



# MEMBERS UPDATE

December 2023

## HOW TO BUILD FIRES IN WET WEATHER

How To Find Preppers Near You

22 Pioneer Skills We Cannot Lose

What Did Your True Love Get You?

12 Gifts For The Gun Lover In Your Life

What To Expect After Using Your Firearm In Self Defense

*Next Issue: Raising Animals Off-Grid In Winter Climates*



# RAOS

## OFFSET SIGHT



With its unique 45-degree offset, the **RAOS** allows shooters to quickly transition between a magnified optic to iron sights for close range shooting without breaking your cheek weld or repositioning your hands!

[MYCRISISGEAR.COM/RAOS](http://MYCRISISGEAR.COM/RAOS)

# CONTENT



02

## What To Expect After Using Your Firearm In Self Defense

If you ever have to discharge your weapon in self-defense, it goes without saying that you should make sure that you know the federal and state laws governing guns better than the legislative infringers that cooked them up in the first place.



06

## What Did Your True Love Get You? 12 Gifts For The Gun Lover In Your Life

If the love of your life is an avid shooter, might I humbly advance some gift ideas to keep them excited in the days leading up to when Santa squeezes himself down the chimney to deliver the rest of the loot.



11

## 22 Pioneer Skills We Cannot Lose

The pioneer days may have been a lot harder than we imagine, but the good thing is that pretty much everyone had self-reliance. However, the world now moves at a different pace, and the average American simply doesn't have time to dedicate to keeping the old pioneer skills alive. What's really too bad about this is that the further away we get from the pioneer days, the more important these skills become. We highly suggest you take the time to learn some of these skills before society crumbles.



16

## How To Build Fires In Wet Weather

Imagine for a moment that you're lost in the woods and everything around you is soaked from a recent storm. You're getting cold—and you're definitely hungry—but how in the world are you supposed to light a fire? Do you have any idea about how you could possibly build a fire in these circumstances?



20

## How To Find Preppers Near You

If you're seeking community and shared resources, this guide is for you. Find out where and how to meet fellow preppers, from everyday encounters to online resources like Meetup and Facebook groups, and the importance of staying connected with local preppers.



# What To Expect After Using Your Firearm In Self Defense

By Eric Austgen

We have spent a good deal of time discussing how to prepare for everyday carry and related subjects. However, we have not touched on what might happen after you discharge your weapon in self-defense. Since this is a life or death topic, it goes without saying that one should make sure that they know the federal and state laws governing guns better than the legislative infringers that cooked them up in the first place. Therefore, we will have a look at some law basics to help send you down the research road as to your respective states' laws concerning the subject. We will then wrap it up with a sobering look at the reality of being thrown into a questionably fair and impartial legal system that may or may not like the fact that you decided your life was worth more than someone with a carefully cultivated criminal C.V.

## The Language, Sentence Structure, And Word Placement: All Perfect

Not that it really needed to be reaffirmed by the supreme robed ones or anyone else in the judiciary for that matter, but it was recently discovered that the 2A does indeed give one the right to keep and bear arms for self-defense from everything under the sun, a fact any high school senior who happened to be paying attention in civics class the day it was covered could tell you. However, that's what the robed ones upheld in the New York State and Pistol Assoc. Vs. Bruen case. It should come as no surprise that the state most hostile to gun rights on the East Coast should need a whack to the nose with a rolled-up newspaper. That is why it would be prudent for my readers in states that do not possess a one hundred percent gung-ho pro-gun attitude to fully investigate what is going on to keep themselves squeaky clean.

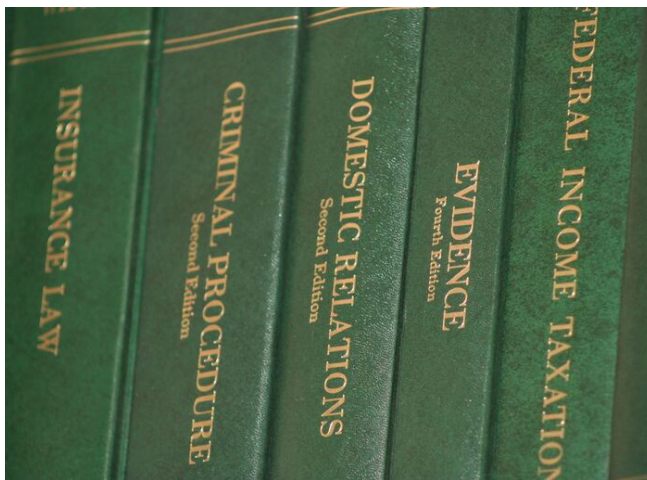
When it comes to self-defense, all states have laws that address the subject, usually with an emphasis on when lethal force is fully authorized. The laws also encompass the types of carry permissible in the state, allowable and outlawed firearms, and those prohibited from possessing firearms. Those of us who are boringly law-abiding have no problem living with these rules or patiently knuckling under until they are changed. However, criminals don't give a hoot, and they pollute the landscape with their depravities, which necessitates the need for

### *The Second Amendment*

*A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.*



EDC, a very vicious cycle indeed. This is the first step when choosing a weapon for self-defense. Take the time to make sure that your firearm and all of its accessories meet with the approval of your state and federal overlords, so that your weapon is fully legal in the event you need to use it; one less thing for blood-thirsty prosecutors to get excited about. That rule will apply across the board for all of your self-defense firearms, whether carried on the person daily or hidden away for a home invasion. In addition to the legality of your firearms, you should also be thoroughly knowledgeable about the laws on open and concealed carry. Just remember, any question of illegality on your part will not cast you in a favorable light with the judge or jury, should it get to that point.



## Keeping Your Six Covered

Every law is not created equal - many are very direct and ironclad in the matter of self-defense, while others are vague and open to interpretation that may be detrimental to the surviving shooter. Most of these laws do not allow for the use of violence as a consequence of being struck or having threats sworn against a person. For someone to satisfy the standards set out by traditional self-defense laws when being attacked or threatened, they must act reasonably, get away from the situation if possible, and use only the amount of force needed to fend off the assailant. I'm sure, dear reader, that you will agree that violence should only be employed as a last resort and that all options should be exhausted before you arrange a meeting between the attacker and his maker. Shockingly, the ones we elected to office agreed with the peasantry and made these standards the keystone to their laws concerning the issue.

Many states will require that any method of de-escalating the situation would be wiser, not to mention less of a mess, and that is where the requirement of retreating, if possible, comes into play. This is another arena in which you will need to be as saintly as possible and follow the rules to the letter. I know it will be difficult to do when everyone's dander is up and someone is itching for a fight just because they're mad at the world. But just as you would practice with your firearm, it might not be a bad idea to practice some techniques to discipline your emotions when confronted with potentially violent or extreme situations, especially if you have an overactive fight or flight system; you cool cucumbers may carry on as usual. However, if the case does go to trial, the jury will evaluate whether the defendant had a reasonable opportunity to duck out of the situation but didn't take it. Usually, the only successful way to argue your way out of this cluster is to show that it was impossible to retreat due to being trapped, escaping with the attacker in pursuit, or the victim getting the living kicked out of them.

If you have been successful in minding your Ps and Qs to this point, prosecutors will begin to loosen ties and roll up sleeves to really get at anything that will give them the big "W." They will now examine if the force you used to fend off the attack fell within the reasonable or excessive realm. This is where great restraint should be shown in brandishing or firing a gun unless the situation dictates and satisfies the law's requirement in doing so. That is why all force should be matched with your attacker if you are unable to escape. The language in the laws pertaining to reasonable force will vary, but it basically boils down to the fact that the victim must fear being gravely injured or killed, and that fear must be reasonable for deadly force to be used.

The reasonable force clause will never let anyone skate for shooting an attacker who was wielding nothing but fists; however, it will allow for a firearm to be used against others waving around the most readily available assault weapons, such as baseball bats, wooden table legs, crowbars, knives, hammers, Molotov cocktails, and anything else that could cause severe bodily injury or death, but only if another weapon is not accessible. However, if Brick



Graniteslab wants to bang his chest and wave his fists around, it may be permissible to show, not brandish, that you are heeled and will not hesitate to shoot if necessary.



Before we press on to the aftermath of a self-defense shooting, I should briefly explain the concepts of the “Castle Doctrine” and “Stand Your Ground.” In many states, the “Castle Doctrine” does not require the homeowner to retreat or escape, even if they are able to do so. The idea is that one should never be forced to flee their “castle” and should be allowed to use enough force up to lethal amounts in defending their domain. Besides, I seriously doubt the perp is there for a polite late-night tea party. The goal of “Stand Your Ground” laws is to expand the “Castle Doctrine” outside the home. This will include public areas, private businesses, your lawn, driveway, car, and the like. These laws may permit the use of deadly force against someone that you believe may kill or injure you, even if you are not at home or could have made good your escape. These laws may be called by different names in each state. For example, it’s called “Make My Day” here in Colorado, but all of them basically extend your self-defense rights and should be learned well so that there will be no gray areas when it comes down to being forced to pull leather and kill someone.

## **Plan For The Worst. But Hope For The Best**

A firearm is the best insurance policy around for most people who carry one, one that is hopefully never needed. The universe likes to screw around with people occasionally as it is wont to do, and an individual may be forced to exercise their rights.



The taking of a life and the emotional turmoil that accompanies it are things that I could never possibly hope to prepare or explain to anyone, as I have never experienced a lethal self-defense situation, but you can be assured that you will be dumping a ton of adrenaline during and after the encounter, and you will most likely be an incoherent mess in the aftermath. This is completely normal and happens to even the toughest of humans; however, the next steps we are covering will be a component of the overall picture that will need to be monitored and brought under control quickly to expedite your journey through an unwanted gauntlet.

The first thing after neutralizing your threat and removing all surrounding weapons from them is to make sure that you and anyone in the vicinity are still on the right side of the grass. This will include taking a quick triage to assess what, if any, injuries exist. The next step would be to ascertain if the human chunk of ballistic gel had one or more accomplices lurking about. Depending on your gun control, the assailant should no longer be stealing oxygen. However, if your grouping wasn’t what you would have liked, you may politely request this mother’s pride to plug their own holes until the band-aid box arrives. This chain of events should give you enough time to start throttling down your body’s “go” juice and collecting your thoughts in order to punch up 911 to let them know what’s what.

The call to the authorities will be quite important in what you don’t say to them. That also applies to the friendly neighborhood beat cops who show up to solve the caper. When you talk to the dispatcher,



relay only your name and address, request EMS, state that you were the victim of a crime, and simply hang up. That's all you need to do; no need to hang on the line with the dispatcher swapping recipes or inadvertently incriminating yourself by babbling about the shooting until the world comes pounding on your door. The principal players in this scenario will be filled in with the pertinent facts when the time is right. Also, the moment your digit hits the last one in 911, the dispatch center begins recording the call, so keep it tight-lipped until you give the aforementioned info. They may ask you for additional particulars for responding units, but keep it to a scant amount and mention nothing about the incident.



While the authorities are rushing to your location, there are a couple of things you should be doing. The first is to call your lawyer, if you have one, so that he will be able to brief you on what to say to law enforcement; they usually know every trick that crowd will use to get a conviction and promotion. Your attorney will review everything that we have discussed this far with you to get an idea of where you sit legally. This is considered attorney-client privilege, so make sure this conversation is private without the possibility of anyone eavesdropping. The second thing you need to do is secure your firearm, whether holstered or placed away from you and the thug. You don't need to give LE a reason to search, nor should you give consent, and any search conducted without consent should be duly noted. Your lawyer should be out the door and on their way to you at this point, so now all you need to do is wait for the cops.

The one thing to remember when police arrive is to remain calm and always protect your rights. If you

were unable to reach your attorney, don't be afraid to invoke your Miranda Rights until you have had time for consultation with counsel. You might upset those who have no use for such rights, and you may be arrested, but it's worth it to go along with the process as calmly and maturely as possible, and to confer with your lawyer at all times during the investigation. Basically, zip your lip, and when you speak, be sure it is guarded; never volunteer information. If you perform within these parameters, the chance of spending any time in a cell is little to none. Especially if your attorney is pretty slick.

Once the preliminary investigation of the scene is finished and statements have been collected, the case is handed over to the D.A.'s office for further review and investigation. This is where your personal life will be put into the spotlight for all to see. People you know or work with will be interviewed, in addition to any social media presence you may have. So be prepared for a roto-rooter job on your life to see just what kind of person you may be. When all is said and done, the D.A. will recommend whether to send the evidence to the grand jury or rule it as justifiable homicide. Whatever the outcome, the more you look like a candidate for sainthood, the better chance you will have for getting through the gauntlet, a little battered and bruised emotionally to be sure, but vindicated in the fact that others agreed that your life was in danger and of enough value to save.

While this only serves as a brief overview of the laws and potentialities faced by a self-defense shooter, it should be noted that every self-defense shooting case is unique, and the circumstances for one person will not be the same as his neighbor a couple of blocks over from him. I would recommend reviewing some self-defense cases that occurred in your state to get an idea of how these defendants are treated and what they went through. Knowledge is power, and the more of it you possess, the better off you will be in any area of your life, but it will be of the utmost importance when it comes to the personal survival department. Also, if you still retain the sanity to cruise social media and are very active on it, please be careful about what you say and post, because it seems that in this day and age, everyone needs to prepare for their eventual day in court. So, until next time, dear reader, stay safe and let's be careful out there.





# WHAT DID YOUR TRUE LOVE GET YOU? 12 GIFTS FOR THE GUN LOVER IN YOUR LIFE

BY ERIC AUSTGEN

It always seems that shopping for others around this time of the year can really test one's very soul, especially if that person is your significant other, and it is almost next to impossible to shop for them, birthdays included. I am notoriously guilty of this and make no apology for it. However, if the love of your life is an avid shooter, might I humbly advance some gift ideas to keep them excited in the days leading up to when Santa squeezes himself down the chimney to deliver the rest of the loot.

## THE PERFECT COMPANION FOR THE FIELD OR RANGE

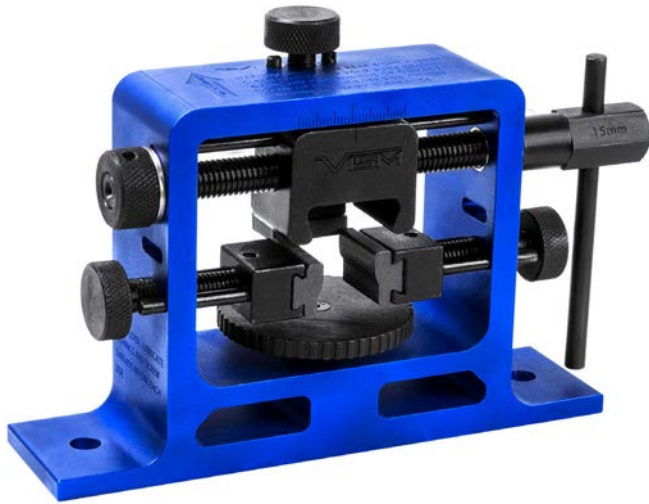
One of the most frustrating things to encounter when shooting is the need to perform maintenance on a firearm only to discover that you either don't have the tools you need or the ones that are present will not work on your shooter. You certainly

wouldn't want to lug around a gun-specific tool chest everywhere; that is why Real Avid has come out with a line of multi-tools that will fit easily into a belt-mounted holster or the side pocket of a range bag. These multi-tools are available for the most popular firearms in use for recreation or defense. There is an AR-15, 1911, Glock, and general pistol tools with beefier, upgraded versions made for the AR-15 shooter. Two multi-tools marketed as compatible with all firearms actually do quite a bang-up job on rifles and shotguns, as both the 18 in 1 and 30 in 1 tools have universal choke wrenches. The tools are very affordable, ranging in price from \$9.99 up to \$89.99 for the upgraded AR-15; a handy gift that will make your gunner very happy.

## WORKING SMARTER, NOT HARDER

Whether your shooter is just starting out or a grizzled veteran, they will be ecstatic to see a





universal rear sight tool staring at them from the depths of the gift box. The NCSStar VTUPRS tool is designed to do it all for a proper rear sight job. Removal, installation, and windage adjustment for dovetailed sights will be a breeze for all semi-auto pistols with full, compact, and sub-compact frames; pocket-sized pistols will fit as well. The tool can be adjusted to hold the pistol firmly in whatever position is needed. With the open configuration, it will also be easier to eyeball the job and insert hand tools without being obstructed. This sturdy bit of metal can be bolted or clamped onto a workbench; it can also be clamped to a work vise. The listed price is around \$72; however, I have seen them sold for as low as \$50. Your shooter will definitely find that target acquisition and groupings will improve immensely by having this tool keeping the rear sight seated in its proper place all the time.

## FILTERING OUT THE HARMFUL NOISE



If you were to survey gun owners about traditional hearing protection, they would all probably mention how much of a pain in the keister it is to keep unplugging one ear or taking ear muffs off just to hear someone talking or the movement of game. Those who have become tired and weary of

straining to hear the important stuff while filtering out the eardrum-popping noises of the world will be delighted to wear a pair of Walker's Razor Slim Electronic Muff. The muff has a 23Db noise reduction rate, which allows one to use it while engaging in activities that produce extreme noises for short or extended periods and still be able to discern movement and speech. The slim design is great for those with a love affair with caps or safety headgear like hard hats or fire helmets. These muffs also have an auto shut-off feature that puts the muff to sleep after 4 hours should one forget to turn it off after a successful day afield. These hardy, water-resistant noise killers go for about \$69.99 on Walker's site and are multicolored to suit anyone's needs or tastes.

## STRESS FREE HOLSTER BUYING



The pouch in which a sidearm is held might not seem like a big deal to the most pedestrian of observers; however, the holster is paramount when it comes to overall shooter performance, whether it be for EDC or practice trips to the range. Since everyone is packing a different body size, the choice of holsters can be staggering, but all that worry and effort can be done away with by getting the ComfortTac Ultimate Belly Band Holster and calling it a day. The holster has a built-in hard plastic trigger guard, will allow for left and right-handed draw, and can comfortably hold a small to medium-sized semi-auto. There is a pouch forward of the holster to place an extra magazine as well. The band extends out to 54 inches, which is great for static and dynamic waistlines but perfect for carrying while doing hard physical activities or going to town to do a little high steppin'. The good news is that this system is coed. It is also very affordable at \$25 to \$30 bucks, depending on where you shop. It would make an ideal stocking stuffer.

## THEY CALL ME DEAD EYE DICK

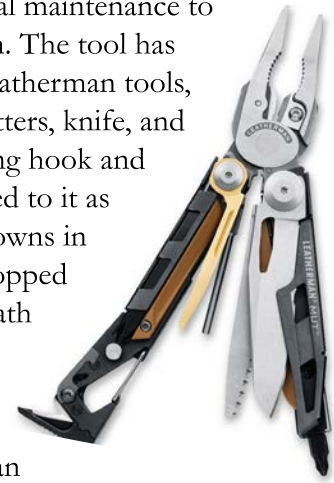


The vast majority of shooters in the world are constantly striving to improve all aspects of their shooting performance. For years, the only thing that could judge this performance was the human senses. However, with the advent of technology, shooters everywhere can see where they are deficient in their skills and adjust accordingly with the Mantis X10 Elite training system. A small sensor device is attached to the Picatinny rail or rail adapter of any pistol, rifle, or shotgun and can be used for live or dry fire exercises. It will even work on CO2 cartridge pistols and bows. This device then sends the gathered information via Bluetooth to a phone app that records and saves your information. The app also allows you to choose the type of weapon the shooter will be using. It also has numerous in-built drills, as well as basic marksmanship training for rifles and pistols. The real-time feedback is excellent for immediate shooting adjustments and improvements. The whole package is \$250 from the manufacturer and includes the sensor, BR7 barrel mount Picatinny rail for rifles and shotguns, universal MagRail adapter for pistols, rifles, and bows, USB charge cable, case with foam insert, and a quick start insert.

## AN EVERYDAY TOOL FOR THE EVERYDAY CARRIER

Since the range bag multi-tool is of little practical use to a gunner outside the range, the Leatherman MUT will be a perfect addition to your shooter's belt. It has a bronze carbon scraper, disassembly punch, bolt override tool, and multiple points for attaching threaded cleaning rods or brushes. It also has standard screwdrivers and Torx bits to

do anything from general maintenance to full weapons breakdown. The tool has features found on all Leatherman tools, including pliers, wire cutters, knife, and saw. A replaceable cutting hook and hammer have been added to it as well for the many unknowns in life. The whole deal is topped off with a MOLLE sheath and adjustment wrench for scopes. Expect to pay \$160 out the door directly from Leatherman



for this tool, but considering all the gadgets on it to keep your loved one's mohaska tuned up on the regular, it will be well worth it to ensure they come home safe every day.

## GET A GRIP



A good relationship should see both parties trying to make life a bit more bearable for each other. For the gunner in your life, you couldn't get any better in the ease department than with the Tipton Best Gun Vise. This baby can be used for cleaning, maintenance, and gunsmithing. It can also be configured to work with bolt-action rifles, break-open shotguns, handguns, and AR-15s. A central channel allows for the movement of individual components to fit different firearms, which then can be adjusted to ensure that the firearm is securely supported. Two offset clamps on the rear base let the user adjust them for a tight grip on a variety of buttstocks. The front support moves along the track length to support the stock and has two leg heights. The vise is made from sturdy, solvent-resistant polymer, which will take quite a beating for many years. The \$150 price tag is quite



nominal for a device that will help service your beloved's arsenal without them breaking a sweat.

## DOING IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME



Despite the best efforts of gun owners, cleaning a firearm could potentially turn into a messy prospect, a situation that could cause an argument if carried out on the dining room table. That is where TekMats cleaning mats come to the rescue; to save relationships and all surfaces, no matter their finish. The mat is made from a 1/8 inch-thick piece of vulcanized rubber with a soft thermoplastic fiber coating that prevents the gun's surfaces from being scratched. The rubber mat performs a dual role of protecting the surface from chemicals, oils, and dirt penetrating through your work area, and keeping the mat from slipping. Handgun mats measure 11 inches by 17 inches and run about \$15, whereas the rifle mats are about \$25. These are slightly larger, at 12 inches by 36 inches. The mats also have a brief history and "blown" apart view of that particular weapon to aid in assembly. It can also be rolled up for convenient storage and, with proper care, will provide many years of argument-free cleanings.

## A NICE COMPLIMENT



Anyone who carries a sidearm every day for work or personal protection is always in need of a good knife, actually several well-placed knives, but that's for another time. The Otter Mercator knife is about as simple as it gets when it comes to a pocketknife. This lockback has a stainless steel handle painted black and comes with either a carbon or stainless steel blade. The springs and lockback mechanism are made of carbon steel. The three-and-one-half inch blade is very durable and extremely sharp. Its slim design is perfect for the pocket or throwing it in a bug out bag for a rainy day. It also has a lanyard loop attached to it so it can be secured to whatever your heart desires. The stainless steel blades would be ideal for those who don't perform regular knife maintenance; however, the carbon steel blades will begin to develop an attractive blueish-blackish patina due to the blade's composition, and an occasional oiling will help to inhibit rust. The knife may be purchased directly from Otter for 44 Euros, or you could have a look at eBay for something a bit cheaper with free shipping. Your favorite search engine should also be able to provide results for alternate vendors.



## INSTANT RESULTS MEANS INSTANT GRATIFICATION

The exhilarating feeling of accomplishment is something that we all enjoy but never seem to get enough of. Your favorite shooter, on the other hand, will find pure pleasure in seeing where their rounds hit on the target with Splatterburst's fine line of products. The premise is pretty simple with this gift. As soon as the round hits the target, it registers a hit mark so that the ritual of checking the target after every drill will be cut to a minimum or altogether eliminated. These targets come in a variety of sizes and designs to fit the general shooter or those who train for life. Another target that is a ton of fun to shoot at is the Do-All Outdoors Hot Box self-healing shooting target. This is basically a ball or cube made from high-quality materials that form a seal every time it is impacted; it is a dynamic, reactive target that helps with a variety of practice drills. Regardless of their use, they will keep your gun lover entertained and amused for hours on end.

## AMMO IS ALWAYS NICE



When I was growing up, it wasn't uncommon for a bucket of .22 rounds or a few bricks of larger caliber ammo to find its way under the tree every Christmas. It was always a welcome gift and put a huge smile on the recipient's face. When it comes to the shooter in your life, you need to consider what type of shooting they are interested in and then buy accordingly. Sly, casual conversation usually ferrets this information out, that is, if you didn't know at all; however, here is a quick crash course in ammo purchases. Self-defense ammo will be good for your EDC practitioner; this ammunition will have a hollow point or semi-wad cutter bullet in it. The hunter will require ammunition capable of felling whatever game they are hunting, from small critters to larger entrees.

Your shotgun sporters will be quite giddy with any size of buckshot shell you get unless they also hunt with it, so rifle guidelines will apply here. I would recommend you refer back to my previous articles dealing with this subject.

## GET LOADED WITH THIS



What better way to unwind after a great, lazy day opening presents or any of the other 364 days we trudge through than to pour yourself or others a nice, tall "bullet-pierced" tumbler of the hard alcohol of your choice from a firearm-shaped decanter? Yes indeed! These functional conversation pieces are sure to be the hit of your next party. They come in a variety of styles, including the AK-47, AR-15, shotguns, and handguns, complete with 4 tumblers with the appropriate caliber bullet embedded into the side or a shotshell for the shotgun decanter. The bullets are perfectly safe to be around consumables as they are made from solid copper. These decanter and glass sets can be found all over the internet and can command prices of up to 150 smackers or more, depending on size and style.

## FINAL WORDS

While we are sitting around sipping our favorite beverage and recovering from a day of ripping and tearing, I would like to take a moment to say how much I have enjoyed our time together this year and appreciate you all coming back for my coherent monthly ramblings. I hope you have enjoyed reading them as much as I have writing them. I would also like to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and a Blessed New Year with much happiness, health, and prosperity in which to greet you right out of the gate on the first of January. Plus, I hope you all made out like bandits this year, no matter what your wishes may have been. So, until next time, dear reader, stay safe and let's be careful out there.





# 22

## Pioneer Skills We Cannot Lose

The pioneer days may have been a lot harder than we imagine, but the good thing is that pretty much everyone had self-reliance. After all, you couldn't just walk to the corner store and pick up what you needed for dinner. At best, there might have been a general store, but it definitely didn't have everything you'd need to get through a week (or, more likely, a month+).

However, the world now moves at a different pace. It's becoming less common for people to homestead, and the average American simply doesn't have time to dedicate to keeping the old pioneer skills alive. What's really too bad about this is that the further away we get from the pioneer days, the more important these skills become.

In fact, if you pay close attention to the skills the pioneers had, you'll realize that these are the exact same skills you'll need to survive once the SHTF. So, if you don't know how to do even one of the items on this list, we highly suggest you take the time to learn before society crumbles.

### 22 Pioneer Skills We Cannot Lose

As everyone else around you begins to lose their mind, you'll be able to keep yourself together if you've learned some of these skills.

#### 1 Bartering

Imagine that we've gone back to caveman times. Humans haven't developed the ability to speak yet, but they do need certain objects to keep their particular cave-village moving properly. Once one of them discovers that the people in another cave not only have what they need but they've even got extras, the concept of bartering is born.

Again, there isn't much room for bartering in today's world. A store isn't going to take chicken eggs as payment, after all. Because of this, you may not have much practice with this ancient art. However, once the SHTF, the typical methods of purchasing items will be behind us. Convincing someone to trade you what you need – and without taking advantage of you – will become super important.

Be sure to stock some extra liquor and coffee with your SHTF supplies. Both of these items should be in high demand, giving you the wiggle room you need to barter for whatever you happen to need.

## 2 Baking

Do you know what to do once you've got bread dough in your hands? Being able to turn that dough into yummy muffins, brownies, or cookies will make your popularity meter shoot through the roof. Even better, imagine the smell of a freshly baked loaf of bread filling your home.

If you can bake, you'll be in a better position than those who can't, once the SHTF. Baking can help keep your family not just alive but also thriving. And when it comes to bartering, if you bring a loaf of fresh bread with you, you'll probably be able to get basically whatever you want in return.

Again, baking is a skill almost everyone used to have, but it's fallen a bit by the wayside due to our modern lifestyle. Although lots of people still have this skill, there are less and less of them with each successive generation. Therefore, learning how to bake with any level of skill will help you out tremendously as society falls apart.

## 3 Building



Did you know that the pioneers were almost all able to come up with a concept and then actually build it? Nowadays, this concept has mostly fallen by the wayside. Heck, even if you have the skills, you may not be able to get through all the red tape required to bring a building to life.

Let's think about building smaller things, then, such as a chicken coop. Now, think of what the coop would look like and how you'd make it. Do you have any idea how to build one? If not, it's beyond time to learn. You're not going to be able to call your local handyman to build a chicken coop for you, so you've got to be able to take care of it yourself. If you currently have no idea how to do this, then it's time to focus on building your building skills (get it?).

## 4 Blacksmithing

Would you like to be able to forge metal, using tools like an anvil and hammer to bring objects such as hinges, hammers, nails, etc., to life? Then, you'll definitely need to focus on developing your blacksmithing skills.

Until the late 1800s, having a high-quality blacksmith in town was pretty much guaranteed. Once the industrial revolution hit, though, blacksmiths became less of a need and more artisanal. However, what do you think will happen as the SHTF? Yes, that's right; the need for blacksmiths will eventually come back in a major way.

If you're already a blacksmith, then you're far ahead of most people. Simply take the time to ensure you can build the things most people will need. Then, sit back and wait for all the blacksmithing opportunities to start rolling in.

## 5 Beekeeping

You've heard that the bees are dying, right? And you know that if the bees die, then we'll die too, right? This makes learning the art of beekeeping an extremely wise idea. But you'll need to know what you're getting yourself into.

First off, being a beekeeper probably won't provide you with any honey for more than a year. This may make it seem pointless, but if you are planning to survive for more than just one year, it's actually a very good idea. You see, this is one of those times when preparing for the future is more important than what you're dealing with in the present moment.



As long as you learn to be patient, keeping bees will eventually provide you with plenty of honey. And, if we've learned nothing else, then we know that this honey will be perfect for bartering!

## 6 Cooking Outside

Even if you've never learned how to cook outside, it's not that hard to learn. All you'll need is a Dutch oven, along with charcoal, tinder, and matches. If you've got these items, you're good to go!

## 7 Canning Food

This is another art that is falling by the wayside. It used to be that the whole family participated in canning food, which kept them fed throughout the year. Now, most people have absolutely no idea how to go about canning food. Of course, they no longer need to know, or at least they won't need to know until society collapses!

Get on top of this vital need by learning all about how to can your food. It may not be important right now when you can go to the grocery store to grab all your food needs, but that will change as soon as the SHTF.

## 8 First Aid/Medical Care



This is a category that everyone should have stayed up on, but unfortunately, most haven't. Heck, if you think about your close friends, family, and neighbors, you probably

know at least a person or two who keeps basically no first aid supplies handy. Don't fall into this trap. There is nothing worse than an emergency happening when you don't have a first aid kit, and there are no hospitals you can call for assistance.

Assuming you have a first aid kit, do you know how to use it? Signing up for a first aid class is a critical step in the right direction.

## 9 Fishing



The good news is that there are millions of anglers today. The bad news is that most have never had to fish without their special equipment. If you already know how to fish, why not try it the old-fashioned way? Turn off your equipment and leave your specialty lures behind. Are you still able to catch a few fish? Are any of them big enough to keep?

Take whatever fishing skills you currently have and expand on them. Try to find bait instead of buying it. How did you do? If your answer is "not very well," then you'd better practice these skills again and again until it's second nature. Your stomach will thank you for it!

## 10 Grow Fruit Trees

Growing a fruit tree may be a lot like beekeeping – in other words, you might be planting something that won't pay you back for a while. But that doesn't matter as long as you're planning on living for a long time.

Take care of your immediate needs first, of course, but once you've got some spare time on your hands, it's very wise to plant some fruit trees. That way, they'll be there for you in the future.

## 11 Gardening

Around 35% of Americans currently partake in some form of gardening. This is a decent number, but it's nowhere near what will be needed after society crumbles. We suggest that you start with a smaller bed to see if you've got a green thumb or not. Then, expand your garden bed until you've got all the vegetables you'll need growing in your own backyard.

## 12 Hunting

Hunting may cause some controversy right now, but it's going to be an imperative skill after everything falls apart. Of course, we can't mention hunting without also bringing up butchering. These two skills need to go hand-in-hand. Without having both skills, you can get into a lot of trouble. The best time to start learning is right now!

## 13 Knitting



Knitting will give you two important things: a necessary skill and something to burn off nervous energy. You can knit a hat, slippers, scarf, wrist warmers, blanket, etc., to help keep yourself toasty. Additionally, knitting comes with a lot of other less tangible benefits, including improving cognitive function, reducing anxiety and stress, boosting self-confidence, lessening depression, and offering a sense of control. In other words, knitting is the perfect activity whenever you get overly worried about things.

## 14 Quilting

This gives you another way to make a blanket. Of course, a quilt is going to be warmer and more durable than a knitted blanket. You can also tell a story through a quilt, which is a great way to be extra creative and to keep your stories alive.

## 15 Save Garden Seeds

If you want to continue to have a good garden, don't forget to save some of your garden seeds. This allows you to replant your food without needing to access new seeds. As you can imagine,

this will save you money now, as well as prevent a huge hassle later on.

## 16 Raising Animals

You can keep your tradition of eating eggs every morning alive if you raise some chickens. Alternatively, you could enjoy some chicken or turn a pig into some delicious bacon. The answer to what to do with the animals you raise is up to you. They'll also give you something to barter with, so raising animals can help you in multiple ways.

## 17 Sewing

If you're going to learn how to sew, it might make sense to look into getting a top-notch sewing machine. Even if you can't use it after things fall apart, you'll still be able to use it right now. Sewing up your clothes once they become holey is much better than buying new ones.

## 18 Water Gathering/Storage

Back in the old days, people had to find a way to gather water. This usually meant taking a long walk with a full pail, and it was anything but fun. Now, thankfully, there is water hooked up to pretty much every house. But once it goes out, there's going to be general madness for a bit.

Instead of waiting in line for bottled water like everyone else, store enough water to give you at least a few weeks of this beverage. If you combine this with rainwater collection, you should be in a very good position.

## 19 Welding

There are classes you can take to learn how to weld. You can also teach yourself how to weld using online videos and tutorials. You'll need to ensure you get plenty of practice. Just remember that using MIG welding will make the process easier for you.



## 20 Repurpose Old Clothes

Imagine you've got kids. Now, what will you do with your older son's clothing as he grows out of them? If you said, "repurpose them," you're absolutely correct! Giving your younger son these clothes will help, but if you really want to make sure that they get the most out of them, you'll need to know how to sew.

## 21 Grinding Wheat



Do you have a home grain milling machine? Or perhaps one of the many other methods of grinding wheat, such as a mortar and pestle? Then, you can grind your own wheat from wheat berries! Benefits of grinding wheat yourself include:

- It's more nutritious
- Wheat berries are typically cheaper than flour
- Freshly milled flour tastes better
- Wheat berries last forever, as opposed to whole wheat flour lasting just six months
- You'll actually reap the benefits of eating the whole grain of wheat

Sounds good to us!

## 22 Know Your Neighbors

Let's wrap this list up with something that is hard for some people – getting to know your neighbors. We understand that you may not like your neighbors, but that has nothing to do with getting to know them a bit.

There are several benefits to knowing your neighbors well enough to remember their names. Not only will this provide you with someone you could barter with, but it's also always a good idea to have someone looking out for you.

We suggest that you host a couple of events in your neighborhood so that you can meet all your neighbors. Maybe throw a neighborhood barbecue with lots of games that everyone can play. This is vital because once the SHTF, you want your neighbor to still see you as human. And it's a lot harder to shoot someone (or even just hurt someone) you've shared food with.



## Final Thoughts

When you think about it, it's truly amazing that humanity has come as far as it has in a relatively short time. We couldn't fly until about 120 years ago. It was only around 100 years ago that most Americans began to drive, and the modern toilet was invented just over 110 years ago.

When you consider the fact that the very first humans are believed to have lived almost 2 million years ago, it becomes even more astounding how much we've accomplished in the last 120 years. Don't let yourself get lost in how much we can do, though. Instead, try reviving several of the skills that people had back in the pioneer days. These skills are what will save you once the world falls apart.



# How To Build Fires In Wet Weather

Imagine for a moment that you're lost in the woods, and everything around you is soaked from a recent storm. You're getting cold—and you're definitely hungry—but how in the world are you supposed to light a fire? Every twig or stick you find is saturated with water. Even the ground itself is wet, wet, wet.

Do you have any idea about how you could possibly build a fire in these circumstances? Well, we're going to tell you how! By the time you reach the end of this article, you're going to have an understanding of how to start a fire, even if it seems like the daunting task of starting one is nearly impossible.

## How To Build A Fire In Wet Weather

Getting a fire built is the only way to provide yourself with light and heat, along with the ability to cook. Therefore, when you're in the woods, you must get a fire lit, no matter how badly it seems like

16 the odds are stacked against you.

## Gather Fire Fuel



To build a successful fire, you will need to find three different types of material: kindling, tinder, and larger logs and sticks. Normally, this is relatively easy, but with everything being rain soaked, you're going to need to look a bit harder to find some dry tinder.

Tinder provides the first few sparks of what could become a roaring campfire. But how can you find some dry tinder? Well, it's not actually that difficult.



First, start by looking for pine trees. If the trees are dense enough, it's entirely possible that some of the pine needles, leaves, and grass at the base of a tree will not be thoroughly soaked. In fact, you may even find some tinder located here that's not really wet at all.

If there are no pine trees near you, change your focus and look for cattail fluff and birch bark. You can also dig beneath the top layer of dirt to find some dry leaves and grass. And if you fail to find cattail fluff, you could always split a large log with a hatchet. You should be able to reach a dry inner surface by splitting it in half. From there, you can shave out some of the dry wood to use as tinder.

If all else fails and you happen to have some petroleum jelly and cotton balls, you can turn them into a tinder source.

Your next step will be to gather some kindling. This requires you to find branches and logs. But do you know what type of branches will work best? You can test them to see whether or not they're still alive by seeing if the branch has elasticity (live tree) or if it snaps easily (dead tree).

Using a dead tree will always offer better results, as a live tree's moisture content is too high. In other words, if you use a live tree, it's going to cause a bunch of smoke. So, stick to dead trees.

**REMINDER:** Always collect more tinder and kindling than you think you'll need. It's especially important to collect more tinder. After all, you can't possibly know in advance exactly how long your fire will burn for, so you might need to add some extra fuel.

## Choose A Suitable Spot

Where you choose to start a fire is critically important. Before you start building your fire, use your situational awareness to check the area over thoroughly. Is there something that can fall on you? Or is there something above you that could conceivably catch fire? Are you in an area that's especially prone to wildfires? These are all questions you need to answer before you build a fire.

Because it's so wet out, you'll need to find a spot that offers some protection. Ideally, you'll be able to find a cave, large rock, under an overhang, or under a tree (as long as the tree's canopy is far above the fire).

## Lighting The Fire



Now, it's time to build and light your fire! First, you'll need to build a platform out of either logs or rocks. You may find it difficult to locate a bunch of rocks, but don't worry – wet logs offer you a great way to build a platform. Even better, once your fire gets going, it's eventually going to dry out and then consume your log platform. This is a win-win because your fire will burn for a bit longer than it would have otherwise.

The most critical thing you can do for yourself is to ensure you have maximum airflow, as this provides the most efficient fuel burning. Making a teepee shape with your kindling and tinder at the base is a great way to accomplish this.

Once you've got the fire lit, you can begin slowly adding larger pieces of wood to your kindling. If you add them too quickly, however, it'll snuff out the flames. Keep adding small twigs until the bigger pieces of wood catch fire.

**REMINDER:** Keeping your fire small is the best way to go. After all, if you choose to make too big of a fire, it's just going to burn its way through all your wood, and you will not have any left. Instead, build a smaller fire and sit close to it. Just don't allow it to burn you or any of your stuff.

## What If It's Actively Raining?

It's difficult enough to get a fire started when everything is just wet, but what about if it's actively raining? This additional wrinkle may make you think that you can't start a fire, but you'd be wrong! In fact, there is a method you can use that practically guarantees you'll be able to build a fire, even with damp wood.

To begin, you'll need a:

- **Sharp knife** - To split fine kindling
- **Folding saw**
- **Small hatchet** - For use as a splitting wedge (never use it as a chopper)

Collect your wood by locating a downed, dead tree. Saw off a limb of the tree that's approximately an arm thick. Touching the sawed-off end to your cheek, you should notice that it's dry. If there's a ring of wet wood near the bark, don't worry; you'll simply discard it when you split the piece.

**CAUTION:** If the wood smells damp, reject it. Your firewood must pass the smell and cheek tests.

## It's Time To Start Sawing

Using your folding saw, cut your wood into foot-long sections. Then, cut each individual section into kindling. As you do this, be sure to use your hatchet as a splitting wedge to avoid the risk of an accident.

If there are two of you in the woods, the next task is going to be a whole lot simpler. You can hold your hatchet with both hands while your friend knocks it through. This works like this: you'll hold the hatchet firmly in both of your hands. Meanwhile, your friend will have a log chunk that they use to pound the hatchet head through.

Now, pick a lighter log and split some of the fine kindling with your knife. Next, use your knife to prepare the tinder. You're going to want to cut about a handful of shavings—most likely wafer-thin—from your dry splittings. This will be your tinder.

Gather your tinder, kindling, and fuel. The tinder should be a handful of dry shavings no thicker than

a match, the kindling should consist of one-eighth to one-quarter-inch thick dry wood splittings, and your fuel will be quarter-split logs.

Trim away all the damp wood and bark from your tinder and kindling. Then, separate your wood into piles by category (tinder, kindling, fuel). Because it's still raining, you'll need to put your piles underneath a tarp.

## Fire-Starting Accessories



You're going to need to find a good firestarter due to the rain. Fortunately, we've got some ideas.

- Carry a candle and chemical fire-starters.
- Use a flattened wax milk carton, cigar-sized newspaper logs dipped in paraffin, or a cotton ball dipped in Vaseline.
- Do NOT use loose newspaper pages as they absorb moisture.
- Create a 'fire blower' to nurse a developing flame by attaching a six-inch piece of copper or aluminum tubing to a rubber piece of hose.

## Building Your Fire

You've got all of the necessary ingredients to build a fire! The way you build it, though, will determine how successful it is. Therefore, here are step-by-step directions!

- Place two 1-inch-thick sticks approximately 6 inches apart on the ground. Put four pencil-thin support sticks across the base. Leave about a half-inch between your support sticks.
- Stack up an inch-thick layer of your wafer-thin shavings on top of the support sticks. Be sure to leave some space between each shaving for



airflow. Place two half-inch ‘bridge’ sticks across each end of the base structure. This will support the heavier kindling that you must work with next.

- Put down fine, split kindling across your support sticks. Splittings should remain parallel to each other, and there should be plenty of space in between. It’s imperative that they do not compress the tinder below.
- Apply your lighter or match directly underneath the tinder. Once the first flame has appeared, you can hand-feed shavings (not kindling) into it to ensure it grows. Be sure that you’ve got a reliable fire going before you add the kindling.

The nice thing about doing this is that you’ll get a bright flame without the fuss of a smoky fire.

## Do NOT Build Your Fire Inside Your Shelter



Whether you’re using a tent or a tarp as shelter, be sure to never start a fire inside. Even if your campfire doesn’t burn down your shelter—which is a mighty big if—you can end up with carbon monoxide poisoning.

You can, however, build your fire near the entrance to your shelter. Just be sure it’s not close enough to accidentally start a fire.

## Alternate Way To Build A Fire In The Rain

There are several different methods for building a fire in the rain. Here is yet another option you can try.

- Clear a fire pit with a stick. Remove as much wet debris as possible.
- Find sticks and lay them down to create the fire’s floor.
- Out of the six main ways to make a fire, select either a lean-to or an A-frame. This makes it easier because there will be a ‘roof’ to protect your fire.

## Lean-To Fire

Find a big rock or log. Set it next to the ‘floor’ you made for the fire. It will serve as your frame for the fire. Next, start using very small sticks, and prop them up against the frame. Keep adding more sticks until you have a ‘roof.’ Be absolutely sure that you’ve left an opening underneath the ‘roof.’

## A-Frame

Locate a long, thick branch or log. Take another log or rock and prop the first one up. Be sure it’s over the floor you’ve made. This will serve as the frame of your fire. Start with very small sticks and prop them up on both sides of the frame. Keep adding additional sticks until the ‘roof’ is slanted on both sides of the frame.

- After selecting the lean-to or the A-frame, keep adding sticks to your frame. Make sure they are increasingly larger.
- Light a teepee fire. Use either the dry tinder that you found or a Vaseline-soaked cotton ball.
- Keep adding to the roof. The lower layers will eventually dry out the upper layers of the roof.

If you’ve done everything correctly, you’ve now got a roaring fire, even if it’s pouring rain. How cool is that?

## Final Thoughts

Now that you know how to build a fire in the rain, you’ve just become much more self-reliant. Don’t forget to practice this skill whenever you get a chance. It may be basically just finding a bunch of tinder and kindling, but keeping your head on straight during a rainstorm may be harder than you think.



## How To Find Preppers Near You

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!

### 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 Preppers, which has 96,000 members, and Casual 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.



# 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



*The information in this publication is for general informational and entertainment purposes only. NSRA makes no representation or warranty, express or implied. Your use of this information is solely at your own risk. I acknowledge and understand the scope, nature, and extent of the risks involved with the products and activities discussed in this newsletter and expressly, voluntarily, and irrevocably assume any and all risks of loss and/or damage to property, illness, injury, and/or death which may occur. This publication may contain references to websites or third-party content, which we do not warrant, endorse, or assume liability for.*