

15 Projects For Preppers Before The Winter Comes

Summer is almost over, but we still expect to enjoy some warm and sunny days! It's time to get out of the house, do some barbequing, and stretch your legs. Time to enjoy the weather and go swimming, weed the garden and fix all the stuff that fell apart over the winter.

While the weather's still nice, there are plenty of survival projects that you can work on, too. Just click on the links in the article below to check these projects.

1. Take the Kids Camping



Everybody (well, nearly everybody like us) loves to go camping, but in between the ghost stories and the s'mores, take the time to teach the kids some wilderness skills.

I've found some great articles and projects that offer some awesome ideas.

Learning **how to tie knots** is a skill that can come in handy in a survival situation. Knowing which knot to use can mean the difference between holding a raft together and floating down the river on one piece of Styrofoam.

Also, many knots are meant to hold strong if pulled from one end, but come loose easily if pulled from the other. That means that you can reuse the rope without cutting knots out of it. Check out this instructable: [How to tie various knots](#)

Building lean-tos and shelters can be made into a fun “build a fort” type of project now but may save lives later. Here are a couple of good ideas for different types of lean-tos. [How to build a lean to in a deciduous forest](#) and [Nice DIY shelter and hunting camp](#).

Knowing **how to start fires without matches** or a lighter is a great skill to practice when camping, too. Here are a couple of cool methods: [5 ways to start a fire using water](#), and the good old fashioned [bow drill method](#).

Finally, navigating without a compass is possibly one of the most important survival skills you and your kids can have. Here’s a good instructable that shows [3 different, easy ways to find north](#). You can also make a [duct-tape compass](#).

2. Make Fire Starters

Stocking up on fire starters is a great idea, regardless of whether you’re doing it to build a fire during the winter, or to add to your stockpile and your bug out bags.

There are dozens of ways to make them, but here are a couple of ways that are free (or nearly free), light, and simple. The first is a [waterproof dryer lint fire starter](#) and the second is a nifty little project made with [straws and cotton](#).

3. Learn to Cook without a Stove or a Box

Cooking over a fire is a great survival skill but it’s not as simple as it sounds, at least until you get the hang of it. I’m a firm believer in iron skillets but that may not be possible if you’re packing light. Practice cooking on the grill and over an open fire.

Even if you have a ton of boxed mixes stored, you can only live so long before you run out of cake and biscuit mix. You'll eventually need to know how to do it yourself, so why not learn now? It will taste much better too, once you get the hang of it!

Here's a good article to get you started on your journey to [cooking from scratch](#). Redflycreations also shares some [great baking mixes](#) that you can make yourself so that if you want to stockpile some baking mixes and dry-can them, you can. You can use the fire starters that you made from the instructables above, or practice starting a fire without a lighter.

4. Stockpile Wood

Now's the time to get your wood seasoning for next year. Remember that it's best to let wood season for at least a year before you use it so that it's dry and easy to burn.

Check out our [own article](#) on every aspect of choosing, cutting, splitting, and burning wood.

5. Build a Solar Panel

This is a really cool project that the kids can help you with. I like it because it recycles cans that you're going to use anyway and it actually works to heat up air. That may just be the difference between freezing or not, or at least washing in warm water.

Check out this instructable for [DIY solar panels from soda cans](#).

6. Learn about Edibles around Your Location

The weather's beautiful and the kids are going to be stir-crazy. Take them outside and show them what they can eat and what they can't around where you live. If you don't have kids, (and especially if you do!), pick up a book on local edibles and go for a hike.

6 WILD PLANTS YOU CAN EAT



Plantain



Chickweed



Garlic Mustard



Lamb's Quarter



Miner's Lettuce



Mallow

survivopedia.com

7. Scout Bug Out Locations

Summer is the perfect time to scout potential bug-out locations both around you and far away. If you're considering buying a homestead somewhere, this is the ideal time to look.

Be sure to do your homework before you start looking. Read these Survivopedia articles about [how to choose your land when buying](#) and [the problems you might have when relocating in rural areas](#) to get the knowledge that you need.

Of course, what you should look for depends on whether or not you're just looking for a local place to hole up or an entirely different home or bug out place with all the amenities. Do your research and make up a list before you go on the hunt so that you don't forget anything.

8. Set up a Rain Water Collection System

You can only survive 3 days without water, so it's critical that you have a way to capture water even if your well goes, or the grid goes down and you don't have any city water.

Even if you just want to save some money on your water bill or water your plants with rain water, building a rain water collection system is easy with this [guide](#).

[This Device Easily Turns Air Into Water!](#)

9. Build a Backyard Fire Pit

I love sitting around a fire at night, listening to the sounds of the crickets and owls and watching the fire pop. Having a backyard fire pit has also served me well several times when the power was out and I was out of charcoal.

A little bit of wood and a grate and you've got yourself a great outdoor cooking source. Here are a couple great ideas for building a fire pit for next to nothing. I've actually built one similar to each.

For the [first one](#), I used a broken grill that I'd picked up at a yard sale so it only cost me about \$5 and it looked great. The [second one](#) is dirt cheap assuming you have cinder blocks laying around, or can get some recycled ones.

And here's also a nice infographic on building fire pits:

FIRE IT UP

How To Build A Backyard DIY Fire Pit

Building A DIY FIRE PIT



Dig a hole 8-10 inches deep and fill with a 2 inch layer of sand.



Insert a metal fire ring or simply a circular frame into the hole.



Stagger layers of bricks or stones around the pit, adhering with masonry.



Light it up!

Two Major FIRE PIT STYLES



Above ground

Creates a nice barrier between you and fire

PROS

grass requires a string trimmer

CONS

In-ground

Edge, has a great look to it

Creates a nasty pitfall

Picking A Location For Your FIRE PIT

Consider prevailing wind's effect on smoke and embers.

10'

7'

1 Open, flat space at least 10 ft from nearest structure (check local and HAO regulations).

2 Select area best for socializing. Place seating around 7 feet from fire.

10. Build a Spiral Herb Garden

Fresh herbs are great, and if you have limited space, this is [spiral herb garden](#) is definitely the project for you. My only advice is to do some research before planting because some herbs will merge flavors if you plant them near each other.

11. Go Fishing

They say a bad day of fishing is better than a good day at work, and it's the truth. This DIY prepper project is necessary and fun – your homework is to go catch fish! Do you know how to [clean your own fish](#), though? I also found some cool tips about [making fish hooks from soda can tops](#) and ways to make fish hooks out of what you can [find around outside](#). Oh yeah – and you're going to need bait so catch some with this [pickle jar minnow trap](#).

12. Build a Triple Compost Bin

Are you tired of waiting for your compost pile to mature before you can use it, then starting over? Well here's a great idea for having [compost in 3 different stages](#) so that you always have compost ready to use. And [here's also some good advice](#) on how to use compost.

13. Build a Simple Water Filtration System

You have all of that rain water collected, and now you need to be able to drink it as well as water your plants with it. Filtering water is a great DIY preppers project that's useful. This fairly simple [water filtration system](#) uses gravel, sand, and charcoal and is actually 3 different systems that can be used individually or altogether for a total treatment. There's another water filtration that uses a [plastic barrel system](#) that's fairly easy to make as well.

14. Learn How to Use a Gun

Just because you own one doesn't mean that you know how to use

it properly. I'm not trying to be offensive, but even if you're experienced and capable with your weapon, ask yourself this – can your other family members break down your gun, clean it, tell when it's loaded, shoot it, and reload it? If not, don't you think they should learn? After all, what if something happens to you?

Make yourself and your family an appointment for a firearms class. Also, if you're interested in learning how to make reloads, here is the first in a series of articles about [learning to reload](#) on the cheap.

15. Hit the Flea Markets and Farmers Markets

Some of the best things about summer, as far as I'm concerned, are the flea markets, farmers markets, and yard sales. They're great places to find fresh foods, reusable items to make stuff on the cheap. These places are also great places to make connections – for food shares, prepping and homesteading resources and partners, and just all around good people.

I hope that at least some of these DIY prepper projects sound appealing to you, and that you find the links fun and useful. I know that some of them are simple and some are more complicated, but I tried to find a balance that would be within everybody's ability.



Get Your Own Amazing Device That Turns Air Into Water

[Watch Video »](#)

If you have any good summer prepping projects to add, please tell us about them in the comments section below.

*This article has been written by **Theresa Crouse** for Survivopedia.*