

Making The Most Out Of Your Bug Out

If you're like most preppers I've encountered, your bug out plans leave a lot to be desired.

It's not that you don't have any plans, but rather that your plans are incomplete. There are a few critical areas, like where you're going to go, which could really use some firming up.

Don't feel bad if that's your situation. There are a lot of us who fall into the same pit. It's easy to have a detailed bug out plan, if you've got someplace definitive to go to; but unless you own that cabin in the woods that we all want to have, but can't afford, it's hard to be that sure of where you're going.

[Catch A Glimpse of Green Beret Outdoor Survival Ingenuity](#)

My "go to" advice in a situation like this is to find a rural community that you can use as a survival retreat. While most rural communities don't have any more resources than a big city does, they do have a lower population. So, at a minimum, there won't be as many people competing for whatever resources are available.

Of course, there's a huge difference between a rural farming community and other rural communities. Just because a community is rural, does not mean that it is a farming community. If we want to find a rural community that is going to have resources that we can use; then we want to find a farming community, not just any rural community. While the selection might be slim in most farming communities, at least there will be food to eat.

The trick for us is finding such a community and then establishing a survival retreat there. Or, if we can't establish a survival retreat, then to establish at least enough of a connection with that community, so that we stand a chance of joining it when a disaster strikes.

Finding Your Survival Community

Let's start out with finding a community that you can use to become your survival community. This is the project that I'm recommending you spend your summer vacation on this year. You can make it fun for the family, taking a road trip, while at the same time accomplishing something useful from a prepping point of view.



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Chances are, you'll need to visit several of these potential communities, before you are able to select the one that will become your choice in a bug out. That's what your road trip is going to consist of. With that in mind, the first thing to do is plan your trip. That means finding potential rural communities that you are going to visit.

These communities should contain the following elements:

- They should be farming communities, so that there will be plenty of food.
- They should have plenty of access to water, preferably from a river, not from wells.
- They should be a bit off the beaten path, so they won't become crowded in the aftermath of a disaster.
- They should have abandoned buildings that you could occupy.

- They should have storage units that you can rent.
- They should be far enough away from your home, so that they won't be caught in the same disaster that makes you bug out.
- They should be located somewhere that is free from flooding, whether from a broken dam or from a tsunami.

It would also be nice if you could find someplace that your family might actually like visiting, either in or nearby these towns, so that your family would enjoy the trip. I just recently took a weekend trip of this sort and we visited a vineyard and winery, a presidio (Mexican frontier fort) that was part of the Texas war of Independence, some antique shops and some nice restaurants.

Surprisingly, the town we visited also had an old blacksmith's shop, which had been converted into a blacksmith's club. That was rather unique. In my way of thinking, a blacksmith's shop will be extremely useful in a post-disaster world, especially if the electrical grid goes down.

road trip packing list

CAR AUDIT

OIL
WATER
TYRE PRESSURE/TREAD
SPARE TYRE + TOOLS
BRAKE ACTION
WARNING TRIANGLE
TORCH WITH BATTERIES
+ BREAKDOWN COVER



CAR TRIP

PHONE HOLDER
PHONE BATTERY
MAPS/MUSIC
PONCHO/BLANKET
SNACKS
GAMES



WINTER ROAD TRIP

WATER/SNACKS
SHOVEL/SCRAPER
DE-ICER/SCREENWASH
WARM CLOTHES



eco tips

RUBBISH BAG
PICNIC KIT
WATER FILTER BOTTLE

DAY TRIPPING

CLOTHES
DAY BAG + COVER
SUNTAN LOTION
HAND SANITISER
HIKING BOOTS
WATERPROOF COAT
CAMERA
HEADTORCH
FLIP-FLOPS
TENT?
SLEEPING BAG?



MEDICATION

MOSQUITO SPRAY
ELECTROLYTES
FIRST AID KIT

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Taking Your Road Trip

Once you've found your potential bug out towns, it's time to visit them all. This is where the road trip comes in. If you're taking a two week vacation, you should be able to visit four or five such towns, even while taking the time to see the

attractions as you go.

The idea here isn't to see how fast you can go through your list, but rather to take your time to look around. You want to see the sights, but you also want to get a good feel for each of these communities. Specifically, you want to get a feel for what the people are like, what resources might be available and how you could integrate yourself into the community.

Drive around each of the communities you've selected as potential candidates, as well as the surrounding country. Remember, you're playing tourist. But instead of just looking for things to take pictures of, you're also looking to see if that community meets the criteria listed above. You're also looking for someplace that you can set up camp, should the time come. This location needs to be:

- Contained within the community for shared defense.
- Easily defensible or able to be made easily defensible.
- Provide your family with shelter.
- Give you access to water.
- Close enough to food sources that you can harvest, work for or trade for.



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Camping on Your Trip

I would recommend making this a camping trip, rather than a hotel/motel type vacation. Chances are, when you really do have to bug out, you'll end up camping anyway. If you don't, and actually end up in a building, you'll still be living like you are camping, at least as far as water, sanitation and cooking are concerned, so you might as well get used to it.

Besides, this is a great time to teach your family some more survival skills. I've always advocated camping trips as a way of teaching basic wilderness survival skills. My personal start in learning these skills was in the Boy Scouts, especially through studying my Boy Scout Manual. While the Scouts has changed a lot through the years, you can still buy the old Boy Scout Manual with all the useful tricks for camping and surviving in the wilderness.

By and large, kids love learning these skills, and love camping too. So taking the time to teach fire starting, making a shelter out of available materials and how to fish with a survival fishing kit isn't just practical, it will be fun for them as well. Allow them to practice those skills until they become proficient.

Some of the most important skills to teach:

- Fire starting
- Building shelter
- Purifying water
- Cooking over a fire
- Tracking game
- Making snares (you may have to disable these, so as to not actually catch anything)
- Where to locate snares (along animal trails)
- Fishing with a survival fishing kit
- Locating north
- Map and trail skills
- Protecting your food from bears
- Personal and camp hygiene in the woods

Granted, there are a lot of other things to teach your kids; but this is at least a good starting point. For more, check out Bushcraft 101 or get your hands on an old Boy Scout Manual.

Integrating into Your Chosen Community

Hopefully you'll be able to pick out your go to survival community from one trip. Once you do, go back and visit it again. In fact, you want to make it a habit to visit that community every once in a while; say every month or two. One of the features of small towns is that people tend to know one another. That means they will quickly recognize strangers.

In William Forstchen's book, "One Second After" the small community of Black Mountain ended up setting up roadblocks at the town's entrances, keeping strangers out. This was an act of self-preservation for the town, as there was no way they could feed all the people who were coming to them. Such action is likely to happen in a TEOTWAWKI event, which is why it is important to integrate yourself into the community, before the disaster strikes.

So, how do you do that? You do it by spending time in the town and getting to know the people.

Ideally, it would be great if you could rent some place in town that is your weekend getaway. But if you can't do that, rent a storage space and develop a survival cache there. The rental contract for that storage space might be enough to act as your ticket to get into town, even while they are keeping everyone else out.

Even more important than renting something is getting to know some of the townspeople, preferably prominent people who are well-known in the community. Being on a first-name basis with the owner of the local restaurant, general store and barber shop makes you part of them. it would be real hard to say "No" to you, when you show up.

60 WAYS TO BUILD COMMUNITY

1. Go outside.
2. Say hello to people on the street.
3. Smile at strangers.
4. Make friends with your neighbours.
5. Plant a community garden.
6. Have a party.
7. Visit your local library.
8. Get involved with projects that inspire you.
9. Have friends of all colours, beliefs & abilities.
10. Respect elders.
11. Remember your ancestors.
12. Support community events.
13. Host a community event.
14. Plan a block party.
15. Have potlucks.
16. Share your knowledge.
17. Learn from others.
18. Read books with your children.
19. Talk about & celebrate diversity.
20. Ask questions.
21. Offer answers.
22. Notice problems then find solutions.
23. Pick up garbage.
24. Keep your local park clean.
25. Barter and trade.
26. Shop local & seasonally.
27. Support indie artists & handmade culture.
28. Connect with the producers of the things you consume.
29. Buy food at Farmer's Markets.
30. Find farms and go visit them.
31. Pick your own fruit.
32. Make pies and give them away.
33. Have other children over and make something beautiful.
34. Spend time at your local school or community centre.
35. Help out a new mama.
36. Take someone's kids for the day-we can all use a day off.
37. Hire a local youth to do odd jobs.
38. Give your seat to elders, pregnant women and small children.
39. Pick flowers. Bring the bouquet to someone sad.
40. Invite a friend to tea.
41. Tell people why you appreciate them.
42. Give thanks often.
43. Ask for help when you need it.
44. Organize a work party.
45. Help carry someone's groceries.
46. Offer a ride or a place to stay.
47. Know the names of the people you see every day.
48. Ask them about their lives.
49. Really listen.
50. Care about people's stories.
51. Share what you have.
52. Resolve conflicts.
53. Don't turn away from suffering.
54. Volunteer at a local shelter, hospital or hospice.
55. Step in even if it makes you uncomfortable.
56. Speak up.
57. Be cheerful but honest.
58. Give lots of hugs.
59. Never forget how important you are & how much your community needs you.
60. Just be there.
61. How do you build community?

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Building Your Cache

Your survival cache will do two things for you. First of all, it provides proof that you are part of the community. The fact that you have storage space rented in the town, which you visit regularly, means that you have a stake there. In addition, having it stocked with food and other things you will need means that you won't be a burden to the town. Rather, you might even be an asset.

Remember, everyone is going to be interested in their personal survival, including the people of your chosen retreat town.

Being able to show them how you can be an asset to them is to your advantage, because it is to theirs. Once you can prove your worth to them, in helping them to survive, nothing else will really matter. They'll probably receive you with open arms, because it is to their benefit to do so.

In addition to food and other common survival supplies, be sure to put some tools in storage, especially tools which you might be able to use to establish some sort of post-disaster business that would be useful to the people of the community. If you have skills in repairing anything, you would be valuable to the community, especially if those are skills that nobody else in the community has.

Be sure to keep a copy of the contract for your storage in your bug out vehicle, along with a key to get into your unit. Keep another copy in your bug out bag, in case you end up arriving there on foot. Either way, that paperwork and that key is your ticket into that town, so you want to be sure to have it.



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