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Bugging In – My perspective

The purpose of this guide is to arouse your brain, it is not definitive. You may have other ideas and plans that are better suited to you and your family. It's sole purpose is to activate your "Prepper" mentality.

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Food and Water

"Store what you eat and eat what you store!"

Initially aim to store enough food that will provide a nutritious and balanced meal for a period of at least seven days. Then look to increase this periodically until you have met your target. The stocking up of food need not be expensive, in fact it will save you money in the long run. Take advantage of special offers each time you carry out your regular shop. If you see something going cheap then buy it! Don't make the mistake of thinking it will be there next week.

Look to purchase items that have a long use by date. Pay attention to the wording. Foods that display a "best before date" can generally be consumed past that date without ill affect. However, there may be loss of flavour or texture. Foodstuffs that display a "consume by date" must be followed. Foods consumed after such date are potentially dangerous.

When you are shopping for food always check the dates before you purchase them. Stores place the older items at the front of the shelf and have the fresher items at the rear.

Tinned foods can have a 3 year shelf life and are excellent products to store. Discard any tins that have dents as the internal lining may be damaged and as a result the food can become tainted very quickly. Discard any tins that have "bloated ends", i.e. the lid or base is convex. This is caused by bacterial growth inside. Remember to mark your tins with a permanent marker, record the BB or CB date and the contents. This pays dividends should they loose their label.

Suggested Tinned Food: Baked beans, Ravioli, Macaroni, Meat balls, Spaghetti, Spam, Corned beef, Luncheon meat, Chicken, Braised beef, Chilli con carne, Curries, Hot dogs,

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All day breakfasts, Fray Bentos pies, Tuna, Salmon, Pilchards, Potatoes, Carrots, Peas, Mixed veg, Sweetcorn, Peaches, Pineapple, Fruit cocktail, Custard, Rice pudding, Soups...

Fresh-ish meat... Cured meats like Peperami, Mattessons Smoked Pork Sausage etc., whilst they won't last much more than six months they do not need to be refrigerated! Ignore the supermarkets, read the packaging!

Then there are dehydrated foods like Cous Cous, Instant Mash, Cup a soups, Pasta snacks, Pasta, Rice, Noodles etc.

Dried herbs or curry powder can also make a bland meal more tasty.

Hot chocolate, powdered milk, tea bags, coffee, sugar, salt, pepper, gravy granules, yorkshire pudding mix, sauce mixes...

The list really is endless, and if you have pets then please do not forget to stock up on food for them...

For drinking water I personally stock 3 litres of water per person, per day. That's 2 litres each for drinking, ½ litre each for cooking and ½ litre each for washing. Of course you may decide you need 5 litres per person, per day. That's fine. It's your call.

Bottled drinking water is relatively cheap, 3 litres of supermarket water can be bought for approximately 93p and again, if you check the dates you will find many bottles with a BBD of 12 months or more... Just store it out of direct sunlight and away from extreme temperatures.

Of course there is absolutely nothing wrong with storing tap water in suitable containers. In an emergency I might consider filling the bath tub and covering it and using water from the toilet cistern. I wouldn't recommend taking water from your central heating system unless you have researched the subject properly. Another source of water may be from water butts in your garden, again research how to treat the water and make it drinkable.

Lighting

Every member of your household should own a torch or have one issued to them in the event of a sitX. LED Headlamps are relatively cheap and the batteries last for a long time. Headlamps offer ample lighting ability whilst you move around your home and because they are worn on your head make every day tasks much easier. Try to open a tin with a regular torch in your hand...

Aim to ensure that all your torches use the same size batteries and invest in both regular alkaline batteries and some rechargeables. Also purchase a solar battery charger to keep the rechargeables topped up. In my opinion the wind up torches are not fit for extended use and should not be chosen over regular types.

Chemical glow sticks can be purchased from Pound shops and are often sold in packets of 3 for a £1. Just be aware that they should be retained in their original packaging until they

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are needed otherwise the sunlight degrades them. These are best suited for alerting household members of danger areas such as the tops of stairs etc. or for illuminating a safe passage.

Don't forget good old fashioned candles but please be aware of the risk of fire. Do not place near areas that are prone to draughts or close to curtains and such like. Do not leave lighted candles with children or pets.

Gas lamps and paraffin lamps are also available and again consider the risk of fire and Carbon Monoxide poisoning!

Solar powered garden lights may also be of use in doors but remember to place them back outside during the day for charging.

Heating

Get used to being cold now! Sounds drastic but you need to acclimatise. Turn your heating down a touch and wear a jumper. Ensure that there are no gale force winds blowing under your doors or round your window frames. But, do not make your home air tight! Sounds daft but again it's dangerous. An old pair of ladies stockings filled with screwed up news paper balls make a good draft excluder. Hanging a heavy curtain over a door will help to keep the room(s) warmer. Don't try to heat the whole home. Close off rooms that are not regularly used, consider every one sleeping in one room.

If you decide to make a fire then research it first, you need a safe base that isn't flammable, a chimney and ventilation!

Portable gas heaters are available but use fuel rather quickly and again you run the risk of Carbon Monoxide poisoning. Paraffin heaters may be an option but I have limited knowledge in these and would suggest further research on your part.

Cooking

By far the easiest method for cooking would be with a gas camping stove. There are plenty of models available to suit your budget. From basic Bistro types to double ring cookers with a grill. Whatever type you choose make sure you have enough fuel. Due to the flammable nature of the fuel I would strongly suggest that it is stored in an outbuilding. The only downside to this is that if the gas gets too cold it remains in a liquid state until the cannister warms up. DO NOT in any circumstance try warming the cannister with direct heat!

Ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using the stove as again, there is a risk of Carbon Monoxide poisoning.

Sanitation

Ensure that you have an adequate supply of the following: Toilet paper, wet wipes, bleach, disinfectant, soap, tooth paste, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, washing up liquid,

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hand cleaning gel etc.

If you are unsure of how many of these items you will need then write the date that you started using the item and when you need to replace the item take note of the date. With toilet paper write the date inside the cardboard tube and tell everyone in your household NOT to throw the empty item away until you have seen it...

Washing:

The importance of washing is obvious though if water is in short supply then don't...

Washing prior to food prep or administering first aid is much more important than just smelling nice. Before using water and soap use the hand cleaning gel.

Less than ½ a cup of water is more than enough to shave in, do not use water for brushing your teeth. You can rinse your mouth after brushing with a mouthful or two of your drink... A cup of water is enough to wash your face and sweaty bits in. Just do your face first...

Toilet needs:

As soon as the toilet stops flushing stop using it! Consider using a bucket placed within the toilet to catch your deposits. Or you may decide to purchase a camping type toilet or make one... Remove the cushion from a dining room chair and place a bucket underneath. Not nice but effective. To dispose of the waste you can pour the urine over your garden (natural fertiliser) or bottle it up and store outside away from your home. Solid waste can be burnt off with diesel if available or stored in air tight containers and again stored away from your home or buried.

Washing up and food waste/rubbish:

To prevent the risk of illness it is imperative that pots, pans, plates, cups and utensils are washed properly after use. Consider using an old news paper to scoop out the unwanted foodstuffs and then wash with water. Holding the pot or pan over a naked flame will not only dry it but also kill anything nasty that may still be lurking...

Refuse should be bagged up and buried away from your home or burnt. Failure to dispose of waste properly will invite unwanted attention from Rats and such like...

Security and Safety

Ensure that your property has adequate locks fitted such as five lever mortice types. Remove any objects from outside your premises that may aid an intruder, such as loose house bricks/rocks, garden tools, ladders etc.

Fit security lights, consider covert CCTV as opposed to overt CCTV. If it is overt then you are advertising that you have something worth taking and also advertising your security...

Plant prickly shrubs and bushes under ground floor windows. Keep windows adjacent to

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drain pipes and flat roofs closed and locked at all times.

Fit an intruder alarm AND small battery operated proximity type alarms to doors and windows. Make sure your home has working smoke detectors and invest in at least one battery operated Carbon Monoxide detector.

Fit carpet grippers on the inside edge of perimeter fences (at your own risk due to legality issues).

Invest in some fire extinguishers and learn how to use them.

Purchase some fluorescent tape and stick it on your exit doors to enable easier identification of escape routes should there be fire...

Consider purchasing a professional escape ladder. These roll up when not in use.

Compile a Fire Action Plan and practise it with your family.

Communication

A multi-band radio that also runs off batteries is ideal for listening in to local news reports. Try and get the best that you can afford as poor quality tuners suffer from frequency shift and will need constant re tuning. If you have poor reception connect a length of copper wire (3m long) to the aerial with a small crocodile clip and alter the position of the wire until your reception improves.

HAM and CB radios are a good means of communicating with other people both nationally and internationally.

PMR's (Personal Mobile Radios) are very low on transmit power but work relatively well over short ranges. These are ideal for keeping contact with your family members. EG you are at the end of your garden and your partner is upstairs. They are also great as a means of communication if you are out as a group.

Telephones – If you use a cordless phone it will cease to operate in the event of a power cut. Your phone socket however is likely to be still working as it is supplied by a different grid. Therefore make sure you have a standard telephone that you can plug in when the power goes off...

Welfare

This section covers a number of categories.

- First Aid Kit – Ensure that you keep a well stocked FAK and remember to check the contents frequently.
- First Aid Manual
- First Aid Course – If you can get yourself on a First Aid course now, even if its only a 1 day affair. The knowledge you will pick up is indispensable.

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- Prescription Medication – If any member of your household is medication dependant then look to increase the quantities that you store. Always check the use by date and rotate as necessary.
- Prescription glasses – Get at least one spare set.
- Dentistry – Who would like toothache during a sitX? Get your teeth sorted now and consider purchasing a home “emergency dental kit” from your local chemist. Those with dentures should also purchase an “emergency denture kit” also available from your chemist.

Children

Lets not forget the children. For many of us this is the reason we prep. Make sure you have a number of board games stored away along with colouring books and pencils, reading books and puzzles.

If the juice did go off for an extended time it will be a big shock to the kids who no longer have access to their games consoles, TV, DVDs, computers and more.

The idea behind storing the new items away is that when the time comes they will be new to the children and hopefully the children will show more interest in them and become occupied.

Depending on the age of your children you might role play with them. I do this frequently with our son. One scenario is that Mum has fallen over and hurt herself. Our son (he is 8), knows exactly how to operate our cordless phones, knows how to dial 999 and knows his address word perfect. He can even recite our post code using the phonetic alphabet.

Both of them also know what to do if we are out. Perhaps shopping, if I didn't like a situation I would say “Why don't you two go and find auntie?” What that statement really means is “Go now, back to the car and wait for me”.

You might decide on a key word with your child that means they have to go and hide in a prearranged spot until Mum or Dad comes and finds them. Use your imagination and above all practise.

Children love games. Perhaps turn the electricity off for an hour and play a board game under candle light? Get them accustomed to different scenarios. Then when things happen for real you will both feel more comfortable.

Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet. I'm no expert or author and I'm sure there are many people around that will tell you different to what I have written. If after reading this booklet you are inspired to check your own preps then I have achieved what I set out to do.

All the best and stay safe!
DV.