

What Are Your 2025 Prepping Plans?

The new year is a time of new beginnings. People make their resolutions; most of which will be broken within the week. Others look back at the previous year, seeking to make a list of what they've accomplished. But I would say the wisest amongst us use the new year as a chance to make plans and goals for what they want to accomplish that year.

You know the old saying: "Failure to plan, is planning to fail." Well, this is the time for that planning.

This is typically the time of year when I tell people to go through and inventory their prepping supplies, making sure that everything is still in good shape, usable, and stored where they think it is stored. Both equipment and supplies, left sitting, stored away, can go bad; and we want to make sure that our stockpile of both equipment and supplies are ready to use, whenever a disaster happens. Otherwise, we might as well not have them.

But that just deals with maintaining your status quo. If your inventory and equipment all checks out good, then you haven't lost any ground. But what about gaining ground? That's what I want to deal with here.

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I've been learning about survival since I was a teenager. In other words, for 50 years. I say "learning" intentionally, because even with all I know and all I've written about survival, I'm eminently aware that I don't know it all.

There's always more to learn. Just like there's always more to prepare.

Planning for the new year

So, how do I come up with my plan for the new year?

The review process, checking my inventory and equipment is the first step in this process. Obviously, if there's something that has gone bad in my supply inventory or a piece of equipment that isn't working right, those are my top priorities. But the inventory process serves another important purpose for me as well; that of grounding me in where I am in my prepping journey. Trying to make plans for tomorrow, without the solid foundation of understanding where I am today, is a recipe for disaster.

As I look over the equipment that I have, it seems that I can always find things that are missing; things that I need to add, in order to be more prepared. As I look things over this year, one thing that stands out is that my bug out vehicle isn't really ready to go. I've got a great vehicle, a 1990 Toyota 4-Runner; but there's a lot I want to do to it, in order to turn it into the ultimate bug out vehicle. That's going to be part of my plan for this year.

I do the same thing with my skills and knowledge; looking over what I've learned and what I know. I divide this into two general areas: survival skills and marketable skills in a post-apocalyptic world. In the survival category, I'm specifically looking for survival skills that might have gotten rusty, which I need to give myself a refresher on. Hunting and fishing can fall into this category for me, as I don't do as much hunting and fishing as I did in my younger years. I need to force myself to find time for these activities, so that I don't lose the skills.

But there are other survival skills that I have never learned

as thoroughly as I would like to. These are varied, including such things as medical skills and foraging for edible plants. Plant identification has never been a strong area for me; so, it follows to reason that I have trouble identifying edible plants. For that matter, I have trouble even knowing where to look for those edible plants. That's a skill I need to work on.

The other area of skills, the "marketable skills" is a whole different animal. I believe that in the event of a true TEOTWAWKI event, it's going to fall to us preppers to rebuild whatever sort of society we will live in after that event. For one thing, we are the ones who are most likely to survive such an event; meaning that we will make up a large portion of the population. For another, most of us are practical people; the kind who are likely to have the necessary hands-on skills.

I have a few areas of skills that qualify in this regard. For one thing, I used to be a manufacturing engineer. That means that I know how a wide variety of things work and how to fix them. Overall, I'm pretty good at making things and working with my hands. If we're going to rebuild any sort of society, we're going to need to do a lot of fixing and a lot of jury-rigging to get any sort of infrastructure working.

On top of that, I'm a woodworker. I can make just about anything out of wood. But like most woodworkers today, I'm more of a power-tool woodworker, than a hand-tool woodworker. I have a lot of respect for those who went before power tools existed, especially when I look at the fine craftsmanship of their work; but I'm not there yet. That's one of the things I was working on last year, as well as one of the ones I intend to work on in this new year.

Even with that, I would love to find a way to modify my workshop, so that I can run my power tools off of some power source than electricity. In olden times, both animal power and water power were used to run machine shops and other power

tools. I don't know how I could use either where I am; but I'm still looking.

Your plans

Okay, we've talked about me; now let's talk about you. Everything I've talked about is to give you a basic idea of how I go through this planning process at the beginning of the year; so that you'd be able to apply that to yourself and your preparedness.

Start out by looking at where you are today. That means doing an inventory of your survival supplies, determining just how long you can survive, should a disaster strike and the supply chain be cut. If you find that you have inadequate supplies in some area of that some of your supplies have gone bad in the last year, then rectifying that problem has to become part of your new year's plan.

While you're doing that, be sure to test all your survival equipment. There is little likelihood that equipment will go bad, unless it contains batteries and the batteries themselves leak. Nevertheless, testing all of your gear is a great way to make sure you're up to date on where you have everything stored and how everything operates. It's amazing just how much you can forget in a year. If your testing doesn't go smoothly, schedule yourself some time with that piece of equipment, using it enough to get yourself back in the groove.

Now we get to the important part; that of evaluating your survival skills and how they fit into your overall survival strategy. Nobody can do this for you, as nobody else has your exact survival plan. Your skills and your plan have to fit seamlessly together, something that only you can accomplish. And you will do it in a unique way that is molded around your personality, character, skills and abilities.

Whatever skills you decide to work on this year, must be

skills that fit into your overall survival plan, improving that plan, if possible. If they don't improve it, they should fix areas where you feel that you are weak and in need of improvement. Either way, you want to end this new year with greater skills than you have today. Ideally, you want to know how to do at least a couple of things well, at the end of the year, that you don't know how to do today.

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It would be a good idea to extend that planning beyond yourself and take in your family as well. I know that not all family members are always 100% on-board with the prepping lifestyle. Even so, when things go bad and you have to depend on yourselves to survive, they will find themselves needing those skills.

Back when my kids were living at home, I got them involved in whatever areas of prepping I could. That especially included such things as gardening and prepping projects such as drilling a well and building a rainwater capture system. Now that they have grown up and have their own families, I find them using those skills to take care of their spouses and children. So, whether they appreciated it back then or not, they appreciate now, what I forced them to learn back then.

Make sure you write down your plan for this year and post it someplace where you can see it regularly. I like to post these things over my desk, where I can see them every day. I might not read it every day; but having it there serves as a reminder to myself of what my goals are for the year.