

THE
ULTIMATE
BUG OUT
BAG



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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

We live in unpredictable times. Natural and man-made disasters lurk behind every corner. It could be something slow-brewing like the Arab Spring riots which swept the MENA region or Russia's military action in the Crimea region of Ukraine.

Disaster can also occur unexpectedly, such as the Fukushima nuclear disaster. Either way, current political, social, and financial issues have made the world an unpredictable place and we must be prepared to the best of our abilities at all times.

Other potential threats include wildfires, tornadoes, hurricanes, blizzards, and earthquakes (all of which seem to be happening with increased frequency). The likelihood of civil unrest, financial meltdown, and a dwindling food supply have also increased at an alarming rate.

Although there is nothing we can do to prevent catastrophe, there is plenty we can do to prepare for it. Unfortunately, when disaster strikes most people are unprepared. This lack of preparation could literally mean the difference between life and death in any of the situations already mentioned. By taking the necessary steps right now, you can widen the gap between becoming a statistic and a survivor.



One of the best ways we can start preparing for the inevitable right now is by creating a bug-out bag.

WHAT IS A BUG-OUT BAG?

A bug-out bag is a portable container stocked with enough items to ensure survival over a pre-determined period of time. Many bug-out bags are designed for short periods of survival (72 hours for example), but as you will learn in this guide, there are bug-out bags designed for long-term use as well.

Bug-out bags are known by many other names including Personal Emergency Relocation Kits (PERKs), Go Bags, and Get Out of Dodge (GOOD) Bags.

The purpose of any bug-out bag is to aid during evacuation and survival scenarios. Although most bug-out bags are not intended to aid in long-term survival, with proper planning a well-designed bug-out bag could allow you to survive for months at a time.

WHY DO YOU NEED ONE?

Bug-out bags are a lot like fingerprints. Every bug-out bag will be different and be a direct reflection of anticipated survival situations and disaster scenarios particular to a given area. Bug-out bags may also differ in size based on the number of family members involved in a given

bug-out scenario. A family with numerous household members will require a lot more supplies than a single man or woman will need to survive for a given period of time.

The reason you need a bug-out can be summed up in one word: accessibility. During a time of crisis, it is often difficult to locate items you may need during an evacuation procedure. Think about what happens right before a disaster occurs. As a general rule, most people run to the local grocery store and stock up on fresh water, canned food items, and other “necessities” they deem important at the time.

Whether we’re talking about food, clothing, or survival-related items, store shelves typically empty quickly and those who are not prepared find themselves in potentially life-threatening situations.

Avoiding anything which might impede or hamper your movements during a disaster is extremely important. If you currently have a good bug-out bag ready to go, you are already ahead of 95% of the people in your area in terms of evacuating quickly and safely. Your bug-out bag allows you to avoid crowded stores, riots in the streets and a host of other potential threats so you can evacuate the area immediately without having to stop or wait.

A tactical backpack, likely a MOLLE-style bag, is shown resting on a sand dune. The bag is dark-colored with various straps, buckles, and pockets. The background shows the undulating curves of sand dunes under a clear sky.

CHAPTER TWO: **Disaster Scenarios**

MENTAL PREPAREDNESS

Do you prefer hurricanes over riots? Would you rather deal with an earthquake or nuclear fallout? Wildfire or blizzard? Angry mob or stark raving mad police state? The choices presented during a disaster are never appealing. In a perfect world, most of us would choose “none of the above” for every question posed.

Unfortunately, this is not reality.

Reality is that one or more of these events will probably happen to you at some point in your lifetime. In the case of some people who live in disaster prone areas—such as California’s San Andreas Fault—disasters are even more likely. That said, we never truly know when or where the next disaster will strike so it is up to us to be prepared for anything at a moment’s notice.

The first step is to mentally prepare yourself for any number of disasters that could occur. When an actual disaster happens, there is usually little time for analysis and/or planning. For this reason, it is important to create a bug-out plan that encompasses as many potential disaster scenarios as possible.

With a little bit of thought, most people can address common disaster scenarios in a single plan. For instance, if you live in an area that is prone to flooding your evacuation plans should account for closed roads and other obstacles typically associated with this type of disaster. That said, the same plan would probably work just as well during an earthquake or even a terrorist attack as many of the same escape routes should be accessible.

It’s not a bad idea to have a second plan as well. This plan can be implemented in the event that your primary escape route/plan is no longer feasible due to unforeseen circumstances. The point is that the more time you spend thinking out and carefully planning your actions during a disaster scenario, the

more likely it is that you will successfully survive the crisis.

BEING READY-TO-GO

Bugging out as a term should make us think of a fly or a mosquito—animals that fly away at the first hint of danger. To successfully survive most disaster situations, we need to be mentally prepared to act in a similar fashion when necessary.

This relates directly to preparing our bug-out bags and every item placed inside the bag should reflect this mentality.

We have to be ready to fly off at the first sign of trouble. We have to detach ourselves from our possessions, homes, and other comforts. We have to be ready to move almost immediately and it is for this reason that the creation of your bug-out bag is not only a physical endeavor, but a mental challenge as well.

As you will learn in this guide, building your own bug-out bag from scratch teaches you how to analyze the value of each item in detail before deciding if it is an appropriate addition to your bug-out plans or not.

The act of creating a well-thought-out bug-out bag also helps to ease any last-minute concerns you may have during an actual disaster scenario. You will feel safer and more relaxed when the time to bug-out actually arrives because you will be confident that you are equipped with all of the tools necessary for your survival.

REMAINING CALM

Another key component of mentally preparing yourself for a disaster is to learn how to remain calm under pressure. Almost every disaster is worsened by erratic human behavior. Usually, this behavior is a direct result of panic and fear.

Your bug-out bag is useless if you fail to remain calm and levelheaded during an evacuation. While it is absolutely normal to feel fear and apprehension during traumatic situations, there is no excuse for erratic behavior.

It is absolutely essential that you put yourself into a frame of mind where you are solid and dependable. You will not be able to depend on anyone else during a disaster and you should take steps to mentally prepare yourself for the stress and anxiety you will likely endure during a real emergency.

SOME OF THESE STEPS MIGHT INCLUDE:

- Learning and practicing deep breathing/relaxation techniques
- Creating a self-motivating mantra that you can repeat to yourself during times of extreme stress
- Practicing your bug-out plan at least once every six months (the more familiar you are with your plan, the more confident you will be during the real thing)

Developing a strong survival mindset is a difficult task, but one that is essential for success. Special Forces soldiers, for instance, spend months

learning how to control their emotions during the stressful situations they may face on the battlefield. As people who have chosen to survive, we must also learn to control our emotions to ensure the survival of ourselves and our families in even the bleakest of circumstances.

You may be wondering why we are focusing on mental preparation in a book about bug-out bags. The fact is that your bug-out bag is completely useless if you don't evacuate quickly enough. All of the planning you put into your bug-out bag will be for nothing if you hesitate during a crisis.

Also, your bug-out plan directly affects the contents of your bug-out bag. Without a well thought out and concise evacuation plan, you may not have the necessary materials within your bug-out bag to survive for more than a day or two.

We wanted to emphasize the importance of understanding the exact purpose your bug-out bag will serve during an actual emergency because only then can you design a customized bug-out bag solution capable of protecting you during any situation that may arise.

CHAPTER 2 CHECKLIST: BEING PREPARED TO BUG-OUT

- ✓ Realize that disaster is imminent. Whether it is naturally occurring or manmade, most of us will experience a disaster scenario at some point in our lifetime.
- ✓ Understand that hesitation is not an option during an emergency.
- ✓ Practice mental preparedness techniques including:
 - Deep breathing and relaxation exercises
 - Develop and use a self-motivating personal mantra
 - Practice your bug-out plan often as this will increase your confidence during an actual emergency
- ✓ Understand the importance of having a well-developed bug-out plan that accounts for any contingencies that could otherwise render your plan useless.
 - Think about multiple escape routes
 - Develop rendezvous points that everyone in your family is familiar with
 - Explain the importance of adhering to the plan to everyone involved in the bug-out plan
- ✓ Remember that your bug-out bag and all the survival gear in the world is useless if you do not take the time to plan your evacuation should a disaster occur.



CHAPTER THREE: Key Items

ITEMS TYPICALLY FOUND IN A BUG-OUT BAG

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There is no fixed number of items that your bug-out bag must have. There are, however, some generally agreed upon items you will find in just about every bug-out bag. That said, remember that the contents of your bug-out bag will vary greatly depending on the bug-out plan you have devised, your location, perceived threats, and other considerations.

Below, you will find a list of common bug-out bag items along with descriptions of each. Once these basics are covered, we can look at some of the other details you should account for while creating your own bug-out bag inventory list.

BOTTLED WATER 1 gallon of water weighs 8.34 pounds; a very heavy load to carry during a survival situation. Although bottled water is good for short-term hydration needs, a better solution is to carry empty containers that can be used to store water once it has been purified from natural water sources. Canteens and other



portable containers work well for this purpose.

FOOD Canned food is heavy and should not be carried unless absolutely necessary. A better solution is to pack dehydrated foods which take up much less space and weigh significantly less than their hydrated counterparts. Dehydrated foods do not spoil and it is relatively easy to pack at least a two week supply of food using dehydrated products exclusively.



COOKING SUPPLIES

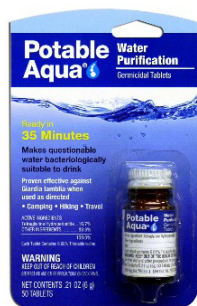
In a survival situation, usually only one sturdy cooking pot (stainless steel or titanium) is necessary.



This pot can be used to boil water and rehydrate dehydrated food stores without taking up too much weight in your bug-out bag. While a camping stove certainly makes things easier, a more lightweight option would be to create a campfire as the extra weight of the camping stove (and associated fuel) can quickly make a bug-out bag unbearable to carry over long distances.

WATER PURIFICATION SUPPLIES Water

purification is extremely important during a survival situation and you should carry at least two different water purification methods with you at all times. Iodine tablets are popular choice because they are small and easily carried; however, it takes 30 minutes for the iodine to actually purify water and long-term exposure to iodine can have health risks (especially for children and pregnant women). While iodine tablets provide a good secondary water purification option, commercially available filtration systems are compact and usually serve as a perfect holding container after water has been purified. Also, don't forget that boiling water will remove 99.9% of all biological contaminants without the need for any other treatment method.



FIRST AID KIT Although

first aid kits can be assembled from scratch, it's usually best to purchase a commercially available first aid kit designed for outdoor use. These are the type of kits carried by long-distance backpackers and typically include many more useful items that are not usually found in the "home-use" kits that are rarely more than a collection of bandages and medical tape. Look for a first aid kit with materials to create splints and even suture lacerations whenever possible.



FIRE STARTING TOOLS The

ability to start a fire should not be taken for granted during a survival situation. Your bug-out bag should have at least 2 – 3 different fire starting tools including a magnesium fire starter. Magnesium is waterproof and the sparks produced are hot enough to ignite even damp tinder; a useful advantage when bugging out. If you plan on carrying matches or lighters, make sure they are double bagged in sealable Ziploc style packaging to protect them from moisture. Many survival experts also recommend coating cotton balls in petroleum jelly and sealing them in a plastic bag. When lit, these cotton balls will burn for approximately 30 minutes and are extremely useful when starting a fire in wet conditions.



APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

Again keeping the weight of your pack in mind, you should have clothing appropriate for your geographical area packed in your bug-out bag. As a general rule, one complete change of clothing is a good idea as well as additional layers that may be needed to fend off temperature differentials between night and day. In the desert, for instance, it can easily be 100°F during the day and fall near freezing once the sun goes down. The clothing in your bug-out bag should accommodate variable weather conditions.



SPECIAL NEEDS FOR CHILDREN, THE ELDERLY, AND PETS

If you will be bugging out with children, elderly loved ones, or pets, take into account any special items that may be required for these family members. This might include diapers (reusable cloth diapers are a better choice than disposable ones during a survival situation), specialized medical equipment, and food for your animals.



RADIO A radio provides pertinent weather information as well as updates about the crisis situation. Many radios are designed specifically for outdoor/survival usage and may include flashlights as well as other useful items. Although a battery-operated radio is better than no radio at all, look for a crank radio that can be recharged quickly and easily. Batteries are heavy and deplete relatively quickly, so their use should be avoided whenever possible.



FLASHLIGHT Since we have no control over whether a disaster occurs at night or during the day, at least one or two flashlights should be in your bug-out bag. Like the radio, there are crank flashlights available that circumvent the need for heavy and expensive batteries, but many of the newer LED flashlights use small watch style batteries that do not take



up much weight in your pack. Specifically, LED flashlights designed to be worn on the head are an excellent choice because they are small, compact, and they allow you to use both hands to complete tasks.

BATTERIES If you are relying on electronic devices that require batteries in your bug-out bag, make sure you have an ample supply of batteries (of the correct type) for each device. This usually means looking at every electronic device in your bug-out bag and making a list of required batteries. Also, don't forget that batteries do lose efficiency over time and in extremely cold climates. This may dictate swapping out your battery supply every so often and carrying more batteries than you think you actually need.



FIREARMS

Firearms are useful for protection and for hunting during a survival situation. While some people are opposed to using firearms if at all possible, your bug-out bag should have at least one firearm. While a small caliber weapon (such as a .22) will be useful against small game, it will do little to fend off an angry mob. For this reason, a large caliber firearm is also recommended for self-defense and large game hunting.



KNIVES At the very minimum, your bug-out bag should include a small folding knife which can be used as a general purpose



knife (i.e. field dressing and skinning animals, cutting rope, etc.) and a larger fixed blade knife (machetes work very well) for clearing trails and possibly even for self-defense.

BEDDING ITEMS If you have never slept directly on the ground before, you may not realize how uncomfortable it can be. A sleeping pad can be folded up into your bug-out bag. Some people opt to use a hammock instead; however, these often take much longer to set up and may not be practical in all situations.



ANIMAL TRAPS Simple snares can be made from electrical wire, take up very little space in your bug-out bag, and represent a very effective, passive hunting method. By simply setting up some snares in the area where you are camping, you may be able to harvest protein without actually going hunting.



DUCT TAPE There are very few things that duct tape cannot be used for. Everything from splinting a broken bone to repairing a ripped tarp can be accomplished with this inexpensive and powerful adhesive. Every bug-out bag should have at least two rolls of high quality duct tape.

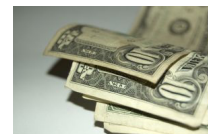


PLASTIC SHEETING Thin, clear plastic sheeting takes up very little space in your pack when folded properly and can be used for a variety of purposes including:



a rain poncho, the main component of a solar still (for purifying water), and even a temporary shelter just to name a few examples.

CASH Depending on the nature of the disaster, cash may have little or no value; however, it is a good idea to carry some cash in a plastic bag just in case. After all, if you successfully escape the area of immediate danger, you may need to purchase more supplies which could be difficult to do if you do not have any cash on hand. As a general rule, \$100 in small bills should be sufficient.



IDENTIFICATION Similar to cash, your identification (such as driver's license or Social Security card) may have little value following a disaster, but if you anticipate the disaster will be more than a short-term situation, you will need these items when you return to civilization.



MEDICAL RECORDS We will cover important documents (including medical records) that should be carried in your bug-out bag in the next chapter, but realize that carrying copies of this information in your bug-out bag could help emergency responders if you become incapacitated during your bug-out attempt.

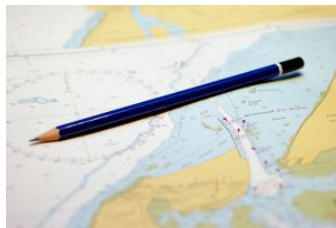


REQUIRED MEDICATION Your bug-out bag should include at least a seven-day supply of any required medication for yourself or any family members bugging



out with you. This is not always possible because of strict laws regarding controlled substances; however, talk to your medical professional to find out what options may be available.

MAPS A high quality (preferably topographical) map is essential for your survival. This map should include your immediate area as well as any surrounding areas you may evacuate to should the emergency situation escalate. You should become extremely familiar with this map well before you actually bug-out and ideally it will be marked with multiple locations that you have already scouted and deemed useful during your survival attempt (i.e. good water supplies, protection, etc.).



COMPASS A high quality compass is also essential because it is very easy to become disoriented during a survival situation. Not only should you understand how to use your compass effectively, but you should also learn other direction-orienting techniques in case your compass fails or becomes lost. Understanding how to make a rudimentary sundial, for instance, provide you with a very accurate sense of direction without a compass.



Please keep in mind that this list only represents the absolute bare minimum supplies that should be kept in your bug-out bag. Additional items will

vary depending on your exact bug-out plan, the type of bug-out bag you are building (covered in a later chapter), and any special items that may be specific to your geographical region or climate zone. The rest of this chapter will be devoted to explaining some of these considerations.

WANT VERSUS NEED

It can be difficult to choose the right items for your bug-out bag. Living in a consumer-driven society, we have learned to love luxury items. In fact, many people do not realize how many items they own that they do not need and most of these items will have little to no value in a survival situation.

You never want to be in a situation where the bulk of your time and energy are wasted lugging your bug-out bag around. If your bag requires more than one person to carry around, it is not a bug-out bag. Rather, it is a suitcase—or even worse—a travel chest; neither of which are acceptable during a survival situation.

The bag you choose should be functional, lightweight, and durable. We will discuss proper bag selection in the next chapter, but it is important for you to successfully differentiate between items that are considered a luxury and those that are essential to your survival. No matter how good your bag is or how strong you think you are, no one can carry around a heavy, cumbersome pack efficiently. Therefore, “trimming the fat” is an important part of developing a good bug-out bag.

This requires taking an honest look at your

possessions and asking yourself “which of these things can I live without?” When you are actually honest during this exercise, you should conclude that most, if not all, of your worldly possessions fall into the luxury category and simply have no place in your bug-out bag.

This may seem harsh, but we are talking about survival, not parading around town with your precious photos and knick knacks. The people who are able to “get over” their personal possession obsession will do much better in a real bug-out scenario.

To sum it up, if it’s not a part of your bug-out bag, YOU DON’T NEED IT TO SURVIVE.

THE IMPORTANCE OF QUANTITY

Any time you look at your bug-out bag, you will inevitably wonder if you have enough of a particular item. This is an especially common concern when it comes to food and water, but can also impact the amount of fire starting tools you carry, the clothing you pack, and the number of batteries on hand to name just a few examples.

Food and water are the most important, but fortunately, having a good bug-out plan should make this an easy decision. The importance of having a solid bug-out plan cannot be emphasized enough and the food/water situation is a perfect example that highlights the importance of knowing what to do before you do it.

Let’s say you have a predetermined bug-out location in mind. This should be a place that

is well outside the area affected by whatever disaster has come your way that provides protection from other people, dangerous animals, and extreme weather conditions.

This location should ideally provide you with both food and water sources as well. If you select a location that offers a variety of hunting opportunities, for example, you can pack a lot less food than someone who plans to spend weeks in a place with limited natural food supplies.

You should be looking for more than just wildlife when scouting out potential bug-out locations. Are there edible berries, flowers, and plants in the area? These could also provide a reliable food source during a crisis and allow you to carry other supplies in lieu of food reserves in your bug-out bag.

An ideal bug-out location should also have a natural water supply whenever possible. A stream, creek, river, or lake can provide an unlimited supply of water once properly purified. Once again, the less drinking water you have to carry in your bug-out bag, the more room there is for other essential supplies.

Finally, you should take into account the seasonal nature of these food and water sources. If a creek only runs in the spring, for instance, and you arrive at the location in the fall, you may not have the water available that you originally anticipated. The same goes for food supplies that are seasonal (berries may not be available throughout the year and some animals may

migrate depending on the weather).

Don't forget the advantage afforded to those who dehydrate food for their bug-out bags. As much as 98% of water is removed during the dehydration process, allowing significant weight and space savings that can mean the difference between eating well and starving to death in a long-term survival scenario.

CHAPTER 3 CHECKLIST: ESSENTIAL BUG-OUT BAG ITEMS

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| ✓ Bottled Water | ✓ Knives |
| ✓ Food | ✓ Bedding Items |
| ✓ Cooking Supplies | ✓ Animal Traps |
| ✓ Water Purification Supplies | ✓ Duct Tape |
| ✓ First Aid Kit | ✓ Plastic Sheeting |
| ✓ Fire Starting Tools | ✓ Cash |
| ✓ Appropriate Clothing | ✓ Identification |
| ✓ Special Needs for Children,
the Elderly, and Pets | ✓ Medical Records |
| ✓ Radio | ✓ Required Medications |
| ✓ Flashlight | ✓ Maps |
| ✓ Batteries | ✓ Compass |
| ✓ Firearms | |

*Specific information about each item can be found in Chapter 3 above.



CHAPTER FOUR: ***Important Documents***

PHYSICAL

A disaster danger that few people consider is identity loss. Today, we rely on Social Security numbers, bank account numbers, driver's license numbers, etc. to positively identify ourselves. Losing your driver's license or ATM card can make it nearly impossible to accurately represent yourself—even during non-life-threatening situations.

During a survival scenario, you will not be able to replace these items very easily (if at all) should they become lost or fall into the wrong hands. You may not be able to access your bank account or identify yourself to authorities. While most of the supplies listed so far directly relate to your survival, you do not want to find yourself in a situation where you cannot identify yourself considering the potentially tense, high-intensity environment typically associated with a survival scenario.

Taking preventive action often involves thinking outside-the-box. A great example is to create strategically sewn pockets similar to a trick used by smugglers years ago. By sewing small pockets

into the interior layers of shirts, jackets, pants, etc., you minimize the risk of losing important documents while bugging out.

Many experts recommend photocopying important identification materials, folding some cash, and adding a prepaid phone card into a small rectangular pocket. By sewing this information into a sleeve or a pant leg, you can ensure the retention of these items at all times.

Even if you choose not to create secret pockets in your clothing, you should carry photocopies of identifying information in your bug-out bag such as:

- ▶ Birth certificate
- ▶ Driver's license
- ▶ A list of any medical conditions and prescription medications
- ▶ Proof of residency
- ▶ Renters/homeowners insurance documents
- ▶ Life insurance policy

- ▶ Credit cards
- ▶ Family photos (for identification)
- ▶ Children's fingerprints
- ▶ Children's school registration information
- ▶ Pet registration
- ▶ A copy of utility bills
- ▶ Contact information for friends or family located in a different geographical area

In our technology driven age, perhaps an even better solution is to keep digital copies of all of these important documents. In fact, a two-part “digital storage” approach is probably best.

The first part involves keeping a digital copy of your important documents on a physical device such as an SD card or a USB flash drive. By simply scanning a document and saving it to this portable drive, you can carry a lifetime's worth of identification, financial and medical data in a device no larger than a book of matches.

Another option takes advantage of recent advancements in cloud computing. For those of you who are unfamiliar with “the cloud”, it is simply a way of referring to data you store off-site in a secure location. There are many companies offering cloud-based solutions including Google, Dropbox, Evernote, and Box. Most of these companies offer a limited amount of free storage space which should be plenty for you to store scanned copies of important

documents for retrieval at a later time.

The advantage of storing your information in the cloud is that it is secure and stored redundantly (companies store your data on multiple servers in geographically diverse regions). This means that even a large regional catastrophe will not affect the integrity of your information and it can be retrieved once the emergency situation has resolved itself.

CHAPTER 4 CHECKLIST: IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- ✓ Birth certificate
- ✓ Driver's license
- ✓ A list of any medical conditions and prescription medications
- ✓ Proof of residency
- ✓ Renters/homeowners insurance documents
- ✓ Life insurance policy
- ✓ Credit cards
- ✓ Family photos (for identification)
- ✓ Children's fingerprints
- ✓ Children's school registration information
- ✓ Pet registration
- ✓ A copy of utility bills
- ✓ Contact information for friends or family located in a different geographical area

A tactical backpack is shown in the foreground, partially obscured by a dark, semi-transparent banner. The background is a field of tall, dry grass under a bright sky.

CHAPTER FIVE: **Selecting A Bag**

Many preppers fall into the trap of becoming obsessed with the gear they ultimately put in their bug-out bag without giving much (if any) consideration to the type of pack used to carry all this gear. Whatever you do, do not underestimate the importance of a high-quality pack capable of carrying all your gear reliably and comfortably.

The military is a perfect example of just how important a good pack actually is. The United States Marine Corps has spent millions of dollars researching the best qualities in a bag and we can apply many of these same concepts while shopping for our own bug-out bag. In fact, at the end of this chapter we have included a couple of bags that work exceptionally well as bug-out bags and one of them just so happens to be the very same USMC pack mentioned above.

TYPES OF BAGS

Although there are many variations of packs available, there are three categories of bags that are appropriate for use during a survival situation. The one(s) you choose is dictated primarily on the bags intended usage and the amount of gear you plan on carrying in the bag.

BACKPACK A backpack could be a school book-bag, a tactical-type bag, or anything in between. This is probably the most common type of bag used for bug-out bags as there are a variety of sizes and options to choose from. Assuming you are bugging out by yourself or with one other person, a backpack may represent the best option in terms of affordability and effectiveness. Keep in mind that these bags typically have a much smaller capacity so they are not suitable for use in long-term survival bags or when traveling with a large number of people.

DUFFEL BAG Duffel bags are a great option when you need to carry a lot of stuff. If you are traveling with a family or need lots of supplies for a potentially long-term survival situation, a duffel bag may be

a good choice. The problem with this type of bag is that it is difficult to carry for long distances or over rough terrain. For this reason, a duffel bag should only be used if you plan on traveling by vehicle to your bug-out location.

HIKING PACK This type of bag is probably the best choice overall as it provides the capacity of a duffel bag with the carrying comfort of a backpack. Hiking packs are unique because they usually have a metal frame (either internal or external) that allows the bag to distribute a large amount of weight evenly across your back. While slightly more expensive than either of the other options, the durability and additional features found on hiking packs make them one of the best choices for your bug-out bag.

Regardless of what type of bag you choose, take some time to evaluate your choice before shelling out the cash. Most outdoors-type stores have no problem with you trying on a variety of packs and walking around with them to test the comfort of a particular model.

SOME OF THE KEY THINGS TO LOOK FOR IN YOUR NEW PACK INCLUDE:

COMFORT AND FIT – In some survival situations you may be required to travel miles each day as you evacuate. Your bag needs to be comfortable enough to accommodate this type of travel even when fully loaded down with gear. Hip straps and pads are especially important

when carrying a heavy load as they allow the weight to be distributed across your entire body instead of just your shoulders. This is a common trait among hiking packs but is almost non-existent in regular backpacks and duffel bags.

VOLUME – The bag needs to be large enough to fit all of your gear snugly without shifting during travel. This is where you need to really sit down and think about the items you need vs. the items you would like to have. While some bags are capable of storing over 100 pounds of gear, this is not always practical and could be nearly impossible to carry for long periods of time.

ACCESSIBILITY – As you will quickly learn during a survival scenario, it can be frustrating to dig through all your gear to find a single item you need right away. A good bug-out bag will have plenty of side pockets where necessary items can be accessed easily. This might include items such as a flashlight, radio, or fire-starting tools that should be easily accessible at all times.

OTHER USEFUL FEATURES – Many new bags have a bunch of cool features that can make bugging out much easier. Hydration bladder compatibility is worth considering as it makes carrying fresh water much easier. Rain hoods protect your gear from moisture in inclement weather and Modular Lightweight Load-carrying Equipment (MOLLE) compatibility allows you to add compatible gear to the outside of the bag quickly and securely.

A LITTLE MORE ABOUT MOLLE

The MOLLE system is used by military forces around the world because it is modular and allows for a variety of accessories that can be added or removed in seconds. Some of the MOLLE-compatible accessories available include a canteen pouch, knife sheath, axe sheath, radio pouch and medical pouch. There are countless other options available as well making it very easy to customize your bug-out bag exactly as you see fit.

Packs equipped with MOLLE technology are also a great option for those who want to start building a high-quality bug-out bag right now but may not have the financial resources to buy the pack they really want right away. As long as the pack has MOLLE, additional pieces of equipment can be added as your budget allows.

PACK RECOMMENDATIONS

While there are literally thousands of options available for your next bug-out bag, there are three that stand out as excellent choices for most survival situations. We have included one bag from each of three categories discussed earlier, but remember that these are only recommendations that work well for most people. Your unique survival situation may be different.

BACKPACK

The Mil-Tec Military Army Patrol Assault Pack Tactical Combat Rucksack is an excellent entry level bag that offers multiple compartments, a 30L capacity, an adjustable hip belt and pad-

ded shoulder straps.

This pack also includes a Velcro pocket specifically designed to carry a hydration bladder (such as a CamelBak) and, of course, the pack also has MOLLE built in for additional accessories.



The great thing about this bag is that it is inexpensive (~\$50) and offers just about every feature you should be looking for in your bug-out bag without being extremely large or heavy. This is a quick way to give your prepping a jumpstart.

DUFFEL BAG

The UTG Ranger Field Bag is designed for tactical gear and manufactured



to withstand a lot of abuse during a survival situation. This duffel bag is large enough to carry a large amount of gear and has side pockets for easy access to necessary gear.

Remember that duffel bags aren't designed to be carried long distances, so this option is better suited for use in a vehicle if that is part of your bug-out plan.

HIKING PACK

If you want the ultimate bug-out bag equipment without spending an arm and a leg to get it, you should strongly consider the ILBE USMC Main

Pack Generation 1 or 2. As we mentioned before, this pack was specifically designed for the USMC and it is built to withstand just about anything.

This pack has an internal frame allowing it to carry up to 120 pounds of gear and it boasts 4,500 cubic inches of storage capacity. Large pockets on both sides of the ILBE can carry large knives, firearms, and other tactical gear in addition to a provided rain hood that keeps your sensitive gear safe and dry even in the worst weather imaginable. The ILBE also includes a large MOLLE setup allowing you to attach lots of additional gear as your budget allows.



A new Generation 2 pack will amount to approximately \$250, but there are also a number of these packs available used for less than \$100. Either way, you can't go wrong with this durable pack that was made with the intention of survival situations.

CHAPTER 5 CHECKLIST: SELECTING A BAG

- ✓ Remember that the bag you select should reflect the intended use of the bug-out bag.
- ✓ There are three primary types of bags commonly used to create bug-out bags including:
 - Backpacks
 - Duffel bags
 - Hiking packs
- ✓ Consider the following features when selecting and purchasing a bag:
 - Comfort and fit
 - Volume
 - Accessibility
 - Other useful features
- ✓ Look for a bag that includes MOLLE-compatible straps
- ✓ Many high-end bags are available used for significantly less money; don't skimp on the quality of your bug-out bag!



CHAPTER SIX: ***Bug-out Bag Types***

Most bug-out bags are designed to ensure your survival for a short amount of time. Usually, 72 hours is deemed a sufficient amount of time to safely evacuate an area and move to a secondary location. This is good news because it means you don't need to carry hundreds of pounds of gear on your way to your planned bug-out location in most situations; however, it isn't always this simple.

For example, let's say you are at work when a disaster strikes and your primary bug-out bag is at home. In some cases you might have time to get back to the house safely, retrieve your bag, and continue on with your bug-out plan. Sometimes, however, it may be unsafe to go home. Left without your survival gear, how can you expect to arrive at your planned bug-out location safely?

Simple.

Have more than one bug-out bag. Most successful preppers have more than one bug-out bag and these various bags are stored in different locations just in case a disaster strikes when

you least expect it—which is exactly when they always happen.

For this reason, it is important to understand how to construct a variety of bug-out bags that can be used depending on the situation. One good practice is to keep a small bug-out bag in the trunk of your car. This bag doesn't need to have all the gear found in your regular pack, but should have the basics in case you need to bug-out while on the road.

If your budget allows, another option is to have a couple of different bug-out bags in your home—a larger bag designed for long-term/long distance situations and a much smaller bag designed for a quick evacuation due to a weather anomaly or other temporary event.

The nice thing about building your own bug-out bag is that you can always improve the contents of your existing bag and add the now antiquated gear to another bag that can be used as a backup and stored in a different location.

Below, you will find descriptions of a few

different types of bug-out bags so you can better understand the purpose of each and how you incorporate them into your bug-out plan.

Although bug-out bags are known by many different names, it's important to distinguish the differences between an actual bug-out bag and some of the other bags you should consider creating as well. These include the Every Day Carry (EDC) bag, the Get Home Bag (GHB), the actual Bug-out Bag and the Survival Cache. Let's take a look at the importance of each type of bag and some of the items that might be included in each type.

THE EVERY DAY CARRY (EDC) BAG

As the name implies, the EDC is specifically designed to be small and carry only essential survival gear so it can be brought anywhere easily. At the bare minimum, an EDC should include basic fire starting equipment, a topographical map of the area, an emergency blanket, iodine tablets/crystals, and maybe a few snacks.

This equipment can usually be fit into a bag the size of a fanny pack which makes it ultra-portable and easily carried pretty much anywhere you go. At the bare minimum, you should have one of these in your vehicle and ideally, a couple more spread out in various locations such as the office. The idea of having an EDC is that it provides a rudimentary level of preparedness at all times; no matter where you

are when a disaster strikes.

THE GET HOME BAG (GHB)

Once again aptly named, the GHB is designed to get you home if a disaster strikes when you are traveling or are at work when an emergency occurs. A properly constructed GHB should provide most (if not all) of the items listed in Chapter 3. When done correctly, your survival gear should fit into a backpack or small duffel bag easily.

The goal of a GHB is to provide you with enough gear to survive for a few days while traveling from one place to another. Often, these bags are referred to as 72 hour bags as it is assumed that this is ample time to arrive at a secure bug-out location, even when on foot. The lightweight and small size of the GHB makes traveling quickly manageable for most people and a GHB should be stored in the trunk of your vehicle at all times.

BUG-OUT BAG

A true bug-out bag is designed to sustain you for long periods of time during an evacuation. You may or may not have a predetermined bug-out location in mind and the large number of supplies carried in a bug-out bag allow you to live for an extended period of time without the comforts of home.

A properly constructed bug-out bag is much larger than a GHB and is usually packed into

a large frame backpack such as the ILBE mentioned previously. With enough food and water (or water purification tools) to sustain a person for days or even weeks, this bag is too large to carry around every day and should be left at home in an easily accessible location if the need to bug-out should arise.

BY-THE-MINUTE BAGS

For the sake of the thoroughness, we should also mention another common prepping technique known as the By-the-Minute (or BTM) Bag. You may have heard terms like “a 5-minute-bug-out bag” or a “30-minute-bug-out bag.” Basically, this refers to the amount of time it takes to compile and pack the contents of the bug-out bag.

Please note that this should be a **last resort** survival technique for a couple of reasons.

First, during the stress you will undoubtedly experience during an actual survival situation, there is a strong possibility that you will forget to pack essential items.

Second, there may not be enough time to pack the contents of your bag depending on the severity of the emergency and how much (or little) warning you have before disaster actually takes hold on the area.

A much better solution is to build your bug-out bag from materials and gear that are purchased specifically for your bug-out bag. This way your bag is always packed and ready to go; no matter

how much or how little warning you have. If your budget doesn't permit you to purchase everything all at once, slowly build the bag starting with the items you deem most essential first.

If you do decide to have a BTM Bag, it is highly advisable to practice constructing the bag as often as possible. Practices doing it as soon as you wake up in the morning, in the evening, on your lunch break, and even wake yourself up in the middle of the night. Time yourself so you know exactly how long it will take to compile your gear and pack everything properly.

Again, this is not an ideal way to create a bug-out bag, but it is better than nothing if you do not have the financial resources to buy gear specifically for your survival plans.

SURVIVAL CACHE

It doesn't matter how much experience you have or how much weight you can carry on your back because during an extended survival situation you will run out of supplies eventually. A survival cache is a large container that can be stored discreetly (usually by burying it underground) in your preselected bug-out location.

Large plastic totes with secure lids work well for this task and can protect your supplies from temperature, weather, and insects effectively. Once again, a survival cache demonstrates the importance of planning well in advance for a survival situation. By selecting a secure bug-out

location and properly storing additional food and other heavy supplies, it is relatively easy to sustain an entire family for weeks or even months if necessary.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING

If you haven't noticed by now, planning for disaster is probably the most important aspect of survival. Think about this scenario for a moment:

You are at work when a crisis breaks out. The type of disaster isn't important, but you realize that you have to bug-out immediately. You call your wife only to find out that she is on the way to the school to pick up the children. Then, you realize that your bug-out bag is in the garage at your house on the other side of town. The problem is that the highways you have to take to get home are already experiencing bumper-to-bumper traffic as panicked people take to the roads. What do you do?

If your answer was "grab your spare bug-out bag from the trunk and meet your family at a pre-determined rendezvous point" you are in good shape. If not, you should start planning right now for exactly this type of scenario.

The point is that we never know when or how a disaster will occur. We do not know where we will be, what we will be doing, or where other members of our family will be at that time.

Simply going to the grocery store for milk when a disaster happens could throw a wrench in your entire bug-out plan if you haven't planned for the unexpected.

It's a good idea to sit down and think about all the possible scenarios when creating a bug-out plan. If you have a family or plan on bugging out with others, set a rendezvous point that everyone can reach during a disaster. These are the types of things that set apart those who will most likely survive a disaster from those who will likely perish.

Disasters are unpredictable and hectic. Whether natural or manmade, they are a challenge that most of us have never faced. With adequate preparation, attitude, and a dedication to survival, success is within your grasp.

We hope that you use the information in this report to begin building a proper survival mindset, plan an effective bug-out plan, and of course, build the ultimate bug-out bag. In the event of a crisis, the difference between survival and death is little more than solid planning and the right attitude.

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