

7 Unusual Multi-Purpose Items For Survival

It's common knowledge that you should stockpile items like water, food and bleach but there are also items that you probably already have in your house that you can use for survival. Another great thing about these items is that, for all of you thrifty shoppers out there, you can often get these for very little money, or even for free if you coupon and watch sales. Free and multi-purpose? What a deal!

We've included some regular household uses, too because we're all about repurposing and saving some money!

Maxi Pads

These pads are made to be absorbent and they're also wrapped individually so that they stay clean until you use them. They have several different uses that have nothing to do with feminine hygiene, though you should definitely stock them for that purpose too if you have a woman in the house, or even if you don't. Think barter.

- Wound dressing
- Staunching blood flow
- Cut to make an eye patch
- Starting fires (tinder)
- Cold or hot compress
- Shoe lining to absorb moisture and add padding
- Blocking drafts around windows or doors
- Barter

You can get regular maxi pads or you can get mini pads. The minis take up much less space but don't absorb as much. If you have the room, get both.

Clear Plastic Garbage Bags

It's waterproof, clear and a bit stretchy. Clear plastic garbage bags have so many uses for both survival and everyday living that you should stock several roles.

- Solar still for your water
- Water collection
- Rain poncho
- Shelter
- Hanging your food if in the woods
- Keep wound dressings dry
- Cover a broken window
- Lay underneath your sleeping bag to keep it dry and to keep from losing heat
- Mark trails
- Keep weeds out of your garden – lay bags over soil
- Boot covering to keep your shoes dry
- Carrying items to keep them dry
- Collecting and disposing of human waste
- Blow them up and they float or make a good pillow

Trash bags are, of course, useful just to have around the house and serve a wide variety of purposes even in everyday circumstances.

[CLICK HERE to find out more about simple and effective first aid techniques that you need to learn for survival.](#)

Aluminum Foil

Aluminum foil is the bomb. Around the house it has dozens of uses and is an integral part of food prep and cleanup for many households. When you add these to the survival uses of aluminum foil, this shiny product is a must-have multi-purpose item to keep in your BOB or in your pantry. It takes up little space and is re-usable as long as you buy the heavy duty

version.

- Line your pans or oven to make clean-up easy
- Clean your cast iron skillets with aluminum foil and salt
- Make a cup
- Place petroleum jelly-coated cotton ball on a cupped piece of foil to keep the jelly from melting into the ground. It will burn much longer.
- Use for signaling
- Mark camp with it so that your light reflects off of it. Just stick it to a tree or something at eye level.
- Sharpen scissors by cutting through a few layers of foil
- Make [cooking packs for open-fire cooking](#)
- Keep your pie crusts from burning
- Make a cooking vessel
- Hang pieces around your garden to keep birds and critters out
- Clean your grill with a wadded up piece of foil

Pantyhose

Pantyhose are extremely inexpensive and [have about a million uses](#), both for survival and for everyday living.

- [Water filtration](#)
- Rope, and it won't leave rope burns or damage
- Making an herb or tea sachet so you don't have to strain the concoction
- Polishing your shoes
- Tie up your plants without damaging the stalks
- Keep your wrapping paper organized – just slide the roll into a leg.
- Make homemade stuffed toys by stuffing them with cotton or old T-shirts
- Store onions, potatoes, garlic, flower bulbs and herbs. Keeping them off the ground keeps them from spoiling so

fast

- Cover your rolling pin to keep dough from sticking to it
- Place melons and squash in them as they grow to keep animals from eating them
- Put your bar soap in the toe to keep it from getting nasty and to keep from wasting it
- Put a piece over the end of your vacuum cleaner hose to find lost earring backs or other small items
- Put human or dog hair in a foot and tie around your garden to keep deer and other foragers from scarfing down your goods. Replace every month or so because the hair loses the scent.

Video first seen on [Howcast](#).

Steel Wool

These handy little pads are another example of a multi-purpose item that every household should have. Sure they're great for scrubbing pots, but they can help keep you from freezing to death too. Read on and you'll never toss another piece in the trash!

- Throw a couple of sparks from your farro stick into a wad of steel wool to get a quick fire going
- If you don't want something to reflect, buff it with steel wool to remove the shine
- Peel carrots or potatoes by scrubbing with steel wool
- Put steel wool around pipes or in seep holes in your house to keep mice and other rodents out. They can't chew through it

Fine Mesh Strainer

In addition to being handy to have in the kitchen, a fine mesh strainer is a great multi-purpose survival tool, too. You can often pick these up at a garage sale for a little bit of

nothing and they're so handy that we recommend having a spare and an heir. Yeah, you may use it that much. Make sure you get the fine mesh.

- Filtering water. Double your power by adding a coffee filter to it
- Straining oil to make biodiesel
- Straining rendered fat for cooking, candle-making, soap making, etc.
- Straining herbs from medicinal concoctions
- Filtering fresh milk
- Separating curds and whey when making cheese

Sarong

OK, we admit that this might be the most unique item that we've listed to date but keeping a few sarongs on hand isn't a bad idea. Sure they're typically worn as a dress but when you look at one, it's actually just a large piece of cloth that you can do whatever you want to with. You'll usually find bandanas on survival lists, and this is sort of just a BIG bandana.

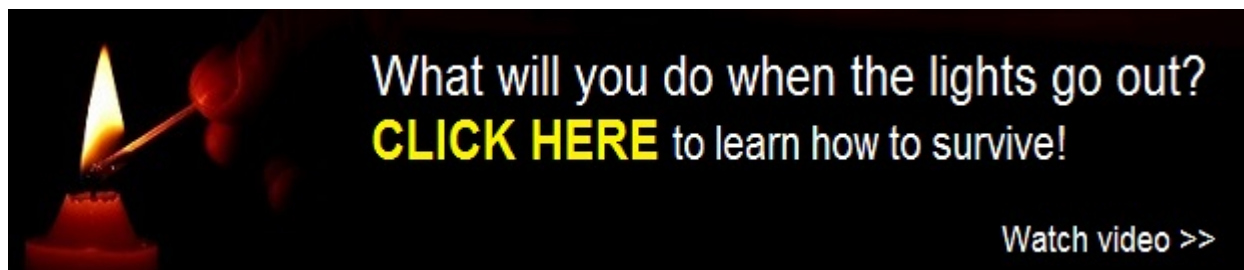
- Making bandages
- Making a carry bag
- Make a sling
- Make a hammock
- Use as a light blanket
- Barter
- Filter water
- Use as a towel
- Tablecloth
- Curtains for windows or to divide a room
- Hang to make a sunscreen/shelter

When it comes right down to it, you need to pick items that you can use now, and that you will find useful should the world as we know it cease to be. The entire goal of prepping

is to have everything on hand that you'll need to survive. What that consists of varies depending upon your location, your needs and your knowledge.

Our goal is to provide you with ideas to help you live independently and to be prepared should something happen. Repurposing items is not only great for your wallet, it's great for the environment. Items that we can use for many different purposes are the best and when we find them, we love to share them.

If you can think of any more good uses for the items that we've described, or if you have other good multi-purpose survival items that we missed, please share with us in the comments section below!



*This article has been written by **Theresa Crouse** for [Survivopedia](#).*