

Prioritizing On A Budget

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With the economy in the dumps as it has been in recent years, more people than ever before are waking up and wanting to get prepared for the worst, but limited funds can be quite a constraining factor. If you're trying to get prepared on a budget, then this article is for you.

With tips and recommendations, we'll go over how to prioritize your limited budget and some great ways to get the most out of your hard-earned money.

To begin, let's prioritize the survival essentials:

1) [Food and water](#): you can't live without them, so food and water come first on your list. You can save money by stocking your larder one item at a time. This week, pick up a few cans of corn and stick 'em into your pantry for safekeeping. Next week, some apple sauce or corned beef in a tin, then after that some beans or a few more cans of corn, so on and so forth.

2) Fire is an absolute necessity for survival, and luckily it is pretty cheap to acquire, too. Start by grabbing a few Bic lighters from the grocery store next time you're running errands, then add a few booklets of matches or a tube of waterproof matches. When you've got a little extra money, invest in a ferrorod (magnesium fire-starter) or two and you'll be all set.

3) Your [first aid kit](#) is probably the next most important thing to have on hand for an emergency situation, although hopefully you'll never actually need it. If you're on a tight budget, seriously consider putting together your own first aid kit rather than buying a premade kit. Not only will you save money by building your own kit one item at a time, but you'll also know precisely what you put in it as a result; guesswork be gone!

4) Shelter: this can be something as simple as a tarp that you'll tie up with paracord, or it can be a small tent. Small, light-weight tents are generally quite affordable, although the quality of the cheapest tents may not be so great. When possible, do your research and save up a bit of extra money if necessary to get a higher quality item; in the long-term it will serve you better than if you save a few dollars but get an inferior product.

5) Your bug out bag (BOB) – okay, this is a bit of a cop-out because your BOB should have quite a few items in it, including some of your food and water, your first aid kit and your tarp or light-weight tent for shelter. Once you have the first four survival essentials taken care of, you can start building your BOB. Take your time with this piece of survival equipment; buy the items you need one at a time and opt for higher-quality whenever possible.

For those who really need to get the most for their hard-earned money, here are 5 great tips for finding quality survival gear at cut-rate prices:

1) Shop during fall sales; after the summer has ended and students have returned to school, usually sometime in September or October depending on your region, sporting goods and hunting stores tend to mark down a lot of their camping inventory. Since a lot of the basic camping gear (ultra-light tents, camping mess kits, portable lights, walkie-talkies and more) is the same gear you need for bugging out or surviving in the wilderness, you can take advantage of these sales and save a bundle of

money gearing up.

2) Price match, compare and shop online as much as possible. Shopping online not only gives you a huge variety of merchants to choose between, but you can also find surprisingly good deals, usually no sales tax and often even lower rates than you would've paid in store.

3) Check out the classified ads and sites like craigslist and eBay where people often unload their belongings for far less than they originally paid. Your local craigslist is a great resource for this, actually, since many people give things away or ask only a few dollars for them, including tents, blankets, flashlights, sleeping bags and other gear you can use for survival.

4) Thrift and second-hand stores, particularly those who support veterans like the Salvation Army, can present a treasure trove of discounted survival gear. Salvation Army is especially useful for military-grade survival gear, from sets of camo clothing and military-issue jack boots to knives for hunting and self-defense, Salvation Army had got tons of useful stuff.

5) Contact and network with local militia groups, veteran groups, and/or prepper outdoorsman groups. These groups generally have friendly members who are willing to share their time, knowledge and resources to help you learn and further yourself with regard to your mutual goals. Aside from the wealth of knowledge and information that such groups often share, you can get hands-on experience and training among such people and oftentimes other members will go out of their way to help you obtain the basic survival gear necessary for an emergency.

Finally, when you are budgeting and prioritizing materials and gear to purchase, remember that you are purchasing emergency survival gear. There's a good chance that someone your life will depend on the quality of that survival gear, so do yourself a favor and invest in higher quality tools and gear whenever possible; you'll thank yourself if that day ever comes.

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