "goes without saying." However, it never hurts to touch on some common sense practices tied into the 4 ironclad gun commandments.

As all of you critical thinkers out there know, mental health is the absolute number one driving

factor behind the majority of shootings, not firearms. However, an entire generation of gun grabbers who believe toys anthropomorphize after humans leave the room would argue the complete opposite.

Outside of Fantasy Island, mental health problems are a very real and scary ordeal for those suffering from it and the people that care about them. I am a staunch Constitutionalist and would never advocate for the infringement of anyone's rights, and this is one of those times. The reason I say this is because there is a stigma attached to mental health, a stigma so shameful that a vast majority suffering various illnesses do not self-report for fear of the repercussions from others. Obviously, this is not helpful to the afflicted or society as a whole.

Therefore, if you or someone you know is having mental illness problems, do not hesitate to seek help for yourself or convince others to do so. I assure you that there are caring, compassionate people working in the mental health field that want nothing more than to help people break free from their mental imprisonment. If you own firearms, please give them up to a person that you trust implicitly to give them back after getting help, someone that is a good judge of character and really knows if you should have them or not, a task the government has never bothered to legally perfect. Bottom line, get help if you need it and make sure your firearms come back in the same or better condition than when you left them.

Along the lines of mental health, we have addictions to address. Use of firearms under the influence of anything that causes you to be other than sober is a huge no-no. This includes prescriptions in addition to the recreational drugs out there. Besides, it's illegal to purchase or possess a firearm if you are addicted to the hard stuff, and I don't mean just alcohol. Of course, this seems to be a problem mostly associated with criminals. However, if you do have a problem, please be responsible, get help, and stay away from firearms or other heavy machinery.

Know your firearm inside and out, up, down, and all around. Know how to handle it when it malfunctions, run drills with it, practice safely

clearing leather, use the right ammo, and make sure the barrel is free from obstructions.

The consistent, conscious application of the 4 set rules will hold you in good stead every time you encounter a firearm. Take time to think of some other good safety practices that you can incorporate into your routine to prevent Murphy from showing up with chaos in tow.



HANDGUNS: PISTOLS AND REVOLVERS

They both fit in your hand, and they are indeed firearms, but the characteristics and design of the two couldn't be more different. So, let's compare and contrast.

Revolvers are the most basic of handguns and have been around since Colonel Colt pumped the first one out of his Patterson factory. They have evolved over time, but have virtually remained the same in design and function. Traditionally, the cylinder, the thing that gives the revolver its moniker, holds 6 cartridges, although, with advancements in materials and calibers, that amount can vary depending on the manufacturer. Modern revolvers will have a cylinder that "swings out" to facilitate loading, while original cowboy shooters and their clones have a cylinder that is affixed within the frame, and that must be rotated clockwise to load each chamber through an ident on the recoil plate, and guarded by the loading gate. Other than that, just aim and squeeze the trigger. To unload the revolver, simply reverse your loading procedure. These guys don't get any more complex than this, although I should point out one safety concern. Due to a hair-width gap between the chamber mouth and barrel, there will be an escape of high-pressure gas out of the side after each shot, so be careful where you place your fingers.

Pistols, or semi-autos, have a few more moving parts to them, requiring a bit of dexterity and more attention on the shooter's end. Even though it is a point-and-click job like a revolver, you now need to contend with a safety, magazine release, magazine, slide, slide release, and anything else thrown on by the factory or aftermarket upgrade. Granted, it's more info to fill the brain pan, but with practice, the operation of these ancillary features will become second nature, muscle memory, if you will.

Handguns of both varieties will be either single or double-action, that is, if they are equipped with a hammer. Hammerless handguns are only available in double action. Single action means that one must pull the hammer back after every shot to fire the weapon, whereas the trigger not only releases, but also sets the trigger in double-action. As I have pointed out before, double-action firing will have a negative effect on accuracy, especially when blazing away at a fast pace. Single-action firing may seem like a hindrance. However, it is easier to thumb the hammer back, taking the extra tension off the trigger, and allowing for faster target acquisition. I have seen shooters let their trigger finger take over and blast away at everything but the target, while I have seen the same speed with single-action shooters, but with deadlier accuracy.



RIFLES AND CARBINES

The term we use to describe this firearm is actually what is done to the barrel's interior to make these weapons long distance lead slingers. Rifling hit the U.S. during the Civil War to accommodate the newly introduced Minie conical bullet. The corkscrew pattern grooves cut into the inside of the barrel will spin the bullet and increase the accuracy.

The first of the three types of rifles is the lever action. If you aren't familiar with these shooters, every Western movie known to man is lousy with them, so they are kind of hard to miss. The lever acts as a cocking mechanism and trigger guard. To load the weapon initially, one simply pushes the lever down, forward, and then back to its resting position. Once firing has commenced, loading and shell ejection are covered in that one action. Cartridges are fed from a spring-loaded tubular magazine located underneath the barrel, each one end on end. Round nose cartridges are used as opposed to sharp points to eliminate the risk of popping rounds off in the magazine.

Bolt action rifles are the single action kid in the rifle inventory and are more accurate because of it. Just ask any snipers you know the next time you get together for coffee and cake. There will generally be a 5-round internal magazine in all basic models. The round is chambered when the bolt handle is lifted, rotated to a knob-up position, pulled back, and replaced to its starting position. Very simple action that facilitates a very smooth and satisfying shooting experience.

Lastly, semi-auto rifles have taken the country by storm as the more modern sporting rifle on the scene. These are your AR and AK platform weapons, firearms that function the same as a hammerless double action pistol, and as we have seen with their handgun counterpart, less accurate because of it. The action is the same as the handgun; squeeze the trigger, and the bullet comes out of the barrel while the whole cycle repeats. Just remember to quickly re-acquire your target after every shot.

SHOTGUNS

Much like rifles, there are three types of shotguns. Shotguns use different-sized shot shells loaded with different-sized lead pellets or with solid slugs; it all depends on what your quarry will be.

Break-action shotguns have barrels that are side by side or on top of each other. By pulling or switching a lever, the barrel is released from the breech to hinge open, allowing for loading and unloading; this also acts as a safety precaution while walking. Snap the barrels back in place and you're ready to rock and roll.

An under-barrel magazine and sliding foregrip define the pump action shotgun. Shotshells are loaded into the magazine through a port just forward of the trigger. When the magazine is full, pull the foregrip back and then forward to cycle and eject rounds. This is a quality weapon where reliability and quick follow up shots are desired.

Although less reliable than the other shotguns around, semi-autos are slowly getting on the accuracy and dependability train. The magazine is under the barrel, but the foregrip is all for show on this guy, as the cycling and ejection action are all housed in the receiver. So like the other semi-autos, your trigger does all the work.

ROUNDING UP

Hopefully, this has provided you with a good understanding of the rules governing the safe handling of firearms and the differences between firearms. I can not stress enough how absolutely essential it is to follow the 4 core rules of firearms safety. These are rules without wiggle room. Think of them as the only strict rules in your life; put in place to save it. Violation of these rules will come with consequences that may have you staring at the walls of an 8 X 5 cell or shrouded in the darkness of a pine box; it's all up to you. Taking the extra time and precaution to ensure that a firearm is clear and safe will be all the difference between a happy life or shaking hands with danger. So, until next time, dear reader, stay safe and let's be careful out there.



7 Primitive Cooking Methods You Still Need To Know Today



If your first question to this article was “why,” then you’ve still got a lot to learn. Of course, that’s perfectly okay, and we’re here to teach you!

The true purpose of this article is to show you a variety of cooking techniques that you can use when modern methods fail. Each of the techniques listed here has been proven to work, although some methods are easier to use than others.

Roll up your sleeves and get ready to dig in!

Ash Cooking

Ash cooking is similar to tin-foil cooking. The only difference is that you’ll be trading in aluminum foil and using leaves instead. So, how do you make this work? It’s easy!

- Make a fire and wait for the coals to stop burning - make sure they’re hot without being on fire.
- Find very large leaves and wrap your food in them.
- NOTE: Make sure the leaves you pick aren’t poisonous.
- Look for leaves or plants that have vines still attached. Wrap them around the food.
- Your food is wrapped, the coal is hot, and it’s time to cook!

- Place the food directly on the coals. Brush some of the coals on top of your food for even cooking.

This will work much better if you find some edible leaves. Any that aren’t poisonous will work, but you’ll enjoy it a lot more if your food is wrapped in something edible.

Clay Cooking

There is a common misconception about clay pots and clay cooking. Many people believe that clay was the first thing that allowed ancient humans to cook. The truth, however, is that humans had already mastered cooking their meals before clay pots were ever used for this purpose.

Still, this is a very old method for ensuring that your food is properly heated. And the best part is that there is no need to lug any heavy clay pots with you. All you have to do is dig far enough, and you will find enough clay to do what’s needed.

NOTE: If the clay happens to be found in an area that used to hold a gas station, DO NOT use it. Additionally, any other place where toxic chemicals were once in use should be avoided.

Okay, so you’ve dug for a bit, and you’ve found some clay. You have two options: A) Use some

water to mold the clay into the shape of a pot or bowl (will take hours), or B) Take some of the clay and pat it until there is enough room to cook your leaf-wrapped food. If you choose option B, make sure you're using an even layer of clay.

Once you're prepared, lay your food over hot coals and let it cook. The time necessary for cooking will vary based on the thickness of the clay and what exactly you're cooking. After it's done, you'll need a small rock or hammer to break into the clay. The pieces will fall off, leaving your food behind!

Broiling



Did you know that broiling items over a fire is quite similar to using your oven's broil function? The only difference is that you may not have a pan available to put your food in. There is an easy way to address this, though.

Start by looking for some flexible wood like willow or river birch. Next, begin construction by bending one piece of wood into an oval and crossing the bottom of the oval with another straight stick (think of an uppercase D).

Use a vine or some small twigs to tie the oval-shaped wood onto the straight stick. You can stretch the top piece so that it reaches down the entire straight piece of wood. To make the wood even more stable, add smaller pieces across the two pieces of wood. This will give support to the food, and if you're handy enough, will make it easy for you to move the wood up and down to fit specific pieces of food.

Voila! You've got a makeshift broiler. If you're cooking fish, simply pierce the skin onto some wood. Or, if your pieces are too large, just lay them across the broiler. Finally, you'll need to ensure that the flame isn't too high, or else your food could catch on fire. You'll also need to ensure that the broiler stays flat so that no food falls off it.

Spit Cooking



Have you ever witnessed a rotisserie chicken slowly spinning as it cooks? Or how about a pig tied to a big stick? Well, congratulations! This means you know exactly what spit cooking is supposed to look like. There are vertical and horizontal spits, and you have the choice between bringing a metal spit with you or finding a wooden stick to use in the woods.

This cooking technique seems relatively straightforward, but don't let it fool you. Be sure you've tied every piece of the meat to the spit. If you don't do this, your meat will go bouncing around and could end up in the fire. Of course, meat shrinks when it's cooking on a spit, so you'll need to tie it down for extra security. Find twine, vines, or wires to ensure you've got it well-tied. If you happen to be cooking an entire animal this way, make sure that its limbs are tied up. Failure to do so will throw off the spit's center of gravity.

Keep in mind that the difference between spit cooking and broiling comes down to turning your food on the spit. But because you'll probably be using this method after the SHTF, your odds of finding a spit that automatically turns itself for you will be quite low. So, you're going to need to rotate it manually.

Hot Stone Cooking



You've cooked with a frying pan before, right? Well, cooking on a hot stone is basically the same thing. So, how does it work? We thought you'd never ask!

Find a flat rock surface and heat up the rock. Put your food down on the hot stone, and then heat the rock up even more. Be sure to pick a rock that's basically flat, as you don't want part of your meal to fall off into the fire.

Before you begin to cook, though, you should clean the rock and verify that it's at least one inch thick. If it's not at least an inch thick, it'll probably crack once it has been exposed to high temperatures.

There are two ways to cook with a hot stone. You can either A) use a small stone to cook one serving, or B) place several stones over a wide and low fire to cook a larger quantity.

Those who choose A can probably start cooking after their fire has been burning for about 15 minutes. However, if you're choosing the technique that allows you to cook multiple things at once, you're going to need to wait at least an hour.

Once you've laid your food on the stone and waited for it to cook, you're ready to eat! Instead of using a plate, though, keep your food on the heated stone. It'll stay warm for at least 30 minutes, which should keep your food hot while you eat.

Steam Pit Cooking

Steam pit cooking may not be the easiest method to heat up your food, but it's been in use for centuries. To begin, wrap your food in large leaves, just as you

would in ash cooking. Next, locate an area where you can dig a large enough pit to accommodate the food and coals.

Dig down a foot or two, and your steam pit will be large enough for your food. At the same time, it'll be deep enough to prevent steam from escaping. After your pit has been dug, take charcoal and line the bottom of the pit. Light the coal, just as you did with ash cooking, and wait until the fire gets very hot and then dies down.

As soon as your steam pit is ready, place your food on top of the coals, then cover the entire thing with the fresh dirt you dug up. It's going to take at least a couple of hours to cook, so find something to distract yourself until your pit is ready to provide you with delicious food!

Plank Cooking



What are the odds of you finding a piece of wood that is even and smooth? We'll tell you – not very high. Therefore, you're going to need a saw or an ax to create the pieces of wood you'll need.

The first thing you need to know is that many

trees won't work for plank cooking. For example, conifers don't work due to their strong smell, and anything that's poisonous won't work as well. There are three tree types that work especially well: oak, cedar, and poplar.

Locate a piece of wood that looks like it'll make a nice plank. If you happen to find a small log, cut it in half. Next, put it on its flattest side and cut your planks from it. Make sure they're approximately nine inches in diameter. Alternatively, you can use two planks. One will cook the food, and the other will give you somewhere safe to place your cooked food.

As long as your plank is flat, the food should stay still during the cooking process. After which, dig in!

BONUS: Clean Your Gear With Wood Ash

Take your ashes from a hardwood tree such as oak, cherry, and maple. This kind of ash will be much more effective than that from a softwood tree. Next, boil four cups of water. While you're doing this, you can add charcoal to your fire. By the time your water is boiled, your fire should have created all the ash you'll need.

After the water is done, wait until you can safely remove the ash from the fire. Get ready to bring the following formula to life:

Hot Water + Wood Ash + Grease = Soap.

Just a couple of drops of animal fat, butter, or oil will take care of your need for grease. Take two or three cups of ash and a couple of lumps of charcoal, then add two cups of water and stir until you've made a paste. You can use the resulting paste to scrub up all the pots and pans.

NOTE: Wood ash can be very harsh. While this makes it a great alternative to detergent, it also means that you should never, ever use it on your skin. Also, when you're cleaning your dishes, be sure to do it away from your clean water source.

Final Thoughts

14 You've probably found at least one or two that speak to you out of these seven primitive

cooking methods. We're going to give you a bit of homework to help you figure it out. Go out to an easily accessible wooden area, choose one of the methods discussed here, and cook yourself something!

How did your meal turn out? Even if it wasn't nearly as delicious as usual, we think you'll agree that it tastes more than good enough to save your life during an emergency. The one thing you won't like is having to wait longer than usual for your food, but everything is going to slow down after the SHTF.

If your meal didn't turn out very good, try, try again! Putting these techniques to use until you get one of them right will put you in a much better position as society begins to collapse. While everyone else is struggling to find a way to meet their nutrition needs, you'll be enjoying a nice, hot meal.

So, which method will you choose to try? Between ash cooking, clay cooking, broiling, spit cooking, hot stove cooking, steam pit cooking, and plank cooking, we've given you seven fantastic different methods for cooking your food. Plus, with the bonus info we gave you, you can now clean up after you cook, too!





36 PRACTICAL USES FOR DUCT TAPE & ALUMINUM FOIL

We're sure you've heard the popular adage – if it breaks, duct it! Well, today, we're going to go much more in-depth to discover a variety of practical ways that survivalists like yourself can use duct tape and aluminum foil. By the time you reach the end of this list, you'll have a whole new appreciation for the importance of aluminum foil and duct tape.

25 PRACTICAL USES FOR DUCT TAPE

We'll begin with everyone's favorite prom-outfit maker (if you haven't seen the prom outfits made from duct tape, go take a look – they're wild!).

1. Make A Belt

Making a belt might not seem like the best use of duct tape until you realize that you're going to lose weight once you've been on your own for a while. And this means that if you don't have a belt with you, you're going to spend the entire day holding your pants up. Instead, run the duct tape through your belt loops. Overlap your belt by about 5 inches, and you'll be able to undo it whenever you need to answer the call of nature.

2. Blister Care

Again, this might seem like a minor problem right now, but taking care of a blister will take precedence once you have one. These nasty little things can turn a grown man into a weakling, especially if it happens to be located on an important part of your body. Instead of suffering so much, cover the blister with some cotton gauze, then use your duct tape to cover the gauze.

NOTE: Do NOT let your duct tape touch the blister.

3. Repair Ripped Rain Gear

So, there's a rip in your raincoat that might as well make it worthless. Don't despair! Pick up your duct tape and go to town on any and all rips. Unless there is a significant amount of material missing, duct tape will allow you to repair the damage. Easy peasy!

4. First Aid Sling

Now you're in trouble. You've injured one of your arms to the point where it requires a sling. Where in the world are you going to find one? Don't worry;

use duct tape! Fold a length of the duct tape down the middle so that the sticky side is no longer exposed and the tape is half its original length. Now, place your arm in your makeshift sling and keep on going.

5. Temporarily Fix A Canoe



We'd be hesitant to trust our entire lives to the power of duct tape, but sometimes, that's exactly what you've got to do. Imagine you're in a canoe, rowing down the river, and a hole is punched through the bottom of your boat. You're not close enough to shore to swim for it, and you really cannot lose your canoe. What do you do? Repair the hole with duct tape! It's not going to last forever, but it should get you safely to shore.

6. Repair A Pierced Hydration Bladder/ Cracked Bottled Water

Water equals life, so allowing a cracked bottle to waste all of yours is not a good option. Especially if society has collapsed, as this means it could be quite difficult to find some drinkable water. Fortunately, a piece of duct tape will repair the problem. Take your bottle or hydration bladder and dry the cracked area completely. Once this is done, slap on some duct tape and keep on moving!

7. Create A Butterfly Suture

Creating butterfly sutures out of duct tape is a relatively easy process. Just take a small amount of duct tape, and cut it into two small strips. Take a smaller strip and place it across the two strips' center. Be sure to put sticky side to sticky side, and you'll have yourself a makeshift suture!

8. Make Some Cordage

Having some cord or rope can make all the difference in the world. But what if you don't have any? Well, as long as you've got some duct tape, this is a problem you can solve! Use one (or, even better, several) piece of duct tape and twist this into a rope. It may not look the prettiest, but it should work.

9. Leave A Note

There are times when you have to keep moving, even if you're trying to reconnect with family or friends. If this happens to you, don't despair. You can write on duct tape or use the duct tape to spell out letters. NOTE: Use a Sharpie on the duct tape, or your message might not be legible.

10. Fix Your Glasses

Purposefully making yourself look more like Harry Potter may not be at the top of your wishlist, but duct tape can easily allow you to tape two broken halves of your glasses together. Since being able to see clearly is imperative, it's more important to do the necessary repairs than to be seen as "cool."

11. Alternative To Handcuffs

Do you know why so many criminals prefer to use duct tape over handcuffs? It's because, psychologically speaking, duct tape signals to the human brain that there is no point in struggling. Of course, if you've been reading this newsletter for several months, then you know that there is an easy, pretty much foolproof way to break out of duct tape handcuffs. But as long as your opponent doesn't know this, you can easily duct-tape them to a tree.

12. Create A Hat

Much like a duct tape prom outfit, you can use the sticky stuff to fashion yourself a hat. In fact, the Mythbusters demonstrated how to take a roll of duct tape and turn it into a hat.

13. Repair Clothing And Shoes

Perhaps you never learned to sew, or perhaps you don't have what you need to even attempt to sew your clothes back together. What do you do? You

guessed it; use duct tape! Slapping some duct tape onto holes and rips will keep your clothing together, at least for the time being.

14. Build A Shelter (Elements Of It, Anyway)

All you have to do is attach a few garbage bags together with duct tape and you'll have something that can be used for your shelter roof, a windbreak, a sleeping bag cover, etc. Never underestimate what you can bring together with just a few scant ingredients.

15. Affix A Bandage



Before you bust out your duct tape, be sure that there is a sterile dressing covering your wound. Now, cover the dressing with duct tape (don't touch any area of the wound) and go on with your day. As a side note, we hope you're not too hairy if you have to try this one. Because yes, removing the duct tape will definitely hurt then.

16. Attach Survival Gear

Have you figured out how you can always have a backup fire source? All it takes is taping a spark rod to the side of your knife's sheath. And, of course, duct tape is the best type of tape to use.

17. Create A Spear

Duct-tape your knife to a pole, and you've just created a spear. You can use this if a wild animal busts into your camp. You could also turn a spear on a human, but you'd better aim well. If you don't kill them, you run the risk of angering them greatly.

18. Make A Drinking Cup

Your cup may look weird, but if you build it correctly, it'll give you something to drink from. Remember: the sticky part should not be visible inside the cup.

19. Make Survival Arrow Fletching

Rip off a few five-inch strips of duct tape, along with a long edge of one piece to the arrow shaft. Fold the tape lengthwise and stick the other long edge of the piece to the arrow. Repeat the process two more times, then trim the vanes into the shape you'd like. The end result is a serviceable arrow fletching.

20. Splint A Leg

A broken leg or ankle can be stabilized with enough splint material, duct tape, and padding. You can also create a makeshift crutch out of a forked branch. Add padding to the crotch of your branch with duct tape and cloth.

21. Mark A Trail

There are several ways to mark a trail, but what could be better than duct tape markers? This will work even better if you happen to have reflective duct tape. Either way, marking your trail will make it much easier to find your way out of the forest.

22. Keep Your Tent Closed

Does your tent have a damaged zipper? Instead of giving in and allowing wind to whip around you while you attempt to sleep, why not tape your tent closed instead? This will prevent bugs from getting inside your tent, and it'll also make it easier to sleep.

23. Repair Your Sleeping Bag

Have you been using a sleeping bag with down feathers? Now that it's got a hole in it, the feathers are plotting their escape. Keep them inside your sleeping bag by slapping a piece of duct tape over the hole.

24. Repair Your Bug Out Vehicle

There are so many things that can go wrong with your bug out vehicle, but the good news is that duct tape can repair some of them. For instance, imagine your window gets stuck in the down position. Just take a trash bag and firmly duct tape it over the window. Additionally, you can use duct tape to stop leaking hoses.

25. Splint A Broken Fishing Pole Or Tent Pole

It's time to get out there and catch yourself some dinner. But what's this? Your fishing pole is broken? Well, you can always duct-tape it back together. Don't expect this to last for more than one or two uses, but hey, if it helps you catch fish today, then it holds off starvation for a while.

11 PRACTICAL USES FOR ALUMINUM FOIL



Now that you've learned the many ways that duct tape can help you during a survival situation, let's turn our attention to aluminum foil!

1. Signal for Help

You can also use aluminum foil as a trail marker, just as you can use duct tape! Whether you use it to mark a trail or to signal for help, you should affix your foil to a tree and make sure it's obvious for anyone to see what it is.

2. Create A Way To Boil Water

Water is the number one thing you need to stay alive. But you can't just drink water from a river; so what are you going to do? You have no pots, no pans, and

aluminum foil and make a pot or pan out of it. Create your makeshift bowl, then boil water in it for at least 60 seconds before you allow it to cool.

3. Repair Your Water Bottle

We provided a way to do this with some duct tape, but you can also use aluminum foil and pine sap. This method won't work as well as ducting it, but it will give you temporary relief from having a broken bottle.

4. Build Fishing Lures



Fish are absolutely entranced by shiny objects. So, the next time you find yourself without any bait, wrap some aluminum foil around the weights. This will act as a flasher, which will attract fish. In fact, if the fishing has been tough for a few days, use a square tin of foil in conjunction with a lure, and you should start getting lots more bites!

5. Repair Loose Batteries

Have you ever had an item that was powered by loose batteries have several glitches? This happens because the battery compartment's springs have lost some of their tension. But never fear! The solution is to take a small, folded piece of aluminum foil to fill in the gap that's been created. Once you do this, you should be good to go.

6. Sharpen Your Scissors

Scissors are important, but they also tend to get dull if you use them a lot. Fortunately, you can sharpen your scissors using aluminum foil. Take a piece of foil, fold it over two or three times, and cut it with your scissors. Doing this actually helps sharpen the blades!

7. Clean Dirty Pots And Pans

You know how a scouring pad works, right? Well, by crumpling up a piece of aluminum foil, you can scour away whatever's making your pots and pans dirty. Not only will this help you from a cleanliness standpoint, but it'll also ensure that your camp doesn't attract bears and other creatures.

8. Keep Your Matches Dry

You've been wandering for days, and it keeps raining. How in the world are you supposed to keep your matches dry? Simple! Take a small piece of aluminum foil and wrap your matches up inside of it. As long as you don't get dunked underneath the water, this makeshift carrying case should keep your matches safe and dry.

9. Remove Rust

You've come across some cool equipment, but it's got a lot of rust. The good news is that you also have some aluminum foil with you. Crumple the foil like you would a piece of paper, then rub at the rust repeatedly. It may not be perfect, but you'll find that most of the rust can be rubbed away.

10. Create A Windbreak For Your Campfire

You'll need a lot of aluminum foil to complete this project, but as soon as you've put a windbreak in place, your campfire should be able to last through the night. Another good reason to build a windbreak is that it will keep you warmer. You can also wrap yourself up inside aluminum foil at night, and it'll help insulate you against the cold.

11. Collect Some Rainwater

Remember the method you used to turn your aluminum foil into a bowl for boiling water? Use the same method now, but make the bowl at least three or four times bigger. While you can also use a tarp to achieve the same thing, it'll be much heavier and bulkier to move.

FINAL THOUGHTS

When we began this article, we bet you probably didn't have quite as much respect for duct tape and aluminum foil as you do now. The reality is that these two items have multiple uses, and one of them may even save your life. That's why we always recommend adding both of these items to your bug out bag.

Whether you need it to boil water, create a splint, or build a shelter, never forget how useful some simple aluminum foil and duct tape can be. In fact, we encourage you to think outside the box and see what other types of creations you can come up with!



There are two types of mindsets: the prepper group mentality and the lone wolf mentality. Obviously, if you're the type who plays lone wolf, then the following article won't mean much to you. But if you're looking for a community, we can help!

The Prepper Group Mentality

Do you know what can keep you safe? Numbers. In fact, if you're in a large enough group, no one can tear it down. Being in a group also makes the prospect of civilization ending not quite as scary. After all, you're going to have the combined might of everyone's resources, and that's quite powerful, indeed.

The Lone Wolf Mentality

There are some pros and cons of forgoing a group. Either way, though, you're still going to need to keep an eye on other local preppers. As a lone wolf, it will be easier for you to blend in with a crowd. If there is a catastrophic situation in your area, being a lone wolf could turn very bad, very quickly. We suggest that even lone wolf types seek out a prepper group. There is a lot to learn from different people, even if you decide to go it alone after the SHTF.

Where Can I Find Other Preppers?

Finding other preppers may seem a bit intimidating at first. You'll most likely have to put yourself out there, as most preppers don't openly declare their views. By carefully feeling people out, you could find another prepper basically anywhere – the hardware store, a doctor's office, church, etc.

If you want to find a pre-existing group, turn to your local Meetup page. For instance, I live in Metro Detroit. When I visit my local Meetup page, I can see that there is a group called PrepperNet based out of Toledo, Ohio. It has 95 members too, which is a lot. By searching for Events and Groups within 100 miles of you, you'll probably find a similar group you can join.

Another fantastic resource for fellow survivalists is Facebook. There are hundreds of different pages and groups dedicated to prepping. Some of the most active private groups include Survival

How To Find Preppers Near You



Preppers, with 75,000 members. You can also find a group that is based where you live, like Michigan Preppers.

If you wish to find a public group instead, you can turn to Preppers. With more than 31,000 members, it's also a solid resource. Just remember that any public group you join can be seen by your Facebook friends, including what you post in the Preppers group.

Final Thoughts

Regardless of the tactic you use to find people, it'll provide a good opportunity for you to connect with others who have the same basic belief system. And that's exactly what you will need. Because, even if you're a lone wolf, there are instances when you simply need to be around other people who understand you.

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