

# FORAGING

## BEGINNERS

for

**fpa\***

Family Protection  
ASSOCIATION





# FORAGING FOR BEGINNERS

## SEARCHING WIDELY FOR FOOD AND PROVISIONS

All of humanity and civilization grew from early tribes of hunter gatherers. Before agriculture became the mainstay of society the fruit and vegetables these tribes consumed were discovered by foraging. Foraging is defined as searching widely for food and provisions. A skill like foraging can be invaluable in survival situation, but to properly forage one must be not be afraid of hard work, experimentation, and be willing to educate themselves.

## **STAYING SAFE**★

The first step is to purchase a guide to edible plants. You need this for numerous reasons, first off is a reference guide for situations where there is no internet, no electricity, you know, your general SHTF situation. Very few of us have the



time to become botanists, and there is a chance you will forget some of the edible plants out there. Most of these guides will show you how to decide what's ripe, and more importantly how to cook it and how to properly forage it.

The final reason is the fact that there are dangerous plants out there, and these guides will reference them and most importantly provide pictures of them. While I always suggest studying



and educating yourself before you encounter a survival situation, we are people and we forget things. This is amplified when you're under stress, and you're tired, and hungry. A reference guide can be a literal life saver. A rule for foraging is you should not consume anything you cannot positively identify.

It's also important to wash any food you find in the wild to cleanse it of any potential contaminants. Next, unless you plan on eating these foods right after cleaning them you need to set them out to dry. This needs to be done before storage because water can make food rot, or mold when it's stored wet. Set your foraged goods apart from each other and let them dry in the sun before being put away.

Berries, oranges, tomatoes, and several other 'soft' fruits and vegetables do not last very long when foraged. If you're not already fitted with the materials to start canning them than the best you can really do is consume them within the first few days. This is also dependent on the weather. Cold weather means these fruit and vegetables will last longer. If they are carried or stored safely this will prevent bruising and breaking, which aids in prolonging their life.

## ***FORAGING ETHICS***★

So where do you find fruits and veggies like this? First you can find them in fields grown by farmers, but taking these is stealing. However most people with large amount of crops and groves will not be focusing on selling goods in a survival situation, and will be probably be happy to barter work or other goods for food.

Outside of farmers and their crops you'll find that quite often food bearing plants will grow ignored and some people's property. These can be nuts, fruit, or even vegetables like wild onions. Ask for permission prior to foraging and be prepared to barter.





## FORAGING SAFETY CHECKLIST

	I can't say it enough, if you don't recognize the plant, don't eat it.
	Wash everything before you eat it
	Look out for wild animals, including venomous insects, snakes, etc
	Gloves are always a welcome addition
	Don't trespass
	Exercise your best weapon, common sense

### INTO THE WILD

So what can we eat? What can we forage? Well we all know the traditional black berry, the strawberry, onions, grapes, oranges, tomatoes, etc. This are obvious fruits and vegetables that we consume throughout our lives and ever think twice about. What are some of the less obvious food out there?

### Nuts and Seeds

The nut and seed family is a large one, and can be found across the continental United States. These nuts and seeds have a long storage life and are

easy to harvest and collect. Nuts and seeds can be a wonderful source of protein, natural fats, and nutrients like magnesium and vitamin B.

These examples are some of the nuts and seeds one can find foraging.

	Acorns, which are best roasted and should always be washed to remove a bitter tasting acid
	Walnuts
	Hickory nuts
	Sunflower seeds
	Hazelnut
	Pecans

### Greens

Greens are some of the easier food to identify, and often grow in some form or another across the country. Greens are low in calories and fat content, but enriched with vitamins, minerals and ,antioxidants necessary for a healthy life. Greens, when mixed with nuts and berries are

the base of a nutritional diet. Some of the more common greens out there are,

	Dandelion
	Wild Mustard
	Plantain
	Watercress
	Common Woodsorrel

Roots

Roots are not something I normally associate with food stuffs, but in fact some roots can be very nutritious and packed full of vital nutrients that can be foraged for survival. These roots and tubers (think potatoes) come from the earth and can be very hardy and resistant to cold and the elements in general. Some tasty roots out there are,

	Cattails
	Wild potatoes
	Water lilies
	Ground nut

Mushrooms

Now it's time for a little fungus. Mushrooms are one of those foods that needs to be referenced before eating. There can be some mushrooms growing out there one does not want to consume. If you know nothing about mushrooms I suggest you just pass them by, and double check every mushroom in the reference guide. Mushrooms can be a delicious and easy to find, and prepare food to forage. A few you can find in the United States,

	Oyster mushroom
	Morel
	Giant Puffballs
	Shaggy Mane
	Chicken of the Woods (These actually taste kind of like lemon and chicken.)

Berries

So I know we said that berries and oranges and all that were well known foraging foods, and it's true to an extent, but there are some berries out there you don't find in the grocery store. Let's face it berries are freakin delicious so the more the better. Here's a few berries you may not be familiar with.

	Serviceberry
	Mulberry
	Quince
	Persimmon

	Hathorne
	Wintergreen
	Bearberry
	Rosehips

So as you can see your foraging menu can be quite diverse, but it does vary where you live. Different areas will have different fruit, veggies, roots, greens, and of course mushrooms. Depending on the area can also affect the seasons and locations these foraging produce. The best practice is to plan ahead and learn where your local foraging goods are known to grow, and learn the seasons they are plentiful. Remember proper preparation prevents piss poor performance.



# FORAGING 2.0

So natural foraging has been around forever and it's always been a popular survival skill. This form of foraging is often done in a rural environment, and can rarely be done in an urban environment. However here in foraging 2.0 I want to address the Urban forager. The ability to locate useful supplies in an urban environment. This can be used to use to supplement your preps, supplement natural foraging, or just survive.

Now Urban foraging aka foraging 2.0 is the process of finding and utilizing both food supplies and survival supplies. Of course in a disaster situation it is pretty much a guarantee that grocery stores, hardware stores, gun stores and the like will be stripped bare of their wares, or be extremely well protected. Urban foraging is the way to locate places people may not have considered off the bat.

Let it be said I am not encouraging looting, or thievery. However survival being what it is I am suggesting you do what's required to live until the situation can be rectified. This does not involve harming others, unless they have harmed you, and does not involve looting or rioting.

## 1. SCHOOLS

It goes without saying that public schools are absolutely everywhere in this nation. Often three or more per county, rarely less. These institutions are not often known for having some magical source of supplies for survival.

However schools across the nation have a very important task to complete once a day. Feed the kids. While the majority of the food may be frozen and gone bad after a SHTF situation there will still be plenty of foods suitable for consumption. This includes things like cereal, powdered mashed potatoes, cookies, canned fruits and vegetables, as well as the potential to find sports drinks or powdered juices. These drinks can be a valuable source of sugar, sodium, potassium, etc.

Another advantage is an abundance of first aid kits. Most schools will keep one per classroom, as well as a stocked Nurses' office. These kits are very basic, but can provide important wound cleansing agents, bandages, gauze, and potentially burn kits. Burn kits are especially prevalent in chemistry classrooms. A working nurses office could very well be cleaned out, but if not there

can be a wide variety of medical gear present.

The last advantage is the janitor's closet. These closets are not just full of cleaning supplies, but many useful items. Yard tools like shovels, machetes, rakes, and other valuable goods are nearly always stored in certain areas of the school. Other potential tools can include small hand tools, bolt cutters, and even some power tools.

## **2. GOVERNMENT WORK CENTERS**

This a bit of an odd title, but I meant it to be a generic term that can encompass a wide variety of government works. These aren't DMVs, or bureaucratic offices, but work centers that require physical labor. These are Forest Service offices, Road Departments, Department of Transportation offices, and other general maintenance offices.

The reason being is the high likelihood of the presence of bottled water. These departments outside work almost exclusively. Often hard and difficult work, that requires the employees stay hydrated. So they often provide bottle water to their employees. Forest Services throughout the country are used to fight wildfires throughout the country. That means there is water, lots of water. Tankers, tenders, and brush truck could potentially provide sufficient water for a number of individuals. This water will likely need to be purified of course.

Guess what they will have in the utmost abundance? Tools, tools, tools, the sheer amount of tools these places have can boggle the mind. They are absolutely excellent source for tools ranging from axes, to sledge hammers, hand tools,

chainsaws, generators and even heavy equipment.

This may be rare, but you may also be able to find a variety of fuels. This includes diesel and gasoline, and possibly kerosene. Department of Transportation offices for examples often have their own private fuel farms.

## **3. LIBRARIES**

Knowledge is Power, and knowledge is half the battle, and knowledge is this and that am I right? Knowledge weighs nothing, and learning new skills is cheaper than buying new gear. You'd be surprised at the amount of information you can find useful for survival in your everyday library.

This includes books simply on survival, including trapping guides, foraging guides, and even self-defense guides. On top of that you can find emergency medical guides, first responder guides, and a variety of military medical manuals. Of course traditional military manuals are often very easy to find and can provide a host of useful information.

It's doubtful many people will pay attention to a library as well. Not much in a library incites riots and looting, so the building may be untouched and provide an excellent shelter in emergencies.

These three places listed are only some of the most common urban forage areas. Different parts of the country and different cities will have a different variety of places to forage and salvage from. These places can be everything from junk yards, recycling centers, and even odd places like day care centers most will simply glance over. Keep an open, and adaptable mind, also evolve to your environment, and think outside the box.