

# A Beginners Guide to Building Your Emergency Kit for Shelter in Place

In the event of an emergency, having a well-prepared kit can be crucial for the safety and comfort of you and your household. This checklist is designed to ensure you have an essential buffer to last at least 1 week.

Whilst government recommendations are for 72hrs, if you have the finances and space then 1 week is preferred as a minimum.

## Food and Water

- **Non-perishable Food:** Stock up on tinned foods, pasta, rice, and ready-to-eat meals. Take advantage of special offers and only buy what you and your family will eat. Include sweets and treats and don't forget your pets. Make sure your stocks are rotated to prevent, or at least reduce waste.
- **Water:** Due to the weight and physical bulk it is not really feasible for an average person or family to store enough to last for a week. 1 person requires a minimum of 4 litres per day. 2 litres to drink, 1 litre for food prep and 1 litre for very basic washing.

If you have the space (garage or shed), then 25 litre food grade containers are available on Amazon & eBay for approx £16.00 (for two, delivered). These could be filled with tap water and stored. Keep them away from direct sunlight and if being stored in an unheated structure don't over fill them. Otherwise they may split if they freeze.

If you anticipate having problems moving a 25kg container then store water in smaller, 5 or 10 litre containers.

Other alternatives are purchasing supermarket Spring water in 5 litre bottles.

Just remember, a family of four requires a minimum of 16 litres a day. That equates to 117 litres for 7 days.

Don't forget to factor in pets!

- **Manual Can Opener:** Essential for accessing tinned food.
- **Cooking Supplies:** Consider a camping stove and fuel. The Bistro type is inexpensive as is the gas to fuel it. A single CP250 cannister will serve 2 people for 1 day. If you are a family of 4 then look to purchase 14. These should last a week.

The Campingaz Isobutane type, whilst slightly more expensive than the cheaper pure butane cannisters. Will perform better at low temperatures.

Don't forget a couple of lighters for igniting the stove! The long neck BBQ type are excellent for this purpose.

## Lighting

- **Lighting:** Every member of the household should be given a headlamp. This enables hands free illumination. These are ideal for reading, cooking or just moving around the home in the event of a power cut. Remember to stock spare batteries.

Whilst rechargeable lights are OK the issue is that once they go flat you have to wait for them to recharge!

I strongly recommend using devices that take disposable batteries.

LED lanterns for "room" illumination are also a requirement. They are much safer than candles or oil lanterns. Especially if your household has children or active pets.

## Staying Warm

- **Layer Clothing:** Wear extra layers to stay warm.
- **Blankets and Sleeping Bags:** Keep them handy for added warmth.
- **Close Doors:** Keep doors closed to retain heat in one room. Consider sleeping in the same room if possible. Use rolled up towels or stuff the leg of a pair of ladies tights or stockings with scrunched up newspaper to create draft excluders. Make sure they can't jam the door from opening. Use tape to seal any draughty windows.
- **Hot Water Bottles:** If you have access to hot water then consider using hot water bottles. These should be periodically checked. They have a year of manufacture (number within a circle), adjacent to the neck. Discard and renew if more than two years old. Remember, the water within can be recycled for refiling the bottles.

## Staying Informed

- **Battery powered AM/FM Radio:** In the event of an emergency BBC Radio 2 and Radio 4 are the designated stations to keep the nation informed. It would be prudent to mark the dial of your radio with an indelible marker showing where R2 & R4 is.
- **Note Book and Pencil:** Essential for taking notes.
- **Battery Power Bank and USB Lead:** Keep it charged up at all times and store a USB lead of the correct type for your mobile phone with it.

## First Aid and Medication

- **First Aid Kit:** Every household should have a well stocked First Aid Kit. Ensure it contains at least: Bandages, dressings, plasters, burn dressings, eye wash and wound cleansing wipes.
- **Prescribed Medication:** Ensure that you always have extra prescribed medication.
- **OTC Medication:** Rehydration sachets, anti diarrhoea, pain killers, Antihistamine and anti-septic cream are recommended.

## Hygiene

- **Toilet Paper:** Keep some extra rolls put aside.
- **Wet Wipes:** Used for cleaning/washing when water is scarce.
- **Soap and Toothpaste:** Keep one of each put to one side.
- **Feminine Hygiene Products:** Often forgotten.

## Tools and Supplies

- **Basic Home Tool Kit:** For running repairs, damaged fences, doors, windows etc. Hammer, Screwdrivers, Saw, Pry bar and Adjustable Spanners.
- **Materials:** Gorilla tape, assortment of nails and screws. Polythene sheeting that can be used to cover damaged windows or seal rooms etc.

## Personal Documents

- **Important Documents:** Keep copies of insurance policies, drivers licenses, birth certificates and bank account records in a waterproof container and know where they are kept.
- **Emergency Contact Information:** A list of family and friends' phone numbers along with numbers for work places, schools, local plumber, electrician, locksmith, Banks etc.

## Other Essentials

- **Cash:** In small denominations for purchases if electronic payment systems are down.
- **Family Disaster Preparedness Plan:** Download your copy from this site and complete it.
- **Books, Board Games and Playing cards:** Essential to keep the mind active. Especially if there are children in the household.

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Regularly check your emergency kit to ensure everything is in good condition and replace any items that may have expired or been used - Adding a reminder to your mobile phone takes seconds.

This Kit list, if followed, will provide the essentials to deal with 99% of the incidents you're likely to face and is an ideal basis for you to develop your preparedness strategy further, should you feel the need.

***This is prepping for Tuesday, and not Doomsday!***