

10 Essentials To Consider Before Going Off Grid

Living off the grid is a dream come true for some, while for the rest of us, it still remains the final goal in our preparedness journey.

Every day you hear or read stories about how preppers managed to change their lives and adapt to this alternative way of living. The problem with making the transition is that most folks out there don't actually know what it means to live off the grid.

First and foremost, the vast majority of people associate living off-grid with the classical cabin, located deep inside the woods, without essential comfort or the things they are accustomed to using every day. And second, once they discover that comfort can greatly be improved with today's technological advances, they believe that everything is pretty much covered.



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The reality is quite different, and there are a few things you should be aware of before deciding to live off the grid.

Regarding the main concern, the level of comfort we are all used to, there isn't much to worry about that. In fact, with all the innovations and all the gadgets, and whatnot coming out every year, living off the grid has become a standard lifestyle. There are all sorts of readily-available solutions to help you become self-sufficient and independent. Even

though living off the grid means living with what the land has to offer, technology makes things much easier and learning how to use natural resources to ensure your sustainability is mainly a matter of will and effort.

Once you cover all the aspects of your new way of living, you may think that the pieces of the puzzle will fit in perfectly, but that's not really the case. Throwing money at your new lifestyle may help, but it's actually the transition that makes it difficult for most people to live off the grid. This becomes a struggle if they don't realize how their lifestyle will be impacted, what struggles they will have to face, and what challenges they need to overcome.

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Before getting into details, here's a small example of what the transition to living off the grid means.

Let's say your kids (like most kids) are hooked up 24/7 to their phones or game consoles. Switching them to an environment that requires outdoor activities and nature interaction will turn into a major shock for them. They will have a panic attack just by thinking that their daily gadgets could be off-limits for an extended period of time.

Suggestions before making the transition to off-grid living

1. There's no room for debt in this journey

If you want to live off the grid, you need to get rid of debt. You don't need that burden hanging over you and treating your future and peace of mind. Make sure you don't owe anything to anyone at all, before making this transition.

If you are serious about it, you need to pay all your loans, credit cards and any other financial liability that may hold you back. You should never have to worry about debt collectors that may one day come on your property and ask for “what’s theirs.” There’s no forest large enough or hole deep enough to hide from bill collectors. You won’t be able to adapt to your new lifestyle and properly enjoy it if you are not free of debt.

2. Savings are a must

Most people I know that are now fulltime off gridders had something put aside for darker times. While some managed to save more than enough to make a smooth transition, most of them had just enough to give them a good start. You need to acknowledge that living off the grid requires a few startup costs.

Having a self-sufficient home in the middle of nowhere will require some money. No matter how well you design and plan it, to cover the needs of your family, there will always be some hidden costs. In time, all the money you pour in your home and the investments you decide to make will pay for themselves. However, you have to reach that point, and even when you are there, the need to buy supplies and maintain your home in good shape will take a big bite of your savings.



WATER & CONTAINERS

- Water
- Water Filters/Purification Tablets
- Canteen

FIRE ESSENTIALS



- Lighter
- Flint & Steel
- Matches
- Tinder
- Waterproof Storage

FOOD & UTENSILS



- Metal Pot
- Metal Cup
- Spork
- Protein Bars
- Can Opener
- Portable Stove
- Stove Fuel
- Canned Foods
- Dried Fruit
- Trail Mix
- Peanut Butter
- Fishing Kit



FIRST AID

- Bug Repellent
- Anti Diarrhea Meds
- Prescriptions
- Bandana

CLOTHING



- Underwear
- Zip-Off Pants
- Long Sleeve Shirt
- Wool Hiking Socks
- Fleece
- Hat
- Gloves
- Rain Coat
- Sunglasses
- Shemagh
- Sewing Kit

BEDDING

- Tent or Tarp
- Sleeping Bag or Blanket
- Sleeping Mat

HYGIENE



- Hand Sanitizer
- All-Purpose Soap
- Toilet Paper
- Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- Small Towel
- Wet Napkins
- Mirror
- Condoms



TOOLS

- Multi-Tool
- Survival Knife
- Rope
- Duct Tape
- Survival Guide

LIGHTING

- Headlamp
- Glowstick
- Candles
- Batteries
- Mini LED Keychain



COMMUNICATIONS

- Cell Phone
- Crank Power
- Charger
- Radio with Hand Crank



NAVIGATION

- Emergency Whistle
- Pencil & Note Pad
- Compass
- Map/Atlas
- Cash in Small Bills



3. Proper research and exploration is required before settling in

You probably won't buy a house without seeing it first; am I right? Well, the same goes for your new place, and there's a little bit of research that needs to be done. You should start by researching the seasonal weather, the surrounding environment, and layout of the land. Also, make sure to check the criminality rate and anything that may pose a problem for your future home.

When moving off-grid, there are two main choices you need to choose from. You can purchase an already built home, or you can buy the land and build the one you've always imagined.

Even so, there's a lot of imagining to be done before you make a commitment. You need to have a clear idea of what you want and what your family needs. All this, considering how it may be influenced by the area you settled on.

Certain people want a piece of land in a quiet, isolated area, while others may want an off-grid house in a well-established community.

If you're part of the first category, you need to establish (or predict, if you will) how the weather and local wildlife will influence your new lifestyle. Living in a remote area means no immediate access to medical assistance, no fail-proof garden, no exterior help that can help you with various chores and an overall, proper understanding of what living off the land means.

Now, if you're part of the second category, the more social ones, you may be privileged. You will rely on your local community every time a problem arises, but you will also be able to use your skills to make some extra money. However, the size of your community may become a problem when SHTF. If things become desperate and the "community bounds" break, it

will be every man for himself. That means you will need to be able to protect yourself and what's yours and always have a plan B on the side.

4. Get familiar with the local regulations

Things are not like they used to be, and you can't live like your grandparents used to do it. Unfortunately, it has become illegal to live off the grid in certain regions of our country. Even collecting rainwater can get you in trouble, and the government seems to impose all sorts of rules to keep you in the rat race, addicted to their "facilities."

To avoid getting on their radar, you need to check the regulations in your area to know what is possible and what not in the region you want to live off the grid. You might elude the authorities and do things your way, but sooner or later they will catch up to you.

To be on the safe side, do a thorough research, and establish what can be done with the land you bought and what can be built on it. You need to make the most of it and for the love of God, don't forget about the water and mineral rights!

5. Stockpiling becomes a way of life

Living off-the-grid will requires learning a thing or two about stockpiling and how to do it properly without spending all your money. The first thing you need to do is make sure you stockpile all the tools and complementary items you need to complete all various types of chores.

You will need to start a garden, you will need to fish or hunt, and you will need to fix things, and you can't do all of this without the proper tools. You may have a toolbox in your home, but that won't be enough to help you live off the grid.

Before you start the transition, stock up on all sorts of tools that can be found in thrift shops, garage and yard sales, or just get them from friends who have some they do not use. Having more than one tool of the same type is essential for off gridders. Since you will need all types of tools for your house and your garden, make sure you can buy them in advance and take advantage of sales and other bargains.



BUILD A BACKCOUNTRY FIRST AID KIT



1 LATEX GLOVES

2 CPR FACE SHIELD

3 PLASTIC BAG

4 TRAUMA SHEARS (OR POCKET KNIFE)

5 TWEEZERS

6 PAPER & PENCIL

7 ADHESIVE BANDAGES

8 ACE BANDAGE

9 GAUZE PADS

10 GAUZE ROLL

11 MOLESKIN

12 MOLEFOAM

13 ATHLETIC TAPE

14 DUCT TAPE

15 IBUPROFEN (& ACETAMINOPHEN)

16 ANTIHISTAMINE

17 EPINEPHRINE AUTOINJECTOR

18 ANTIBIOTIC OINTMENT

6. Get a taste of living off the grid before going PRO

While you may be convinced that living off the grid is the right choice for you, things may not be as easy for the rest of your family. This lifestyle is not for everyone, and you need to figure out if your loved ones are cut for it. They will have to deal with some drastic changes, and the way they handle everyday chores will also change.

Before embarking on this journey, I suggest you test the waters. There are things you can do to see if your loved ones can easily adapt to this change. While going camping for one week or two will put them to the test, there's more to it than just living in the woods. For example, you won't be able to go out as much as you did before, and staying in becomes normality. Try cutting out on eating out and outside-the-house entertainment and see how that works for your family.

Not to mention that you will need to start cooking more and take on canning or other projects that will provide you with all you need during times of moderation. These are the tasks that should concern everyone, and all of you should pitch in to make things easier.

Also, try cutting down the time you spend on the Internet, start a few hobbies, spend more time with your kids, and see how this is working out for them.

You could live for a month with all the restrictions you would have in an off the grid lifestyle and see how it plays out. If everyone manages to live through this, let's call it "training period", then you have a good chance to adapt and live off-grid. If that's not the case, you can look for something else or discuss every detail of off-grid living with your family before actually going for it.

7. Learn to generate some income

Now, this is a hard topic to handle and its personal to each and every one of us. Most of the people I know have managed to generate a small amount of cash flow, and they are even able to save up for emergencies.

How you manage to make some little cash while adapting to the off-grid life, is entirely up to you. Some people sell their produce while others are making crafts that are being sold at local markets. Others have turned to freelance or have developed a home-based business that is able to sustain the entire family.

Maybe you are a good handyman, and the skills you have could be traded for some items you need or money. The bottom line is that you will need to generate an income by using the skills or by exploiting the hobbies you have.

8. Make it last

When living off the grid, you will require some extra protection measures for your family. You never know how your new world can turn on you. While some decide to live isolated and have the means to protect themselves, others will choose the safety of an off-grid community.



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Whatever you decide to do, you need to make sure you can protect yourself and loves ones from both beast and man. I'm not going to start a debate about gun views and other topics, but I am going to say this. No matter what you feel about the defensive tools most of us are accustomed to, you can't live

off the grid without these protection tools.

You will need to have some reliable firearms, one or two proper cleaning kits and enough ammo to assure the long-term use of your guns for both hunting and defensive purposes. In this new lifestyle, you are your own bodyguard, and you need to understand this if you want for it to last.

9. It's not about surviving, it's about thriving!

Living off the grid is not about survival. It should never be unless the end of days comes, and it all caught you unprepared. This lifestyle should be about thriving in a new environment and enjoying every moment of it. It requires a proper mindset that in time will teach you how to make the best out of everything.

It's a constant learning process, and you will eventually learn what makes you and your loved ones happy, even though it may be challenging at first. This new life of yours will create a special bond between you and your family, and it will teach everyone how to be independent and enjoy the little things along the way.

Even though chores may seem like a drag at first, doing things your own way with the knowledge you gathered provides satisfaction that it's hard to describe in words.

As a few general rules, you should plan your storage room so that it contains everything you might need, you should keep a thorough inventory, and you should replace your provisions on a regular basis. Some items go fast in a crisis, and it's better to know what you should stockpile.

Canning becomes a normal activity to ensure a good amount of food supplies for the cold season. Grow your favorite fruits and vegetables and surrounding yourself with useful animals

(including pets for your kids) will allow you to enjoy the simple life, just as you did when you were a kid.

Do everything you can to improve the background and make it as hospitable as possible.

10. Mother Nature is both friend and enemy

Mother Nature has her own will and every once in a while will throw you a curveball. You can't fight against it, and there's no point in trying. All you can do is learn how to respect nature, be a part of it, and make it work in your favor. You will learn new things about your surroundings every day, and even though sometimes it seems that nature has a bone to pick with you, you need to learn how to cope with it and move forward.

Learning how to hunt, fish, and forage, but most importantly, when to do these activities will provide you with great rewards. It will supplement your food supplies while making you understand how Mother Nature functions, but it will also teach you to respect it. You will develop an intimate relationship with your environment, and you will understand that if you take care of it, nature can provide you with almost everything you need.

Learn about the medicinal plants in your area, teach yourself how to grow them in your garden and how to preserve them for later use. Take advantage of every season and learn how to use the power of the elements to your advantage. A rainfall may go unnoticed in the city, but in your new environment and lifestyle, it becomes a good source of water for bathing and other chores. The sun will provide you with electricity to power your appliances while the wind can dry your clothes or provide you with power if you manage to harness its energy. There are many ways in which nature can work in your favor and make your off-grid living more comfortable.

Conclusion

If you want to live off the grid, you need to understand that such a lifestyle is a constant learning experience. The idea you may have in your head may be totally different from the “on the field” trail. You may dream of building a home in the wilderness and live a peaceful life without being bothered by anyone, but it may not be that easy in reality. You need to commit to such a lifestyle, and there will be unforeseen challenges every step of the way. Consider all the above before making the transition, and you will at least have a good start, before jumping head first.



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