

Useful Kits for Disasters and Emergencies

Materials and Ideas for Trainers

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Introduction

Having an **emergency preparedness kit** is necessary for the safety of you and your household during disasters or emergencies. In such an event you may not have access to your regular food, water, or first aid resources. You will need an emergency kit for short term survival. Your kit should contain enough items for you and your family or household. It is a good idea to always keep your kit in a handy place known to everyone in your home.

Depending on where you live, you and your family may face different disasters, which could include wildfires, hurricanes, tornadoes, terrorist attacks, flooding, or earthquakes. Understanding the risks of each disaster for each member of your family is critical when putting together your kit.

You should be prepared to support your entire family and your pets with your kit for at least 72 hours, or 3 days. Your kit can support you and your family in case of evacuation and relocation, or in case of sheltering in place. You should also be prepared to rely on the materials in your kit for a reasonable time frame after a disaster.

This module will instruct you on what items are crucial for your emergency preparedness kit, and where your kit should be stored. [Note: The contents herein are beta (draft) versions and have been developed exclusively for educational purposes.]

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Preparing a Kit: Think-Pair Share

[Think-pair-share-expand is a collaborative learning strategy where learners work together to solve a problem or add to solutions. This strategy requires learners to (1) think individually about a topic the instructor wants to raise; and (2) share ideas with a single colleague, and then the group.]

Your emergency kit will include the items for your essential needs in the event of an emergency or natural disaster.

When you prepare your kit:

- Include items you will require during several days of disruption to supplies such as power, water and gas.
- Store your kit in a waterproof storage container.
- Kept your kit in an accessible place and be sure all members of your household know where they kit is stored.
- Check on your kit and resupply perishable materials at least twice a year. Supplies should be rotated and stocked up to ensure provisions are fresh and safe to use.
- Be sure to include enough supplies for all members of your family, including pets, when assembling your kit.

Since you do not know where you will be when an emergency occurs, prepare supplies for home, work and vehicles.

Home: Keep this kit in a designated place and have it ready in case you have to leave your home quickly. Make sure all family members know where the kit is kept.

Work: Be prepared to shelter at work for at least 24 hours. Your work kit should include food, water and other necessities like medicines, as well as comfortable walking shoes, stored in a “grab and go” case.

Vehicle: In case you are stranded, keep a kit of emergency supplies in your car.

Some basic supplies that should be included in every emergency preparedness kit include:

- Nonperishable food
- Water (1 gallon per person per day)
- Flashlight and batteries
- Important documents, IDs and cash
- First aid kit
- Medications
- Blanket or warm clothing

These are just a few specific examples of key supplies. On the back of this paper, please list some other supplies which you think should be included in emergency preparedness kits.

Videos

- [Build a FEMA Disaster Kit](#): A comprehensive list of all emergency preparedness materials recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. **This video is quite long, at 18 minutes. The first three minutes provides an introduction and online resources. After that, the video goes through all of the supplies.**
- [How to Make a 72-hour Survival Kit from Materials from the Dollar Store](#): This video uses the FEMA Emergency Supply Checklist to put together an affordable emergency preparedness kit, using items from the dollar store. **Start video at 1:10 because the first part is an ad for Dashlane.**
- [Apartment Prepping Disaster Kit](#): A detailed overview of what emergency preparedness materials you should keep on hand in your apartment or home in case you need to “bug in” or stay in place for an extended period of time. This is one in a series of videos on apartment prepping. Other videos include: what food to stock in case of sheltering in place, how to treat water, and how to control climate in your residence in case of damage from a disaster. **The video is a bit long, at 13 minutes. Other video topics can also be found on YouTube.**
- [How to Easily Build a 2 Week Emergency Food Supply](#): An explanation of how to put together an affordable supply of emergency food rations, that will last your family up to 2 weeks. **The video is also quite long with much commentary about family size and dietary considerations. This is not a good video if you are just looking for a simple checklist.**
- [25 Must Have Items for your Car Emergency Kit](#): Details on what items to have in the emergency preparedness kit to keep in your car, especially in case of a breakdown in cold weather. **This video is quite long, at 13 minutes, but shows the supplies and how to nicely pack them in a compact bin.**
- [Creating a Go-Bag](#): This 1-minute video runs through important supplies to include in a go bag, including food, water, medicine, batteries, flashlights, and more. **Simple and short video.**
- [Family Communications Plan and Emergency Kit](#): This video teaches youth about making a family communications plan and emergency kit. The video covers what questions to ask when making a plan, what to put in an emergency kit, and ideas for getting families together to make a plan or kit. **Overall good video for children.**
- [Disaster Preparedness in Spanish](#): Video that goes through the very basics of how to prepare for a disaster, where to go, and what you should do to inform your family and loved ones after a disaster. Making a GoBag (“kit de supervivencia”) is part of preparing

for a disaster. **The video is quite long, at 20 minutes, but is comprehensive. Creating a kit starts around minute 14 of the video.**

- **[How to Prepare to Shelter in Place](#)**: When you shelter in place, it isn't enough to seek shelter in a room. You will need to have supplies while you are sheltering, and there are other items you will need to keep yourself safe. This 5-minute video demonstrates how to assemble an emergency kit for when you must shelter in place.
- **[In an Emergency, Will You Be Ready?](#)** This 5-minute emergency preparedness video illustrates emergency preparation steps that include developing an emergency plan, creating an emergency kit, creating individual go-bags for family members and plans or reuniting the family after a disaster. It discusses, in addition, specific considerations for people with disabilities.
- **[Red Cross Evacuation Planning](#)**: This 7-minute video is a great introduction to the basics of family evacuation planning. Determining an evacuation route, emergency contacts, and places to stay are all part of making a plan. An emergency kit should include food, water, medicine, batteries, clothes, and more. Remember to prepare your home before leaving, and to connect to local information sources to stay informed.
- **[What's in My Survival Kit?](#)**: An American Red Cross video featuring Jamie Lee Curtis as she talks about some additional supplies to consider for your kit. These supplies include comfort items and games. **This video does not cover basic supplies that should be included in an emergency kit.**
- **[Create an Emergency Preparedness Kit](#)**: This short video (under two minutes) runs through the essentials to include in an emergency kit. **The video goes a bit quickly and does not go into great detail.**

Downloadable handbooks, pamphlets, and other materials

- **[Red Cross Emergency Preparedness Checklist](#)**: A 4-page downloadable document with checklists for creating a kit, creating a plan, staying informed, and storing your family's contact information all in one place.
- **[Family Emergency Kit Checklist](#)**: Details the questions you need to address when putting together a kit and plan for possible emergencies to ensure that they fit the needs of you

and your family. Also includes a comprehensive list of materials that should go in your kit, and special considerations for those with bleeding disorders.

- [72 Hours – Is Your Family Prepared?](#): This comprehensive handbook from Canada includes information on how to know what types of disasters may occur in your area, make a plan with your family, and stock a go bag. Page 19 is a one-page handout for key supplies to include in an emergency preparedness kit. The handbook also has links to additional resources (Canadian only).
- [20 Weeks to Preparedness](#): This step-by-step checklist breaks down all of the supplies and additional steps you should take to prepare for a disaster into manageable tasks. For 20 weeks, the guide provides a short list of items to purchase for your supply kit and provides one additional step to take. Steps include planning escape routes, determining where water and gas shut offs are in your home, and getting familiar with your insurance policy. This is a great resource for those with limited time or operating on a tight budget as it spreads tasks and supplies over a longer period of time.
- [Food and Water in an Emergency](#): A Red Cross guide to stocking food and water in an emergency, including how to properly store food, ensure that it doesn't go bad, and find safe water if needed.
- [Preparing Makes Sense for People with Disabilities and Special Needs](#): A two-page resource including a checklist for what to include in an emergency preparedness kit, as well as tips for how to make a plan. The handout includes special considerations for people with disabilities and special needs such as remembering to include medications and supplies for service animals and creating a support network if help would be necessary for daily activities or movement. The special considerations are the same for [elderly individuals](#).
- [Emergency Preparedness for Pregnant Women and Families with Infants](#): A two-page guide of special considerations for creating an emergency preparedness kit for pregnant women or those with small infants. The guide also includes tips on how to better prepare before a disaster, what to do during a disaster, and signs of preterm labor.

Downloadable and adaptable materials (not in PDF)

See attached

Possible sub-topics

- Possible disasters in your region
- Putting together an affordable emergency preparedness kit
- Special considerations for your family when creating an emergency preparedness kit
- Putting together kits for the most at-risk members of your community
- Creating an emergency kit for your car, including weather considerations
- Differences between preparing a kit for evacuation and preparing a kit to shelter in place

Possible class handouts

- [Go Bag Checklist](#): This three-page handout includes a go bag checklist with images. It also includes a checklist of things to do before and during evacuation, and signs to post in your window to let emergency personnel or others know if you are okay or need help.
- [Visual Checklist for your Disaster Supply Kit](#): This one-page handout is a checklist of key supplies to include in an emergency kit, with colorful pictures of each.
- [Emergency Essentials Kit Checklist](#): This two-page checklist conveniently organizes all of the supplies you'll need into categories such as food, first aid, power and sanitation.
- [Set Your Clocks Check Your Stocks](#): This emergency stockpile checklist includes lists under helpful subheadings such as personal items or emergency supplies to help you organize. The title also provides a catchy phrase for remembering when to ensure that your supplies are still working and food is not expired.
- [FEMA's Emergency Kit Checklist](#): A two-page list of items that should go in your emergency preparedness kit. A good resource for quick reference. Also available on FEMA's website in [Spanish](#) and many other languages.

Suggested group activities

- [Community Preparedness: Simple Activities for Everyone](#): This is a full compilation of available FEMA facilitator guides for evacuation and disaster preparedness planning activities (including the two above). Topics range from getting to safety, to creating a disaster plan, to coming home after a disaster. **The Preparedness on a Shoestring module starting on page 6 is the perfect group activity for learning the contents of an emergency preparedness kit.**

Additional Ideas:

- Brainstorm the disasters that could happen to your community.
- Discuss what you would not have access to in the event of these emergencies (potable water, food, medicines, transportation, etc)
- Go through a general schedule of your family's day and identify what resources you use daily that you would not have access to during an emergency, and should include in your kit.
- Write out a list of all the materials should have in your emergency kit.
- Work together to identify the best places in your community to obtain these items, and put together an action plan, with specific dates and times, for when you will get these necessary items.

Plausible participant behavioral changes

At the end of this session, participants should...

- Research the disasters that are relevant to their area;
- Understand the importance and urgency of having a disaster kit on hand;
- Know the items they will need to have in their kit in the event of an emergency;
- Determine the best way to customize their emergency kit to the needs and comforts of their families;
- Buy the necessary items for an emergency preparedness kit (or develop a timeline to buy them);
- Determine the best place to store their emergency kit in the appropriate location; and
- Communicate with their family about the emergency kit, what it contains, where it is stored, and why it is important.

Related android apps

- [Emergency preparedness & Disaster Survival Guide App](#): This app, available on Google, provides information about how to prepare yourself and your environment for an emergency situation or disaster, the best course of action to take based on your current situation, how to survive in any disaster whether it is natural or urban, the equipment you should have to improve your chance of survival and how to use it, and lifesaving advice and tips to help protect yourself and others around you.
- **Flashlight App**: Many phones come already equipped with a built-in flashlight! Be sure you know how to activate this and keep it in mind in case of emergency.

Additional Resources

- [Ready.Gov Website](#): Details the types of disasters or emergencies you may face, and how to prepare an emergency kit to address these differing disasters.
- [The Science Behind Home Disaster Preparedness Kits is a Disaster](#): An article from the Wired that outlines the importance of preparing a kit for disasters. The government will respond, but ultimately it's up to communities to fill the gap until they do. Even if you don't need the kit during a disaster, your neighbor or someone else in your community might!
- [The Best Emergency Preparedness Supplies](#): This article from WireCutter researches the various brands and types of materials to include in an emergency kit and provides recommendations on the best materials to purchase as well as some pros and cons of going with a pre-made kit.

Attachment A: Survival Kits

Disasters usually occur with little or no warning. Though the focus of this site is on “bugging in,” it’s still wise to have a vehicle [survival kit](#) or a [bug out bag](#) in case you’re stranded on the way home or forced to evacuate the area.

[Survival Kits Online](#) makes a good [Deluxe 2 Person Kit](#) for \$99 and a [4 Person Survival Kit](#) for \$199. However, they don’t include everything you need to keep your car running.

I recommend purchasing a sturdy [backpack](#), gathering these items and keeping them in your trunk. Make adjustments based on your personal needs. Much of the equipment will depend on what type of vehicle you own. You should also learn to change a tire, change the oil, jump-start a car, and replace fluids, belts and hoses.

Fire, Heat and Light

1. [Emergency Candles](#) so you can see in the dark.
2. [Fire Sticks](#) – These light even after being submerged in water.
3. Hand Crank Flashlight – Never worry about the battery running out.
4. Light Sticks – These are really cheap in the months after Halloween.
5. [Spark-Lite Fire Starter](#) – The official fire starter of the U.S. Military.

Shelter/Clothing

1. Blankets – [Heatsheets](#) are affordable and very convenient.
2. Change of clothes in case you get wet or dirty.
3. Coats – When it’s only a little cold outside, you can use these instead of the heater and save fuel.
4. Gloves for working on car, building [shelter](#), cold weather, etc.
5. [Ponchos](#) in case it rains.
6. [Sleeping Bags](#) – In case you can’t reach your destination before nightfall.
7. Socks – Much more important than you might think.
8. Spare Shoes in case yours get wet or damaged.
9. [Tube Tent](#) – Only eight bucks.
10. Umbrellas in case it’s raining.

Miscellaneous

1. [Batteries](#) – For [flashlights](#) or cell phones or any other devices you might have.
2. [Compass](#) – [Military Style Lensatic Marching Compass With Pouch](#) is the most affordable option.
3. [Emergency Food Bars](#) in case you get hungry. The more protein, the better.
4. Emergency Whistle – The [5 in 1 Survival Whistle](#) is only \$5.
5. [First Aid](#) Kit – There are a lot of [first aid kits](#) to choose from on amazon.com.

6. [Folding Shovel](#) in case you have to dig something such as a cathole.
7. Food – Anything with a very long shelf life (canned food, MRE's, etc.). You'll still need to rotate it.
8. Maps – Check your local department store. Get an atlas of your country and a map of the local area.
9. Metal Cup – Emergency Zone makes a great [Stainless Steel Sierra Cup](#) that is perfect for boiling water.
10. [Mini Rescue Mirror](#) so you can signal for help.
11. [Multi-Tool](#) – Again, lots to choose from.
12. Tissues/Napkins – For cleaning spills or use as fire tinder.
13. [Toilet Paper](#) – Pretty self-explanatory.
14. Water – A gallon a day per person for 3 days.
15. [Water Purification Tablets](#)
16. Wire Saw – The [Commando Wire Saw](#) cuts through wood and plastic.

Vehicle Equipment

(How much of this you decide to get might depend on the condition of your vehicle.)

1. Antifreeze/Coolant
2. Brake Fluid
3. Extra Belts
4. [Fix-A-Flat](#)
5. Flares
6. Fuses
7. Hoses
8. Ice Scraper
9. Jack
10. Jumper Cables
11. Lug Wrench
12. [Magic Tank](#) (in case you run out of gas)
13. Oil
14. Ratchet Set
15. Replacement Bulbs
16. Screwdrivers
17. Spare Tire
18. Transmission Fluid
19. Windshield Washer Fluid

One note of warning: Don't let your gas tank get below half full. If the disaster is major enough or there are mass evacuations, gas stations will probably be closed, so you want to always have enough gas to last you for a while.

Also, make sure to change your oil every 3 months or 3000 miles (although as one commenter pointed out, you should check your owner's manual to see if your car is different).

Attachment B: DID YOU REMEMBER THESE ITEMS?

Use the following starter list to adapt your own. You can also add annotations and links to the list as we began to do.

- \$500 Minimum in Small Bills**
- Quarters (Qty 8)**
- Local Area Map**
- Compass**
- Small Note Pad / Pencil**
- Emergency Whistle**
- [550 Parachute Cord \(50'\)](#)**
- Cotton Bandana**
- Duct Tape (25')**
- 55 Gal. Contractor Garbage Bag (Qty 2)**
- Resealable Bags (Qty 5, Various Sizes)**
- Sunglasses**
- N95 Face Mask**
- Sewing Kit**
- Latex Tubing (3')**
- Fishing Kit**
- Binoculars**
- Personal Medications**
- Spare Pair Of Corrective Lenses**

Drivers License / Passport

Similar to credit cards, these items may or may not be useful, but might be

Tinder

As an experienced survivalist, you can normally find natural tinder in the wilderness. However, it's always smart to prepare for the worst, so pre-pack some tinder tabs as well.

Cotton balls work well, or you can buy [these Quick Fire Tabs](#) that are specially made for easy ignition. They hold a flame longer giving you time to catch the tinder flame to your small kindling.

Vaseline

Add a dab of [vaseline](#) to tinder and it will help it ignite quickly and easily.

Small Magnifying Glass

With the sun you can use magnification to focus light energy. This focused energy can be harnessed to make a fire.

[This device](#) will work if you run out of butane or matches. Plus, [this Gerber Tinderbox](#) helps make fine tinder from sticks and includes the magnifying glass built in.

Small Waterproof Storage Container

Small Roll Of Duct Tape

Hand Sanitizer

Use a [small bottle of hand sanitizer](#) to clean your hands before eating.

Try to avoid ingesting bacteria from your hands after tromping through the wilderness all day.

Bandana

Dental Floss

Light, small and [highly useful](#).

[Dental floss](#) will keep your gums healthy. Maybe even [more important than brushing](#).

Sportsman Soap

While moist towelettes can replace your daily shower, you'll want some [sportsman soap](#) for the occasional river bath.

Again, ration this stuff to the extreme unless you pack a lot of it. But it will get heavy and take up space if you do.

Tampons

Vaseline

I'm aware this is the second time [Vaseline](#) made this bug out bag checklist, but it works as both a fire starter and as an ointment. Apply this stuff to your chapped skin or lips to prevent painful cracking.

Survival Antibiotics

When SHTF, access to lifesaving antibiotics to cure infections will become severely limited (*if available at all*). So stock up on a [few bird or fish antibiotics](#) and throw them in your bug out bag, just in case.

Sterile Alcohol Prep Pads

Clean all wounds early and often with [these alcohol wipes](#). The alcohol will clean the wound, killing infection-causing bacteria.

Hydrogen Peroxide

Same idea as the alcohol pads, [use it to keep wounds clean](#) and bacteria free.

Q-tips Cotton Swabs

Use [Q-tips](#) to clean your ears. Allowing excess wax to build up in your ears can lead to infection. And, wax buildup muffles your hearing. And clear hearing is a major advantage in survival.

They are also ideal for applying small amounts of medical salves and liquids.

Lastly, you can tear off the cotton ends and use them as tinder to start a fire. They are extremely light and useful, so feel free to pack a couple hundred of them.

Tweezers and Nail Clippers

Pack a [sharp set of tweezers](#) to get slivers out and a [good set of nail clippers](#) to trim your nails.

Insect Repellent

Mosquitos are a nuisance and can transmit diseases so if they are abundant in your region you'll want to pack a repellent [spray with high amounts of DEET](#).

Sun Screen

Neosporin

[Add this cream](#) to any cut or laceration to [help prevent infections](#).

Pain Killers

Sleeping Pad

While a sleeping pad provides some comfort, it's primary survival function is to insulate you from the cold hard ground.

You need something between you and the ground because laying directly on the ground sucks the warmth and energy out of your body.

You can forgo a pad and get insulation by building a layer with wilderness debris (*i.e. leaves, pine straw, etc.*) but only if you know what you're doing.

[Get this light, durable option.](#)

Zip Ties

If you stop to think about it, [zip ties](#) are an amazing invention. They are tough as hell, light, and allow you to create tight connections. Many police departments use a [thick set of zip ties](#) instead of handcuffs.

They have a large variety of [additional survival uses](#) too.

As far as shelters go, use them to tie branches together to create simple survival shelters.

Paracord Survival Kit

Stocking Cap

Fresh Socks

Quick-Drying Undergarments

Sewing Kit

Safety Pins

Military Meals (*MRE – Meal, Ready to Eat*)

Eating Utensils

Small Collapsible Cup/Bowl

Stainless Steel Water Bottle

Water Purification Tablets or Portable Water Filter

Attachment C: WHAT SHOULD I INCLUDE IN MY WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS KIT?

Wildfires are unpredictable natural disasters that strike without notice and spread quickly. Our hearts go out to the people of Australia who have been displaced by relentless wildfires recently. No matter where you are located, a survival kit is essential. While your kit will be tailored to the specific needs of your family and where you live, there are staples that should always be included in every kit. These essential items include 72-hours worth of food and water, medical supplies, and so on. You can read up on how to build a home [survival kit for your family here](#).

STAYING PUT DURING A WILDFIRE

As previously mentioned, there are items that are crucial to add to your survival kit if you are staying in your home. These essential items, of course, include enough food to last at least 3 days, medical supplies, flashlights, fire extinguishers, hand-crank radios, and dining supplies like silverware and can openers, and so on. It's also a good idea to keep a cooler with some ice on hand in case you lose electricity. Speaking of which, activities that don't require power like board games are also a great addition to your kit.

One of the most important things to prepare before a natural disaster strikes is to know how to evacuate, what to do to, and when to do it. Be sure to map out as many alternative routes to travel, be prepared to do so on foot if necessary, and have a plan in place as to what to do with pets if you can't bring them along. If you can bring pets, be sure to bring food and water, leashes, and so on. Communicate your evacuation plan to everyone in your household. An evacuation plan is crucial in any disaster scenario and is something that many people fail to prepare properly.

DON'T HESITATE, EVACUATE

If you are unsure about whether to evacuate, it's almost always better to be safe than sorry. Listening to your local radio stations for disaster and evacuation information is critical as well. Losing property to wildfires is tragic, but homes and possessions can be replaced - human lives cannot. When in doubt, don't wait it out!

YOUR WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS KITS POST-EVACUATION

There are some items that you will want to include in your wildfire preparedness kit. Be sure to keep this kit in a bag or something that's easy to grab in a pinch, and keep it located in a hand place. Some important items to add to your wildfire survival kit are:

- **Keep important documents in a safe, waterproof container.** These documents include medical records, insurance paperwork, birth certificates, marriage and business licenses, will and estate documents, and social security cards.
- **Extra clothing and blankets.** Be sure to keep extra socks and pack yourself some weather-appropriate clothing. Include some blankets as well. Even if it is warm during the day, extra blankets can come in handy during a disaster scenario.
- **Facemasks** are also essential. Breathing in [wildfire smoke can be deadly](#), especially for small children - so be sure to bring enough facemasks.