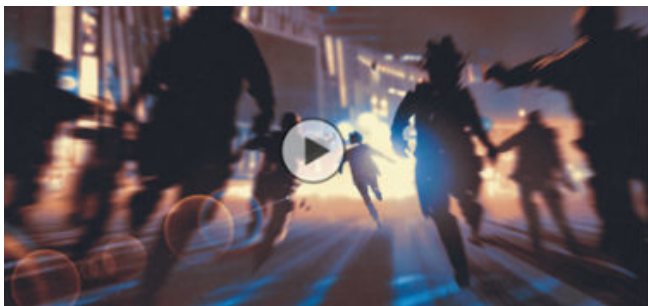


# Indispensable Gear for your EDC Core Layer

*While our basic survival needs haven't changed in at least the last 5,000 years, and most of us no longer make life and death decisions on a regular basis like our ancestors did, we face a broader array of threats than they did and have a more tools available to deal with them.*

If you have been reading my articles and paying attention, you probably know that I advocate a modular, layered approach to carrying survival gear. This article is just about EDC layer, which is survival equipment and supplies that people carry in their pockets or wear, aside from clothing. So, that means pocket contents, knife, concealed carry loadout, jewelry, and so on. But it excludes load bearing equipment and any equipment or supplies that are attached to it.



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Carrying a Core Layer of survival equipment and supplies, either worn, or carrying in one's pockets, ensures that the survivor retains a layer of basic survival gear even if separated from packs and bags when resting, seated in a vehicle or due to a crash, unplanned swim or other mishap.

## Concealed Carry Ensemble

The world has always been, and continues to be, a dangerous place. The thin veneer of civilization can be stripped away at any moment, the rules of etiquette replaced with the cruel

realities of survival. At such times, man's security depends on his own capability to defend himself and those in his care.

- **Sidearm** – To fight your way back to a bigger gun.
- **Spare Magazine(s)**
- **Tactical Flashlight** – You need to be able to tell the difference between a toy or cellphone and a handgun or a knife and you cannot do that in low light without a light. The fact that a man had a small flashlight with him saved dozens of people on 9/11, making it possible for a large group of survivors to pick a path down out of one of the towers before it collapsed, and that was in the daytime. At the start of survival ordeals, survivors often have to find firewood and build a shelter after dark. Without a light source, tasks that would be straightforward during the day can be near impossible on a dark and cloudy night.
- **Small Fixed Blade or Lock-Back Folding Knife** – In addition to arguably being the most important survival tool you can carry, as a backup weapon, a knife doesn't run out of ammunition until you stop swinging.
- **ASP Key Defender** – The Key Defender is a pepper spray with a machined aluminum body and a removeable cartridge, enabling cartridges to be replaced, and the use of inert training cartridges. It is also useful as an impact instrument such as a yawara stick, or Kubotan. Lethal force is not always a reasonable response to every violent confrontation. Having a handgun as the only tool in your tactical toolbox is like being a doctor who can only perform surgery. It should be balanced with training in empty hand fighting and less-lethal options.
- **Smartphone**

## Keychain

For some, carrying a few small essentials on the keychain helps ensure they will have them when needed.

- **Whistle** – Survivors often find that they are unable to shout for help for very long before they lose their voice. A whistle solves this problem and is audible from a much greater distance. Pea-less whistle designs are best for use as emergency whistles because cork peas eventually disintegrate and saliva can freeze in cold weather, rendering whistles with peas inoperable.
- **resqme Auto Escape Tool** – Most auto escape tools are cheap junk and don't work. The resqme has a seatbelt cutter, glass breaker, and detaches from your keychain with a tug. If caught without an escape tool, some models of adjustable head restraints are removable and the steel rods or bar they slide up and down on can be used to break a tempered safety glass side or rear window.
- **Ferro Rod, Magnesium Rod & Carbide Scraper/Sharpener** – The ability to start a fire is something you should not be without and a ferro rod is a good backup. Quality ferro rods will not corrode and pit as quickly but it is worth investing in a ferro rod in a gasketed tube if you spend time in high humidity, salt air or on the water.
- **Small Keychain LED** – For applications where the blinding light of the tactical flashlight is overkill, a small keychain LED fills a niche and provides a backup light source.
- **Digital Survival Library on a Pen Drive** – Get the most out of your smartphone by carrying your digital survival library on an encrypted pen drive with adapters for your phone and computer. Focus on lifesaving information that is hard to remember.
- **ID Clothing Clip** – I carry a clip on my keychain so I can attach my extra ID to my clothing if I am caught without my turnout gear and uniform.

## Wallet

It seems that their wallet, or more specifically the credit card in it, is pretty much the only tool some folks know how to use anymore.

Alternator died? They swipe plastic. Vacuum cleaner broke? They throw it the trash and order another one. Knife dull? They pay someone else to resharpen it.

You might think I'm talking about city slickers from New York or LA who have no idea where their food comes from, don't own even a single firearm, and couldn't tie a square knot to save their lives. Unfortunately, all of the above examples were from survivalists or primitive survival students.

The remedy for this hypocrisy is to stop reaching for your credit card and start reaching for your Leatherman tool.

- **2" x 3" Metal Signal Mirror** – For emergency signaling, self-treatment, covert observation or looking around a corner without exposing your head to gunfire.
- **Retroreflective Adhesive Tape or Patch** – For night signaling/visibility.
- **Fresnel Lens** – For removing stickers and glochids, reading fine print and starting fires.
- **Cash** – While we all need it, it shouldn't be the only tool in our survival toolbox.
- **Law Enforcement, Emergency Responder, VOAD, Healthcare Worker, Military, or Press ID** – Sometimes flashing any of these IDs will get your vehicle through the perimeter of a disaster.
- **Recent Photos** – If a member of your family becomes separated during a disaster, or for some other reason, a recent photo helps simplify the process of family reunification.
- **Information Card** – Should contain patient treatment information (chronic health problems and drug allergies)

and scripts for a 9-1-1 call/mayday call, what to do and say if you are involved in as shooting, and emergency contact information.



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### Other Gear Worn or Carried in Pockets

- **XL Bandana, 100% Cotton** – The humble swatch of cotton cloth it is one piece of gear that I use every day. It can prevent the loss of small parts, be used as char cloth, as prefilter in water treatment, as a cravat or bandage, as a pouch, a drape to prevent sunburn or as cordage. Flag bandanas can be used to tell friend from foe or as a signal device, a white flag signals parlay or surrender, a yellow one quarantine. The bandana and similar cloth articles have far too many uses to list here.
- **White Petrolatum Lip Balm** – Lip balm, skin protectant, lubricant, and accelerant for starting fires. White petrolatum keeps wounds moist to promote healing, can be applied to burns once they have cooled, and can be applied to non-stick gauze to create an occlusive dressing for sucking chest wounds and certain other types of injuries.
- **Notebook & Pen** – It might seem old fashioned, but a notebook doesn't need batteries and enables you to record information offline and leave notes.
- **Shielded Pocket Liner** – I carry a pocket liner of conductive fabric to shield the contents of my pocket to

prevent skimming attacks on bank cards, passports and car key fobs. It also stops any communication between my cellphone and cell towers, Wi-Fi access points, GPS satellites or tower cloning surveillance equipment such as Stingray and related hardware. It gives me control over when my cellphone communicates and when it doesn't and drastically reduces the digital breadcrumb trail I leave behind. It is important to your cellphone and other vulnerable items in a shielded envelope while traveling through international airports where 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment rights are suspended, and passengers are funneled through tight control points, where their ID's and cards are skimmed and cellphones are subject to tower cloning man-in-the-middle attacks.

- **Restraint Escape Gear** – Depending on your skill level, you might carry a handcuff key, razor blade, a friction saw, and a covert glass breaker. Or you might just use a small report binder clip as a money clip or maybe carry a couple of bobby pins. The important thing is that you have the tools and skills to escape if illegally restrained. Some people may be at higher risk for a variety of reasons, but a home invasion could happen to anybody.
- **Pocket Survival Kit** – A pocket survival kit puts key elements of the core layer together in one or more small pouches or tins which can be carried in a pocket. Keep it small enough that you won't leave it home but large enough to give the tools you need to survive.

Interested in improving your safety? This Green Beret's guide is all you need to prepare for your survival defense! Click the banner below to get it!