

SPECIAL FORCES OPERATION FIELD GUIDE

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READYMAN.

PLANNING CITIZEN OPERATIONS



If you must plan combat missions as a citizen, you should know that the United States Army has perfected a way to execute missions with a minimum of risk and a maximum chance of success. Sadly, their field manuals read like gibberish.

Vowing to avoid as many acronyms and military terms as possible, we re-crafted the wisdom of the Army into something a regular person can understand. Even better, ReadyMan has created a series

of *Operation Planning Workbooks* that serve as disposable field notebooks for every kind of prepper mission imaginable.

The Exciting Stuff

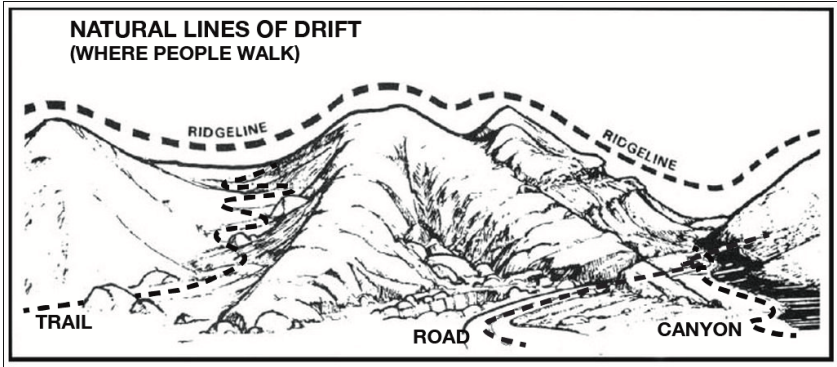
Since we know you're likely to skim this book first, we decided to place the stuff you're going to like the most up front, even though it makes a mess out of the organization of the book. Once we've got you on board—that this book contains life-saving tools, we'll move on to the even-more-important combat survival skill: *planning*.

Standard Group Sizes:

1. **Buddy Team:** 2 guys
2. **Fire team:** 2 to 4 guys (2 Buddy Teams)
3. **Squad:** 6 to 14 guys (2 to 4 Fire Teams)
4. **Platoon:** 18 to 42 guys (2 to 3 Squads)

Order of March.

Order of March means “how to move together” in the quickest way possible that maintains the group's ability to react to an ambush. The faster your group moves, the harder it will be to respond to an ambush. The more you can respond to an ambush, the slower you will move. What formation will you use (discussed later in this chapter)? Where will the leader be in the formation? Where will critical equipment and comms be?



Lines of Drift.

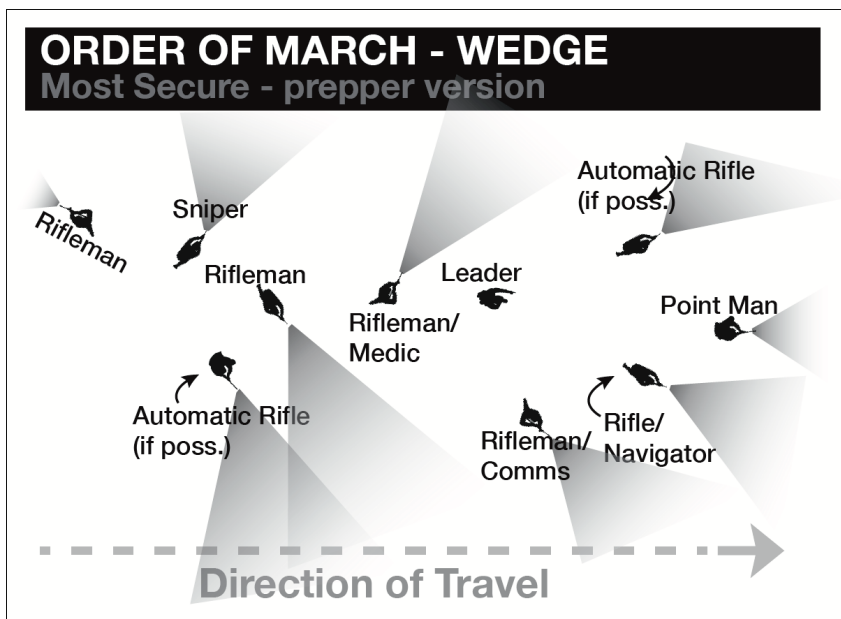
Human beings and animals naturally follow the easiest path with is usually a road, path or trail. It's easier to walk along a ridge than on the side of a ridge. It's easier to move on a game trail than through thick brush. Most ambushes are set up along natural "lines of drift" because, mostly, people can be counted upon to take the easiest route. If you want to avoid an ambush, you will avoid natural lines of drift, such as roads or trails, but that will cause you to move more slowly. As always, you will need to make a choice between speed and security.

Movement Options:

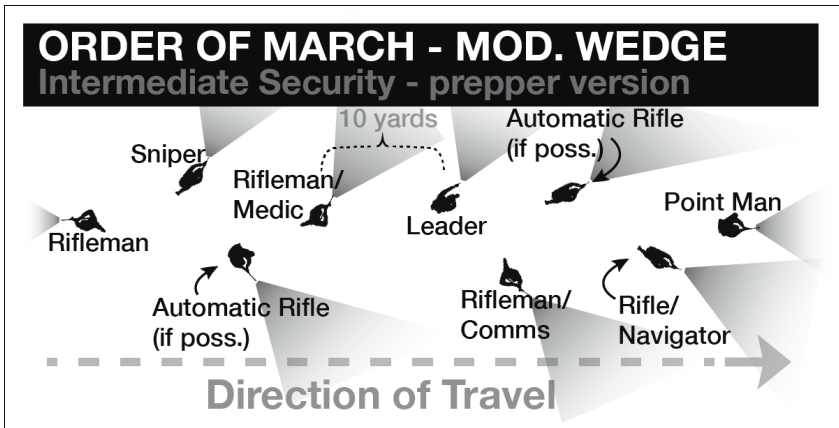
1. **Column:** Fastest and least prepared for an ambush.
2. **Modified Wedge:** Most common formation because of terrain.
3. **Wedge:** Medium speed and somewhat prepared for an ambush.

When you move in a group, you should consider your "order of march" and dictate that ahead of time. How you move will depend on

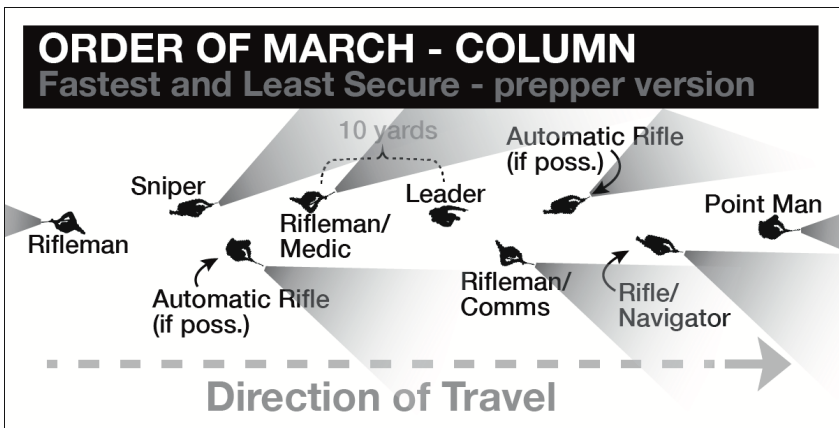
the size of your group, the roughness of the terrain and the speed at which you need to move.



The more spread your group out (in a wedge), the more likely you are to discover an ambush and the better-prepared you will be to flank the ambush. In other words, when your group is in a wedge, you should have shooting angles on an ambush (but it'll be slower.) If you group is in a column, it will be harder to build shooting angles on an ambush.



A modified wedge is a column that divides fields of fire like a wedge. It's like a wedge but on a trail, road, canyon bottom or ridge line.



If your group is moving in a column, you will be less likely to discover an ambush early, walking into the kill zone before you know it. If your group is moving in a wedge, you have better odds of discovering an ambush, or at least not getting completely inside the kill zone before discovering it.



Speed versus Security.

This is the big questions when it comes to movement.

We based our diagrams on Army manual FM 7-8 and we modified them for a preparedness group that is unlikely to have grenades and crew-served weapons. So, we've replaced those positions with resources that you may have in your prepper group (sniper, assault rifles, and automatic rifles.)

Also, we've added fields of fire illustrations to the diagrams so you can see how the different people in your group should be watching various threat angles as you move. Early detection is a key to saving lives.

The ideal outcome is to detect an ambush and "break contact" which is a fancy way of saying "get away by going back the way you came."

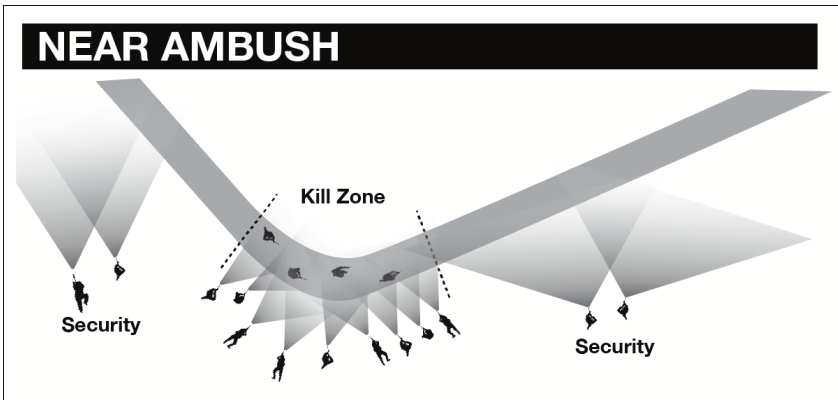


Reaction to Ambush.

As a group, your reaction to an ambush will depend on how deep into the ambush you find yourself when it goes off.

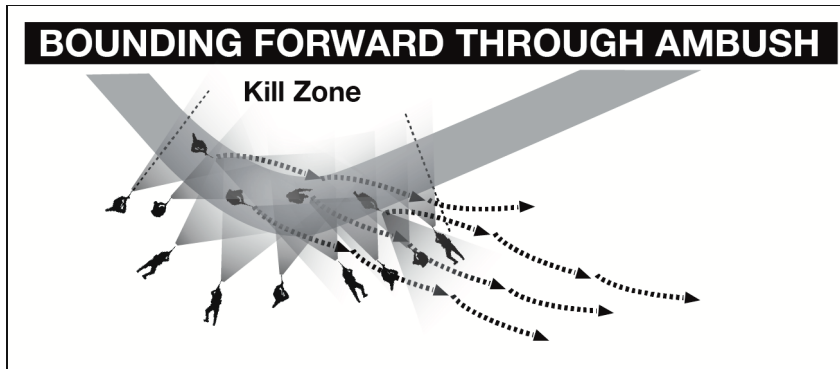
Near Ambush.

If you're caught in an ambush kill zone, or if it's hard to turn around because you're in a convoy of vehicles, you may need to assault **THROUGH** the ambush. Obviously, this is a decision that must be made very quickly. Assaulting through an ambush means reacting with focused violence to break the ambush. While this is not a desirable outcome and you will likely lose men, assaulting through a near ambush is usually the lesser of two evils, because retreating away from a near ambush (if the ambush was well-prepared by the enemy) will probably mean incurring greater losses. If possible, your team will push through the ambush while gaining as much of a flanking position as possible by pushing out to the sides. This reaction is something that your prepper group should practice very frequently and is known as an Immediate Action Drill or "IAD."



Immediate Action Drills (IADs).

The following four small squad reactions to taking fire should be practiced a lot, so that everyone can do them scared to-death, in the dark (which is the exact scenario where their practice will come in handy.)



Bounding Forward.

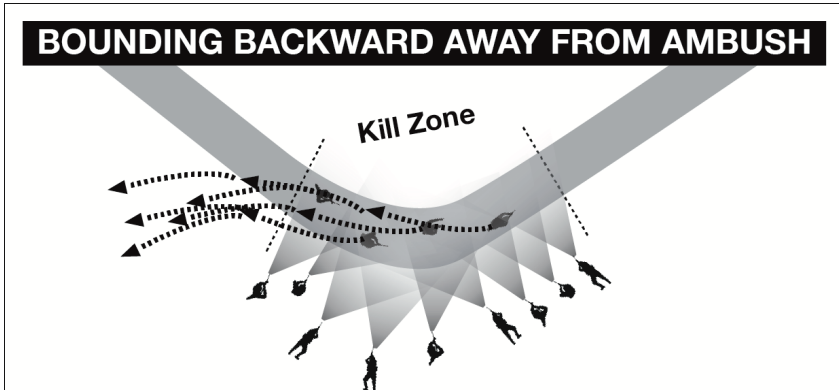
Done in buddy teams, fire teams or squads, the person on point fires heavily to suppress the enemy. The men behind rush forward, take position, usually prone, behind cover and continue firing. When the last man in the fire team passes the next man, he taps him on the shoulder and shouts “last man,” allowing the new last man to know that it’s his turn to bound forward. Depending on how close the ambush, the men may simply assault directly into the ambush with little regard for bounding. The goal is to overrun the ambushers and occupy their position.

Hasty Counter-Ambush.

If your group has some space to maneuver, and maybe some cover, men at the back of the group may be able to fan out to the sides and build shooting angles on the ambushers.

Breaking Contact.

If the ambush is discovered, launched when the group is not quite inside the kill zone, or if the ambushers back off, breaking contact and retreating is often the best option.



Bounding Backwards.

Your group should practice bounding backward, with the last man yelling to the next-to-last-man "last man" as he passes.

Training for bounding: when bounding, shooters are in grave danger of breaking the Four Rules of Firearm Safety, since men will be running in and out of one another's fields of fire. Never shoot when another man is inside of the 45 degree cone projecting from the muzzle of your weapon. If someone enters that cone, you must cease fire, shift fire or move to clear the 45 degree cone projecting from your muzzle. NEVER practice bounding with live ammunition. However, you should OFTEN practice bounding with airsoft, simunitions or paintball, while carefully observing the Four Rules of Firearms Safety.

TWO MAN FORWARD BOUNDING

The diagram illustrates the 'Two Man Forward Bounding' technique. It shows two soldiers moving forward in a series of bounding steps. The first soldier is in a bounding position, with one leg forward and arms back. The second soldier is in a bounding position, with one leg forward and arms back. The diagram shows the sequence of movements for both soldiers, with arrows indicating the direction of travel and the bounding steps.

SUCCESSIVE BOUNDING
Easier, more secure, slower

The diagram illustrates the 'Successive Bounding' technique. It shows two soldiers moving forward in a series of bounding steps. The first soldier is in a bounding position, with one leg forward and arms back. The second soldier is in a bounding position, with one leg forward and arms back. The diagram shows the sequence of movements for both soldiers, with arrows indicating the direction of travel and the bounding steps.

| | |
|-----------|-----|
| "Moving" | YOU |
| "Move" | ME |
| "Set" | YOU |
| "Moving" | ME |
| "Move" | YOU |
| "Set" | ME |
| (Repeats) | |

ALTERNATE BOUNDING
Harder, less secure, faster

The diagram illustrates the 'Alternate Bounding' technique. It shows two soldiers moving forward in a series of bounding steps. The first soldier is in a bounding position, with one leg forward and arms back. The second soldier is in a bounding position, with one leg forward and arms back. The diagram shows the sequence of movements for both soldiers, with arrows indicating the direction of travel and the bounding steps.

| | |
|-----------|-----|
| "Moving" | YOU |
| "Move" | ME |
| "Set" | YOU |
| "Moving" | ME |
| "Move" | YOU |
| "Set" | ME |
| (Repeats) | |

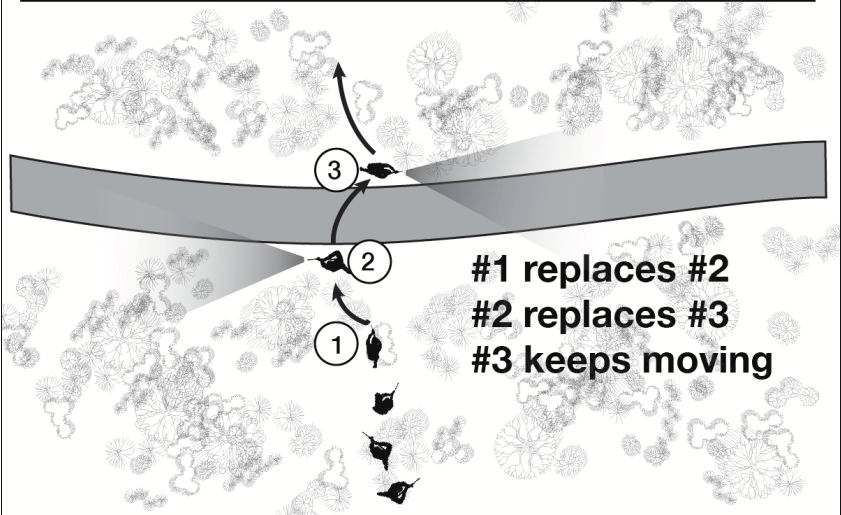
OPEN DANGER AREA BOUNDING

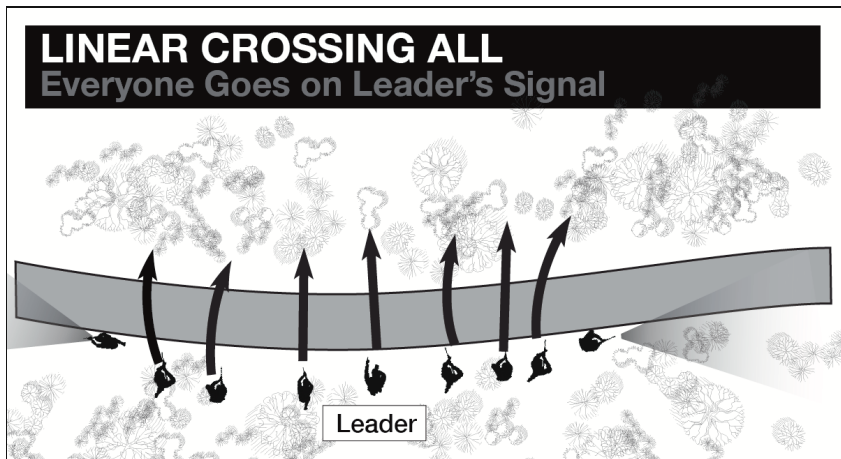
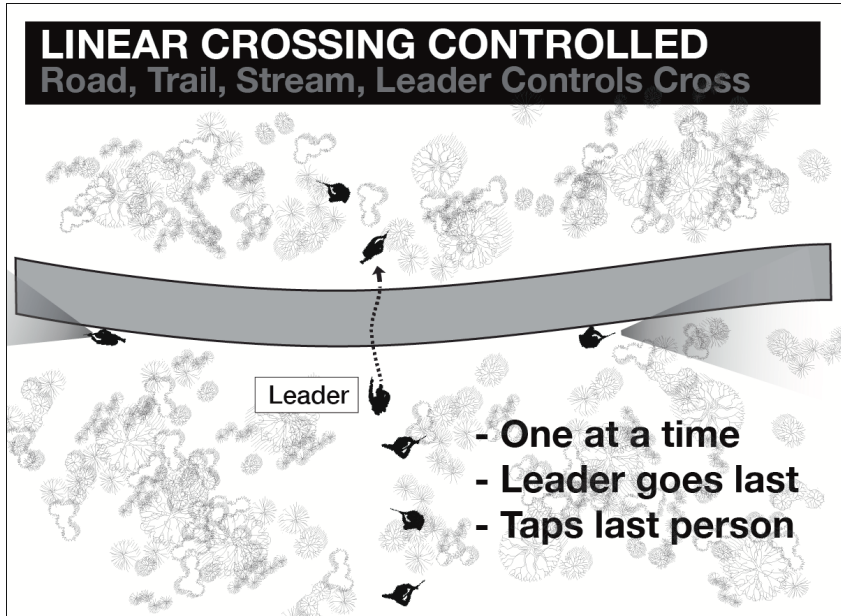
Crossing an Open Field

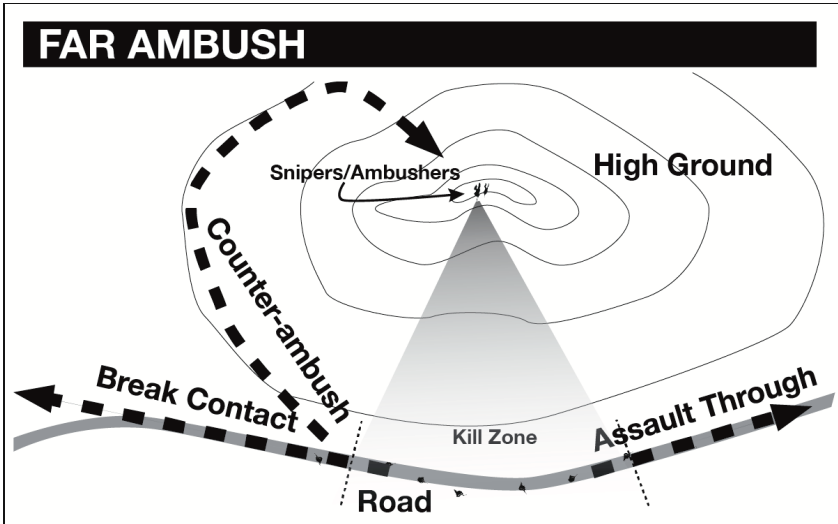


LINEAR DANGER AREA CROSSING

Road, Trail, Stream





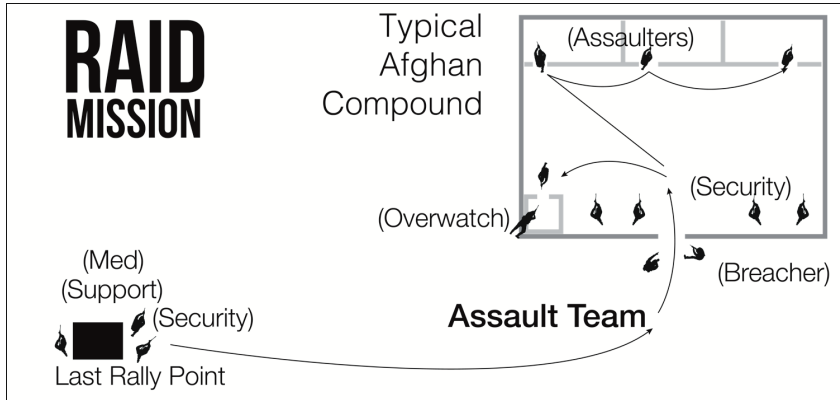


Far Ambush.

If your group gets ambushed from further away (more than forty yards), this should give the group greater room to maneuver. The men in the kill zone should immediately return fire, and then the leader must decide whether to assault through, counter-ambush or break contact. In most prepper group scenarios, it's difficult to imagine a situation where a group that's being ambushed would counter-ambush. That group would already be behind the eight ball and they likely couldn't absorb losses (since prepper groups are often family/friend groups.) A prepper group would probably break contact, whenever possible, and live to fight another day.

Like in a near ambush, the group can break contact by bounding backwards out of the kill zone and retreat out of the area.

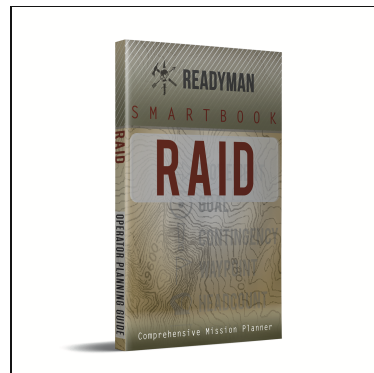
How to Make All That Combat Goodness Happen



You may follow along in your ReadyMan Operation Planning Workbook. We'll begin with the most-fundamental mission: the Raid.

Raid Mission

A raid is an attack on a location. This same type of mission profile can be used any time your preparedness group is moving to a place to do some form of work at that place. Even if you don't expect a fight, you should plan the mission as though you might.





How to Use the Operation Planning Guide

Step One is to develop a Prep Order (pages 1-3 in the Operation Planning Workbook), which allows everyone involved to begin preparing for the mission: gathering information, people and material that will be needed for the mission brief. For example, if your mission was to go investigate the local police station to see if they are active, you may first want to conduct a Recon mission to make sure the building isn't controlled by hostiles or to see that the police station hasn't burned down. Recon is to confirm what you think you know. The Prep Order would let everyone know that a mission is coming and that they need to get their stuff together for a mission meeting.



Step Two is to conduct the mission meeting, bringing all the information together and completing all the pages in the Operation Planning Workbook. Essentially, this is the meeting where the mission is planned and everyone takes assignments.

Step Three is to rehearse the mission. Of course, the amount of rehearsal will depend on the risk in the mission. More risk should lead to more rehearsal. In an actual raid, where conflict is expected, you will want to use one-third of your time planning and two-thirds of your time rehearsing. As part of the rehearsal, make sure you inspect your equipment, so there are no surprises on the mission.

Step Four is to execute the mission as per the plan.

| PREP ORDER GATHER PEOPLE & INFO | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| PEOPLE ⓘ | |
| <u>MISSION:</u> | |
| Leader: | <input type="text"/> |
| Dep. Leader: | <input type="text"/> |
| Others: | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="text"/> |
| <u>SUPPORT:</u> | |
| Comms: | <input type="text"/> |
| Equip: | <input type="text"/> |
| Vehicles: | <input type="text"/> |
| Medical: | <input type="text"/> |
| Others: | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="text"/> |
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| | <input type="text"/> |
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| more on back ➔ | |

Completing the Prep Order.

The Prep Order is just the leader saying, “Hey guys. We’re going to do this mission pretty soon.”

Leaders.

It’s common to imagine in a collapse scenario that democracy will continue, since patriots are so often those who prepare. Democracy might work in community projects, but it won’t work in military command—where decisions must be made instantaneously and without debate. Establish very clear leadership, appointing a leader and a deputy leader for any and every mission, no matter how safe those missions might seem in concept.

**Support.**

Warn the folks who will be needed in various support positions so that they can prepare weapons, vehicles, equipment and catch up on any necessary training. For example, if you'll be asking a young person to drive a truck, they should begin learning how to back up a large vehicle as soon as the Prep Order is sent out.

Info & Materials.

Gather any maps and information about the location that you may have. Also take a look at the likely weather including the moon phases and time of sunrise and sunset. Your prepper group should have the next year's almanac when going into a collapse. You're going to want to know what's up with the moon, weather and sunrise/sunset times.



Special Skills and Equipment.

Equipment has a way of walking off or breaking down. When a mission is coming up, someone needs to check up on the vehicles, weapons, electronics and other doo-dads that will be needed.



Completing the Mission Statement.

Unlike the “mission statements” from corporate America, **this** mission statement is necessary so that everyone knows what they’re hoping to learn, grab or kill. This mission statement should cover the five Ws (who, what, where, when and why.) Be specific. Here are a couple examples.

- “We will meet the Archibald group and trade wheat for mattresses.”
- “We will hit the bowling alley and destroy the group of criminals operating from there.”
- “We will secretly observe the group forming up in the State Park and assess their numbers and intent.”



Situation.

You'll need to know the basic scenario before running into the blender, which might include conducting some recon or reviewing information gathered from your sources. You need to know how many “enemy” might oppose you, how many friendlies are in the area, what authorities might get involved and what the weather and light conditions will be for the mission.

Once you complete the Mission page in the Operation Planning Workbook, everyone should be literally and figuratively “on the same page.” This may seem overly-bureaucratic, but trust us when we say that taking just a moment to hit these points will save your butt downrange.

Mission Parameters.**Who?**

Who is fighting and who is the enemy? What friendlies might get involved?

What?

What do we plan to accomplish with the mission?

Where?

Where will the mission happen?

When?

When will we execute the mission?

Why?

What's the purpose of the mission (so that everyone can make contingency decisions if the "what" grows hair.)

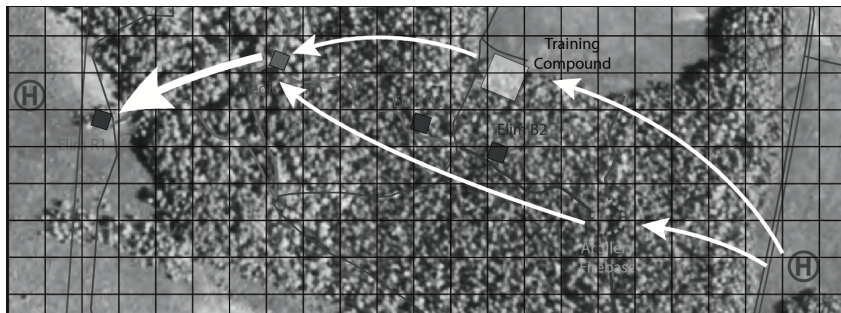
Mission Planning Meeting.

[Starts big and then goes micro. Then fill in the gaps.]



- Time sync watches
- Reference materials from Recon
- Routes: to target (primary & alternate), from target (primary & alternate)
- Situation

- Mission statement
- Execution (actions from last rally point and actions to target, on target and away from target)
- Service support
- Command and signals



Route Planning.

When you are moving, you are very vulnerable. Cars do not stop bullets, generally speaking. People marching across the land are prime targets for ambush. Everything about movement must be done carefully and with contingency planning, because you are at least three times more vulnerable while moving than you are at home. Plus, moving from Point A to Point B involves transportation systems (feet, packs, vehicles, armor) and transportation systems are apt to break down, especially in civil disorder.

Pick Primary and Alternate Routes.

You may want to avoid taking the same route back from the target that you took going to the target. If you use the same route twice, you could be setting your group up for an ambush.



Use Maps Instead of Directions.

Directions rely upon landmarks and landmarks can change, especially in a chaotic world. Also, maps allow for flexibility when you find that you must detour around a choke point.

Major Turns.

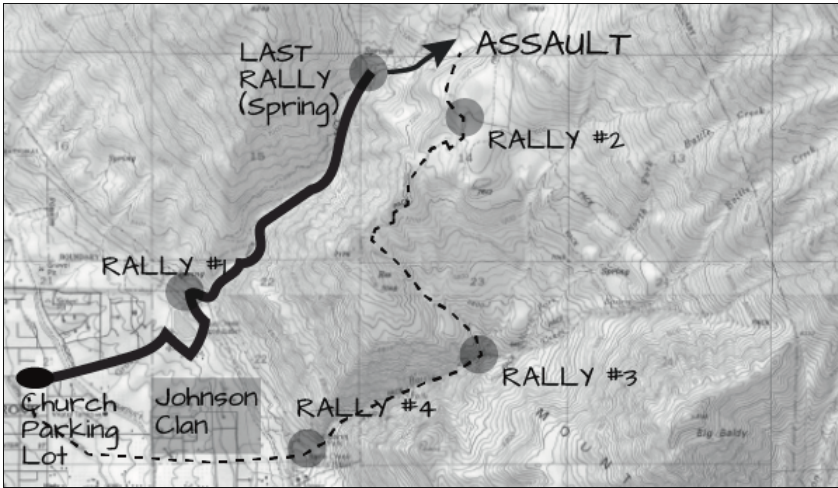
Discuss the major turns your group will take on the way to the target, which should be the same as your rally points. Give those turns names (Turn A, Rally B, etc..) Keep the route as simple as possible. Losing parts of your group is very common and will likely cause the mission to abort.

Landmarks.

Establish a code for each major landmark so that you're not giving up your position over radios (in a civil disorder scenario, there is no good way to have comms security, so code words are your best bet.) The major landmarks might also be your rally points too.




Evasion Possibilities.

As you go over the map, discuss alternate routes for getting to the target and alternate routes to escape and return home. Give each route a code name, draw the map and write the code name in the "Route Notes and Maps" pages.



Friends En Route?

If you have friendlies en route, talk about using them as an evasion, or recon, resource. What can those friendlies do to make the mission safer?

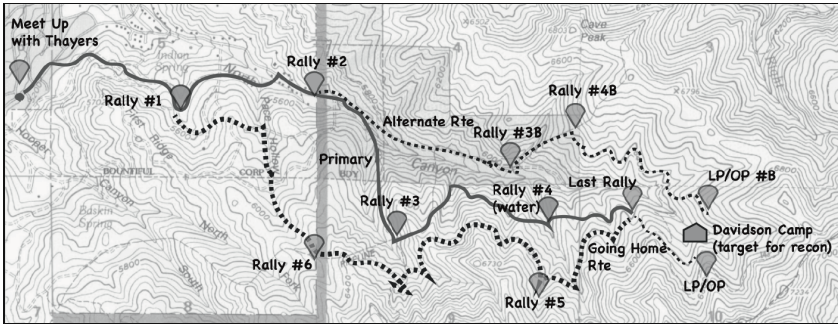
| ROUTE PLANNING GUIDE | |
|---|---|
|  | PICK PRIMARY & ALTERNATE ROUTES  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ USE MAPS INSTEAD OF DIRECTIONS ○ MAJOR TURNS (code for each) ○ LANDMARKS (code for each) ○ ESCAPE & EVASION PLAN (p.16) ○ FRIENDS EN ROUTE? ○ HOSPITALS, MECHANICS, GAS & WATER ○ TIMELINE |
|  | ROUTE CONSIDERATIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DISTANCE TO & DISTANCE BACK ○ TRAFFIC (effect on time) ○ ROAD SURFACE ○ ROAD CONDITION ○ DANGER AREAS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> choke points bridges road blocks tight corners dead cars ambush sites checkpoints |

Hospitals, Mechanics, Gas & Water.

What are the resources close by the routes for emergency medical help, repairs to vehicles, fuel resupply and water resupply, if any.

Timeline.

Finally, discuss how long you project to be exposed while moving to the target.



Alternate Route(s).

While you discuss your Alternate Route, you must also cover:

ACTIONS AT STOPS (what you will do at the stops and Rally Points: get gas, take a piss, etc..)

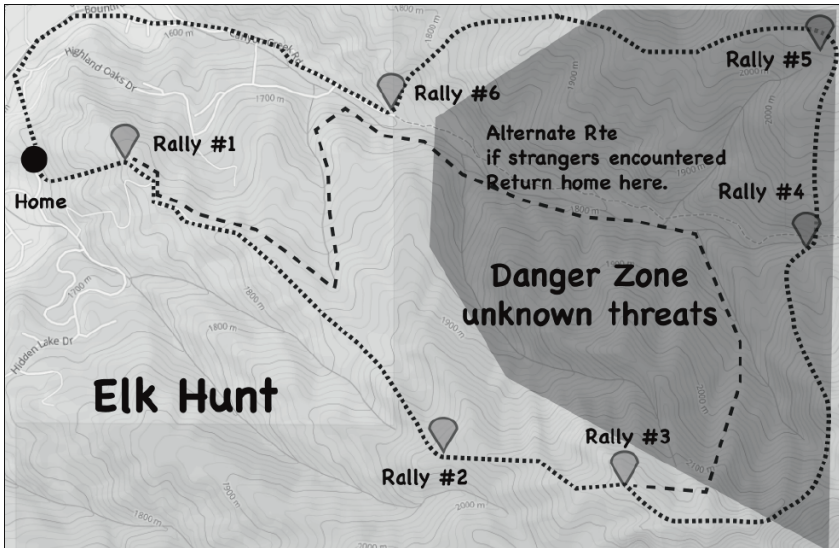


Actions if Problems

(what you will do if there's a breakdown, an attack, etc..)

- Vehicle Breakdown (will you scrap the mission?)
- Danger Areas (choke points, obstacles, road blocks, bridges, etc..)

- Medical Evac (where to go with injuries on the Alternate Route)
- Abort Criteria (what will cause you to turn around and go home.)



Route Considerations.

Don't forget to discuss each of the following as you set your route:

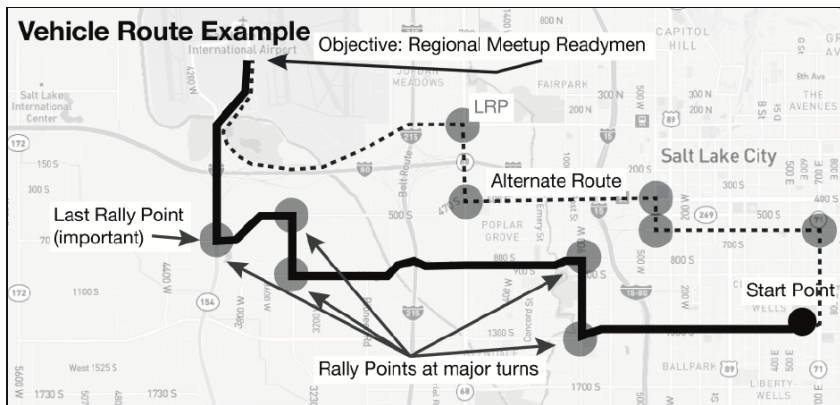
Distance to the target and distance back

(if you're returning by another route, which is often a good idea since you won't have the same exposure to ambush if you return another way.)

- Traffic and how obstructions in the road will effect your timeline.
- Road surface and other obstructions such as dead vehicles or downed bridges.
- Road conditions such as snow or ice.

- Danger areas such as natural choke points, bridges, road blocks, tight corners, dead cars, likely ambush sites, government checkpoints and large open areas.

With all these questions and considerations discussed, you should be able to set a primary route and at least one alternate route. Make sure everyone draws the same map in their Route Notes & Maps pages.



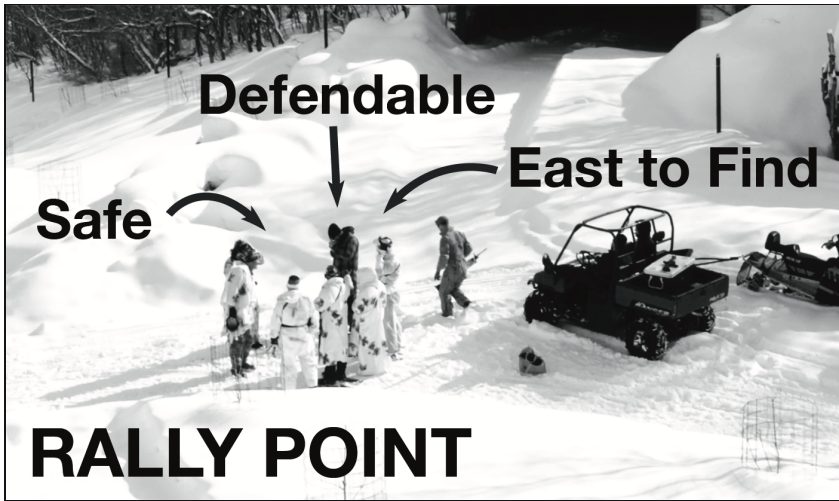
Rally Points

Set Rally Points so that the group can stop in a safe location, set up security, conduct a head count and then proceed. Do not rely upon everything working out as planned. Use the rally points to reset and check in on your plan.

Rally points should be easy to find, should offer cover and concealment, should be away from the natural paths people would take (roads, trails, etc.) unless you're driving, then you can't avoid the roads. Make them obvious, such as landmarks or major turns, so you don't lose people (which happens constantly in combat or under stress.)

The rally points should be defensible while you group up. If you're on-foot, your rally points should be 100 to 400 yards apart. If

you're in vehicles, the rally points can be further apart (miles, even) but don't get too strung out between rally points, even with clear roads.



Last Rally Point.

The Last Rally Point should be within sight and sound of the target, but should offer cover and concealment and should be defendable. This point will be your last chance to openly discuss changes to the mission plan. You will launch your mission from the Last Rally Point.

While YOU might think the routes and plans sound simple, it is extremely common for multiple people to hear multiple different things when planning a route. Taking enough time to make sure that everyone is crystal clear will be worth it in the long run.

As a Citizen Commando, you will have less-reliable electronic comms, less-trained people and more-poorly maintained equipment than an Army unit might have. Take

| SCAVENGE EXECUTION | | ON TARGET |
|---|---------------|--------------------|
| <p>📍 LAST RALLY POINT</p> <p>🕒 SNEAK PEAK? (before target)</p> | | <p>📍 ON TARGET</p> |
| <p>← POINT</p> | <p>MIDDLE</p> | <p>REAR</p> |
| <p>APPROACHING TARGET</p> | | |
| <p>🕒 JOBS ON TARGET</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OVERWATCH (sniper security) SCAVENGERS (search and collect) SECURITY (containment) SUPPORT (medical, reserve, driver) LEADER/COMMS (coordinating) | | <p>START TIME</p> |
| <p>🚫 ABORT CRITERIA</p> | | |
| <p>🚩 ON TARGET</p> <p>FINAL APPROACH → SETUP → CONTACT</p> <p>COVER STORY AT ASSAULT SITE</p> | | |
| <p>more on back</p> | | |

plenty of time with the route planning to avoid a snarled mess that could cost the mission or lives.



Rehearsal.

Before you jump into executing a mission, you must rehearse. It is an extremely common human fallacy to think that when something is clear in your mind, it is also clear in everyone else's mind too. Do not mistake communication for understanding. The moment you begin to rehearse, you will suddenly realize that your group wasn't HALF as clear on your plan as you imagined.



Make your rehearsal as PHYSICAL as possible, rather than talking through ideas. Actually DO the things that you plan to do en route and on target, in a safe place and as realistic as possible.

Lay out buildings on the ground with tape or string and practice,

over and over, how you will enter rooms, approach compounds or conduct negotiations. Tease out all possible surprises and ask a lot of “what if THIS happens?” kinds of questions. Involve everyone, even the truck drivers and support people.

By rehearsing, you’re hoping to:

- Get better at the important stuff
- Discover weaknesses in the plan
- Coordinate the players
- Improve everyone’s understanding of the plan

Rehearsal, especially if you expect gunfire, must be at least two-thirds of your planning process. A team that rehearses stands an excellent chance of stomping the opposition. Don’t sacrifice that advantage because your team grew impatient.

Standard Group Sizes:

- 1. Buddy Team:** 2 guys
- 2. Fire team:** 2 to 4 guys (2 Buddy Teams)
- 3. Squad:** 6 to 14 guys (2 to 4 Fire Teams)
- 4. Platoon:** 18 to 42 guys (2 to 3 Squads)

Go Route.

Mark your start time on the Operation Planning Workbook and then follow the Maps & Terrain (landmarks) that you noted in planning. Hit your rally points, set up security and the conduct a head count. Head counts are a must, since regrouping is the whole purpose of rally points.

Help from home might become necessary en route, because of an ambush or mechanical issue. Be sure to discuss a contingency plan with your group and the group at home before you depart.



Cover Stories.

Given that Citizen Commandos might be operating in a world where some government may exist, or where towns, churches, foreign invaders or other preparedness groups may still be operating, it may well be critical to “get your story straight.” You will almost always have secrets you want kept, at very least.



Get your group together on the story of why you’re moving and what you’re hoping to accomplish. In some cases, the story might simply be the truth. But even in that case, you may want to keep certain information to yourself, such as the location of your home base or the number of people there. In any case, you will want to create a cover story for your movement, your business on the target and for your return movement home. In each case, the story may be the same or different.



Mission Execution.

When you finally arrive at the target.

Last Rally Point.

The last rally point should be close to the target, should provide you cover and concealment and should be easily defended if something goes wrong. Usually, this rally point will be the rally point when the mission on target is done (whether it's raid, barter, recon, ambush, scavenge or snipe.) When the mission succeeds or fails, this rally point will be a place known to everyone and should already be secured by overwatch or security.

If everything has gone well with your movement to the target and your group has finally reached the last rally point, it would be a good time to abort the mission if necessary. You should do a head count to make sure everyone has arrived. Then, the leader should conduct a sneak peak to make sure the target is still set up the way you imagined when you planned. If not, seriously consider aborting the mission.

Jobs on Target.

Depending on the mission, there will be a number of possible jobs on target. Often, a single person might do several jobs, but it's important

that everyone understand their jobs and important that there is duplication so that there are no holes if someone becomes incapacitated.

Jobs on Target

Leader.

Person who makes the decisions.

Deputy Leader.

Person who makes the decisions if the leader can't.

Overwatch.

Person who stands back and is ready to provide cover if things go south, often a long range shooter.

Security.

Person who sets up a safety envelope around the target, making sure new threats don't arrive. Also, covers the last rally point, vehicles, medical, and support people.

Assaulter.

Person who hits a target with the intent to destroy or capture usually entering buildings first.

Breacher.

Person who breaks doors, gates, or walls with explosives, hammers, shotguns or rams.

Comms.

Person who communicates to other groups or home.

Sniper.

Person who shoots from far distances and/or conducts surveillance of a target.

Spotter.

Person who helps a sniper and/or conducts surveillance of a target.

Negotiator.

Person who negotiates during barter.

Scavenger.

Person who finds, collects and transports needed supplies and items.

Medic.

Person who provides medical attention to the wounded.

**Complete Your Work on Target.**

Once everyone's done their job on target, the team should huddle in a safe place and review the list of jobs on target for each team member. Unless there's a good reason to leave quickly, take time to make sure all the work was completed, especially maps, lists, sketches, etc.. You will not want to be forced to return because you forgot to do something.

Exiting.

When planning, you will discuss the method for withdrawing, usually to the last rally point. Once you arrive at the last rally point, the leader must conduct a head count to make sure all men and equipment is accounted for and ready to head home.



Going Home.

Once everyone is gathered at the last rally point, the group is ready to go home based on the go home route, or alternate go home route, set up during planning. Once again, the group will review maps, terrain (landmarks), rally points, and what to do if the shit hits the fan and they need help from home.

AS THE GROUP FORMS UP, they will either resume their order of march from before, or they will set up under a new order of march. This is a good time to conduct another head count to make sure the group doesn't leave while someone is off taking a piss.

Before leaving, the group leaders (drivers, squad leaders, fire team leaders, etc..) should discuss:

- Actions at stops (refueling, bathroom breaks, etc. at rally points)
- Actions if problems (ambush, road blocks, authorities, etc..)
- Vehicle breakdown or getting stuck

- Danger Areas on the route (bridges, towns, etc..)
- Medical Evac (in case of injury)
- Escape and Evasion (in case of ambush or conflict)



Link up with Home.

One of the greatest dangers in conducting a mission is returning home, especially at night. Commonly, returning people get shot by their own defenders. The process of returning home must be carefully and slowly conducted.

- Make contact over radio, if possible.
- Make far recognition by signaling, waving, honking, etc..
- Do challenge and response passwords and make positive connection before crossing over.
- Make sure to use a re-entry method that you've previously discussed and rehearsed with home.



Escape & Evasion and Leadership Contingency Planning.

In the Operation Planning Workbooks, we've combined the escape and evasion (E&E) plan with the plan for anyone who will be separating from his unit. Both require a deviation from the plan and both require a quick plan be made before departing from the main plan. This applies to anyone leaving at any time, even going to take a pee. The common military acronym for this is **GOTWA**.

1. **Going Where?** In the case of a leader leaving his group, he should explain where he is going. In the case of an E&E, this will be the escape corridor.
2. **Others?** In both cases, this will answer who will be with you?
3. **Time?** In both cases, this describes the planned timeframe for return.
4. **What?** In both cases, this tells those who remain what to do if you don't return on time.
5. **Actions?** In both cases, this is a discussion about what to do if the you or the other person is hit.

A PRE-DETERMINED E&E plan should be agreed by all and written down during planning. However, if the E&E plan must change, and an SOS call is made to the group or home, the communication should follow this GOTWA format so nothing is left out.

WHEN A LEADER LEAVES HIS GROUP, for any reason, he should run down this list and make sure those who remain have the answers to the GOTWA questions.

Communications.

Due to the unsophisticated nature of a post-collapse fighting force, comms security will probably not be an option, at least not in any certain sense of the word. GRMS and FRS radios sometimes have privacy features, but they're not secure. Ham radios are wide open to the world. Therefore, security is not available in an electronic sense.



Codewords.

Codewords, however, work the same as they always did. If you set codewords beforehand, you can communicate in relative privacy. Don't forget, if you are facing organized and technologically-advanced enemies (government or foreign invaders) they can triangulate your signals with relative ease.

But that's only a part of the problem. Using radios to coordinate actions can be devilishly difficult. Also, in an EMP, there might not be any working radios anyway. The best way to communication is to follow these rules:



- Use different frequencies (or channels) for different parts of the team, so that you don't talk over top of one another.
- Never use voice activation, or you'll spend the entire mission listening to your friends breathe.

- Hold down the Push To Talk button before you speak and keep it down until you're completely finished.
- Designate a command frequency for your group leader to the main leader.
- Designate a frequency to home base.
- Set codewords for every rally point, the target, home base and other critical pieces of the mission.
- Set codewords for planned events and possible failures.
- Conduct radio checks at important rally points such as before leaving home, the last rally point and important rally points in the middle.
- Teach and train radio discipline, where everyone learns when to shut the hell up (ie. most of the time.)

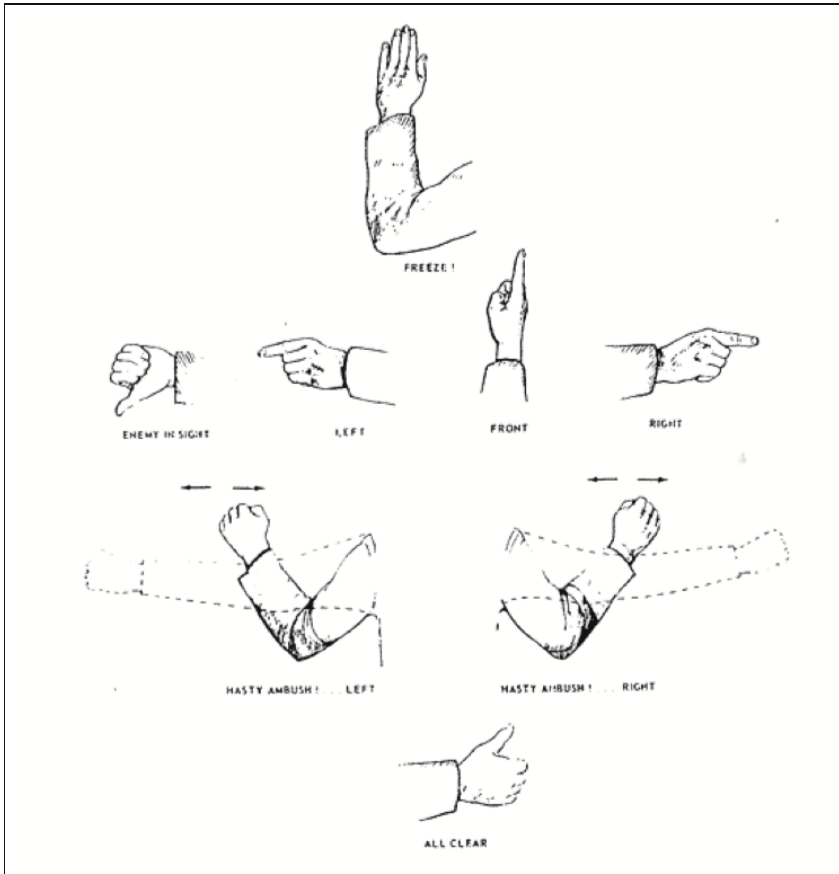
Security of the Plan Itself.

If you're stopped or arrested, what should you say that you are doing? Everyone should know the story so that you keep it straight. You need a cover story for your travel and a cover story for the action you will be taking.



Watch/Time Sync.

Hopefully, everyone in your preparedness group owned a watch that survived the collapse (and not just their phone, which may or may not work.) Before launching a mission, all watches should be synced to the same time. This should be the first thing done in your mission meeting and then the last thing before you leave home.



Hand and Arm Signals.

Learn standard hand and arm signals and also carry visual signals for use at a distance, such as signal squares, strobes, laser lights, IR stickers, IR floodlights, etc..

Challenge and Reply Signals.

Also, figure out your group challenge and reply signals. If person A says "Nine" the other person must say "Six" (because the challenge and reply total was designated as the number fifteen.)

Train with hand and arm signals for movement so that a patrol can signal danger with a hand or arm signal instead of shouting.



Light Signals.

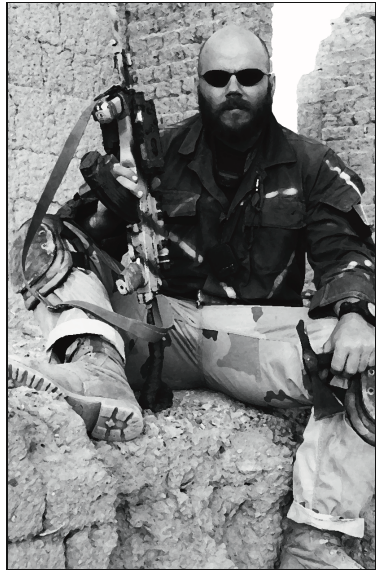
In the dark, flashlights or lasers can be used to communicate the approach of friendlies or to communicate danger. Set up a light signal scheme before the mission.

BASELINE SKILLS OF A COMMANDO

Jeff Kirkham and Evan Hafer developed a handgun and carbine course for use by U.S. operators and clandestine services. In between deployments to the Middle East, they returned to the United States with skills and combat priorities they had learned overseas, and then they imbedded them in their handgun-carbine classes.

Using a feedback loop of combat-test-combat, they arrived at many startling realizations about combat shooting and training. Unfortunately, the more detailed techniques fall outside the scope of this book (Jeff keeps promising to write a book on handgun/carbine, so let's keep our fingers

crossed.) Even so, their experi-



ence as operators and instructors forms the basis for the ReadyMan Five Levels of Combat Shooting.

Gaining proficiency at each new level will, in general terms, result in a TEN TIMES increase in lethality with a firearm. That means a guy with solid Level One skills will likely beat a gangbanger in single combat. A master of Level Two might survive ten such conflicts, and so forth. Hopefully, at the end of all the five levels, a combat shooter and his friends would be very unlikely to suffer casualties in a post-SHTF world.

"Gaining proficiency at each new level will, in general terms, result in a TEN TIMES increase in lethality..."

Safety Warning: in Levels Two and Three, the shooter and his shooting companions will experience high levels of risk of injury or death. The authors strongly urge any shooter to maintain the Four Rules of Firearms Safety and to seek professional training before attempting Levels Two and Three. Also, we recommend the use of non-lethal firearm options (dry practice, airsoft, paintball, Simunitions, etc.) whenever possible.

HOWEVER, each new level (until Level Four) introduces a ten-fold increase in safety risk as you train. We strongly recommend that you engage professional training for Level One, since those fundamentals (especially as they pertain to safety) will have tremendous impact on your skill in subsequent levels.

Levels Four and Five employ non-lethal shooting systems and you may jump to them at any time. We encourage you to begin training at Levels Four and Five immediately, returning to Levels One through Three to improve your fundamentals—because you'll quickly discover that your fundamental vanish in Levels Four and Five, (and that you'll have to go back and re-learn them.) True-to-life training changes everything.



Four Rules of Firearms Safety

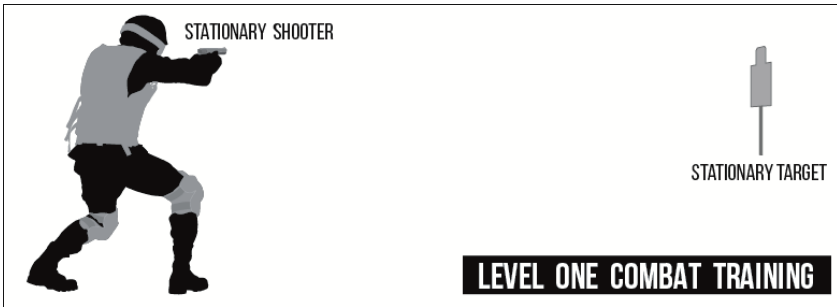
1. Treat every gun as if it were loaded.
2. Never point a gun at anything you are not willing to destroy.
3. Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on the target and you are ready to fire.
4. Be sure of your target and what is beyond, in front and to the sides of it.

ReadyMan Five Levels of Combat Shooting

Even though most public shooting ranges will not allow shooting beyond Level One, the yields in combat effectiveness go up dramatically with every new level of training. *And so do the safety risks.*

- **Level One.** Flat Range. Learning safety and fundamentals.
- **Level Two.** Moving and Shooting. Shooter is moving, target is stationary.
- **Level Three.** Moving and Shooting at Moving Targets.
- **Level Four.** Shooting against a Live Adversary.
- **Level Five.** Shooting against a Live Adversary or Live Adversaries together with a Team.

Level One. Flat Range.



According to the ReadyMan Plan2Survive, a minimum of 5 hours per year of Level One range practice with both handgun and rifle are the minimum.

To achieve and maintain a level of proficiency approaching a “Citizen Commando” we believe that a person should shoot at least 3,000 rounds a year (combined pistol/rifle) in Levels One, Two, and Three.

But, bad practice is much worse than no practice. Practice must be perfect and some of the best practice can be had through “dry practice” sitting in front of the television and burning zero ammunition. Only perfect practice makes perfect skill, so getting it right is critical.

We do not believe in fixed stance shooting. ReadyMan partners with badgecameras.com which has published innumerable videos of police officers, criminals and concealed carry folks handling themselves in gunfights. Our conclusion: everyone shoots instinctively when in combat. Fixed shooting positions (like “modified Weaver”) go out the window when adrenaline kicks in.



Therefore, we suggest NAILING the fundamentals of stance (wherever your feet are), grip, sight alignment, sight picture and

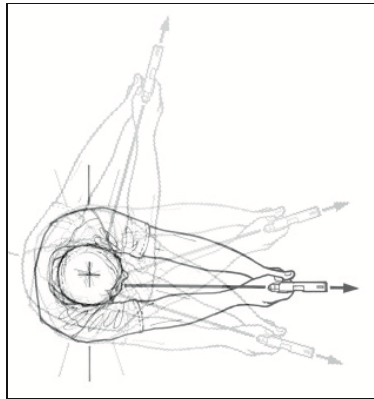
trigger squeeze from ANY POSITION. We believe in shooting from a fighting stance, because that's the stance you will take in a fight, regardless of whether or not you have a gun.

This knowledge led Jeff and Evan to develop a shooting system that emphasizes good fundamentals, but then adds DYNAMIC wrinkles at every turn. The more wrinkles you can absorb and still shoot well, the more lethal you will be in a gunfight.

The goal of range shooting is to achieve UNCONSCIOUS COMPETENCE with any firearm system by starting with perfect form, then moving into dynamic practice (constantly returning to practice perfect form.)

Even shooting on a flat/level range at paper targets can be turned into a dynamic shoot. Simply turning at the waist before shooting is a dynamic move. Here are a few dynamic moves (until the range master yells at you.)

- Changing foot placement.
- Shooting unfamiliar firearms.
- Doing pushups or lifting kettle bells then shooting.
- Shooting on your weak side.
- Shooting from your weak side eye.
- Shooting with a single hand.
- Drawing from the holster and shooting.
- Shooting with a shot timer.



- Instinct shooting from in front of your belly.
- Drawing and shooting from under a table.
- Shooting around obstacles.
- Shooting while stepping to the side.
- Clearing malfunctions/shooting bad ammo.
- Conducting magazine changes while shooting.

Confuse the mind by creating complex situations, forcing yourself out of your comfort zone. The key is to create flexibility in your shooting practice, all while maintaining perfect fundamentals. If you can shoot any gun, any time, any place under any circumstances, then you will be a far more combat-ready citizen.



Level Two. Moving & Shooting.

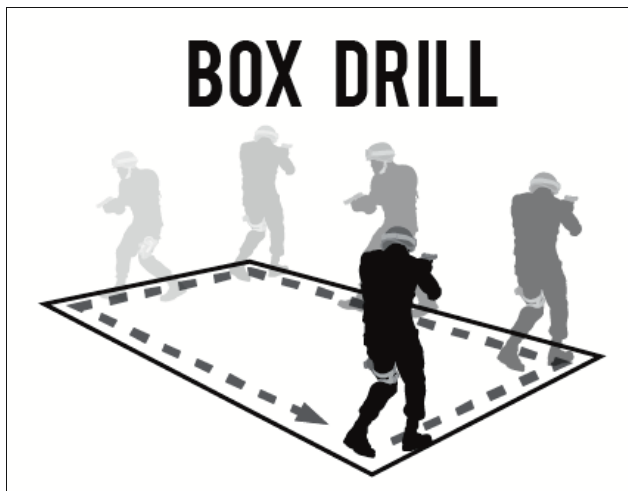


Moving and shooting is usually impermissible at a public shooting range, it is also an order of magnitude more dangerous. But, U.S. military operators do more moving and shooting than any other

kind of shooting. That's because it's how they will shoot in combat. If a commando in a gunfight isn't moving, he probably should be.

Moving and shooting can be as "simple" as marking a ten foot by twenty foot box on the ground and walking in a square while shooting your handgun and rifle. What you'll quickly discover is that moving while shooting forces flexibility, since your feet will land wherever they may when the shot is called.

Again, do not rush this process because tripping with a loaded firearm is incredibly dangerous and quite likely when you begin moving and shooting. Take your time and get professional coaching and never cross your feet in movement. Walk like you normally would.

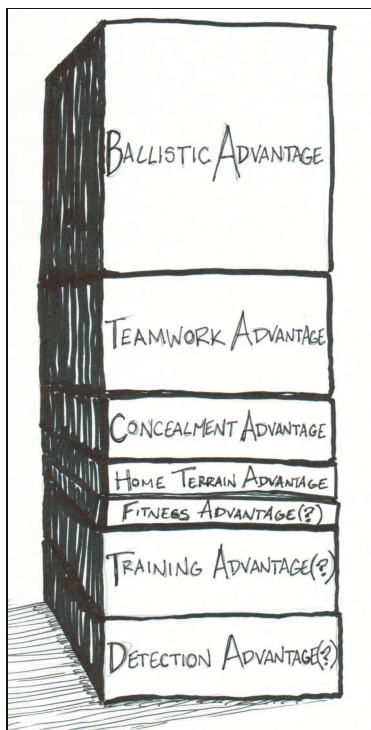


Here is a sample progression of a shooter learning to move and shoot. This progression would take at least ten three hour shooting sessions, assuming the shooter showed up utterly proficient in their fundamentals when the training began.

This process works best with multiple targets at varying ranges, with the targets color-coated. A friend calls the shots at any time during movement. (For example, the friend may call out, "Blue Round Target," the shooter identifies the target, then shoots.)

Here are a sample list of movements building from the simple to the complex:

- Turning at the waist and shooting when the shot is called.
- Stepping side-to-side, stopping and shooting when the shot is called.
- Stepping in a square pattern, stopping and shooting when the shot is called.
- Stepping in a square pattern, stopping and shooting around obstacles (“cover”) when the shot is called.
- Stepping in a square pattern, stopping and shooting with both handgun and rifle, safely stowing each weapon when a friend calls “transition.”
- Stepping in a square pattern, stopping and shooting with both handgun and rifle around obstacles when the shot is called.
- Stepping in a square pattern, stopping and shooting with both handgun and rifle around obstacles/on uneven ground.



Again, do not rush this process. As you should see, the chances of a self-inflicted gunshot wound go up significantly when training at this level of dynamic shooting. Obey all local shooting laws.

Also, don't be too good for airsoft or paintball. If you're too good for airsoft (because of

visions of teenagers and Mall Ninjas running around in the woods) then you're missing out on one of the best training tools available.

Starting at Level Two, and assuming that you maintain perfect fundamentals, airsoft or paintball can be convenient ways to add moving and shooting skills with ZERO RISK of a gunshot wound. You can train with non-lethals every day, in your own home and without all the gear-up of range shooting. Leave your ego behind and get yourself an airsoft gun for training!

"If you're too cool for airsoft and paintball, you don't understand combat training."

- Jeff the 28 year Green Beret



Level Three. Moving & Shooting at Moving Targets.



Level Three becomes increasingly dangerous and difficult to arrange with live ammunition, but it can be done given a home-owned range.

With airsoft or paintball guns, it's a piece of cake. Paintball guns arc dramatically after thirty yards and that's a limitation. Still, both airsoft and paintball guns are excellent tools for learning how to

move, shoot and lead moving targets. At close range, their trajectories are close enough to the trajectory bullets to provide realistic training.

For more ideas about how to practice moving and shooting with moving targets, we recommend *The Home Schooled Shootist*, by Joe Nobody.

Level Four. Shooting Against a Live Adversary.



Obviously, live ammunition becomes unfriendly at Level Four, but the training value skyrockets. Shooting against a thinking, reacting human being will destroy any idea you once had about being a “good shooter.” All of your fundamentals will go out the window and you will suddenly realize that fundamentals, even moving, shooting and moving and shooting moving targets, barely prepared you for moving and shooting while under fire from another human being.



Even shooting in a dark house against an adversary with an airsoft gun will send your heart rate through the roof. Typically, you

will consistently do dumb things and your gun will take over, doing your thinking for you. (And, guns are very poor thinkers.)

If you approach shooting against an adversary as a “game,” the training value will be negligible at best, damaging at worst. Paintball players, for example, learn many extremely bad habits (such as shooting across a field toward friendlies, maneuvering too aggressively, hiding behind thin concealment...) These bad habits leave training scars that can re-emerge in actual combat.



If you approach airsoft and paintball as COMBAT TRAINING, and avoid it becoming a competitive game, these tools can teach you things only a combat veteran knows. While you will not have the experience of risking death (which is another level of training altogether,) you will learn dozens of critical skills that will lift you leagues above your range-shooting buddies. www.combat.com also offers laser tag solutions, including shock belts for added “pain compliance,” which accelerates the learning curve a whole lot more than you might imagine.

Simunitions, Force On Force, or UTM are rare in the consumer world, expensive and *extremely*

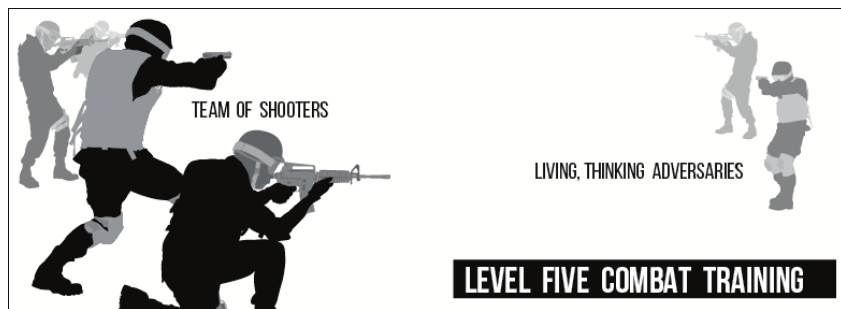
effective for learning man-on-man gunfighting, especially for Close Quarters Battle (or “CQB”) skills for room and house clearing. If you can get access to sims, we highly recommend them.

Man-on-man Combat Skills you will learn shooting against another person:

- Gaining angles, or “flanking.”
- Using cover and concealment.
- Maneuvering under fire.
- Employing athleticism as a weapon.
- Running a firearm under heavy stress.
- Retreating and de-escalating.
- Learning the power of the “first mover.”
- Discovering how much patience pays off.
- Sensing the moment when focused violence prevails.



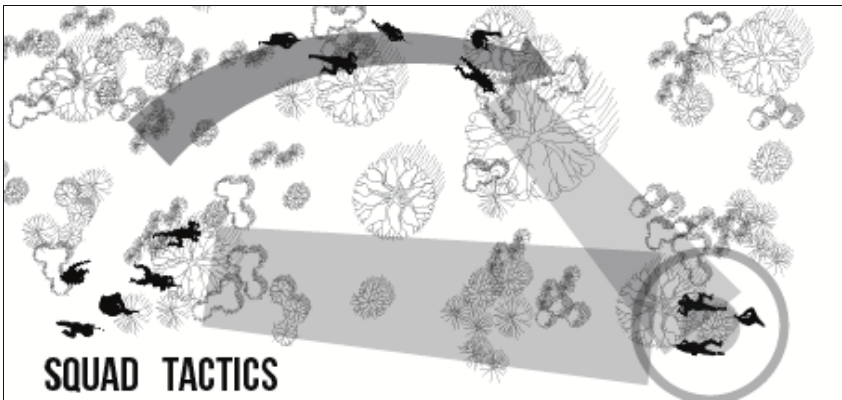
Level Five. Force-on-force Team Combat



The next huge jump in combat lethality comes from fighting with a coordinated team. For U.S. operators, this level is tantamount to learning how to cheat in combat.



In simple terms, using a multi-person force enables you to suppress and maneuver, gaining extreme tactical advantage over an opponent. The advantages of multiple eyes, multiple angles, communications, coordinated fire, combined arms and mission planning are so immense, that it's inconceivable that most preppers have never once trained in a force-on-force scenario.



Using Airsoft or Paintball for Force-on-force Training.

Airsoft or paintball training exercises can either catapult your combat skill forward 100X or create training scars that will compromise your group. Are you playing an ego-game or are you training?

That answer will determine if you're being gamers or combat-effective adults.

1. **Plan** your mission using a Smartbook, relying on leadership and mission discipline.
2. **Execute** your plan against an OPFOR no more than one-third of your unit size.
3. **Use** all forms of communication: electronic (radios), verbal, hand signals and lights.

Communicate a bunch!

4. **Fight** with combat wisdom. In other words, if you can hide behind a bush and defeat a paintball (but not a .223 bullet) than don't hide behind a bush, even when you're training with paintball. If you wouldn't run to a piece of cover against assault rifles, don't run to that cover when being fired upon by airsoft. More often than not, you should complete your mission, killing all the OPFOR without being detected until the moment you launch your assault or ambush. Train as though the OPFOR can kill you.
5. **Conduct** a sit-down debrief after each mission and discuss: what worked, what didn't work, and what you will do differently next time.
6. **Repeat** the same mission until you get it right.



What to do when you're "Hit."

Nothing gets the ego roiling faster than being "hit" during force-on-force training. The temptation to ignore the hit (ie. cheat) is more than

most egos can bear. Obviously, when you cheat, you're only hurting yourself.

One way to break the pattern of ego interference in an airsoft or paintball training scenario is to vary the rules of what happens when you're "hit." By announcing and changing the Hit Rules every scenario, you reinforce the training objective. Also, quitting when you're "hit" generates a training scar. It's always preferable to continue to fight even though shot or fragged, especially when you can administer your own first aid. Rotate through these "Hit Rules" while training:

1. **Hit & Out.** When hit, shout "DEAD MAN" and lay down in that location, administer first aid and drop out of the fight.
2. **Hit, First Aid, Resume.** When hit, shout "HIT," put on a tourniquet or a piece of flagging tape, then resume fighting. After the second hit, shout "DEAD MAN" lay down in that location and wait.
3. **Hit by First Shooter.** Whenever an opponent shoots first from a new position, with an angle on your position, you call "DEAD MAN" regardless of whether you're actually hit.
4. **Hit, First Aid, Return to Last Rally.** When hit, shout "DEAD MAN," apply tourniquet, then escape with stealth to Last Rally Point for additional trauma care.
5. **Fight Through.** Shout "HIT!" at every hit, but continue to fight until utterly dominated by opposing force.

These changing rules will create battlefield confusion and a lot of "I HIT YOU!!!" shouting and arguing, which will remind everyone:

- This isn't a damn game.
- Opponents DO NOT usually die when they are first shot.
- You can count on everyone to cheat in combat.
- You train with total honesty and accountability for

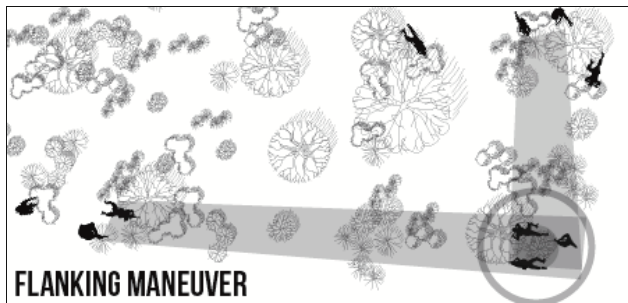
YOURSELF, because that's how you learn. Who cares what anyone else is doing? You're training to learn for you. Defending your ego is pointless in training.

Again, airsoft, paintball, IR Tactical and Simunition systems provide the ability to fight with your team against an opposing force ("OPFOR") to master the secrets of absolute battlefield domination. This is the gold standard of combat training for a Citizen Commando and it should make up a sizable chunk of your practice time. Plus, it's as fun as hell, even when you do it with strict training discipline.



The Operation Planning Workbooks provide the perfect basis for force-on-force training missions. Choose a mission from the OPGs (such as Raid, Recon, Ambush, Sniper, etc.) then enlist a small opposing force to serve as your OPFOR. Then execute the mission and watch as you learn by the bucket-load.

Remember, you will rarely, if ever, fight against a force the same size as your force. If you are wise, you will never fight with less than three men to every one enemy. Especially when you are assaulting, you will be at a tactical disadvantage (because you are attacking and they are defending), so fighting three-to-one, even in training, makes perfect sense. Your OPFOR can and should be small, especially while your team is learning to work together. And, operating as OPFOR is a huge opportunity to learn too.



This is not a game. This is training and your objective will be to defeat the OPFOR without experiencing a single casualty. That will be challenge enough, so don't load your OPFOR with more than one-third your number.

Use the correct system for your scenario. If you're fighting on open ground without cover, airsoft, paintball and Sims will be the wrong systems.



Other Critical Tactical Experience.

You're probably hearing for the first time that there are training levels beyond shooting at the range. Never fear. It gets better. Actually, it gets worse, but worse is better when it comes to building huge advantages over your adversary.

As a Citizen Commando, you want every advantage and the more advantages you can gain from equipment and training the more dominant you and your group will be in a crisis. So, all this extra training is GREAT NEWS for you and TERRIBLE NEWS for the gangbangers, starving hordes or brain-hungry zombies. There are numerous other layers that you and your group should place on top of the Five Levels of Combat Shooting and they will increase your lethality by an even much larger multiple.



Night Combat.

Most combat takes place at night but preppers conduct 99% of their practice during the day. More than 99% of preppers are not equipped or trained to shoot at night and they would struggle to hit the broad side of a barn in the dark.

However, learning to shoot at night, and tuning in the right equipment for night shooting, isn't difficult or particularly expensive. In order of expense, starting with the cheapest equipment and descending toward the most-expensive, here's the list of stuff you should master at night:



- Illuminated rifle sight (aka point sight)
- Illuminated or tritium handgun sight
- Unmounted flashlight
- Mounted flashlight
- Laser sight
- Night Vision Goggles (NVGs) plus Infra-red sights

It's insufficient to just master these tools on the range. You must use them in force-on-force combat, forcing you to learn to use all of your other equipment at night as well (which is a big, damn deal), such as tactical lights, backpacks, load bearing equipment, GPS, maps, clothing and radios. Every

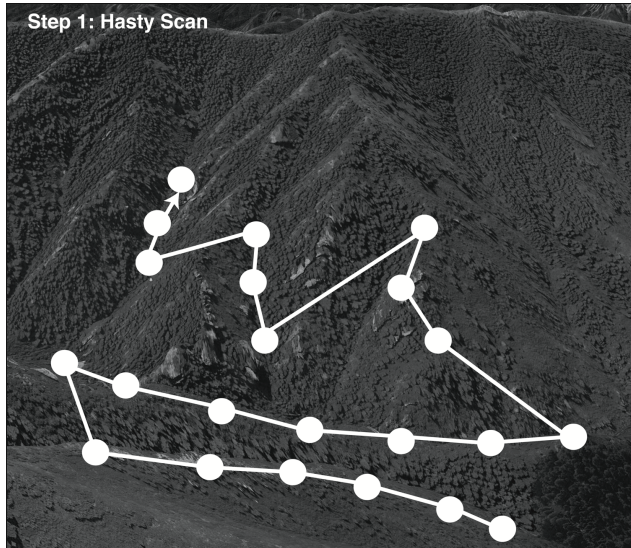
time you change kit, so will your shooting, so work your kit through its paces.

Though expensive, NVGs coupled with an IR laser (not expensive) provide a virtually indomitable advantage on the citizen battlefield. If you must sell several rifles to afford NVGs, it will be well worth the sacrifice.

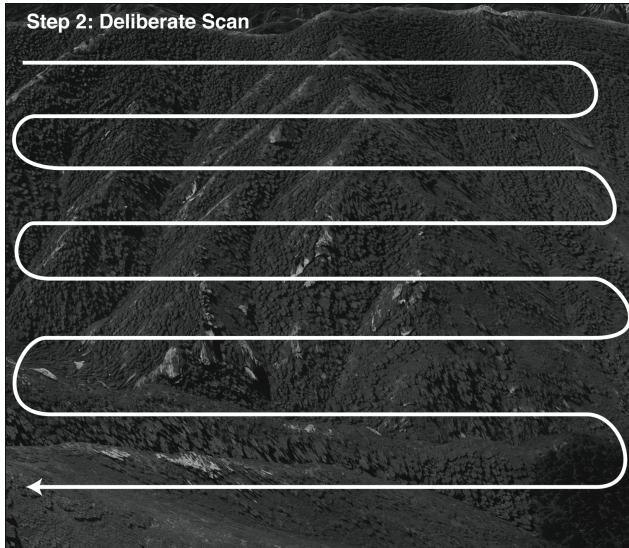


Spotting/Detection.

Detecting an enemy first delivers an advantage so powerful that it's hard to overstate. Hunters hone their ability to spot animals in the wilderness and that skill transfers well to many combat operations.



The use of glass to detect enemy movement can sometimes (though not often) be aided by infra-red gadgets such as thermal scopes and sights, given perfect conditions. But more often, glass optics give a combat hunter the big win. The author spent almost a decade with a pair of binoculars around his neck, because they were a life-or-death advantage.



Here are your tools for detection, in order of importance:

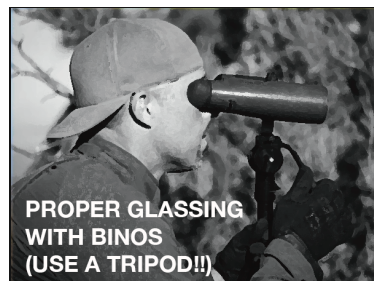
- Binoculars (with tripod.)
- Night Vision Goggles.
- Spotting Scope.
- Thermal Scope.

Remember, many nights have a lot of moonlight, and that pushes glassing with binoculars even further up the list of essential skills.

Making yourself comfortable is the key to effective glassing. Holding bins in front of your face is "hasty glassing" and is not sustainable.

Sit on a butt pad. Arrange a back rest. Place the bins directly in front of your eyes, held by a tripod. Then, scan methodically.

Take the time to get your comfort exactly right, because it can easily save your life!



Learning how to glass comfortably for hours with a pair of binoculars, attached to a tripod, is a vastly under-appreciated combat skill.



Harsh Weather.

At ReadyMan, we do a fair amount of shooting in harsh weather, and the AR15 has not performed well under those conditions. In snow or rain, equipment fails, especially ARs. Even binoculars. Even magazines. Even point sights. Wet, freezing weather plays hell on gear and there's only one way to learn the truth about your kit: train in crappy weather.

There's an old Army saying, "if it ain't rainin', it ain't trainin'." If you're brave enough to train in wet or cold weather, you will learn that your self-defense gear has secret gremlins.



Hopefully, you're beginning to see that operator training and prepper training have lots in common. Tough, realistic training is the single biggest preventative cure to PTSD. Nothing will lower your stress and adrenaline in combat as much as true-to-combat training. With dynamic training, you will give yourself the ability to THINK when the shit hits the proverbial fan instead of spinning up in a whirlwind of combat stress.

BASELINE GEAR FOR A COMMANDO



BugOut Bags

A bugout bag (BOB) is not quite the same thing as personal combat kit (“kit”). With that said, you’ll notice that our *Long Patrol Kit* later in this chapter would make a perfect bugout bag in most circumstances.

A BOB or a “get home bag” should serve a single purpose: *to get a person to their bugout location (BOL) as quickly as possible*. If a prepper

doesn't have a bugout location, then there is little chance he will survive a collapse. Your bugout location might be your home or your brother's farm in the countryside. Either way, you must have a place to go where your chances of survival have been increased by pre-staging preparations (weapons, water, food, alternative power, etc.) and by having built relationships in that community.

If a prepper plans to carry enough equipment on his back to survive indefinitely outdoors, then this plan is destined to fail due to MATH. Humans need calories, calories have weight and weight (when carried) quickly deteriorates those calories and the human body itself. In 99.9% of circumstances, a human being cannot collect enough calories from the wilderness to sustain life.



Remember the probability of threat and balance it against your equipment. Your feet will likely get torn up before you get into a gunfight with criminals. Reduce your time under stress by moving light. Getting there fast reduces the probability of threat!

The calories you have set aside should be stored, along with many other equipment advantages, at a bugout location, which might be your home. Your bugout bag should fit the best mode of transportation you can use given the situation.

First, you will have a bugout bag for your vehicle, which will include a much larger and heavier selection of equipment options.

Second, you might have a bugout bag for a secondary vehicle, such as a motorcycle, bicycle or even a wagon. That bugout bag will be a stripped-down version of the vehicular bugout bag, smaller and lighter.

Third, you must prepare a bugout bag for walking, if all else fails. And, this bag must be very, very light. We suggest **fifteen pounds or lighter**, not including a weapon,

ammunition and water. With a fifteen to twenty pound pack, most adults can walk fast and cover long distances.

Reaching your bugout location quickly, before others discover your food and equipment, and getting off the street before civil disorder mounts, are far more critical than having “all the whistles and bells” for wilderness survival.



PLAN2BUGOUT

Get a free, custom computer app for you to build the perfect Bug Out Bag given your set of circumstances.

Go to www.plan2bugout.com and "Create Free Account."

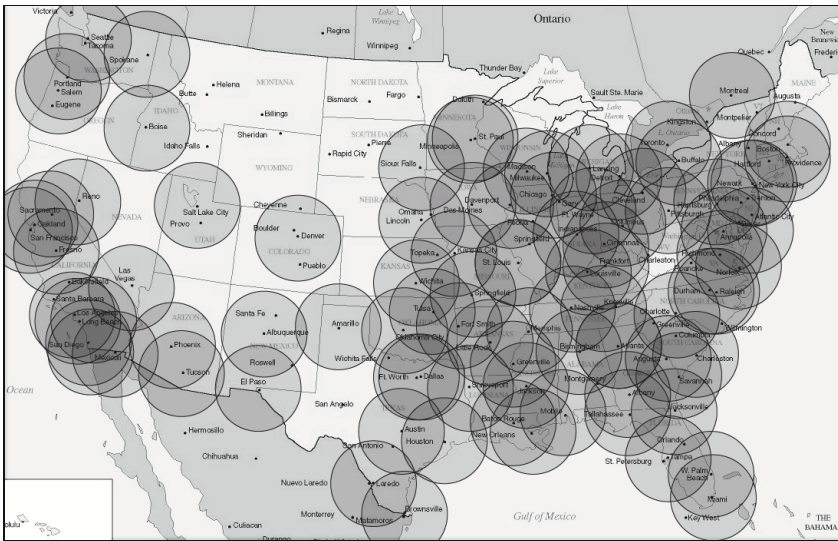
Wilderness survival is not a survival plan, unless you have been living in the wilderness for weeks out of the year, in every season and if you live in one of the very small parts of the United States that wouldn't be overrun with scavengers.

In other words, you should focus on **speed** over all else and you should get to your bugout location without delay.

Once you arrive at your bugout location, security will be a primary concern. It is often said that you can survive three minutes

without air, three days without water and three weeks without food—but you can't survive more than three seconds without physical security.

This saying implies that, if you're defenseless, an armed group of criminals can end your life in the blink of an eye. Unfortunately, the threat to your security is highly binary: meaning you either live or you die and your survival might depend on something as fleeting as whether or not you happened to be carrying a gun at the precise moment of an attack. Unless civil disorder miraculously fails to appear, or unless you live in a safe agricultural hamlet more than three hundred miles from a major city, you would be wise to stand ready for an attack at any moment, day or night.



The reach of a tank of gas around every American city with a population over 150,000

Home Combat Kit [Level 1]

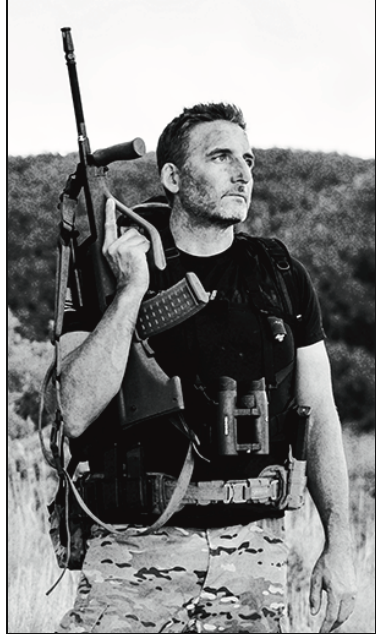
We've created and tested a list of personal combat kit on three levels: **Home**, **Short Patrol** and **Long Patrol**. These lists were honed overseas in daily combat conditions, then blended with ultralight

tech now available. Each kit level assumes that you nest the previous kit inside the next level of kit, going from lightest kit for **Home Combat** to heaviest kit for **Long Patrol**.

Battle Belt.

The easiest place to carry your combat tools is on a belt. Trust us when we say that you will not want to chop wood while wearing a plate carrier vest, even without plates. A battle belt will carry your handgun, mags, plus a bunch of other good stuff. Crye Precision (\$\$\$\$) makes the best battle belt, but Condor (\$) makes a perfectly decent one as well. Remember to use your battle belt at the gun range, because it takes a time of “living in” your battle belt to build the right configuration for you. Don’t forget to buy the actual belt that goes into the battle belt, plus a holster, mag pouches and the molle pouches you will desire.

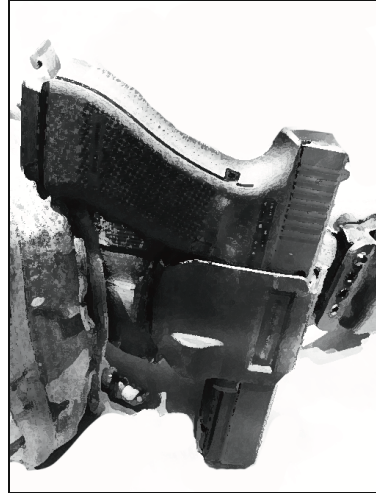
Good luck getting your holster to fit on your molle battle belt. It can require a bit of trial and error, and you definitely want your holster to fit firmly. We assume that you will be doing countless daily chores around your bugout location and that your kit will need to be light and convenient. If you set your weapon down to work, you will eventually leave it, and if you leave your weapon once, you will begin to leave it always. It’s the way of human nature—we grow weary of



threats and we get sloppy. Because of this reality, we suggest a Home Combat Kit that you will never set aside, no matter what you are doing (chopping wood, tilling soil, building structures, etc..) For that to work, your kit must be very light and portable.

Firearm.

If you have open ground around your bugout location (such as a farming town), then you may carry a rifle, but it must be the lightest rifle possible—one you can hang off your shoulder all day, every day. A handgun, especially in urban settings, will often be the right choice. We recommend the Glock 17, because it's standard (not because we think it has magical powers of combat.) We do not suggest carrying both a rifle and a handgun at home, because of weight concerns. Of course, you will always have a fighting rifle somewhere nearby, regardless of which firearm you “every day carry.” The handgun or light rifle will, hopefully, allow you to fight your way to a full-size rifle.



Ammunition.

We recommend carrying three mags, total, for your handgun and one extra mag for an assault rifle. For a long rifle, we would carry about twenty rounds.

Knife.

More a tool than a weapon, we believe in carrying a knife that can be used in a fight, but that's mostly for utility. We like the Cold Steel Voyager in either the four inch or the five and-a-half inch variety, but any knife will do. It's a tool, not a love affair. The Norse warriors often used the same axe for wood chopping as for battle.



When you use something every day, you develop a sixth-sense for that tool. The same knife you use to open Amazon packages should be the knife you would use to defend your life.

Radio.

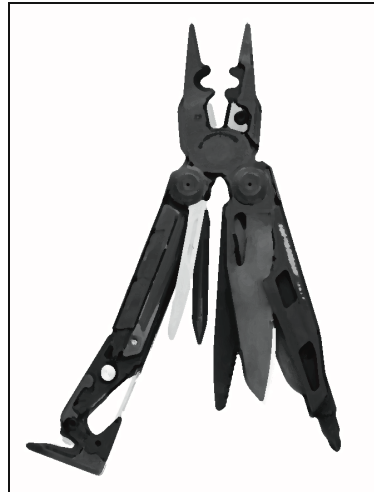
For homestead work, the consumer GRMS or FRS radios (\$) work fine. They're cheap and come in small packages. We prefer the non-rechargeable kind, since they function much longer on regular batteries, which we store in bulk. Small ham radios (\$) are a much better choice, but require a ham license in order to train with them.

First Aid.

Since you're at your bugout location in this scenario, we're very conscious of over-weighting (and most people tend to over-weight their first aid kit.) All you really need for Home Combat is a tourniquet and something to stop massive bleeding. We recommend the RATS tourniquet (because Jeff invented it and because it's better than the alternatives) and some kind of fast-clotting battle dressing like QuikClot or Nu-Stat. You can walk back to the house for anything else you may need (ibuprofen, band aids, etc..)

Multi-tool.

You often need a tool, but in a gunfight (especially if you trust your life to the AR15), a multi-tool can be the difference between winning and losing. Any multi-tool will likely work. If you're looking for a recommendation, we'd suggest that Leatherman MUT (\$\$\$), because it was designed as life support for the AR15 (much-needed life support, in our experience.)

**Ear Protection.**

We include ear pro because, if you keep it in your battle belt, your battle belt will become your range bag. If it becomes your range bag, you will learn to “live with” your battle belt and that will force you to get used to it and customize it to real life use.

Eye Protection.

While you probably wouldn't use ear pro or eye pro in a fight inside your bugout location, keeping them both in your battle belt will make it a regular part of your shooting life, which has more benefits than you might imagine.

Gun Oil.

A small bottle of gun oil is sometimes a game-saver on the range, but it could also help in a fight. We think a tiny bottle is worth the weight. We use the ReadyMan firearm lubricant (\$).

Short Patrol Combat Kit [Level 2]

On top of your Level One, Home Combat Kit, we suggest you add a small backpack and some kind of load bearing equipment on your chest, thought maybe not a full chest rig (plate carrier vest.) Again, you carry this kit *in addition* to your battle belt. On “Short Patrol,” we’re not contemplating an overnight affair. Essentially, we’re picturing a tactical day hike. Short Patrol doesn't require food, so you can carry snacks and gels. Only the essentials!

Small Backpack.

It’s important that you not stuff too much weight in a backpack without a true belly band. You should be looking at around five pounds in a small backpack. Otherwise, you should make the jump to a larger backpack with a padded belly band. One of the most common mistakes made by preppers is to overload a pack that only has a strap belly band or no



belly band. This combination eats their lunch on any kind of over-land movement. Our favorite small backpack is made by Tactical Tailor, the Concealed Carry Backpack (\$\$\$\$) or their Bantam Pack (\$\$\$) or the Condor Venture Pack (\$\$), but you honestly don’t need to spend much if you keep your weight low. Another option is to go larger and lighter—carrying an ultra-light backpack like the ZPacks

Arc Blast (\$\$\$\$), and then you pick up a decent belly band. Ultra-light backpacks are also not as durable, so you need to treat them right.

Chest Rig.

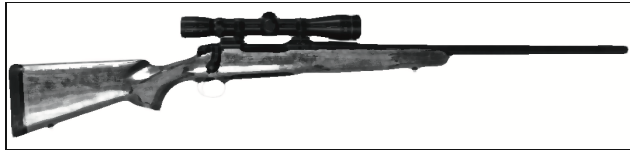
At this level, we don't recommend a plate carrier vest, since you're not on patrol looking to assault a target. You're moving from Point A to Point B and you want to carry a few extra mags in case something goes wonky. For that application (and for most prepper applications), we recommend the Beez Combat Chest Rig (\$\$) or the Condor Recon Chest Rig (\$\$). Since you won't be wearing armor plates, you want your rig to breathe as much as possible. These chest rigs provide the minimum amount of fabric needed for breathability and the maximum amount of ammo pouches.



Rifle.

A rifle is many times more lethal than a handgun and you should always carry a rifle when you can. On patrol, it may make sense to ditch your handgun, since the handgun is mostly there as a backup if your rifle experiences a fatal jam (a jam that requires some kind of

steel rod to unseat a spent round jammed in the breach.) We realize that most people carry an AR15, and fatal jams do happen on occasion. But, it's still a close call as to whether you should carry a handgun. As for the best all-around rifle, it depends on whether you're in a rural setting or wandering around open ground. For urban settings, we'd probably opt for an AR15 because you can carry so much more ammunition. For open ground, we suggest the Robinson XCR-M (\$\$\$\$) or the FN/FAL (\$) in 7.62 x 51 caliber (you'll have to dig for cheap models of the FN, but they're out there.) We recommend decent optics, such as the Trijicon ACOG (\$\$\$\$) or a Vortex Optics (\$\$) illuminated point sight. There's also nothing wrong with the Remington 700 in .308 or .300 Win Mag with a half-decent glass optic (\$\$\$). Illuminated point sights, as mentioned in the previous chapter, are an absolute necessity since they're basically required to fight at night.



Extra Ammo.

Ammo is heavy. Don't overdo it. We suggest three magazines, total, for an assault rifle, maybe four (depending on the likelihood of threat.) Keep in mind, weight will jack you up *every time*, whereas a threat may never come.

First Aid.

In addition to your Home Combat Kit, we would add a few, very light, items. Ibuprofen. Tylenol. Crazy Glue (to glue blisters back,) and maybe a little bit of medical tape or Duct tape. Also, a tiny tube of sunscreen and insect repellent might be in order.

Water Treatment.

Iodine tablets are the lightest water treatment solution and we recommend that you keep it light. If you can afford the extra weight (be honest!) we suggest the Sawyer Mini Water Filtration System (\$) or the Platypus GravityWorks (\$\$\$) filter system. You also need a water bottle, but don't back a bunch of water if you'll be patrolling past water that you can treat. We recommend the Nalgene water bottle (\$) because Camelbak bags can easily puncture. We might still carry a Camelbak in our pack, because we tend to stay better hydrated with convenient access to water.



Maps.

You should jump on the USGS website and purchase the 7.5 minute (1:24,000) topo maps for the area around your bugout location, because once they're gone...they're gone forever.

Compass/GPS.

Generally, we don't get lost around our bugout location, and a GPS is relatively heavy. If you can combine your GPS function with a high-power radio, then you get a two-fer, but it's going to cost you: Garmin Rhino 755t (\$\$\$\$). Otherwise, you can carry a regular Garmin (like a Foretrex (\$\$)) or a Garmin GPSMAP (\$\$\$). All of that tech depends on satellites to keep working, which is anyone's guess in a collapse. We usually opt for a nice, light Silva compass (\$) and some map navigation skills. Again, you'll rarely wander that far from home anyway.

Trash Compacter Bag.

As a rain cover for your gear or as a solution for a million unforeseen problems, a heavy-duty trash compacter bag is a must-have.

Heavy-duty 55 gallon Trash Bag.

Sheet plastic is one of our great modern inventions and a heavy trash bag can save your butt.

**36 inches of Duct Tape.**

Like the trash compacter bag, a bit of duct tape can be used as a field dressing, repair solution or the fix to a thousand, unexpected problems.

Fire Starter.

Nothing gets a prepper's blood pumping like fire starters. We kinda hate them. Operators never carry flint and steel, which should tell you something about flint and steel. Rather, just carry two or three Bic Mini lighters. Additionally, we like to carry a half-size Ziploc baggy with fifteen cotton balls drenched in Vaseline. They're as good a fire starter as you will find (check out the video if you need help getting your mind around this process.)



Snacks.

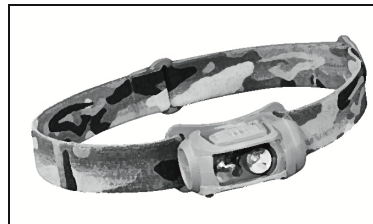
High protein, high fat and high carb snacks, like energy bars or trail mix will go well with exertion. 1 gram carb = 4 calories. 1 gram fat = 9 calories.

Identification.

Depending on the collapse scenario, you may want to carry identification that you can lose in case you're stopped by authorities and they take your ID. In other words, carry your driver's license and hide your passport.

Head Lamp.

Essential gear for combat. Keep around your neck day and night. We like to go ultra light for our backup: Petzl eLite (\$\$). Around our neck, we use the red Princeton Tec Remix headlamp (\$\$).

**Cash.**

We doubt that cash would become instantly worthless in a post-SHTF scenario (but it might.) So, carry \$100 bills or silver (gold is worth too much in small increments) in order to buy yourself out of trouble.

Long Patrol Combat Kit [Level 3]

On top of your Level One (Home Combat) and Level Two (Short Patrol) Kit, we suggest you add a larger backpack with an excellent belly band. This final list of kit, we believe, is a good place to start for

a hiking bugout bag.

Larger Backpack.

We wouldn't go much over 60 liters on this backpack, because then you'll try to carry too much weight—only to get your ass handed to you half-way through the patrol. Go light!! Also, you need an excellent belly band. Nylon webbing strap, without padding, is not “an excellent belly band.” We would sacrifice tactical look-and-feel for a good belly band and light weight, every day of the week and twice on Sunday. We're not overly-worried about durability, either. Remember, every ounce of “durability” weight in your gear will wear out your feet, your hips and your back. Respect the limited durability of your body and go as light as possible. With that said, we love the ZPacks Arc Blast backpack (\$\$\$\$) or the slightly heavier (but tons cheaper) Osprey Exos 48L (\$\$). Again, you'll be scratching your head to fit what you want in these packs, so take less.



Sleeping Bag.

Here's where light weight can cost you. First, take the thinnest bag you can afford given the temperature. It's best to own three bags: a 20 degree, a 0 degree and a -20 degree (adjusted to your local climate.) Then, get the lightest-weight bags you can afford. When we have money to burn, we like the Western Mountaineering bags (\$\$\$\$) or we opt down to the lightest 20 degree bag we can afford (\$\$). There's a good ultra-light argument to be made about bringing a lighter bag and a bivvy sack. Other guys do ultra-light “quilts” to reduce weight

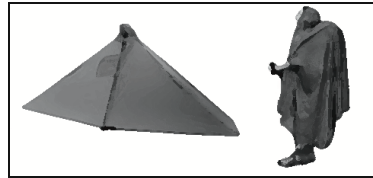
even further, but that's not a rabbit hole we want to go down in this book.

Sleeping Pad.

We think a good night's sleep is worth the weight, so we add a Klymit Inertia X Frame pad (\$) (pack the repair kit!) Or, if your back can take it, bring a cheap chunk of closed-cell foam (\$).

Tent.

For a long patrol, we would opt for the Six Moons Designs Gatewood Cape (\$), which weighs only 11 ounces and doubles as a rain poncho. Remember to practice with it before the SHTF, because you need to figure out how you want to do the center post—either by bringing a walking stick or by using trees overhead to hold up your tent. If you want a bit more space, we love the ultralight ZPacks Duplex Tent (\$\$\$\$). An old Army poncho can work in a pinch, making a "poncho hooch" (but there's nothing ultra-light about an army poncho.)



Tent Stakes.

Go light! MSR light tent stakes (\$).

Beanie.

It's the first thing you tend to forget when you head out into the cold, plus it's the first thing you strip off when you're humping overland. We keep it in our combat bag so it doesn't get left behind.

Extra Socks.

Wet socks = super hard on your feet. Injinji or Darn Tough socks (\$\$). Also easy to forget.

Paracord.

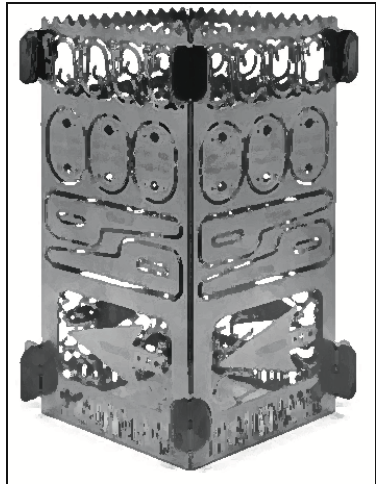
For tent setup and other needs, carry around 30 feet. MSR Ultralight Paracord (\$). Or Titan Survival Paracord (\$\$).

Extra Knife.

In order to have two blades, we toss in a razor-sharp Spyderco Ladybug (\$), which weighs almost nothing.

Cooking Stove.

If you're going to be gone long enough to need coffee and Mountain House (MREs are heavy), maybe pack an ultralight alcohol stove. This is something you need to practice with while camping in order to understand the system, but alcohol stoves do the job as well as bigger, heavier stoves. We've tested them all and we love the Evernew Titanium Alcohol Stove (plus the stand) (\$), and the Vargo Titanium Bot (\$\$\$) and the



Vargo light pot grabber (\$). Don't forget that you need denatured alcohol fuel, that needs to be stored in a plastic bottle. Everclear (available at your local liquor store) works too, but not as well as denatured alcohol. We add a titanium spork to this list too (\$). Also,

we always carry a ReadyMan Pocket Stove so that we can burn twigs to boil water instead of chewing into our alcohol supply (\$).

Food.

The lightest option is Mountainhouse or Backpacker's Pantry. We strip off the bag and stick the freeze dried food in Ziplocs to reduce weight. Every ounce counts. Starbucks Via coffee is light and gets you pretty close to the coffee experience (recommended by Evan Hafer, from Black Rifle Coffee, if you can believe it.)



Compact Cleaning Rod.

You're not going to clean your rifle on patrol, but you may well need a rod to unseat a jammed cartridge (insert gratuitous insult to the unreliable AR15 here.) We carry a compact cleaning rod--without all the brushes and jags--as a way to reach up the barrel and pop a jammed piece of brass loose. Real Avid compact cleaning kit (\$\$).

Butt Care.

We repack wet wipes into small Ziplocs and that's our toilet paper option.



. . .

WE REALIZE that we're swimming upstream against prepper logic by suggesting ultra-light options. We have tested them all and watched preppers destroy themselves moving overland with their heavy bugout bags that have three of everything. You only have one pair of feet, so if you ruin those because you're carrying three fire starters, then you defeated the main objective (getting where you need to go without dying.) We believe in carrying multiple equipment types IN OUR VEHICLE but not ON OUR BACK. If you can *run* in your bugout bag, then you're just about right.



PLANNING TO SURVIVE



In order to help you decide what's next, we would need to:

- know where your preparedness is at right now,
- know what resources you have (budget), and
- know what you think might happen in the world.

In other words, we need a dynamic piece of software to generate the perfect plan for your location, family situation, budget and even your fitness.

ReadyMan offers a badass preparedness planning software that covers all these bases and it only comes with the monthly fee

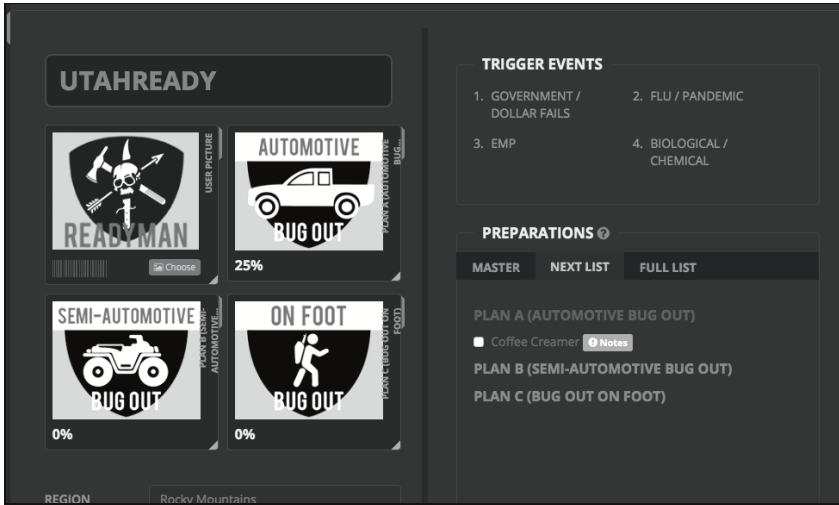
membership (\$9.95 a month as of printing.) The **Plan2Survive** considers all the factors in your life (budget, location, family, fitness, etc.) and cranks out a perfect, step-by-step plan for you.



We're pleased to give you the **Plan2BugOut** free (the same type of computer app but for building a bugout bag)--go to www.plan2bugout.com for your free bugout bag builder. After that, we'll ask you to contribute to the ReadyMan community by paying a bit for the full **Plan2Survive** (go to www.Plan2Survive.com).




If you're planning on surviving a collapse—make no mistake—you're already betting your life on your decision-making skills. Every time you buy a piece of gear or pay for some training, you're making a potentially life-or-death decision about what will guarantee the survival for your family.



We want to help you make the best decisions possible, in this Operation Field Guide, in our Black Autumn series of fiction and in the Plan2BugOut and Plan2Survive.

Four Major Factors.

These four factors describe YOUR survival condition today. Where will you be when a collapse hits? Who will be relying on you for their survival? What kind of physical shape will you be in at that time? And, who will you be able to rely upon as your support community?

 **PROFILE INFORMATION**

USERNAME

utahready

EMAIL ADDRESS

Not Editable

ZIP CODE

REGION

Rocky Mountains

LOCATION

Suburban

FAMILY

Extended Family

FITNESS

Ultra Fit

COMMUNITY

Very Large

BUDGET

More than \$5000

TRIGGER EVENTS

☒ Government / Dollar Fails

☒ Flu / Pandemic

☒ EMP

☐ Natural Disaster

These factors can be improved and changed as you hone your preparation. You could leave the city and move to the countryside. Your kids may grow up. You might lose weight and become more physically fit. And, you could definitely build a tighter, more prepared personal community. But, it's unwise to count on these factors changing quickly. Rather, it's best to strike your plan around the four primary factors as they stand today.



Primary Factor One: LOCATION.

Where will you be living when things start falling apart?

Assuming that you will have enough time to get from work to your home, where will you be living? Your answer to this question most likely fits within one of these categories:



Urban.

You live in a city. If you can drive less than ten minutes and see graffiti, your home is urban. If you live in an apartment, your home is urban. If ever hear a police helicopter fly overhead, your home is urban.



Suburban.

You live outside of the city, but not in the countryside. If you live less than ten minutes from a multi-plex movie theater, your home is suburban. If you live in a development with curb and gutter that doesn't allow horses, your home is suburban. If you can get to The Gap clothing store without planning your day around the trip, your home is suburban.

Semi-rural.

You live in the countryside, but you're still "in town." If you live in a town that has less than 30,000 people, your home is semi-rural. If you have neighbors who can hear your dog bark but you have "horse property", your home is semi-rural. If you can have horses, chickens and goats with no problem, your home is semi-rural.



Rural.

You live in the countryside, plain and simple. If you have to drive “into town” then your home is rural. If you have to drive more than ten minutes to buy a gallon of milk, your home is rural. If you have clear fields of fire in a three-hundred and sixty degree circle around your house for a couple hundred yards, your home is rural.

**Woods.**

Living in the woods is not a survival plan for any duration of time, according to our experts (i.e. special forces guys.) A cabin, or even a tent, in the woods might work as a hide-out for a day or two, but living alone in the woods is almost as dangerous as living in an urban area.

The woods offer very little arable land. Flat, open land is rare in the woods, otherwise it would’ve been made into “rural” land. Estimates vary widely on how much land it takes to survive. But, mountain land generally has shorter growing seasons and challenging access to water. At a minimum, you should be estimating about one acre of plant-able land to sustain each member of your family. Very few parcels of still-undeveloped mountain land have that kind of footprint. Placing yourself in the woods means that food production will be extremely difficult.



The woods have tight fields of fire. Without broad expanses of open field, it is relatively easy to locate a stranger's cabin and even easier to approach to within shooting distance. The woods provide cover for anyone who wants to approach you, kill you and take your provisions.

The woods have poor conditions for housing a family or a community of defenders. Mostly, cabins and tents have little flat land around them and even less shelter. Trying to fit a family into a deep woods scenario would be hard. Trying to fit a small community would be nearly impossible, unless the area was well-prepared in advance.

The woods have little forage. Almost anywhere, it is extraordinarily difficult to feed yourself in the woods year-round, much less feed a family. Fishing and hunting run out quickly under sustained pressure and edible plants are rarely found in great enough quantity or quality to sustain life.

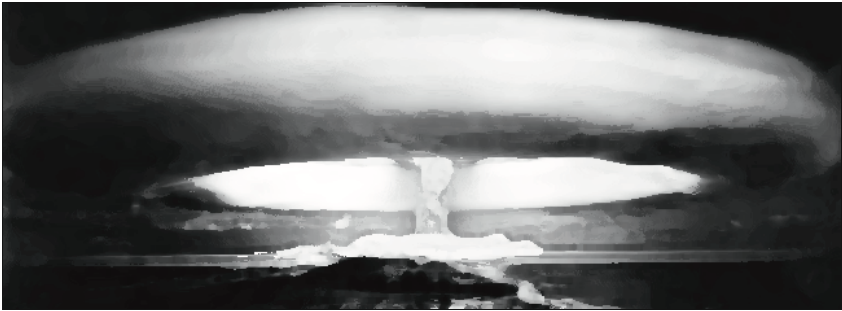
The woods offer questionable security. The woods seem like a place few people would go, because most everyone lives in a city, at this moment. In reality, most under-prepared outdoorsman are planning to "head to the hills."

While crawling all over one another looking for game and forage,



these armchair survivalists would create the worst kind of high-risk battlefield. It'd be a chaotic, hostile space filled with hundreds of one-man armies.

Semi-rural or rural land provides infinitely better conditions than the woods. Most rural areas offer broad fields of fire, cooperative communities, prepared neighbors and plenty of space. Security can be organized within the community so that only a percentage of the residents must stand guard at any one time. Plus, food production can be diversified and trading can be conducted in safety.



Underground Shelters.

In the 1970s, the greatest threat to the survival of the human race was nuclear war. As a result, the “bomb shelter” became an icon of the American survivalist. Today, the idea of bomb shelters continues even though the Cold War has all but vanished.

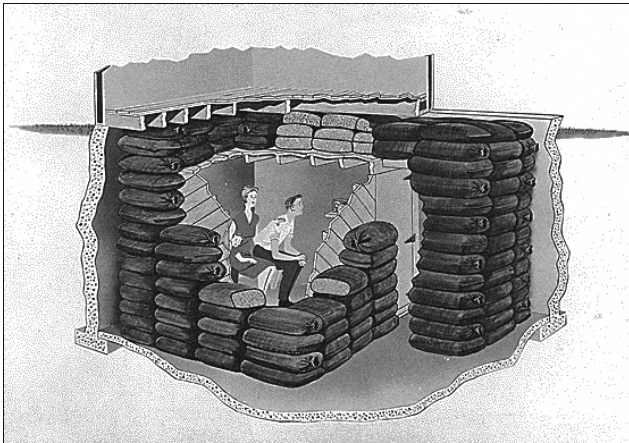
As a general rule, we see more disadvantages than advantages to using an underground shelter, even though more are being sold now than ever before.

Underground shelters impose strict limits on the amount of food and gear a ReadyMan can protect. Once a person goes into an underground shelter, anything stored above-ground must be considered lost. Solar panels, generators, vehicles, farmland – all would be consumed by above-ground scavengers while you hide with your family in a steel tube. Due to the cost of storing underground, and due to the ravages of rust and water, it is impractical to store much

more than a few months of survival stores. Everything else would be forfeit, and “thriving” after a collapse would be very difficult.



Underground shelters are difficult to defend. Absolute Operational Security (OpSec) is the only real defense for a buried shelter. If anyone knows where your shelter is hidden, then you and your family literally become “fish in a barrel” for desperate scavengers. Think about it: how hard would it be to smoke out a family from a buried shelter once you knew where it was located? And, in these days, it’s virtually impossible to keep a gossip-rich secret like that.



Hiding underground limits your ability to build and maintain a

community. Human beings rapidly decline in mental and physical health when they are deprived of community and purpose. Living underground fatally isolates a family, leading to extreme hardship even if the bunker is the pinnacle of luxury. What's more, any community that's developed above-ground will not include anyone living in a shelter. When shelter-dwellers emerge, their status with the community of survivors will be questionable at best.

An underground shelter is very expensive – taking the place of many other, more-useful preparations.

Without the threat of a nuclear ground attack in your area, an underground shelter just doesn't make sense anymore. But, when we think about being a survivalist, we often picture underground shelter as the “ultimate prep.” At ReadyMan, we don't think that's true. We think that a bomb shelter is a blast-from-the-past, more nostalgia than good sense.

Your location is going to matter a lot. If you're facing the shit storm from an apartment in metropolitan Chicago, and you plan to bugout to your brother's place in the suburbs, that's going to be an important piece of information for the Plan. If you already live in the sticks and you plan on staying put, that's critical to the Plan as well.





There are two parts to that question. Where will you START the collapse and where will you END UP after your plan is fully executed. These answers will probably change as you become more and more prepared.

Wherever you start the collapse, there is really only one right answer about where you should end up.

When your preparations reach total completion, you should have a solid bugout location in a rural or semi-rural area. Remote, low-population farmland is the one place where Americans will ultimately thrive after a collapse. It's where America will be rebuilt.

But, until you have that ultimate bugout location, you can survive for days, weeks, or even months in intermediate bugout locations – like a well-defended home in the suburbs, a campsite with three other families or a cabin in the woods. As the worst of a collapse fades, then you will need to move to a sustainable location, in a sustainable community. Lone wolves may survive, but they never thrive.



Primary Factor Two: FAMILY.

Who will you be protecting when things fall apart?

If you're defending and providing for a family after a collapse, the requirements on you will be more serious. Your level of responsibility determines how much you must prepare versus how much you can "wing it."

If you're caring for children or elderly, your ability to move, fight and avoid detection goes way down. Therefore, your preparedness must go way up. If you're fighting it out alone, then you need somewhat less forethought.

Take stock, precisely, of who you will be protecting and how much help or burden they will be. Then, you must factor in that load in your planning.

Careful planning can counter-balance any amount of added responsibility, so be honest with yourself about how much load you'll be carrying and then plan to handle that load like a man.

This factor will determine your level of preparedness, your speed of reaction and your vehicular requirements in a collapse.



Primary Factor Three: FITNESS.

How much stress can your body tolerate when called to survive?

During simulations conducted by ReadyMan (ReadyMan Challenge 1, 3, and 4), we learned that personal physical fitness has a huge impact on the amount of stress – and the quality of decision-making – during a breakdown.

If you have physical disabilities or even if you're just carrying forty extra pounds, you must count on that fitness disadvantage. It will make you tire more quickly and will impair your judgment. No matter how skilled, you will be reduced by the physical AND emotional stress of a collapse. Downplay this warning at your own peril.

Changing the state of your fitness may be a long process – or it may not be possible, especially in cases of advanced age or physical disabilities. Like the other factors, fitness is a factor that can be remediated through superior planning.



If you know that you will likely encounter physical and emotional stress and limitations, you can simply plan better and plan solutions around your current physical limitations.

Do not plan to be more physically fit than you are today. That's a worthy goal, but if you're planning to survive, don't plan on gaining fitness – not until you actually pull it off and maintain that state for six months or so.

For today, plan on your body being in the same state it is today when the collapse comes. Do everything in your power to improve your fitness, but plan on working around your current condition.

Don't worry. It's entirely possible to survive tough times with Dunlop's Disease (a tire around the middle.)



Primary Factor Four: COMMUNITY.

Who will stand with you in a collapse?

We don't believe in the "lone wolf" survival scenario. We believe in being part of the solution – which means that we believe, not only in surviving, but thriving. Part of being part of the solution means rebuilding, and that only happens in community.



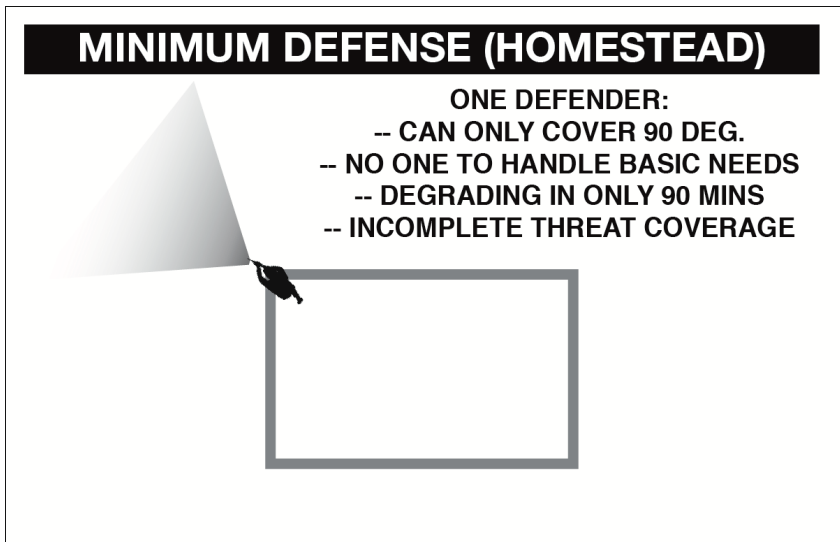
Even if your personality leans away from crowds (we understand that feeling) you should work to build a community of reliable, quality people to support you in your commitment to thriving.

In any case, the math of personal security virtually requires that you stand with others in order to survive. One of the main reasons man came together in community, originally, is our need for sleep. Everyone sleeps and everyone is vulnerable while they do so.



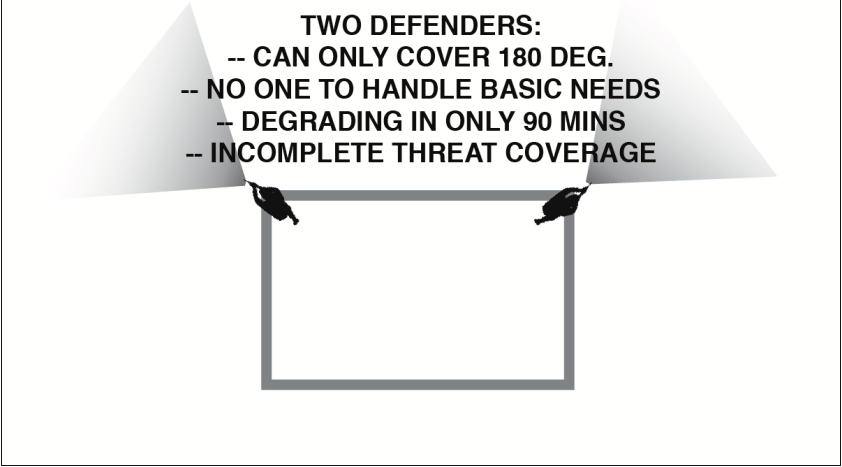
A lone wolf may sleep under a pile of leaves, to be sure, but then his survivability will be greatly limited by the small number of personal possessions he can keep with him. Men require gear in order to survive the natural elements and to defend themselves from other hungry men. Gear requires space and protection. Protection requires awareness and the only way to maintain awareness is to trust another person to provide security while you sleep and handle life's other requirements.

And, up to about 10,000 people, the more people in your community, the better. Here's another way to look at the math – the defensive perimeter.



If you're alone, you must post defense 24 hours a day and cover a 360 degree radius. This is, of course, impossible for more than two days (and a very poor defense for even that time.)

MINIMUM DEFENSE (HOMESTEAD)

- TWO DEFENDERS:**
- CAN ONLY COVER 180 DEG.**
 - NO ONE TO HANDLE BASIC NEEDS**
 - DEGRADING IN ONLY 90 MINS**
 - INCOMPLETE THREAT COVERAGE**
- 
- A diagram showing a square perimeter. Two small black silhouettes of people are positioned at opposite corners of the square, facing each other. Two large, light-gray triangular areas extend from the top corners of the square, representing the 180-degree coverage of the two defenders. The text above the diagram lists the limitations of this setup.

If you add one person, then your defensive strength doubles, meaning you can functionally cover about 180 degrees for an entire day for at least a few days (in the SEALs, they don't count on any one many to cover his sector for more than about 90 minutes before severe fatigue sets in.) With two people, you're still only covering 180 degrees and not for long, before boredom and stress consume you both. If you don't believe it, try it some time.

If you add a third person, then you can almost cover 360 degrees for a couple days. But, then you will have very little time or attention to dedicate to cooking, sanitation, personal recuperation -- much less planting food, improving your defenses and finding water.



If you have four defenders plus a number of others capable of other work, then you will have a fairly solid perimeter with all defenders (able-bodied men) working full-time at defense.

Of course, most perimeters aren't wide-open circles. Most have obstructions, high ground, low ground and buildings. This means that most defensive perimeters require four or more defenders at the same time to prevent anyone from penetrating.

If you add another four defenders, bringing the total to eight, then you can probably have defenders on-guard at all times, plus have limited time for rest, work and personal recuperation. Assuming excellent preparations (food, water, shelter, power, etc.,) then that group may begin to thrive, once they get used to the hard and boring work of protecting themselves.

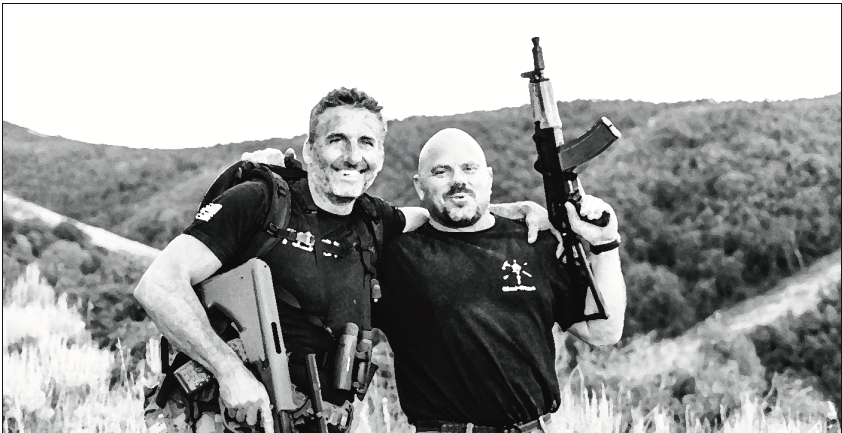


Better still, if you have a small town contributing to defense. You can split the work among hundreds of men. Now, men can specialize into simple guards, skilled fighters and a Quick Reaction Force of skilled fighters who can mostly rest, but then respond to an alarm with violence of action. The work of defending a town then becomes a six-hour shift performed by all men. More or less, it's a just a job. A town can focus military power on likely avenues of approach and assign lesser-skilled men to monitoring open, but unlikely exposure areas. All the while, there would be hundreds of non-combatants working to produce food, livestock and the comforts of life. People would go to church on Sundays. People would specialize in medical care, canning, leadership, production of power and caring for the elderly. Life then becomes much more than surviving. It becomes thriving, even right after a collapse.

Even if a lone wolf survivor could figure out a way to plough through hostile times on his own, thriving is another matter. Mere survival does not equate to living a significant life. In fact, clinical studies show that lone men live much shorter lives than men with families and supportive communities.



Ideally, you will invest in a supportive community that is preparing together for a collapse. That community may be your spouse, your whole family, your closest friends or maybe your entire town. Let's face it: preparing is fun regardless of what happens. Honing outdoors skills, shooting, force-on-force training, learning to garden, raising animals ; for eons of time mankind has enjoyed teaching one another these life skills. Preparing for a collapse should be a chance to meet new people and hang out together in the outdoors.



Operation Field Guide, the Operation Planning Workbooks series, the Black Autumn series and all the hundreds of ReadyMan

videos—we see them all as a “war gaming” exercise to tease out questions related to taking personal responsibility for our families, whether or not society ever falters. We sincerely hope that our families never see a collapse of civil order. Still, we enjoy training and fraternizing with our preparedness buddies. Mastering the old ways and preparing to defend ourselves builds confidence and it's our kind of fun. If you can have fun, spend time with good friends and build an insurance policy for unexpected difficulties, why not?

So, we prepare.



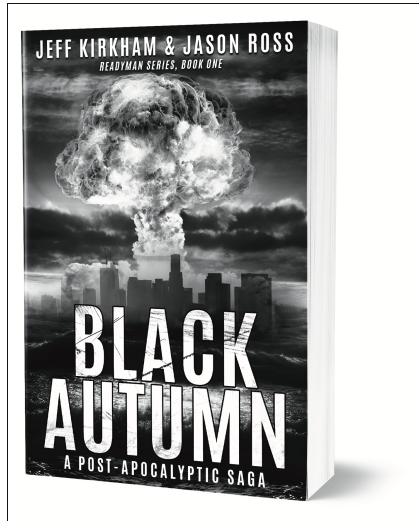
WARGAMING SURVIVAL



We can only guess at what a collapse would really be like. Some of us have experienced collapses in foreign nations, and some dwindling few experienced the American Great Depression. For a future collapse, we have only an inkling what it might be like.

One of the best ways to tease out the conditions of a collapse—be

it mild or severe, economic or civil—is to read fiction. ReadyMan has an expanding collection of its own fiction works, the Black Autumn series, and there are a number of other post-apocalyptic, preparedness fiction books and series that present valuable perspectives on how-it-could-go-down. Here's a list of our favorites:



ReadyMan Thriller Fiction:

BLACK AUTUMN
BLACK AUTUMN TRAVELERS
THE LAST AIR FORCE ONE

ReadyMan Recommended Fiction:

SHTF Series, Lisa Akers, (Women's preparedness)

ONE SECOND AFTER, William Forstchen, (EMP preparedness)

DAY AFTER NEVER Series, Russell Blake, (Criminal world)

GOING HOME Series, A. American, (Bugging Out)

STILL SURVIVING Series, Boyd Craven, (Rural South, Solar flare)

PATRIOTS Series, James Wesley Rawles, (Instructional fiction,
Government tyranny)

GET EXCLUSIVE READYMAN GOOD STUFF

My favorite part of this whole thing is becoming brothers and friends with our readers and members.

My dirty secret: I don't write these books alone. I collaborate with scores of experts and fans and I get many of my best ideas from readers.

Join Jason Ross' newsletter for information on new books and deals (he's my long-suffering co-author.) We might also throw in a ReadyMan gear deal or two.

Join our email list here. When you join, I'm going to send you another download link for *Operation Field Guide* so you can share it with a friend.

In my opinion, ReadyMan has the most-informative, most-enter-taining closed group on all of Facebook. If you read and enjoyed *Operation Field Guide*, you are our kind of person and I invite you to join the group by clicking the link: ReadyMan Closed Facebook Group.

AFTERWARD

Jeff Kirkham served 28 years in the Army, as a Green Beret, DEA agent and in other clandestine capacities. He spent the bulk of that time leading, training and advising foreign forces, which set him up perfectly for his later passion: teaching American citizens how to be competent defenders of their homes and families, especially in the event of an emergency or social collapse.

Now recently retired from service as a Special Forces operator, Jeff enjoys training and hanging out with Citizen Commandos — men and women who pursue the art and science of self-defense.

After four years leading Readyman, Jeff noticed a huge gap in the preparedness of American citizens (or preppers survivalists.) Almost none of them knew the value of planning an operation, which Jeff had learned was one of the greatest differences between highly-effective American forces and ineffective Al Queda terrorists. Likewise, American criminals suffered



from the same deficiency: they almost always failed to plan (unless they were Brad Pitt in *Ocean's Seven*.)



Jeff set to work to provide a citizen-friendly version of the same planning system Jeff provided in his military guidebook, the *Combat Leader's Field Guide* and *Small Unit Leader's Operational Planning Guide*. In combination with the series of *Operation Planning Workbooks* that serve as workbooks for prepper missions, Jeff provides a system for military-style operations tailored to the needs of regular folks who take their family defense seriously.

Without this book and the *Operation Planning Workbooks*, an American prepper cannot expect to be substantially more combat-effective than Taliban, Al Queda or Crip gangbangers. With the *Operation Field Guide*, Jeff hopes to give his American citizen friends a substantial edge if they're called upon to defend themselves and their families.

In Jeff's words, "A fighter who **plans** is ten times as lethal as one who doesn't."

ReadyMan hopes you enjoyed learning from Jeff's massive body of knowledge.

Proper Use:

This material is intended for training only and for a collapse of civil order. It is not intended for use in violation of the Rule of Law. We value law and order and we do not encourage stepping outside the law



