

72 Hour Emergency Kit List

By EmergencyPortal.ca

Normally a 72 hour kit is to go from your home to an emergency shelter or your emergency contact location. However, anything can happen in the voyage in-between, therefore the list here is also tailored with that in mind. **Note that it is preferable to have a 5 - 7 day kit in the event rescue takes longer to arrive.**

This is not an exhaustive list, nor will it meet the requirements of every environment and scenario. It is important to learn what the risks are in your environment and to prepare accordingly. I suggest that you get some training in [survival skills](#), and to practice them. Become [first aid certified](#) as well. You won't regret it.

Notes/Tips:

- This list is an example of what you may put in a [72 hour kit](#). Other lists exist with variations to the one you'll find here below. Add or remove as you see fit, however, be certain to address the elements of survival that I'll list below.
- Remember to tailor your kit according to the needs of the one it will belong to. Every member of the family who is able to carry their own kit, or a part of it, will need to customize **their** kit for **their** needs.
- Stock your kit according to the environment you expect to use it in, and alter your kit with the changing seasons. Different seasons require different clothing as an example.
- Be certain to rotate any perishable items according to their expiration dates. This includes any prescription medications, vitamin supplements, food, water etc. For batteries it should be once a year as well as for water and any canned foods. Make a note in your agenda to avoid forgetting.
- The [elements of survival](#) should be respected in any modifications to the list you may wish to make in order to tailor your kit for yourself and your family. Keep in mind that you need to meet the needs of: [shelter](#), [signaling](#), [fire](#), [water](#), [food](#), [location/navigation](#) and [medical](#) in your kit. Remember, that pets have the same basic needs as we do. Don't forget your pets!
- Be careful about the overall weight of your kit, or you may find that you will not be able to carry it. If you think about putting your kit in a basket with wheels, that may or may not work, depending on the terrain and debris after a disaster. Be prepared to carry your kit if need be. Also, if the kit is on the heavy side, you will expend more energy and dehydrate more rapidly because your body has to work harder to carry the extra load. So keep it simple, or you will find yourself needing a wheelbarrow instead of a backpack :)
- Use a backpack so that the load is square on your hips and shoulders, and that you can have your hands free for other uses. If you choose to, a duffle bag may be used as well, but it is less convenient.
- When necessary, IMPROVISE with what is in your environment to supplement what you have in your kit. Prepare by always having a properly stocked kit to begin with, because you never know what may await you. Perhaps there is no water source where you may find yourself, so even though you know how to make water potable it won't do you much good in this situation. So have a supply of water with you and anything else that is important to bring along.
- When it comes to lighting a fire on a sunny day, use the fresnel lens magnifier or firesteel and spare the matches and lighter fuel. The same goes for water rations. If there is a decent water source, render it potable and spare your supply on hand for when there won't be a source of water. Use good judgment and determine according to your circumstances what's best to do. Try to stretch your supplies by being wise in how you utilize them.
- The colors for your equipment I'll leave up to you, but remember that earth tone and camouflage colors will be more difficult to see, and therefore more difficult to find something if you lost it. Also keep in mind that if you want to be seen (rescued if that is what is needed) or be able to find something you lost, orange is normally best. You can make items more visible by using brightly colored tape or reflective material.
- To avoid carrying the house on your back, choose items that serve more than one function. Multi-use items such as large orange garbage bags can serve as a make-shift poncho, signaling, water containment, garbage disposal, groundsheet (not for insulation, but staying clean), shelter etc. Emergency blankets are also multi-use items. A multi-tool like the Leatherman Wave or other is obviously another example. It is also a matter of survival to know how to make the best use of any given item. For battery operated devices, select those that use the same type of batteries as other devices that you have, so that the batteries are interchangeable if

necessary.

I included clothing in the Shelter and Warmth section because clothing is your 1st line of defense against the elements.

- Check the boxes for the items that you have.
- This arrow symbol indicates a note that I added.

Shelter and Warmth

- Tarp 9' x 12' (or plastic sheeting 3 mils thickness)
- A Tube Tent from Coghlan's.
- Paracord 50' min. True 7 inner stranded [paracord](#) is the best to have for a kit. It is lightweight, inexpensive and has more uses than regular rope. If you have other rope that can do as well.
- Emergency blanket
- Blanket, or sleeping bag (more bulky)
- Sleeping pad to protect you from losing body heat into the ground. This is a bulky item, and with knowledge there are other options available to avoid having to bring the pad.
- Change of outerwear according to the season. 1 pair top/bottom. [Avoid cotton](#). It is preferable to use synthetics and/or wool.
- Change of underwear according to the season. 1 pair top/bottom.
- Have an extra pair of socks.
- Have a toque, mitts etc. for winter.
- You can use a Tube Tent, a tarp or other for shelter. If you go with the Tube Tent, bring a tarp just the same because it has many uses and acts as a backup if need be for your shelter, or to simply make it more weather and wind proof.
- Always have proper clothing on to begin with including sturdy footwear. Layering is preferable in winter.
- Be certain that your spare clothing still fits. Some of us experience expansion over the wintertime :)

Signaling

- Quality whistle such as a [Fox40 Micro](#) or Howler.
- A quality [signal mirror](#).
- Light from a flashlight or other bright lighting device may be used, or an orange poncho, orange garbage bag, emergency blanket etc.

Fire

- Waterproof matches in a match safe.
- Firesteel
- Butane lighter (place it in a plastic bag to protect it from getting wet.
- Fresnel lens magnifier (not very efficient)
- 2 'Tea' candles. Good for starting stubborn tinder and provides a little warmth in small enclosures such as a vehicle or a quinzee in the wintertime.

- Tinder. Cotton balls mixed with petroleum jelly such as Vaseline or other brand will make excellent tinder. Place in a Ziploc until needed.
- Do not overdue it with the jelly when you mash it into the cotton ball, or you'll have difficulty in lighting it if you use a firesteel. Make it a 50/50 ratio of cotton/jelly. When ready to use, pull open the cotton to expose the dry part within and send a spark into it. This will cause a fire to ignite the dry cotton which will then ignite the petroleum jelly/cotton surrounding it. At worst case use a lighter to get it going, and let the tinder do its job as you build up the flame into a fire. Learn how to make a fire under any conditions.

Water

- Purification tablets such as [Katadyn Micropur MP1](#). Use the container you'll have for the microfilter.
- Microfilter with a container such as a 1 litre Nalgene bottle. A pot for boiling is great.
- 2 litres min. of drinking water per person per day. 4 litres is recommended if you include hygiene and cooking. Given that water weighs in at 2.204 lbs/litre, this gets ridiculous. 4 litres/day for 3 days weighs 26.5 lbs! I suggest having 2 - 4 litres in your 72 hour kit. If you can, drink a litre or more of water before evacuating so that you hydrate yourself requiring less to carry. Use other methods to increase your supply.
- The time of year and the environment among other factors will determine just how much water per day that you need. Take the information above as a general guideline, and adjust according to your needs.
- It is important to have some backup for rendering water potable. Water procurement is IMPORTANT in the event you run out or something happened to your supply. Adding a purification tablet to your filtered water will kill any viruses present (if any). Follow the instructions on the packaging. Microfilters do not remove viruses and do not remove chemical contaminants. Some manufacturers claim that their microfilter systems can, and even have an EPA registration. However, have a look at the data info to get more information. It may not be as effective as a purification tablet. Personally I

would use the tablets in conjunction with the microfilter, in the event that viruses are suspect. In North America viruses aren't usually a problem, however in a disaster situation that may change.

- There are many other ways to make water potable. Choose your method.
- Chemically impure water is another thing altogether. Microfilters and purification tablets won't do. Distillation [might be](#) the method to use in such cases.
- A bottle filter is handy. This is similar to a sports bottle but with the filter integrated. Have a look at the [Katadyn Extream](#) bottle purifier for one example.

Navigation

- ❑ Compass and topographical map of any forests you may need to go through. Have street maps as well.
- Know how to use the [map and compass](#), or it will serve no purpose to have them.
- A GPS unit is optional. If you desire one, still pack the map and compass. Bring extra batteries for the GPS. There are downsides in relying on GPS.

Medical

- ❑ First Aid kit (don't skimp with this, but don't overdue it as well). Pack a first aid manual.
- ❑ Add anything to the kit that isn't there but needs to be, according to your needs. Know how to use the kit as well.
- ❑ Prescription medications for up to 7 days if you can (if applicable)
- ❑ Medications such as Ibuprofen, Aspirin etc. for up to 7 days.
- It is preferable to have more than a 3 day supply of any medications, just in case.
- [Become first aid certified](#). This may benefit you, your family and community.

Food

- ❑ A **few** canned goods if you desire. If possible avoid something that has to be cooked, or you will need other things in order to cook it. It is your choice, but try and keep the weight down.
- ❑ Granola bars or other nutritious alternative.
- ❑ Trail Mix and dried fruit.
- ❑ Beef Jerky
- Food is a personal thing. Be certain that the food you put in the kit is food that you can stomach, including that you are not allergic to any of the ingredients in it. An example is the food rations

such as MRE's (Meal Ready Eat) that you can purchase or that may be included in a commercially made kit. It isn't time in an emergency to find out that you cannot eat the food that you packed.

- Cans are heavier whether for food or drink. The empty cans may be used to boil water and as containers for other uses.

Miscellaneous Equipment

- ❑ Backpack. Be certain that it fits well.
- ❑ A good knife, such as a bushcraft knife. [Mora](#) knives are simple, in-expensive quality knives that are adequate (not great) for a small kit.
- ❑ A small saw. With knowledge you can cut down a small tree with a knife and avoid the need to bring a saw or an axe. However, that said a saw still has advantages over a knife at times. The [Bahco Laplander Saw](#) will nicely suffice.
- ❑ A good multi-tool such as a [Leatherman Wave](#). If you have a good multi-tool and cannot afford a bush craft knife, this should do. However be aware that the knife in a multi-tool isn't as robust as a bushcraft knife.
- ❑ Duct tape 30' roll. There are small rolls available that are compact. Many uses for duct tape from making repairs to first aid and so forth.
- ❑ Baby and small children items (if applicable)
- ❑ Manual can opener
- ❑ Plastic or styrofoam plates and bowls and plastic utensils. Personally I'd eat straight out of the can avoiding the extra items and garbage afterwards.
- ❑ Headlamp (LED) for hands-free use or a flashlight. Have extra batteries.
- ❑ Working gloves
- ❑ Garbage bags. 2 large orange bags and a few smaller ones. Have a couple of Ziplocs as well.
- ❑ Battery operated radio to listen to what is going on around you.
- ❑ Rain gear or a quality poncho.
- ❑ Notepad and pencil. The pencil you can sharpen. You can purchase from [Rite in the Rain](#) notebooks and pens that are weatherproof, something to consider.
- Remember that a good knife **is a must** in an emergency. It has several uses, from the kitchen to shelter building and so forth.

Personal Supplies

- ❑ Toilet paper. 1 double roll.
- ❑ Waterless hand sanitizer. Place it inside the toilet paper roll to have it handy when needed.
- ❑ Feminine hygiene products (if applicable)
- ❑ Biodegradable soap. Even with this type of soap

be careful to not contaminate the water supply. Be at least 100 meters away from the source if possible. Normally, only a small amount is needed.

- ❑ Towlettes for a body wash, or you can use biodegradable soap with some water and a cloth. Towlettes are simpler.
- ❑ Other toiletries or personal items deemed necessary (hygiene kit)
- Biodegradable soap is an «all-purpose» kind of soap. Use it to wash your hands, hair, body, clothes and dishes (if applicable)

Important Documents

- ❑ Legal documents such as Birth & Marriage certificates, Wills, Passports, Insurance contracts, photocopy of your Driver's Permit, Health Insurance card and anything else you feel is important to include.
- ❑ Have ownership information (license or other) and vaccination records for any pets that you have (if applicable)
- ❑ Family Plan which includes out of area contacts, addresses, telephone numbers, rendez-vous points etc. Have current photos with full names for all of the members of the family. Include this in all kits.
- Place these important documents in a waterproof pouch. Pouches may not be entirely waterproof, but water resistant, so don't submerge them.

Money & Related

- ❑ Cash, about \$100 if you can, if not have at least \$20. The amount of course is really up to you. Break down whatever amount you have into smaller denominations, such as 20's, 10's, 5's. Have smaller change such as \$2 and \$1 coins, as well as quarters for payphones if they are working.
- ❑ Pre-Paid phone cards for payphones if they work
- ❑ Cell phone, in case it does work and you have an emergency. It all depends on the nature of the emergency.
- ❑ Credit card if you have one. However it may be useless if the electricity is out and the networks are down. Have cash available.
- If where you live you have different denominations for your currency, break it down accordingly. The point is to have smaller amounts instead of only larger ones. An example is if you needed to buy something and the person doesn't have change, you may wound up giving much more than the price asked, especially if the item is really important to you. So have change and

smaller bills.

Pets (if applicable)

- ❑ Have a pet transport cage if you have a cat or dog. One for each animal. Shelters may require this. Have a small, secure cage for birds. Bring anything else your pet needs, like litter etc.
- ❑ Have food, water and any medications for your pet(s). Use non spill bowls.
- ❑ Bring ownership information (license or other) with vaccination records.
- ❑ Photograph your pet(s) and put its name on the photo.
- ❑ If your pet such as a cat or dog has a sweater, bring it if the season is chilly.
- ❑ Pet toys to keep them busy. It will help them to calm down. Pets can be stressed during the traveling, as well as in the shelter environment.
- A dog, depending on the size can actually carry his own kit. [Dog packs](#) exist that goes over the dogs back. Put some food in it. Don't put anything of value of yours in it, in the event that Rover decides to make a run for it leaving you in the dust trail and you don't see him again.

A few other things...

- ❑ Pack things in plastic bags and Ziplocs where applicable, so that things are waterproofed. It is also to protect your things from any spillage such as from the soap bottle or other.
- ❑ Put a plastic 'liner' on the inside of your backpack, or an external liner called a pack cover, to aid in keeping the rain out. A plastic garbage bag can be used in both cases.
- ❑ Laminate all photos to protect them from the elements.
- ❑ Have a little photo ID for each of your young children to hang around their necks in a disaster. The ID should include their name and information on how to contact you. This is in the event that your child is separated or lost. Authorities and relief agencies will have a much easier time to reunite you with your child with an ID. Do this for all of your children (if applicable)
- ❑ Toys for children (if applicable)
- ❑ Have a few candies and treats around to, it can help you to become more calm. A sort of «comfort food».
- You can print a copy for personal, non-commercial purposes and not for display on another website or other medium.