

Top 4 Essentials For A Successful Bugout

The reality of bugging out is something that no prepper can afford to ignore.

Regardless of how well prepared you are and what you've done to turn your home into the perfect survival retreat, there are still things that might cause you to have to bug out. Should any of them happen, you want to be ready with your "Plan B" (or perhaps Plan *B0*).

While we all generally recognize that need, we also tend to make the same mistake in our bug out plan. It's a rather simple mistake, actually; one that can easily be forgiven. But in the case of a true emergency which would require a bug out, it could end up being a deadly mistake.

That mistake is that we tend to start our bug out plan from an "ideal" condition of having everyone at home and ready to switch into survival mode. While it would be great if things actually worked out that well, chances are rather slim that they will. In our modern society, with family members constantly running in different directions, about the only time you can count on everyone being home, is when everyone is asleep. If you have teens, you might not even be able to count on it then.

This problem can drastically change any bug out, especially if you're not ready for it. Rather than making grabbing the bug out bags the first step, it makes the first step finding everyone and getting them home. Then you can work on bugging out.

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In reality, planning for this part of the bug out can be more complicated than the rest of the bug out. That's because of the wide variety of variables that can enter into the equation. With each family member having a variety of different places that they go regularly, plus miscellaneous other trips to go shopping and errands during the week, you might actually need several variations on your "get everyone together" plan.

It Starts with Communications

The first part of making this work is having a secure means of getting hold of every family member and making sure they get the bug out signal. With modern cell phones, this is easy, assuming that they are working. But what if they aren't? What if we're suddenly hit with an EMP, which not only takes out the grid, but takes out all communications at the same time?

There really isn't an easy answer for this, at least not one you can be 100% sure of. The best is to decide that in the case of a loss of power and a loss of cell phone communications, everyone puts their get-home-plan into effect. But if you do that, you're going to have to be ready to back your children up, if they leave school and it turns out they are wrong.

Generally speaking, text messages are a more reliable means of communications than voice calls. The bandwidth needed for texting is less than for voice, making it so that text messages will often get through, when there isn't enough of a signal to make a voice call.

One person in the family should have the responsibility to decide that it's necessary to bug out. This is usually the

person who takes the lead on preparing the family to survive, but it can be another. That's something for you to decide. Once they send out that first message via text, each family member should call two other family members, to ensure that everyone gets the word. If the system becomes overloaded with other people making the emergency calls, you can't necessarily count on the first notification getting through.

A very important part of your family's communications is that you keep each other informed about where you are. This applies to every member of the family, regardless of how much they complain about their individual privacy. That information could be critical in an emergency situation.

Getting the Kids Home

The next challenge is getting the kids home from wherever they are; school or other activities. For the sake of this article, I'm referring to kids who are too young to drive here. Older children, who drive themselves to school or work are treated the same as mom and dad.

Most of the time, younger children will be at school or after-school activities. The good thing about this is that it limits the number of places they are likely to be and most of those places will be near your home. But they may not be close enough to home for your children to get there on their own. So, you need to have a pick-up plan for them.

This pick-up may not be accomplished by the same person who normally picks them up. If mom, for example, normally picks the kids up after school, but her workplace is on the other side of a river, she may have trouble getting there to pick them up. Therefore, whichever driver in the family has the greatest security of being able to pick them up, should be the one assigned this task.

As a backup to that, the kids should be prepared to walk home,

assuming that your home is close enough to wherever they are going to be, so that they can do that. As part of that, they should have a pre-planned route to use, which everyone knows, so that it is possible to pick them up along the way.

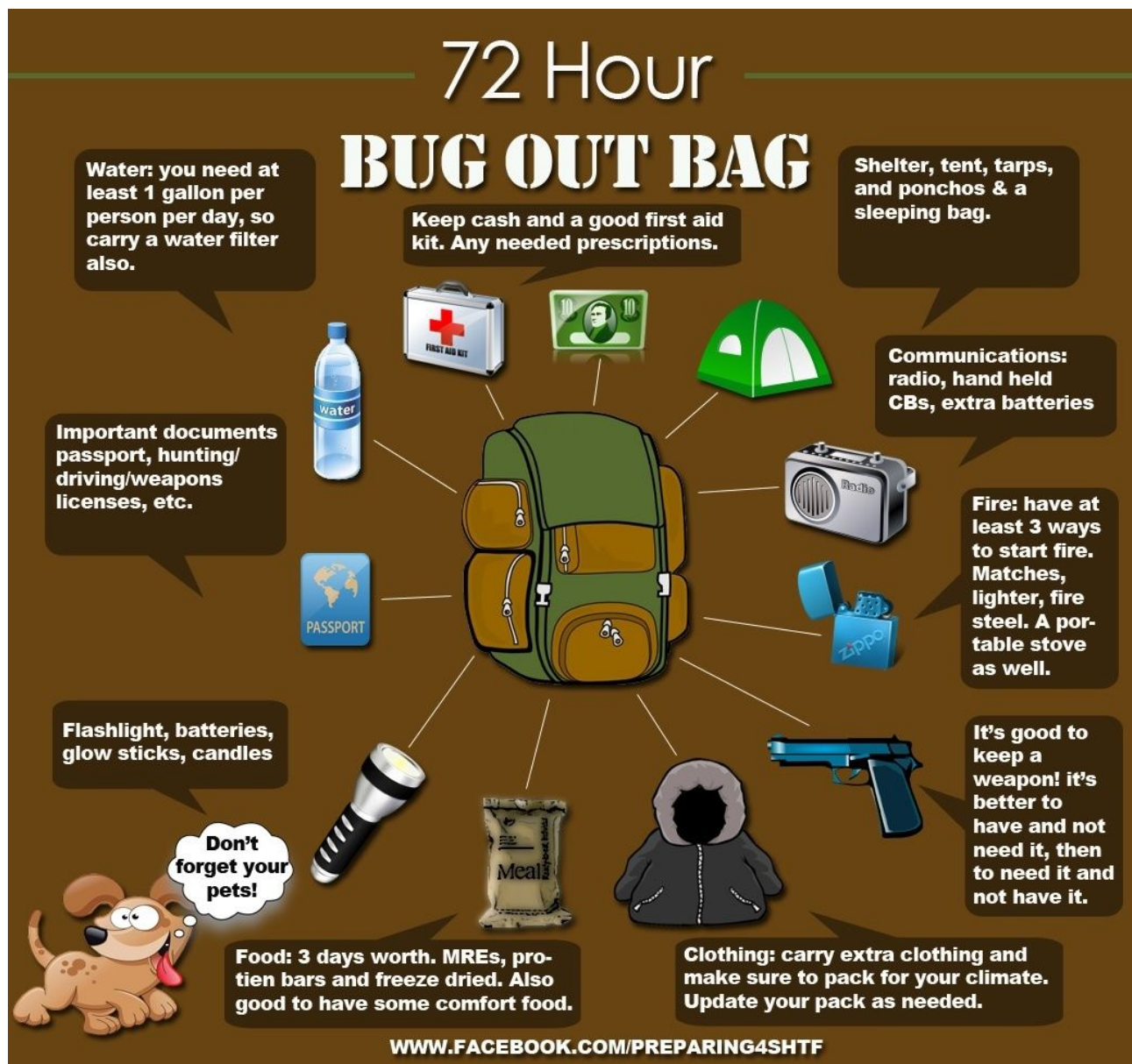
In addition, the children need some basic gear to help them get home. Most kids carry a backpack to school these days, so it really shouldn't be a problem to add in a couple of extra things.

How much you add will depend on their level of survival training, how far they have to go to get home and what the school allows them to carry. It is unlikely that the school will be favorable with them carrying a full survival kit, especially the knife and fire-starting part.

Besides, we're really not trying to prepare them to survive on their own, but to get home on their own. With that in mind, make sure they have:

- Rain poncho
- Tactical flashlight with extra battery
- Laminated map of the area
- Backup battery for their phone

If the children are going to be in a place where they can't walk home in a couple of hours, especially someplace like on the other side of the river, you may want to add more survival gear and some snacks to that.



Getting Mom & Dad Home

Theoretically, it should be easier to get mom and dad home, as they will be driving. However, chances are they have farther to travel to get home. If something happens to make the roads impassible or render their vehicle unusable, they might have to walk home. Therefore, they should be prepared for that sort of a worst-case scenario.

This means having a full-blown survival kit in the car, which is something we should all do anyway. My EDC (everyday carry) bag is a rather complete survival kit, as well as having things to help me with day-to-day problems. I keep it in the

trunk of my car, so that I have it with me, whenever I leave home.

But even that might not be enough. I'd hate to think of some woman trying to walk home 20 miles in high heels in the midst of a disaster. Men's shoes aren't so bad for that, but women's shoes are horrible. So keeping a pair of good walking shoes, like tennis shoes, along with some rugged clothing, a jacket and a hat in the car makes sense as well, if it would be needed.

But don't stop there; think the situation through all the way. I've mentioned the phrase, "across the river" a couple of times. What if you have a family member who works on the other side of the river and the bridge is down? How will they get home then? Is that likely?

That depends on the chances of earthquakes in the area where you live. I know that if I lived in southern California and worked on the other side of the river, I'd at least keep an inner tube and a pump in the trunk of my car, if not a small inflatable rubber boat.

Keep in mind that you're prepping for what can happen; not just for what you think is likely to happen. Limiting yourself to just those things which you think are likely could end up being very dangerous. Better to over-prepare and not need it, than to need it and not have prepared for it. An inner tube isn't all that expensive and doesn't take up that much room in the trunk of your car

A Backup Meeting Place

One more thing you need is a backup meeting place. Since a bug out plan is a contingency plan anyway, we need to consider all our contingencies. That includes the possibility of not being able to meet at home, in the case that something has made the house uninhabitable, such as a flood, earthquake or radiation.

In such a case, you need a backup place for your family to meet; preferably someplace that wouldn't be affected by the types of things that could make your home uninhabitable; perhaps someplace on higher ground. At the same time, it needs to be close enough to home, that family members can make it there on foot.

As part of your plan, whoever has made it home should leave to go to this alternate meeting place after X number of hours or days, taking all your bug out equipment with them. They should then remain in that place until the rest of the family arrives or it is clear that they won't arrive. From there, you can execute your bug out plan.

Of course, if everyone in the family knows the bug out plan, than anyone who doesn't make it home or to this secondary meeting place would still have the ability to continue on and meet up with the family later, either en route or at your survival retreat.



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