

Networking For Preppers: Online Forums

Humans are known to be social creatures, we like to form up into groups and band together with likeminded individuals. So it's no surprise that preppers often want to network with other preppers, especially when you consider that the majority of people are not inclined toward preparation or a survival lifestyle.

Prepping is often seen as a rather quirky behavior or the hallmark of apocalypse fearing, religiously-minded zealots, and preppers are frequently derided by friends and family alike.

As most of us know, the reality of prepping and keeping up a survival mentality is quite different. Most preppers are conscientious, peaceful individuals who simply want to be able to take care of and protect their families and loved ones if SHTF.

Since there is greater strength in numbers, many preppers have a keen interest in [developing a network](#) of likeminded support. That way, if a serious disaster occurs or a catastrophic collapse of civil society happens, they have the numbers necessary to protect and defend themselves, their families and their painstakingly stored supplies.

Some areas have local survival or outdoorsmen groups you could network with, but if you're having a hard time finding a local group, [the internet is a fantastic resource](#) to make use of. There are a lot of really informed, intelligent, well-prepared people out there, and many of them can be found on survival and preppers' forums.

You may meet people living halfway around the world from you, in Australia or New Zealand, or you can specifically seek out

people in the same region, state or city that you live in; the people are there, and the choice is yours.

Forums

There are literally dozens, if not hundreds, of forums dedicated to various aspects of prepping, the survival lifestyle and homesteading. If those topics aren't enough to keep you busy and informed, there are also many forums dedicated to camping and various outdoorsmen activities. Then there are forums dedicated to guns and hunting, so there's something out there for everyone. Some of the largest and most active survival / prepping forums, though, are:

PrepperForums.net is a smaller forum with around 4,000 members, almost 5,000 threads and more than 60,000 posts covering a wide range of topics and prepping concerns. The site is free to join, but you don't have to register unless you want to join in the discussions. There are typically a few dozen users, and additional guests, actively browsing the site at any given time. The forum also has several useful links and suggestions for basic preps if you're just getting started.

SurvivalistBoards.com is a huge survival / prepper forum. With over 5.5 million posts in 294,000+ threads, the SurvivalistBoards forum has over 114,000 members, with nearly 10,000 of those being regular, active members. Topics on this forum span the gambit from DIY projects, recommended reading and book reviews to financial concerns, gunsmithing and reloading your own ammo. First aid, recommendations for maintaining security after a societal collapse, tips for hunting and fishing, and suggestions for self-defense are also discussed in depth. Notably, the SurvivalistBoards also include several foreign-language sections, including Polish, Russian, German, Spanish, Hungarian, Scandinavian and Japanese sections, among others.

WhenSHTF.com is another moderately-sized forum with

approximately 10,000 members in total, of whom about 500 are regularly active. There's nearly 40,000 threads on this forum, with over half a million posts, so the activity level is pretty decent. Like many of the prepper or survival forums out there, whenshtf has a second dedicated to buyers and sellers who are looking to purchase or trade for certain materials and equipment. In addition to the standard prepper discussions, this forum also has regional sections within the US and internationally where members can post to network and connect with others in their neck of the woods.

Wilderness-Survival.net is on par with whenshtf in terms of the number of members and relative size of the forum; there are about 10,800 members, with over 400,000 posts in 22,000+ threads. As a member of this free forum you can also maintain a public or semi-public blog to share with the community and receive feedback on. There's a lot of information on this forum having to do with gardening, homesteading, crafting and building various items, and cooking, canning and preserving food.

SurvivalMonkey.com is reputed to have an excellent community who are friendly, informative and generally more helpful than you might find on some of the other forums. Similar in size to wilderness-survival and whenshtf, the forum has just under 10,000 members and 274,000 posts in 35,800 threads. Most of the standard survival / prepping issues are covered, and the forum also has a small section for buying, selling and trading goods. They also have regional forums dedicated to networking and connecting with other preppers locally.

Maintaining Operation Security (OPSEC)

I'd like to include a special note here regarding the importance of operating with discretion when it comes to your own preparations or stash of survival goodies, especially if

you start trying to network with likeminded individuals. Many of you are probably already familiar with the term OPSEC, a military phrase short for operation security.

For those who aren't, operation security basically entails keeping details of your actions strictly confidential, secret from others. One of the biggest mistakes that new preppers make is telling too many people about their plans.

It's easy to get excited about your preparations, but telling your friends, co-workers or other casual acquaintances about your plans can potentially be dangerous. Even telling your extended family members isn't particularly advisable, unless they are specifically involved in your preps or post-SHTF contingency plan.

The reason is simple: when you broadcast your plans loud and clear for the world to hear, you make yourself an obvious target if or when something does go wrong. At best, you'll be overrun by friends and casual acquaintances hoping to exploit your goodwill toward them. At worst, you may be robbed, assaulted or killed by your former friends, colleagues, or even extended family.

I'm sure you've heard that desperate times call for desperate measures. Well, the bottom line is that desperation can and does change people. People you considered your friends before TEOTWAWKI could easily turn violent after SHTF, when they have nothing and are struggling to survive or are starving.

So save yourself a lot of trouble, and do everything you can to [maintain OPSEC](#); keep a low profile, don't run your mouth in public, keep the number of people who know about your preps to a bare minimum.

Even if you intend to have supplies set aside for extra family members or friends you would wish to help, if they aren't interested in prepping or they don't take it seriously, don't bother mentioning your preps to them; just keep it to yourself

and let them be gratefully amazed by your thoughtfulness if or when the time comes.