

Bug Out Journals How to Learn From Your Mistakes By Joseph Parish

Every survivalist should practice and rehearse what they will actually do should the emergency ever occurs. Being prepared is the main key to survival and the only means by which we can obtain this necessary proficiency is to practice. Every time we execute a practice exercise, we discover that we have forgotten something or we recognize that we need to add something to our BOB or to the BOV. This is not a predominantly lethal dilemma At this time! It could very well be if we were in an actual situation.

Practicing our Bug Out actions is a great exercise in the event we actually have to leave the area. Unfortunately, we tend to forget things shortly after they occur and eventually they fade completely with time. It is possible to combine work with pleasure so to speak. We know we need to have that practice exercise so why not make it a weekend for essentially “camping out”. This affords us the opportunity to actually practice what we have been working so hard to prepare for. Now the key to making this “camp out” a success is to evaluate how we performed on the exercise. We cannot evaluate our performance if we cannot remember many of the little tid-bit items that we encountered, therefore the best method to prevent this from happening is by use of a Bug Out Journal detailing our every step.

If you have previously completed a Bug Out exercise then take a few minutes and try to recall the events that took place during that simulation. What events stand out in your mind? Think about your first Bug Out exercise. There is no doubt that you will remember very little concerning the geographical aspects of your experience, the people you met, the particular route which you took and the traffic situation all along your path. These experiences are completely lost now and if you think about it without this feedback, your exercise was useless. If you maintain a Bug Out Journal in the future this will not happen again.

History records many significant figures who kept daily journals of their campaigns and adventures among them were Macarthur, Napoleon and others. While your journal would not have to be as elaborate as theirs, it still would serve its purpose..

A good Bug Out Journal combines several characteristics. Since in a BOV space is a premium with packing the BOB and stowing extra food and water, etc one cannot afford the luxury of large bulky books to use as journals. Therefore, the journal should be compact so it does consume valuable cargo space that could be used for other things. Second, you should provide a case or cover of some sort to protect the journal from the elements, unexpected spills and so on. Third, your Bug Out Journal should of course contain blank pages to inscribe your notes properly.

Certain information that may prove useful in your analysis may include:

Who was part of the exercise team that participated?

What was your destination? Did you make it there?
Did you meet any like-minded people in the process?
Did you obtain contact information on them?
What were the geographical details of where you went?
What were the daily weather forecasts?
What were any unique things that occurred during the exercise.

Upon completing your exercise, you should easily be able to obtain the following information from your journal.

At the end of the camping trip, you should be able to get the following from your journal:

Contact information regarding the people you meet
Enough detailed information to lead you back to the same spot you stayed at during the exercise if needed.
Any items that you discovered that you did not have but could have used.

To obtain the most benefit out of your Bug Out Journal you should inscribe entries in it during your exercise. Every exercise is unique and provides plenty of information that we can learn and improve upon.