

For the Overwhelmed Prepping Newbie

When the husband and I decided that we wanted to be more self-sufficient, we were extremely excited. Who wouldn't be? We had visions of incredible harvests, a huge pantry filled with colorful jars of the garden bounty, firewood stacked, freezers full, and us in our cozy little cabin sitting back and enjoying it. We agreed that before all of that though, we needed to have at least 3 months' worth of supplies stocked up to get us through unforeseen hard times. The task fell to me to figure out what to stock, how much to stock, and how to store it.



Talk about having the excitement vacuumed out of ya! I dove in, eager to start my research and was completely overwhelmed in short order. There is so much information out there it is hard to tell what is 'good' and what may be someone just trying to make a buck by feeding your fears (fear mongering) and selling you something that is just not reasonable for your area and situation. I had to take a step back, get OFF the Internet and start thinking in the most basic of terms. I needed bite-sized, manageable pieces to work with as we tried to wrap our head around what to prepare for, let alone going about actually preparing. I am only about 18 months into this adventure though some may argue that because I live in rural Alaska, I grew up with a 'prepper' mentality. Even still, I was unsure where to turn and there is no real 'road map' for the newbie. My first lesson in prepping was learning how to prepare. It is so much more than tossing some food into a bucket and calling it good.

In my day-to-day life I am an organizer, a facilitator. Regardless of what industry I work in, there are always different bits and pieces of 'the machine' that need to work well together. As the saying goes, "There is always room for improvement," and through my experiences I have learned that I LOVE to create forms. So, how to get all of those little bits and pieces in one place so you can tackle it in a logical way? Well, I made myself an interactive form. I offer it to you here in the hopes that it will help you take control and

beat back the overwhelming feelings and anxiety most new preppers feel. As I considered several different disaster scenarios, a few things always came up such as clean water, food and how to cook it, and staying warm. A recurring theme came to light and helped to shape what I share with you now. (The link can be found below)

This form is not meant to cover absolutely everything. It is a tool I created to help me get my thoughts and needs in order so I could make a comprehensive plan. I broke it into two main parts:

The first part covers the demographics such as how many people, how long to prepare for, and what kind of disaster situation you feel should be prepared for in your area.

The second part applies to how to meet the 4 basic human needs in said disaster.

It is my sincere hope that this will help you put yourself into the situation and truly consider things such as how you will cook that food, how you will heat that living space, and how you plan on dealing with the sanitation/hygiene aspects of surviving an ugly situation.

If you are the person in your family who sees the true need to prepare for the unknown and have a hard time getting people to consider your point of view, filling this out and printing it off for them to read might just be the thing to open their eyes. In my own experiences, those who are the most staunchly against the need for preparing seem to have a very different view when it is in print and in their hands. When you get down to it, no one wants to consider losing their house and security but something happens when it is written down and printed. They begin to consider how to protect what they have or how to provide when they cannot simply go to the store. My next article will go more deeply into assessing how much you actually have stored and how long it will realistically last you in a SHTF situation. I do not claim to be an expert however, I have developed some simple steps that will help you determine if you have 'enough' to meet your particular goals.

There is no 'right' answer here and I believe that is one of the reasons why there is nothing like this out there for the prepping newbie. I certainly couldn't find it, so I made it and freely share it with you, your friends, and family through the Tin Hat Ranch.

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