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MEMBERS UPDATE

May 2023

GRID GOING DOWN PREPARATION

25 Powerless Appliances For Your Self-Reliant Kitchen

Tricking Out Your Shooter: Neat Upgrades To The Glock

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

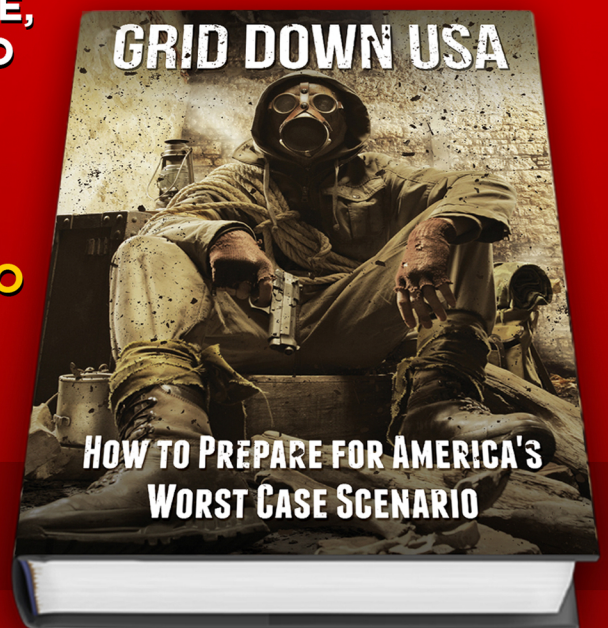
**ECONOMIC MELTDOWN, SYSTEMIC COLLAPSE,
PANDEMICS, FOOD SHORTAGES, WATER AND
SANITATION BREAKDOWNS, VIOLENCE AND
RIOTS WILL ALL HAPPEN AT THE SAME TIME**

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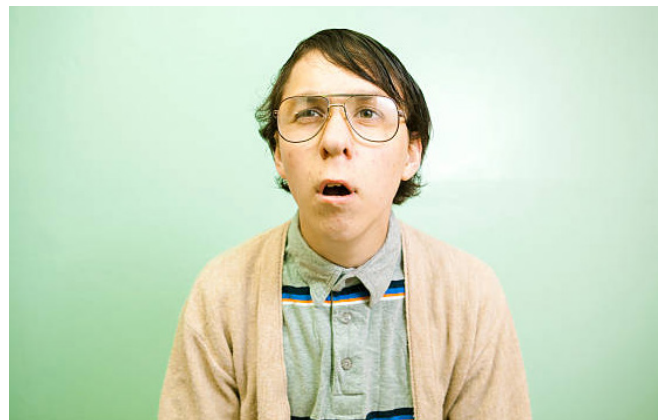
Tricking Out Your Shooter: Neat Upgrades To The Glock

By Eric Austgen

There are many reasons someone may want to upgrade the shooters they have in their inventory. Whether for aesthetics or performance reasons, Glock owners will be happy to learn that this vaunted Austrian arms manufacturer has aftermarket factory upgrades to give their guns a little extra power or some bling to make them the center of attention at the range. So, we'll look at why an upgrade could be needed and what upgrades are available to trick out your piece.

Where Do I Begin?

Deciding what upgrade you want to your Glock is akin to figuring out what kind of firearm you want to buy; you must have a set of parameters to follow in order to get exactly what you want. Do you wish to upgrade to improve accuracy, comfort and/or speed, or is it purely superficial eye candy you want to show off at the range?



Accuracy can be improved by adding different sights, optics, and lights. Swapping out barrels and slides can also improve accuracy by reducing weight and encouraging rapid cooling of the barrel between shots.

Custom grips and magazine extenders can aid in ease of use, whether in a match or self defense shooting.

Some Glock models are known to have a slide release that is difficult to engage. Extended slide and magazine releases can be added to ensure smooth, consistent loading and firing operations.

Outside of third-world dictators and warlords that love to wave around gold-plated firearms, no doubt to match their gold-plated grilles, I have always thought that churching up a gun outside of a practical reason is like sticking an elevator in an outhouse; the two concepts just never seemed to go together. However, many people like a snappy-looking hand cannon, with some outfitting their shooters with slide covers, back plates, and bling barrels.

When upgrading your Glock, please keep in mind that there are a total of five generations in the series, all of which will be chambered for different calibers, which is why it is paramount that you know what model you own and shop accordingly. Some parts are interchangeable between models; however, you should double-check and be sure the part can be used with your Glock.

Extended Slide Stop Lever



This upgrade should be performed as soon as you purchase your Glock or as soon as you read this. The lever is a small part that allows you to pull the slide back to inspect the chamber and close it when a new mag is inserted. The part is also involved with the take down of the weapon. The problem is that Glock made this lever just a wee bit too short, that some shooters have a tough time engaging it with their thumb.

That is the main thing you should look at when getting a lever upgrade, getting a solid purchase with your thumb every time. Quality material is also a must if you want to have years of carefree use. Fortunately, there are parts on the market that are of excellent quality and cheap enough that

it wouldn't hurt to have a couple of spares lying around just in case Murphy pokes his head around.

The Lone Wolf Extended Slide Lock Lever is ideal for upgrading your Glock. This lever is made from high quality steel, which ensures long-term durability, and greatly retards wear and tear to the part. The Lone Wolf Lever is 3 mm longer than the one provided by Glock, making it easier to manipulate in less-than-ideal climates or when one's hands are wet or crud-incrusted.

This is a simple drop-in part, so a gunsmith will not be necessary. However, instructions do come with the part, and these should be followed implicitly to get a proper fit and operation.

Extended Magazine Release



As its name implies, this part is the button that releases the magazine from the interior of the grip. Glock dropped the ball on this important feature by making a release button with a low profile; therefore, it can be somewhat of a headache to engage. There is nothing special to this part, as it can be found almost anywhere genuine Glock parts are sold. Some sanding may be required for proper grip fit and comfort.

Aftermarket Triggers



Many Glocks owners have taken exception to the fact that the factory trigger tends to travel too much and that it takes five to six pounds to squeeze off a

round. Luckily, there are several aftermarket triggers to remedy this malady, some of them complete with an adjustment screw so that you can set exactly how much travel you want.

A trigger upgrade can improve accuracy with its lighter pull and improved control. Aftermarket triggers are also built with comfort in mind to give you ease of squeeze and greater control when firing.

The Agency Arms Glock trigger kit is one such available product. It's a red anodized drop-in flat-faced kit that will give you a shorter, lighter trigger pull with a snappier reset. It also cuts the force on the trigger down to 3.5 pounds from 6, thus improving accuracy with each firing. The trigger's flat face gives the shooter more control through the squeeze and reset, while also retaining the safety lever, important since Glocks do not come equipped with a thumb flick safety catch.

If you are not interested in replacing your entire trigger assembly but still want to reduce trigger squeeze, there is a quick and easy alternative. The supposedly self-cleaning Ghost 3.5-pound trigger connector is another simple drop-in part, basically switching the existing trigger connector for the new one, and viola! You will have a lighter, crisper trigger squeeze; that's the understanding, at least.

Sights



The factory sights that come with the Glock leave a little bit to be desired. Ok, it leaves a whole lot to be desired. The sights are either the dots on the front and rear or U on the rear and dot on the front. They are painted white and are horrible for use in any condition other than in blazing
4 sunlight. However, my fellow shooters, we have the

technology, and a solution to this problem has been discovered that will fix your Glock's poor target acquisition.

Swapping out sights shouldn't require an engineering degree, so stick with the old reliable drop-in variety, only if to keep your last shred of sanity and if you decide to upgrade the upgrade sometime down the road.

One particular product known for its reliability and ruggedness is the Ameriglo Agent Night Sight set. Apparently, these sights are used by the FBI and U.S. Marshal Service, which is supposed to be some sort of benchmark and inspire one to have a tingle down their leg over it. Who uses it doesn't excite me as much as the performance of the product.

Made from high-quality steel bar stock, these sights have been dehorned to eliminate snagging on clothing when the weapon is drawn, and will allow for a comfortable one-handed slide rack. The front sight has a Tritium green-illuminated dot imprisoned within an orange circle that helps to quickly acquire targets in low-light conditions and when under duress. The rear sight U notch also has Tritium illumination to line up with the front sight with expediency and accuracy. These sights are finished in a matte black, so they will blend in with your factory or aftermarket slide.

Grips



Comfort is usually the principal reason for shucking factory grips for ones that are ergonomic, grips that gently massage, and fill every nook and cranny of your hand to give you superior control and relaxation when shooting. Ok, not every nook and cranny, but darn near. When shopping for grips,

not only should you be thinking about comfort, but also the gripping factor of the grip material. These would be grips made of stippled rubber or ones with finger grooves molded into them.

Talon grips are an example of the stippled rubber-type slip-on grip. Another type of aftermarket grip is the Hogue Handall Beavertail Grip Sleeve. The company makes these purpose-built grips for specific firearms, with the shooter's hand fit and comfort their number one priority.

The high-quality rubber grip sleeve slips over the frame, staying in place once fitted, and will never wear or spoil even after many years of hard use and exposure to the elements. The molded dots and finger grooves give the shooter a more natural feel and increase the stabilization of the pistol when shooting.

Another plus to these grips is that they will absorb recoil, which will greatly help in maintaining accuracy and control with each shot. The sleeve will also save that skin waddle between your thumb and pointer from getting intimate with the slide.

Magazines



It will matter little how well the firearm is made when you start running into problems with your magazine. This is the one crucial part of the two-part bullet delivery system. If the magazine can not properly deliver a cartridge to the chamber, you have problems, and it would be wise to get something more reliable.

Logic would dictate that sticking with Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) parts would be the best course of action so that your Glock will

be ready to rock and roll. Even though Glock OEM magazines are of excellent quality, surpassed by no other, they are expensive as all get out, and may cause more than a slight ripple in your budget as you will probably need more than a couple.

If you wish to avoid a moderate bankruptcy of personal funds, I would suggest looking into getting an aftermarket magazine that is cheaper but performs just as well as the factory original.

The folks over at Elite Tactical Systems Group have the solution to your magazine needs. Their Glock mags are built from a sturdy translucent polymer material, allowing the shooter to see how many rounds they have remaining. Due to its polymer construction, this magazine can have the absolute hell kicked out of it, shake it off, and perform its duties as if nothing happened. The only downside is that this mag is not for concealed carry use, only for competition and dispatching uninvited 3 A.M. houseguests.

While we are on the magazine subject, those of you with hands larger than the grip of the Glock will appreciate that there are base pads that can be attached to the magazine so that your hand can fully envelop the grip without your pinky sticking out like you're taking a spot of tea.

Barrels



The barrels that come from the factory are good but not great and could use an upgrade if you want to shoot competitively, attach a silencer, use non-jacketed bullets, or improve your accuracy. The use of a silencer would be excellent when employing your Glock for home defense purposes. I can almost guarantee that there will not be a sliver of time available for you to roll out of a deep sleep and pop in/on some hearing protection to go blazing away at the bad guys. Seconds count when protecting

yourself or your family, and suppression of that loud report will go a long way in protecting your ears, especially in enclosed spaces.

If attaching a silencer appeals to your more-reasonable senses, then the Silencerco threaded Glock barrel will be right up your alley. It is made from machined 416R stainless steel coated with black nitride or left in the buff. This high-quality material will ensure that the barrel is free from defects and failure even after running thousands of rounds through it. The end of the barrel has 1/2 inch x 28 threading and a thread protector; that way, the silencer can be easily attached, and everything kept in A-1 shape when the gun is in storage or in a state of readiness. As with most of the upgrade parts listed here, these barrels are drop-in and won't require any tools or heavy machinery to install.

Just To Summarize

Now that we have an idea of what upgrades we can make to our Glocks, let's have a quick look at each model and what possible upgrades you should consider if you own one of these models.

Glock 19: There is a large number of aftermarket goodies for this bad boy, but the most common upgrades are backplates with custom designs, barrel swaps, grip extenders, and skeletonized slides to decrease what small amount of weight this little guy is already carrying and to jazz up the overall package.

Glock 17: A law enforcement favorite, these guns can be upgraded with improved grips, extended slide levers, and extended magazine releases, which will greatly increase the weapons' functionality.

Glock 43: The compact design of this weapon is fantastic for concealed carry. However, this model is known to have a bit too much travel in the trigger. In addition to a trigger mod, grip extenders and low-profile sight upgrades are also common with this model.

Glock 26: Not as compact as the 19 or 43, this pistol is still a contender for concealed carry duty. Laser beams have been removed from the heads of sharks and conveniently placed underneath the barrel to quickly paint a target without it getting in the way. A red dot sight can also be attached to the top accessory rail. Custom slides are popular as well since they reduce the gun's overall weight.

Glock 42: Since this weapon is slim and lightweight, one may consider slapping on a low-profile sight since the compact barrel may challenge rookie shooters when attempting to rapidly acquire their target. The magazine release should be upgraded with an extended version due to the factory release sitting flush with the grip. Speaking of the grip, a customized upgrade might be in order to secure a tight fit to the slim design of the weapon.

There is nothing more frustrating in life than owning something that doesn't work as it is supposed to or it turning in a lackadaisical performance every time you use it. Most tools come "as is," without any options for upgrades, but it is a great relief knowing that that tool you carry every day to protect you and yours from the monsters of the world has souped-up parts that will deliver consistent, devastating results each time it is fired. Of course, there are some that like the bling that goes with the boom, but that bling shouldn't negatively impact the pistol's performance. No matter what your intentions were going into this upgrade project, the end result should be a tight shooter that performs exceptionally and puts its payload where it was intended every single time. So, until next time, dear reader, stay safe and let's be careful out there.



Grid Going Down Preparation

The strain Americans place on the country's power grid is already almost too much for it to bear. Some experts expected parts of the grid to go down during the summer of 2022. While this thankfully didn't happen, areas especially taxed include Michigan, Wisconsin, Louisiana, and Illinois. Listed as having the "potential for insufficient operating reserves in normal peak conditions," these states ran the constant risk of the grid going down.

And if you feel superior for where you choose to live, be aware that the western half of the country, including Texas, is also at risk. The only difference is that these states may not have sufficient reserves in above-normal conditions, unlike normal peak conditions.

With issues like this running high in the US, it's time to consider what you'll do if you're hit with a grid-down scenario. Even if you live on the relatively safe East Coast, anything can happen. Consider, for instance, the Northeast blackout of 2003. Depending on where you lived, your power went out for anywhere from two hours to four days. Living without power for four days may not be a true grid-down situation, but it certainly felt like it for many Americans at the time.

So, how can you survive suddenly and permanently without power? Read on to find out!

The Power Went Off – What Should I Do First?

What's the first thing you should do when the power goes off? Find a source of light! You'll need a flashlight first, so make sure you know exactly how to get to it in the dark. From there, locate your candles and matches. Alternatively, you can light your lantern. Either way, finding a light source is of the highest importance.

Keep Your Home Heated

Next, you'll need to figure out how to heat your home. Many would be tempted to use a terracotta heater, but you can't rely on one of these for your heat needs. Instead, get yourself a propane heater. You can use it while you get your fireplace started up. If you don't have a fireplace, you will have to use your propane heater with much more intention. Don't leave it on all the time because you'll run out of propane quickly.

Right now, you could install solar panels or take advantage of geothermal heating. Another item that can help a lot is a wood-burning stove. Anything that will keep you warm and keep the lights on while every house around you goes dark is a good investment.

How Do I Get Water?

Getting water doesn't need to be a big production. You can use the well water tips listed in this article, but you should also store at least a couple of gallons per family member daily. Try to have at least a one-week supply gathered at all times. Don't forget to use and refill the water containers at least once every six months.

What You Should Know About Food

As far as food goes, you should be all set as long as you have a manual can opener. However, let's consider what you should do before all your frozen and cold goods go bad. You could have a barbecue for your family and, depending on how much food you have to prepare, perhaps even the entire block. To cook without any electricity, you'll need one of these setups:

- Rocket stove
- Solar stove
- Charcoal barbecue
- Gas barbecue
- Propane camp stove
- Wood stove

CAUTION: Do NOT cook inside with anything other than a propane or wood stove.

Keep Your Health Up

If the grid has gone down, emergency medical care won't be easy to find. Therefore, you'll need to be prepared to take care of your medical needs yourself. Stock the following essentials in your first aid kit. They should help you take care of most of your health-related needs.

- Fully stocked basic first aid kit (tweezers, bandages, etc.)
- Pain relievers
- Decongestant aid
- Antihistamines
- Cough remedies
- Diarrhea treatments
- Muscle cream

- Indigestion aid
- Antiseptics
- Sunscreen
- Burn care

Take the time to understand what each item is used for and how to apply and use it. Having to figure this out during an emergency isn't going to go very well.

Keep Your Home Sanitized



You can use a composting toilet to get off the traditional toilet system. When it comes to keeping your clothing clean, you can purchase a stand-alone, non-electric wringer and attach it to the side of a square or round metal washtub. It will take care of the toughest aspect of washing clothes.

Getting Water From Your Well Without Power

As you know, water is the most important substance on earth. Without access to it, you'll only live a few days. But what happens if your primary source of water needs power?

For example, imagine that your well can't pump any more water. Perhaps there has been an EMP that has affected your entire area. How are you going to get water if your well pump goes down? Even if you have access to municipal water, it probably won't last much longer than your well did.

The very first thing you must do is to conceal and protect your well. Remember – everyone will have difficulty finding water, so your water supply will become coveted. One of the best ways to hide your well is by covering it with a shed. It'll look like a

storage shed from the outside, but inside, there will be water! To make your shed even more protective, you could make it look run down. Doing either this or trying to camouflage your shed will go a long way.

Getting Drinkable Water

Your well may be shot, but tons of self-pumps do not require electricity. You can also use a generator, but eventually, the generator will go down as well. Alternatively, you can make your own self-pump.

- Measure your well's diameter and read how deep it is.
- Cut a section of PVC pipe. Ensure there is at least an inch on all sides.
- Drill two holes in the top of the PVC pipe.
- Place aluminum wire through both holes and create a triangle.
- Run another piece of aluminum wire through the pipe's center section.
- Cut your pipe to about two feet in length.
- Grab a rubber float and make sure it covers one end of the pole.
- Thread aluminum wire through the top of the float.
- Lower the entire apparatus into the well.
- Once water fills the pipe, pull the float upward to seat it at the bottom.
- The float will hold the water inside the bottom of the pole.
- When you pull the apparatus upward, water will drain off, but you'll still have good water inside the pole.

That's all there is to it! For many of you, it may be easier to purchase a self-pump kit. The varieties of these kits have varied price points, so be sure to shop around for a bit before committing to a solution.

How can you power your cell phone?

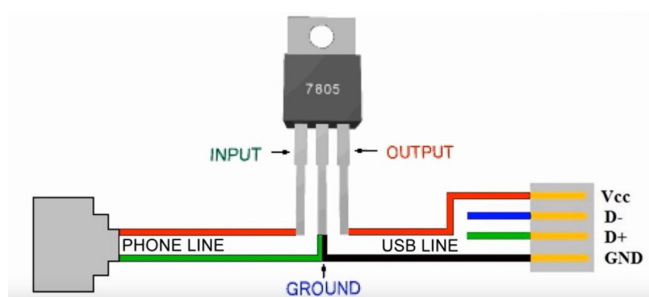
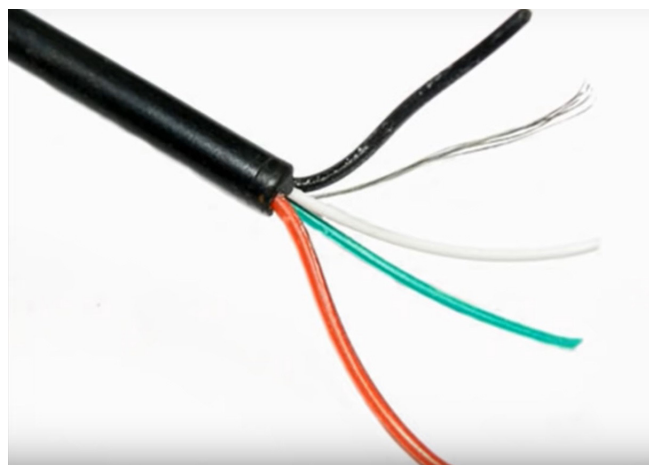
The power is out, your cell phone is dead, and you don't have a landline. How are you going to reach out? You can use a super secret method to recharge

your cell phone. Just make sure you don't do this unless you need to because if you get caught, you could end up in trouble.



Check the power supply coming out of an old landline connection with a multimeter. If your voltage exceeds 50, you should have enough power to charge your cell phone. Use a voltage regulator such as the 7805, and you're almost ready to go!

How are you going to charge your phone, you ask? Take a phone cord, a 5-volt voltage regulator, and a USB cord. Start by cutting off one end of the phone cord and one end of the USB cord. Separate each of the colored wires, as shown in the first image, and then attach them as shown in the second image.



Because the power is out, you'll likely need to wrap the exposed wires around the indicated areas. Be sure they're wrapped away from each other. Plug

your phone into its cord, then plug the cord into the USB connection. It should begin to charge your phone, and you'll have enough battery within a few minutes to make a phone call.

You might be wondering how there is any power to the grounded phone line, but that's quite simple – the phone company maintains a bit of its own electricity to keep them powered up. Since you're in an emergency, taking advantage of this is an absolute must.

Getting Drinkable Water Out of Thin Air

Did you know that some insects that live in the driest parts of the earth have evolved such that they are able to pull water out of thin air? Scientists studied this rare ability until they discovered how to fog harvest! Seventeen countries already use this practice, but researchers at MIT made the process even easier in 2013.

A large mesh structure is needed, but once it's in place, it becomes practically free to operate. You'll only need to brush the structure occasionally to keep it free of bugs and grit.



As you can see, this particular mesh structure is in the process of removing water from the air! You can expect 2%-4% water each time you do this. It won't be enough to keep a very large group going, but it should be more than enough to take care of your needs.

The mesh structure is supported by two posts stuck into the ground. You can easily create one using nylon, polyethylene, or polypropylene netting. Put a water collector positioned on ridgelines

perpendicular to the prevailing wind. That way, you can capture and collect water when fog sweeps through.

Ways To Prepare In Advance

If society keeps growing, our grids WILL go down. They simply aren't built to withstand the needs of today's consumers. Fortunately, there are several things you can do to prepare yourself for when this happens.

The simplest method you can use is to start walking or bicycling everywhere. Only use your car for farther away trips, and always plan to run several errands together. You can take this big lesson from your ancestors, who would have had to walk almost everywhere.

Consider where you live and stock up on the appropriate clothing. Don't get cheap stuff, either. If you live in a climate that can get very cold in the winter, include lots of furs, wool, and leather items in your wardrobe. You could also grow flax, a surprisingly useful and durable material that can turn into linen.

When the SHTF, you won't be able to get specialty foods from another country. The reality is that you probably won't even be able to get foods that are grown one state over. So, you'll have to get used to eating only what can be grown locally. You'll probably have at least one or two exceptions while everything is still operating. Figure out how to substitute these exceptions. Alternatively, you can look up how to get stocked up on your favorite food.

Do you know the people in your local community? Get started now because forging those connections could make all the difference in the world after society collapses. People who trust you will be a lot more likely to trade with you when you need it.

Are you able to build something that most people can't? Practice your skills until you can almost build with your eyes closed. Not only will this give you a sense of accomplishment, but it'll also ensure you have a skill that can be bartered.



Baking bread was a huge hit during the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic, but it fell by the wayside relatively fast. Pick up this habit again and learn to bake bread in a wood-burning stove. Make sure to stock up on the ingredients you'll need now so that you're prepared to provide your group with delicious bread!

Another thing you could do is learn to sew. If you can get good at this, you'll soon be able to make and repair your own clothes. Offering this skill to a group will make you quite valuable, too.

Have you ever wanted to figure out how to cobble shoes? It is another invaluable skill after the SHTF. Just imagine what it'll look like if you're the only one who knows how to repair shoes within a 25-mile radius. Once again, you've increased your value at bartering and earned your place within a group.

Can you make soap or DIY candles? These are also going to be skills that are highly sought after. Any skill you can learn to help people better survive will be extremely helpful.

Learn how to make the basics by hand. This includes pasta, sourdough, mead, and vinegar. Several classes you can take today could make the difference between living and dying tomorrow.

To deal with the boredom, we will need books and storytellers. These may not seem that important initially, but trust us, you'll want to have these things as soon as the novelty of living after the SHTF passes.

Learn the new value of wealth. In the old world, paper money trumped all. However, once society

collapses, you will discover that land, practical skills, and knowledge will become the new version of wealth.

Working with your neighbors may not be your first choice, but it will help all of you survive. Instead of stocking up enough bullets to kill half the block, learn how to work with them. After all, there will never be enough bullets to kill everyone, and why would you want to anyway?

Final Thoughts

When thinking about living in a world with no power, we're sure you've come up with plenty of preconceived notions. However, you must learn how to work with other people. Some of them may have bad intentions, but unless you trust a few people nearby, your life will be much harder than it needs to be.

Remember - humans are social creatures. It's not natural for us to go into hiding for years and not have any contact with others. So, while this may keep you alive, will you truly be living? Learn to join a community instead!



Quick – think of your most useful kitchen appliance. Does it need power to run? The odds are high that this is the truth for most of you. But it doesn't need to be! In fact, there are several appliances you can use that need no electricity at all.

These handy, powerless tools will come back in a big way after the SHTF, so why not get used to using them now? As a bonus, anyone who becomes proficient with these powerless appliances will have a huge advantage over everyone else. With that in mind, let's get to it!

25 Powerless Appliances

Can you even think of 25 different kitchen appliances that don't need electricity? Well, we will solve that problem today. By the time this article is done, you'll look at your kitchen in a whole new way.

1. Pasta Maker

The image posted above shows a pasta maker at work. It allows you to make homemade pasta without it taking so long. This powerless appliance will allow you to make large batches of pasta. It can also produce pasta that you can dry for later. In other words, despite the lack of electricity, a pasta maker is definitely a good item to have in your kitchen.

2. Percolator

We know, we know – you're addicted to your coffee and must have a way to replicate the experience without any power. Well, you're in luck! A percolator is a way people used to make a cup of Joe, and nothing stops you from returning to this more simplistic method.

The best thing about a percolator is there are many options for heating up your coffee. Whether you use your stovetop, an open fire, or a wood stove, the percolator will quickly heat up and provide you with one of the best cups of coffee you've ever had. Sure, you might not have all of your fancy additives, but there is nothing like experiencing a cup of coffee from a percolator.



25 Powerless Appliances For Your Self-Reliant Kitchen

3. Hand-Crank Flour Mill



Before you can reach the step in your bread-making pictured nearby, you'll need to hand-crank some flour. There are many reasons to invest in one of these, not the least of which is how absolutely delicious freshly-milled flour is.

A hand-crank flour mill has other uses, too! Get an extra sturdy one so you can also crank out nut butters. It'll take some muscle, but using a flour mill is the best way to make fresh bread, nut butter, etc. Invest in one now and start practicing!

4. Manual Food Processor

There are two primary uses for a manual food processor. First, it chops up veggies, nuts, herbs, salsa, hummus, guacamole, etc. In other words, it can help you make a great salad or chop up vegetables for you to eat raw. Secondly, because it has this power, it can make it much easier to preserve food.

When you start canning, a manual food processor will provide you with a simple way to do so. Simply chop up whatever you're going to put in a can. That way, you can fit much more inside each can.

5. Solar Oven

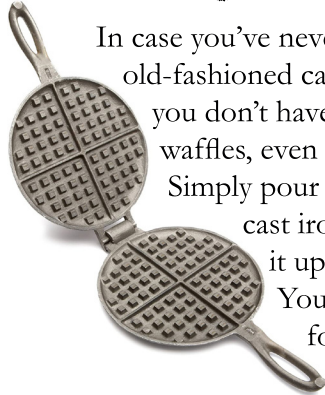


Getting yourself a good solar oven can relieve so much of the burden from your kitchen. You won't need any power to run it because it operates off the sun's

rays. They are often used for baking cookies but don't stop there. As you can see, they can also heat up water and do many other things.

To give you an idea of the efficiency of a solar oven, it would take approximately 40 minutes to get the water to boil. So, yes, it's faster to use your actual kitchen. But if you have no power or it's a super hot day, turning to a solar oven is a great option.

6. Stovetop Waffle Iron



In case you've never seen one of these, it's an old-fashioned cast iron waffle maker. Yes, you don't have to give up on delicious waffles, even after society crumbles.

Simply pour some waffle batter into the cast iron waffle maker and heat it up over a wood fire. Voila! You've made something tasty for yourself, and it didn't require electricity.

7. Solar Dehydrator

There is nothing better than a dehydrator when it's time to harvest your vegetables. But what are you going to do after the power goes off? After all, traditional dehydrators take a lot of electricity to run. Enter the solar dehydrator, which takes vegetables, herbs, jerky, and even mushrooms and dries them for later usage.

What's so impressive about a dehydrator, anyway? Removing the moisture content in your vegetables can make them last much longer. It is the best way to ensure you'll eat everything you harvest. In other

words, a solar dehydrator will be more than worth the money. Or, if you're handy, you can even make one! Look up "solar dehydrator" on YouTube to learn more.

8. Hand-Crank Mixer

Okay, we admit this isn't the first item you should purchase. However, it can be extremely useful and saves you a lot of time. You can have anything from a simple dough mixer to an adjusted stand mixer.

9. Butter Churn



Anyone can make butter if they've got a butter churn and whipping cream. All you have to do is pour your whipping cream into the butter churn, churn it for about 10 minutes, and there you go!

Fresh butter will instantly become available, which makes this old-fashioned invention one of the most impressive things ever made.

10. Kitchen Scale

If you like to cook, you've inevitably got a nice kitchen scale to help you weigh your ingredients. The problem is that they need regular battery changes to ensure they're working correctly. To avoid this issue, get yourself an old-fashioned mechanical scale.

These are much easier to find than you'd assume. All you have to do is go on Amazon and type in "mechanical kitchen scale."

11. Hand-Crank Blender

Whether you use a blender to make nutritious smoothies or delicious margaritas, you don't have to give up on this when the power goes out. For example, Amazon sells one from GSI that currently has a 4.4-star rating out of 150 reviews. All you have to do is fill it up like usual and then use the hand crank to blend your ingredients. It takes a bit of muscle, but you'll soon have whatever drink you're going for blended and ready to drink.

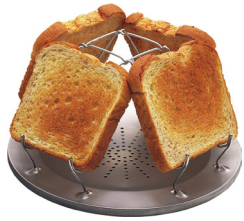
12. Popcorn Popper



When it comes to a popcorn maker that doesn't require any power, you can't do much better than the Whirley Pop system. It promises to make perfect, burn-free popcorn within three minutes.

It is an ideal set that you can use with or without power. Imagine how much nicer a snack like popcorn would make your life after everything else has shut down. Sometimes, little rewards like this make life worth living.

13. Stovetop Toaster



Want to keep making toast but don't have any power? It's easy! Grab yourself a camp stove toaster and start making toast over a wood-

burning oven or, alternatively, over a camp stove. As you can see, it cooks four slices of bread at once, which leaves you and your family with something nice and easy to eat.

14. Meat Grinder

If you have a lot of meat to eat, then you'll probably love a meat grinder. All you have to do is place meat (or vegetables) into the grinder, then hand-crank it until your meat has become a finely ground paste. Most meat grinders keep their blades fully enclosed, too, so you're not at risk as you grind.

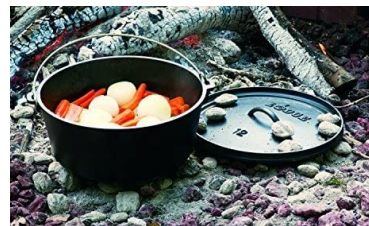
15. Tea Kettle

If you don't drink tea, you may wonder why a tea kettle is on this list, but it's rather simple. Although a tea kettle can produce fine-tasting tea, that's not its only function. First off, it's easier to pour from than a traditional pot. Additionally, tea kettles are perfect for filling hot water bottles on chilly nights, heating water for washing dishes, or heating water for hot chocolate and instant meals.

16. Dutch Oven

A dutch oven is, hands down, one of the most important items you can purchase before the SHTF. They can be used in various conditions, including right in the middle of a roaring bonfire. And everything does taste better when cooked in a dutch oven! You'll be able to create stews, bread, soups, pies, and more.

17. Can Opener



Your emergency food pantry is in great shape, but how are you planning to open all of the cans? It's easy with

a hand-crank can opener. Fortunately, these are still popular items, so it's really easy to pick up a couple. They require a bit of muscle, but that's a good thing because you'll get a bit of a workout each time you open a can.

18. Egg Beater

An egg beater works fantastic for eggs, but did you know it also has other purposes? It can assist you in making whipped cream, mayonnaise, sauces, and homemade dressing, making it an even more important item to purchase. And, once again, there is absolutely no electricity needed!

19. Timer

When was the last time you used a non-electric timer while cooking? The odds are high that you rely on your phone or the microwave clock to tell you how much time is left. However, an old-fashioned timer will make so much sense once society crumbles and we're all on our own. Again, this item hasn't fallen entirely out of favor, so grabbing one should be easy.

20. Salad Spinner

A salad spinner is very useful for people who love to eat salads. This handy little device can ensure that your greens are well-spun out after washing. Additionally, it'll boost the expected lifespan of every green you wash, and salad dressing will stick to the leaves more easily. All in all, this is another powerless appliance that you should pick up while there is still time.

21. Apple/Potato Peeler

This device is a miracle for people who love apples and potatoes but don't want to risk eating the core. Place your apple or potato onto the peeler to peel, spiral, and core the fruits and vegetables. These are great for snacking on, and they can also make apple pies or fruit tarts, potato au gratin, or fresh apple slices. As anyone who has ever cut into an apple or potato in an attempt to slice them knows, getting a device such as a peeler will make for far easier work.

22. Mortar and Pestle



A mortar and pestle set is extremely helpful in helping you grind up ingredients. Whether you want it to grind up some spices for food or you're planning to release the medicinal potential of some plants, having an old-fashioned

mortar and pestle is the best way to do so.

You may not have used these in the past, but they've been around since the Stone Age. For something to have survived for so long, it must be good, right? And it's even entered fairy tale land via the mythical creature Baba Yaga.

23. Rocket Stove



A rocket stove may be too big for your current kitchen, but that's okay. Take it outside to begin cooking. Find some wood, charcoal, or solid biomass fuel, and get your stove

heated up. Once it's ready to go, you can place a pot on top of the rocket stove to cook your food. A dutch oven will work best, as fire will come out of the top section.

24. Hand-Crank Coffee Grinder

Do you have coffee that needs to be ground up? Look no further than a hand-crank coffee grinder! The most impressive grinder can easily handle espresso, java, spices, herbs, nuts, and more. You can also change the setting on most grinders to provide a fine or coarse result.

You can put your hand-crank coffee grinder into your regular rotation. After all, hand grinding increases coffee's taste, acidity, and finish. This is certainly a case where convenience produces inferior results.

25. Water Filter

Investing in a quality water filter is definitely a good way to remove impurities from your drinking water. Doing so in advance will ensure that your water is as filtered as possible.

After the SHTF, you'll want to ensure your water filter is up and running. Otherwise, all types of bacteria and other pathogens could be waiting in your water, and any of them could make you seriously ill. Because water is essential for life, it'll be way too tempting to take a chance that your water is clean.

Remember, even municipal city water is not worth drinking before it is run through filters. So do yourself a favor and choose a water filter right now. Not only will it help you stay hydrated when society collapses, but it can also make sure everyone in your family stays healthy before we hit the end of days.

Final Thoughts

The reality is that although most people are practically addicted to electricity, several powerless appliances are still available to make your life easier.

From a hand-crank can opener to a mortar and pestle, some of the objects that our ancestors relied upon are still more than sufficient today. In fact, some of these objects still work better than the modern solution that has tried to take their place.

Yes, you'll give up some convenience to work with these items, but if your choices are between that or giving up altogether, we know which one we'd choose!

Keep in mind that getting used to how to hand grind or crank food can take a while. Once you've got it down, it will provide you with one of the best ways to cook. Even better, with power costs increasing and the inflation rate getting worse, owning these powerless appliances will be much more budget-friendly, too!



QUELLING AN UN-QUIET RIOT: ROCK AND ROLLING WITH 9 TACTICAL SHOTGUNS

BY ERIC AUSTGEN

There is no doubt that shotguns are, in every sense of the word, awesome. The shock and awe value is enough to scatter a crowd, making them reconsider mounting another attack. Shotguns are also great for getting rid of the occasional vermin that targets your castle. The bottom line of their awesomeness is that they are fun to shoot and scare the hell out of people. However, no matter what you need it for, a tactical shotgun is versatile enough to ventilate a criminal and then switch gears to become a provider of tasty critter vittles. We will explore what to consider when purchasing a tactical shotgun and showcase nine of the best shotguns on the market that meet our buying criteria.

FINDING THE PERFECT PACKAGE



Purchasing a firearm can become almost overwhelming, given the variety of manufacturers and the wares they produce. This obstacle can be overcome by research and having set guidelines that will help determine which firearms will or will not serve your needs.

Some may argue what the most important factor is when choosing a tactical shotgun; for me, it would be capacity. I like having a firearm that gives me the maximum amount of firepower without needing frequent reloading, but opinions vary. When it comes to self defense, though, more ammo is better.

When it comes to tactical shotguns, a lighter option is better, as it will help with maneuvering in and around obstacles and tight spaces, especially corners. Lighter will also mean that your shoulder will be absorbing a generous amount of recoil. Some models of shotguns have components built into them to absorb the recoil, but this makes them a bit on the heavy side, so plan accordingly.

The length of the barrel will be a significant factor, as you wouldn't want to use a 28-inch or more hunting shotgun to dispatch the occasional wayward burglar in the confines of your home. That is why tactical shotguns sport barrels between 18 and 20 inches, reducing the overall weight and length, and just enough to skirt the NFA regulations.

There will always be a healthy, vigorous debate in the firearms world on which ammo is better. Shotgunners have the same debates; in this instance, it comes down to 12 versus 20 gauge. Both gauges are great, have differing recoils, and do the job they are intended to do, so it's your choice on this one.

Finally, the most important thing you should do when buying a firearm is to look deep into the coin purse and decide what you are willing to spend. It is feasible for one to get a starter shotgun, working their way up the quality ladder as funds permit, or one may be a devil-may-care, flush-with-cash type with no limits. Whatever the case, you must choose wisely and within your spending means.

BENELLI NOVA TACTICAL



If one were to look for a starter tactical shotgun, the Benelli Nova Tactical is the perfect choice, not only because of its 399.99 MSRP, but also because Benelli knows shotguns and it doesn't disappoint with this shooter.

The shotgun is chambered in 12 gauge, has a smooth pump action that handles the four-plus-one shell capacity with great ease, and has open rifle sights instead of beads to improve accuracy.

Because it is constructed from a combination of steel skeletal framework and a sturdy polymer stock, this shotgun is built tough, but it is light enough, at 7.2 pounds, to handle any situation. The barrel length of 18.5 inches also helps to cut down on excess weight. The construction and gauge of this shotgun define what a true tactical shotgun should be, a firearm with power, durability, and easy to use.

MOSSBERG 500 TACTICAL



Another company that is no slouch when it comes to shotgun manufacture is Mossberg. To be honest, I find it difficult to choose between Mossberg and

Remington when it comes to shotguns; they are both so damn good at what they do, but we will save Remington for later.

Mossberg took its base 500 model and turned it into a badass tactical version. It is a pump action job, chambered in 12 gauge, has a 6-shell capacity, comes with a 19-inch barrel, and weighs in at a manageable 6.8 pounds. It won't break the bank either, and these shotguns generally run about 624.99 MSRP.

The synthetic stock is excellent for recoil reduction, giving better control and accuracy, which is important in making every shot count. But wait, there's more! This guy comes with a synthetic pistol grip that gives you even more control over the shotgun.

Mossberg also added a free-floating Halo heatshield to the design; this cools off the barrel rapidly after every shot. This shows how much thought went into building a shotgun that would be put to vigorous use by incorporating rugged designs that would ensure a long life but reliable service every time.

REMINGTON 870 TACTICAL



The Remington 870 has been a reliable workhorse for the sport shooter ever since its inception some 70-odd years ago. Today, Remington has reworked its most popular sporting model into a tactical offering. Remington also has an 870 Tac-14 model on the market. For more on that shotgun, please reference the previous article on NFA-compliant shotguns.

This model sports an 18.5-inch barrel, including an extended ported Tactical Rem Choke. The magazine capacity is six plus one of either 2 ³/₄ or 3-inch shells with the 12-gauge punching power, courtesy of the factory two-shot extension. The receiver is milled from a solid steel billet for strength and durability. It is also drilled and tapped for scope mounts, the factory providing an XS Picatinny rail with a ghost ring along with the purchase.

The shotgun has XS Ghost Ring Sights mounted on it to provide for the best in target acquisition and shot placement. The Picatinny rail will accept whatever sight or gadget you wish to attach. The stocks and fore-ends are made from synthetic polymer, which helps to cut down weight. They also have swivel studs attached for sling placement.

The 870 Tactical goes for about 600 bucks, depending on where you look. This shotgun is worth looking into for the price and pedigree alone, not to mention getting the same, consistent, reliable shot after shot with a heavier, power-packing gauge.

BENELLI M2 TACTICAL



Another offering from the fine manufacturer of military, cop, and civilian firepower is the M2 Tactical. This sweet semi-auto shotgun is chambered in 12 gauge with a five-plus-one capacity. It also has an 18.5-inch barrel and comes in at a light 6.7 pounds when coupled with a light synthetic stock. A bit on the higher priced side at \$1299 retail, it's, however, well worth the price, given Benelli's reputation for quality shotguns.

Due to its solid construction and simplicity of design, the M2 is very low maintenance. Should you need to tear it apart for cleaning or inspection, it will be a breeze to snap it all back together.

This gun owes its lightweight to the barrel length and the tactical stock employed for recoil reduction. This gives one the advantage of better movement in tight quarters or when negotiating corners. It also helps when taking covering positions and in marathonesque foot pursuits. The M2 also sports ghost ring sights to complete this overall package of accuracy and reliability.

SILVER EAGLE RZ17 TACTICAL



As you may know, I am rather picky as to where my firearms are manufactured. With the exception of two European countries, I always try to buy American. I was surprised to hear from many I knew that they had shot and thoroughly enjoyed some recent imports from Turkey. Naturally, I looked into the matter and was quite impressed by this offering from TR Imports and their partnership with different quality Turkish firearms makers.

The Rz17 has a 3-inch chamber that can accept 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -3 inch 12-gauge shotshells, its payload delivered through an 18.5-inch barrel. The capacity is four in the magazine and one in the chamber. The pump action is a spring assist affair to help lock up quickly in the most heated of situations.

The sights differ from other shotguns listed here in that they have an adjustable rear sight with a removable fiber optic front sight. The comb height and length of the pull can be tinkered with via the adjustable pistol grip stock. Its ergonomic design is perfect for achieving total control and easy swinging action when sighting multiple targets.

This shotgun is versatile enough to be used for hunting purposes as well. It can handle slug rounds with no problem, bringing down anything from ornery feral hogs to large antlered animals. Most importantly, it is excellent for keeping you and your family safe.

This shotgun could be considered a starter as well due to its 349.99 price tag. Even though there is a low sticker price and it does have the import cloud hanging over it, one shouldn't easily dismiss this as an addition to their arsenal, especially with all the positive feedback I have gotten about it.

ROCK ISLAND VR80 TACTICAL



This company is somewhat of a newer kid on the block when it comes to firearm production, but that fact has never gotten in the way of the quality firearms it has produced, most notably the 1911 clone and nifty little .38 special detective snub nose shooter. In this case, Rock Island has catered to lovers of the AR-15 and everything to do with it by creating a shotgun that looks just like one. Something about having one's cake and eating it too comes to mind.

On the outside, it may look like an AR-15, but it is all shotgun guts. The upper and lower receivers are made from hardy 7075 T6 aluminum. The gun is a semi-auto gas-operated design chambered for 12 gauge. The magazine capacity is five plus one in the chamber, with the receiver accommodating 2 ³/₄ - 3-inch shotshells.

In addition to being solidly built, the VR80 offers the same ergonomics one would find with an AR-15, thus one would never need to retrain themselves in how they operate both weapons, easily moving from one to the other, especially if one is plunged into the middle of an intense gunfight.

This is another shotgun that is versatile for hunting and self-defense, which is no wonder since an AR platform is excellent for both activities. With its nominal price of between 699 and 799, depending on the extra goodies you wish to add, it would be a shame to pass up on the VR80 Tactical.

TRISTAR KRX TACTICAL



In the spirit of shotguns looking like the AR-15, let us consider the KRX. While it's similar in layout to an AR, it looks more like a Fabrique Nationale FAL, although opinions will vary, but looks is not why we have gathered here; it's for the boom boom and affordability.

The KRX has a 20-inch barrel, a light polymer fixed bar, a Picatinny top rail, and additional spaces to attach other rails. This semi-auto is chambered in 12-gauge, with a mag capacity of five plus one in the pipe. The overall weight comes in at 7.4 pounds.

The carry handle is removable and has the rear sights built into it. However, no matter how many times the handle is removed and replaced, the rear sights will always line up with the front every time without the need for adjustment.

This shotgun will run you about five Benjamins, but with its all-around versatility for self-defense and in controlling varmints and other predators, it is decently priced for those needing it to cover a range of tasks without breaking the bank.

KALASHNIKOV KS-12 TACTICAL



AK lovers shouldn't feel left out, as the Russian-built Siaga shotguns will fix you up quite nicely. As inferred, these shotguns are based on the AK-47 design, and have the ability to shoot a variety of shells. These are some of the reasons Kalashnikov USA has imported these weapons for US distribution.

The KS-12 is an 8.8-pound, 12-gauge semi-auto that can accept shells up to 3 inches in length, all packed into a standard five-round magazine. However, this weapon has the option to accept a 10-round and drum magazine. It also sports a pistol grip, folding stock, side-mounted optics rail, collapsible barrel, railed fore-end, and a flash suppressor.

The MSRP on this shooter is around a grand, more if you get upgraded packages, but for its hardy design, construction, and ability to increase shell capacity, the KS-12 would be a fine addition to the armory.

BERETTA 1301 TACTICAL MARINE



The Beretta 1301 was designed for law enforcement and home defense use. It is reliable, easy to use, and offers some of the same options as many other tactical shotguns out there.

This 12 gauge semi-auto shotgun operates on the Blink gas operating system with a cross-tube gas piston, which cycles the weapon 36% faster than other shotguns. It has a large charging handle, textured bolt release, and a reversible safety switch. It holds four in the mag and one in the chamber.

The fore-end is checkered for better grip, even when the shooter is wearing gloves. Spacers are provided so that the stock can be adjusted for length of pull. While we are on the subject, the drop and cast can also be adjusted. The 18.5-inch barrel has ghost ring rear sights, interchangeable front sights, and an interchangeable choke tube. The receiver is machined from aircraft-grade aluminum. The shotgun also has a MIL STD1913 Picatinny rail that makes it easier to add optics without modifying your weapon.

The 1301 retails for about \$1250; this may seem like a higher price for a shotgun that is kind of like the other ones. However, I suspect it can command that high of a price for a basic model due to its gas operation system and silver metal finish with Aqua-Tech coating. This shouldn't deter one from purchase, as this shotgun is perfect for taking out varmints in all types of weather.

IN CONCLUSION

This is by no means the end-all-be-all for tactical shotguns, but rather a small sampling of some of the creme de la creme in that part of the shotgun universe. If you use the aforementioned guidelines when making firearms purchases, it will be easier to separate the wheat from the chaff, and you will be spending less time behind a computer doing research and getting down to the local gun shop or show (both may be prohibited in some areas) to find that perfect shooter for your tactical needs. So, until next time, dear reader, stay safe and let's be



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