

13 Multi-Use Survival Items You Can Find At The Dollar Store

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The question here isn't so much what you CAN buy at the Dollar Store for survival, but what you CAN'T buy.

They have everything from bleach to charcoal and everything in between.

So, instead of talking about individual survival items that you can buy at the Dollar Store, I'm going to give you the top 13 multi-purpose items that you should stock up on, along with several ways that they can be used.

To make it interesting, I'm going to pick unlikely items that you may not even think about, or provide you with new ways to use the ones that are obvious. I'm also going to pick some of the ones that are the best deals so that you can REALLY get some bang for your buck.

1. Maxi Pads

You probably already know that maxi pads are great for stopping bleeding, packing wounds, providing insulation, and of course their intended use but they have many other uses[1] as well. Did you think of using them to make hot or cold compresses? Since they retain water, they're great for this. On the flip side, they're great fire starters.

They're also good to use to hold a poultice in place because the pad will absorb part of the poultice material and also absorb and leakage of blood.

Finally – are you ready? – maxi pads are good for starting seeds. They hold moisture extremely well and keep the seeds just moist enough to sprout.

2. Vinegar

Yes, it's great for cooking and cleaning windows, but did you know that ACV has several medicinal properties? It's a great antiseptic and also works to cure acid reflux. You see, the reason for acid reflux is often not TOO MUCH acid as many people think, but of too little acid. Reflux occurs when your stomach is churning to digest the food with what little acid it has.

Antacids reduce the amount of acid even more, which makes the problem worse. Try taking a couple tablespoons of ACV instead of an antacid and see how you feel.

Other uses of ACV? Use it to curdle cream and make cottage cheese, kill weeds in the garden, deodorize just about anything, and treat such conditions as warts, sore throats, and skin irritations. Finally, ACV may give you a bit of an energy boost and help prevent the buildup of lactic acid, which leads to muscle fatigue. You can also make apple cider vinegar at home[2].

3. Chapstick

You can get this stuff for crazy cheap at the dollar store. Packs of 3-5 are only a buck, and if you have

a really good dollar store, you can get even more. The base of chapstick is petroleum jelly, but it's in a handy little container that's useful, too.

Here are just a few good ways to use chapstick for survival:

- Lubricate knives, zippers, strings, tools
- Prevent rust on saws, knives, or other metals
- Sunscreen – it doesn't work as well as actual sunscreen but it will do in a
- Use it as a candle – dip one end of a cotton swab in it, then stick the other end of the swab into the tube. Light the top and you've got a candle that'll last long enough to get a good fire going and then some.
- Use it along with a cotton swab or ball to make a fire starter[3]
- Rub it in some ash and smear it under your eyes to prevent snow blindness.
- Stop small cuts from bleeding
- Lubricate your skin to prevent blisters
- Protect skin from the elements to prevent windburn or frostbite
- Use the tube to hold small items such as matches, bills, cotton swabs, or wire

4. Steel Wool

Sure it's great to scrub your pots and pans, but steel wool is flammable and is great to use to strike sparks into in order to get your fire started.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18jxYaSc8QA>

Video first seen on [wildernessoutfitters](https://www.wildernessoutfitters.com/).

You can also sharpen knives with it, and hold a stripped screw in place.

5. WD40

We all love it and it can be 4 dollars a can or more at other stores, so WD40 definitely makes our list. Of course it's good for lubricating things; that's what it's promoted as. There are literally hundreds of other uses for WD40 though.

- Removes sap and other goo from your hands or skin that could cause irritation
- Keep your fishing equipment, knives, and other metals from rusting
- Most fishermen swear that WD40 helps them catch fish, though the company denies these claims. Still, where there's smoke...
- Waterproof shoes, boots, and clothing.
- Spray snow shovel with WD40 and the snow won't stick to it as easily.
- Helps keep your axe or knife from sticking in the log when you're splitting it
- Spray on kindling for a quick fire starter
- Clean your gun[4] with WD40

6. Aspirin

Of course it's good for a headache, but aspirin is also good for heart health, namely reducing blood pressure, because it thins the blood. That could be good in a survival situation for people with heart

problems and strokes. It also:

- Works as a mild pesticide[5] directly on your plants and as a fungicide in the soil
- Gargle with aspirin to help soothe a sore throat
- Crush it and rub it directly on your gums to get rid of a toothache
- Crush it and make a paste with water or honey to treat warts and pimple

7. Pantyhose

Of course they make your legs look tan, but pantyhose have many different survival uses. Here are some of them, but you should also read our article[6] to see why they deserve a place in your survival kit:

- Strains particulates out of water[7]
- Acts as a fish net
- Adds a layer of insulation
- Prevents skin from rubbing together and chafing
- Holds gauze bandages on
- Acts as a sling
- Can be used to lash things together
- Can be used to carry light items
- Can be used as mosquito netting

8. Can of Coffee

This is probably the one survival product that you'll save the most on at the dollar store. Coffee has the obvious benefit of mental alertness but it has several other uses[8], too. Buy the type that's in a metal can. Use the coffee for:

- Energy
- Antioxidants
- Relieving depression
- Barter[9]
- Grounds are good to add to your compost pile
- Sprinkle it around plants to deter pests such as ants and snails
- Mix it into mulch, grass clippings, etc. and add it to acid loving plants
- Clean your pots and pans with them
- Use it as a cloth dye

You can also use the can for:

- A hobo stove[10]
- Storage
- When cut, it's extremely sharp and can be used in a pinch to cut just about anything, and the shards can be used as a makeshift weapon

9. Mouthwash

Again, a huge money saver with numerous survival uses. Go for the unflavored kind if you can.

- Mouthwash is an antiseptic. That's why it freshens your breath; it kills the bacteria in your mouth. Use it to clean wounds in a pinch
- Sanitize your pots and pans with it
- Put it on a blister – it numbs it and kills any bacteria that may cause infection
- Apply it to a tick[11] that's burrowed into your skin. The tick will back out and your skin will also receive a dose of the antiseptic
- Use as an antifungal for such ailments as athlete's foot
- Relieves the itch from insect bites, bee stings, and poison ivy

10. Zip Ties

These are fairly cheap – around \$3 or \$4 – just about anywhere, but you'll likely only pay a buck for them at the dollar store. If you buy 5 packs, you've saved at least \$10. Not bad, and there are about a kazillion survival uses for zip ties.

- Use them for make-shift handcuffs – as a matter of fact, many police forces use them for that now
- Tie up a tarp for a tent for shelter[12]
- Tie a tarp or garbage bag in a tree for water collection
- Strap gear to your bug out bag or backpack
- Mark trails with it so that you don't get lost or go in circles
- Compress your equipment and clothes so that you can carry more
- Close off the bottom of your pant legs so that bugs and snakes can't get in them
- Hold a splint together
- Lash together logs to make a raft or shelter

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXxQ9WjFWxk>

Video first seen on [SensiblePrepper](#).

11. Clay Pots

Yes, you can put plants in them, but clay pots have several survival uses.

- You can make smokers with them
- You can make water filter systems[13] with them
- Heating systems from clay pots work for emergency heaters
- Use them for temporary refrigeration, as we already mentioned in our article about building this pot-in-pot cooler[14].

12. Bungee Cords

They're stretchy but strong and you've probably used bungee cords for a myriad of tasks[15] during your life. They're extremely versatile and you can buy them in packs of several at the dollar store for practically nothing.

- Strap your bug out bag to a tree so that animals can't get in it
- Strap other items to your bug out bag or your body
- Use to hold a pressure bandage in place

- Hang up a tarp for water collection or shelter
- Use it as a belt
- Bundle your items together with them
- Use as fishing line in a pinch
- Replace broken magazine straps on your tactical vest

13. Crayons with Sharpener

I bought a big box of crayons for my nieces the other day and they were almost \$10! I should have gone to the dollar store, but didn't feel like going that far out of my way. I did notice, though, that the sharpener would come in handy and that the box of crayons with the sharpener would be going in my stockpile, along with a few other toys[16].

- Crayons are flammable and make great fire starters
- If you light the tip of a crayon and put it upright, it will burn for up to 30 minutes as a small candle
- You can use a crayon to mark trees so that you don't get lost
- Wax is a great water-proofer in a pinch.
- The sharpener can be used to make either wax or wood shavings to start a fire with.

There are thousands of items at the dollar store that you can stockpile for survival and these are just a few that I found that were both multi-purpose, and could save you significant cash over buying them somewhere else.

Surely, you can think of other awesome survival items available at the dollar store, so please share them with us in the comments section below!



**Survival Things That The Pioneers
Took With Them When They
Traveled For Months**

Watch Video »

This article has been written by Theresa Crouse for Survivopedia.

Resources

- [1] <https://www.survivopedia.com/hygiene-items-for-survival/>
- [2] <https://www.survivopedia.com/how-to-make-vinegar-at-home/>
- [3] <https://www.survivopedia.com/how-to-make-vinegar-at-home/>
- [4] <https://www.survivopedia.com/dos-and-donts-of-gun-cleaning/>
- [5] <https://www.survivopedia.com/natural-weed-control-for-garden/>
- [6] <https://www.survivopedia.com/multipurpose-panty-use/>
- [7] <https://www.survivopedia.com/water-purification-on-the-move/>
- [8] <https://www.survivopedia.com/survival-homesteading-uses-for-coffee/>
- [9] <https://www.survivopedia.com/skills-and-items-for-bartering-when-shtf/>

[10] <https://www.survivopedia.com/cooking-off-radar/>

[11] <https://www.survivopedia.com/danger-in-the-grass-how-to-survive-tick-season/>

[12] <https://www.survivopedia.com/quick-guide-for-shelter/>

[13] <https://www.survivopedia.com/water-purification-on-the-move/>

[14] <https://www.survivopedia.com/diy-pot-cooler/>

[15] <https://www.survivopedia.com/ropes-and-knots-basics-for-survival-and-everyday-use/>

[16] <https://www.survivopedia.com/toy-box-survival/>

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