

LEARNING MADE EASY



Disaster Prepping

for
dummies[®]
A Wiley Brand



Create a plan
for when disaster strikes

Prep for utility outages
and other shortages

Know when it's time
to evacuate your home

David E. Stevens

Author of the *Fuzed* trilogy

Disaster Prepping For Dummies®

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by David E. Stevens

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Introduction

Most disaster preparation books assume the permanent collapse of civilization and promote a rural fortress retreat with a “Rambo” arsenal. If civilization ends, that may be the only path, but most people don’t have the resources, time, or level of OCD required. Even if you *could* survive an apocalypse that results in a *Mad Max* world, would you want to? The good news is you ... *probably won’t*. A cataclysmic disaster bad enough to permanently wipe out civilization will likely take out you and me.

Instead, this book focuses on survivable disasters from minor blackouts to events that require some time for society to reboot. These disasters span everything from floods to asteroid impacts, earthquakes to artificial intelligence. In each case, you’ll either stay and figure out how to get by for a while with little or no municipal infrastructure, or you’ll evacuate. Both scenarios are covered with smart, simple, practical steps for those of us who aren’t ready to remodel that abandoned missile silo.

With simple, inexpensive preparation, you can survive without power, water, and grocery stores for a week. With a little more effort and investment, you can get by more comfortably and extend your time to a month or more. Most of these preparations apply whether you live in rural Australia or a New York City apartment. They include leveraging technology, dual-use items that are useful with or without a disaster, and even things that are fun or might be good investments. This book also touches on more advanced strategies that move you toward permanent independence from municipal power and water. These include powering your home with solar

panels or using an RV or vacation cabin as a survival destination and short-term rental.

The number of Americans who spend some of their household income on disaster preparation doubled to more than 20 million since 2017 and has expanded to include people from all walks of life. Categorizing yourself as a “prepper” isn’t required, and since disaster preparation reduces dependence on municipal resources, it also tends to reduce environmental impact. This has brought together people with very different philosophical and political views but who share common goals.

About This Book

To effectively prepare, it’s important to know what you’re preparing for.

- » [Part 1](#) of this book identifies the different types of disasters you could face, their impacts, and developing a survival mindset. The rest of this book covers the resources needed to survive.
- » [Part 2](#) covers the basics: air, water, food, septic, and medical treatment.
- » [Part 3](#) covers shelter, power, communication, and defense.
- » [Part 4](#) covers evacuation, transportation, and money.
- » [Part 5](#) covers next-level preparation, such as achieving independence from municipal power and water, creating your own disaster retreat, and educating governments on how some of these disasters can be prevented.
- » [Part 6](#) covers fun things you can do while pretending to prep for an apocalypse.

Each chapter is broken down into two levels of preparation separated by cost. The third level is covered in [Part 5](#):

- » **Level 1:** Level 1 preparation is the least expensive and the fastest to implement. It'll get you through a week or two without power, water, or grocery stores. It covers simple hacks and dual-use items, some of which you already have or can buy inexpensively. For example, most water heaters contain enough water in their tank to provide a household with a week of drinking water. Or a small additional monthly fee on your phone plan allows you to use satellites to text when the cell phone network is down. Implementing Level 1 preparation should cost a few hundred dollars. This is budget preparation and is about getting by for a week or two ... not comfort.
- » **Level 2:** Level 2 preparation improves your survival conditions and increases independence from municipal infrastructure for about a month, but requires more investment and effort. This represents the most bang for the buck. It includes important things like keeping your refrigerator powered and dual-use items that are useful in or out of a disaster. For example, a \$400 inflatable hot tub is fun and relaxing, but it can provide 250 gallons (1,000 liters) of water for flushing toilets, cleaning, and drinking (when treated). Implementing Level 2 preparation runs several hundred to several thousand dollars, depending on location and priorities.
- » **Level 3:** Level 3 preparation strategies are covered separately in [Part 5](#). These give more options and move toward permanent independence from the power grid and municipal water, but require a much greater level of investment and effort. However, some of these strategies may pay for themselves over time.

- » **Level 4:** Level 4 preparation — remodeling that abandoned missile silo — isn't covered in this book, nor will this book prepare you for a Navy SEAL mission.

Foolish Assumptions

I've made a few possibly foolish assumptions about you:

- » You're concerned about global or local disasters and their impact on infrastructure. Or ... you really don't want to know any of that depressing stuff. You just want to be able to get through whatever might happen.
- » You're new to disaster preparation but aren't ready for that abandoned missile silo or an appearance on *Naked and Afraid*. Or, you're a pro prepper looking for additional hacks, the latest tech, or a quick reference guide.
- » You appreciate some level of self-reliance and not being completely dependent on municipal resources, or maybe you just want to reduce your environmental footprint.
- » You're willing to look at everyday items from a different perspective and possibly "MacGyver" some things. Yes, "MacGyver" is now a verb in the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, defined as "to make, form, or repair with what is conveniently at hand."

Icons Used in This Book

Icons, the little pictures in the margins, are placed next to some of the paragraphs that may need extra emphasis.



TIP

This symbol indicates additional information that can make things easier to do, or shortcuts and hacks.



REMEMBER

This book is a reference, which means you don't have to commit it to memory, and there's no test at the end of class. However, sometimes there are important bits of information you may want to file away for future use.



WARNING

This symbol represents danger. It's used to emphasize any item or process that could get you or others into trouble.



TECHNICAL
STUFF

Sometimes, we overshare. Technical or scientific information is used to explain the “why,” illustrate a point, or give some background. While we find this stuff absolutely fascinating, you may not. Skipping these sections won't prevent you from applying the steps or strategies.

Beyond the Book

Additional resources and references will be covered, including several other exceptional books in the Dummies series. These books can provide more detailed information on related topics, such as “*Wilderness Survival For Dummies*.”

This book also comes with a free online Cheat Sheet, which highlights key skills, important items to have in your bug-out bag, and a list of vehicles that are effective during disasters and evacuations. Simply go to www.dummies.com and enter “Disaster Prepping For Dummies Cheat Sheet” in the Search box.

Where to Go from Here

You don’t need to read this book from cover to cover, although that’s not a bad idea. The chapters stand on their own; however, I do recommend starting with [Chapter 1](#), which provides an overview of the entire book. [Chapter 2](#) is all about understanding the potential global disasters you may face, ranked by their impact and likelihood. [Chapter 3](#) zeros in on local disasters and specific impacts of both local and global disasters. [Chapter 4](#) covers personal disasters that almost everyone could face sometime during their life.

[Chapters 5](#) and on cover preparation strategy and resources by specific topic or area, such as drinking water, electricity, or evacuation. You can choose to read all the chapters or just choose the topics you’re interested in and that apply to your situation. Inside each chapter, you can choose the level of preparation you wish to achieve.

I’m always looking for feedback, corrections, new ideas, and hacks for future editions. You can reach me at disaster.prep.dummies@gmail.com or www.global-disasters.org.

Finally, many of the top global disasters are actually preventable or can be mitigated. If you want to know more about how they might unfold and how we, as a society, can prevent some of them, read the last chapter or watch the TED talk, “How Do We Prevent Our

Inevitable Extinction?" at

https://www.ted.com/talks/david_e_stevens_how_do_we_prevent_our_inevitable_extinction.

Part 1

Preparing for Prepping

IN THIS PART ...

Understand your “why” for preparing, and evaluate and develop your survival mindset

Identify the potential global threats facing you based on their consequence and probability

Determine the most likely local disasters for your location and the immediate actions required

Consider the more common personal disasters, such as debt and job loss

Author's Acknowledgment

Due to the exceptionally broad topics that this book covers, it required the expert knowledge and experience of many. I would like to particularly recognize my technical editor, Brian Duff. Brian was an Army Ranger with extensive combat experience as well as a survival expert, professional prepper, and teacher. His excellent book, *Mind 4 Survival* (Mind4Survival.com), and YouTube channel, *Mind4Survival*, tackle one of the toughest challenges in a disaster: overcoming ourselves.

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