

# **HOW TO BUILD THE ULTIMATE EVERY DAY CARRY KIT**



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## CAN YOU SURVIVE WITH WHAT'S IN YOUR POCKETS?

Experienced preppers will tell you “yes!” That’s because they understand the importance of a well thought out “Everyday Carry.” This report will lead you through the process of deciding what items you need in your pockets, and why you need those items with you every day, without fail!



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A while back, I was working on my own Everyday Carry Kit and I asked a fellow survivalist what his EDC (Everyday Carry) items consisted of. I was a little baffled by his answer because he is known to have some of the coolest gear—a lot of it was made and customized with his own hands.

I was surprised to learn that his most important Everyday Carry item was as he said it—his “inner Paleo self” or “caveman”. Next to his inner determination to survive, his next important EDC item was his multi-tool that he could rely on for *almost* anything.

We went further into the conversation, and what he said really made an impression on me. It wasn't just the gear—even though it helped). It was the mental preparedness to accept the realization that you will have to do whatever it takes to survive. No hesitation or second guessing—just primal instinct.

When you make a decision, you'll do it by instinct and then execute your choice:

- If you have to eat, then you find food—whether you scavenge, eat trash, or take it from some one else.
- If you need shelter, you will find anything that will work as a roof over your head.
- If you're threatened, you will meet that threat with dangerous and effective resolve.

Surviving a disaster doesn't really have much room for a conscience. However, acts of evil and cruelty should never be confused with a primal survival instinct. If that is what happens when you rely on instinct then you probably need to see a therapist!

In a survival situation it's “dog eat dog”—keep your head low, and do what you have to do to make it home alive.

## Chapter 2:

# WHAT IS “EVERYDAY CARRY” AND WHY DO I NEED IT?

*“Everyday Carry, or EDC, generally refers to small items or gadgets worn, carried, or made available in pockets, holsters, or bags on a daily basis to manage common tasks or for use in unexpected situations or emergencies. Many times these items blend in with your every day life and anyone that saw the contents on your person would be none the wiser that this is a full survival kit.*

*In a broader sense, it is a lifestyle, discipline, or philosophy of preparedness.”—everyday-carry.com*

To ensure that you will always have a minimum level of preparedness for any event or disaster that life throws your way, your Everyday Carry items should include basic survival items carried on your person on a daily basis.

Your EDC should not be confused with your Bug-Out Bag (BOB). That is a completely separate set of survival items (more on that later).

If you think about it, virtually everyone already has an EDC. Most people carry a wallet or a purse to hold identification, credit cards, money, special licenses and emergency information. With modern technology, the vast majority of Americans carry a cell phone every day. According to a Pew Internet Research poll, 87 percent of adult Americans have a cell phone.



These cell phones often have emergency contact information programmed into them—such as your emergency contact under the name “ICE”, which is an acronym for “In Case of Emergency.” This is not to be confused with “Immigration and Customs Enforcement!” It’s also fairly well known that a cell phone can dial and reach 911 even if there is no active service plan for that phone. It just has to have a semi-charged battery and a SIM card.

Having ID and a way to communicate is important to your EDC, but you shouldn’t rely on those items to save you in a real predicament. Yes, police and rescuers can probably locate you from your cell phone signal, but there’s no guarantee that the delicate electronics of a cell phone will be there for you when it’s life or death.

EDC is an ‘Always Prepared’ approach to life: Even though I wasn’t a Boy Scout for very long, their motto, “Be prepared” fits the idea of EDC perfectly.

Your normal day to day life can be challenged at any moment, and you never know when or where a certain event, disaster or crisis is going to take place. No matter how well you schedule and plan your day, something can

happen to instantly separate you from the safety we all take for granted.

Consider the Boston marathon bombing. Do you think those competitors and spectators were ready for a disaster? Luckily they were at an event that was well staffed, and had scores of emergency personnel nearby to handle the situation. You can’t count on having that kind of immediate support in an event that affects you.

Although violent attacks should certainly be prepared for, a bigger, much more common concern should be natural disasters.

Sometimes storms can come out of nowhere, causing massive destruction. CBS reported that over 7 million people were without power after hurricane Sandy blew through the East Coast. People in many areas spent weeks waiting for the power to come back on. Some spent months...

Even more recently, the tornadoes in Moore, Oklahoma should be a lesson in the importance of preparedness.

## Chapter 3:

# THESE EVENTS DON'T CHECK YOUR SCHEDULE...



You may say that you don't leave home often enough to hassle with an EDC. All it takes is one trip to the grocery store across town to separate you from the survival supplies you have worked so hard to stock up on. Your EDC helps you with the survival basics and get you far enough out of harms way that you can get to your gear, supplies, and hopefully back home.

There are countless reasons you could need to leave your home under normal circumstances, and each time you do it carries the risk of being away when the SHTF (Sh\*t Hits The Fan).

We leave our homes daily for many different activities:

- Commuting to work or school
- Children's events
- Family gatherings
- Shopping
- Vacations
- Dining
- Entertainment (movies, shows, concerts)
- Errands

Take a minute and try to count how many times you have left the house in the last month. That number is equal to the number of times you may have needed to rely on an EDC to make it back home.

Personally, I'm never very far away from one of my vehicles, but the gear stashed in your vehicle could do little good if you can't get to it. Sustained injuries, flash flooding, and gun battles can come between you and your vehicle, making your gear unreachable if that's where you keep it. Even auto-theft can prevent you from accessing your survival tools.

The FBI estimates that a motor vehicle is stolen every 43 seconds in the United States. That's a total of 737,142 vehicle thefts in 2010 alone.

During a disaster, it's not advisable to rely on having access to your vehicle.

Even a simple walk around your own property or a local trail can become a survival situation. Every year many hikers are attacked by wild animals and dangerous criminals... or injured by accident.

Although it would seem highly unlikely, a short walk in a highly populated area can go bad quickly. Many people get mugged and beaten on the streets every day.

By having an EDC and never leaving home without it, you ensure yourself the best possible chance of survival if things take a turn for the worst.

You can have all the survival gear on the market, but it'll do you little good if you can't get to it, or if you don't have it with you on the day you need it most.

Take the story of American outdoorsman

## **Aron Ralston.**

He is very well known for surviving a 2003 canyon accident in southeastern Utah. During his ordeal, he amputated his own right arm with the dull blade of his multi-tool in order to free himself from a dislodged boulder, which had trapped him there for five days and seven hours. After freeing himself, he had to rappel down a 65-foot (around 20m) sheer cliff to reach safety.

While Ralston's story is one of very extreme circumstance, it should help you begin to see just how important it is to have the right mindset and basic survival gear available at all times.

Before we can get into what you should include in your Everyday Carry Kit, it's important to understand that EDC is about a "minimalist" approach. It's only minimalist because there are some very important and definitive limitations. It's not about what you can carry; it's about what you **will** carry. Here are some things to consider before building your EDC.

- ***Limited space***

You only have so many pockets to fill, and only a few places on your body to stash your EDC items. Even if you want to expand to a small bag, it needs to be compact and light enough so it won't burden you during your daily activities. Fashion designers are trying to bring

back the fanny pack by calling it a “hands-free” bag or a “belted satchel”. While these may not be the most fashionable items, they can drastically increase the amount and variety of items that you can carry.

- **Weight**

This is the whole reason that handguns moved away from steel and began going with a polymer-based build. At first, everyone was criticizing, saying it was cheap and not a real gun. However, time has showed that there is a huge advantage to carrying polymer guns. They’re easier to carry, therefore the likelihood you’ll have one with you when you need it is higher. The same concept can be applied to picking the gear for your EDC. Look for items that are flat, thin, light, multipurpose, composite, compact, etc...

- **Convenience**

This is a more common reason for not practicing EDC than most people are willing to admit. North American Arms has a great advertising campaign for their miniature .22 caliber revolvers: *“A North American Arms in the hand is worth... a LOT more than ANYTHING that’s not at hand when you need it.”* They basically state that it may not be the most ideal gun for self defense, but

it’s one that you’re more likely to carry because it’s convenient. Take this to heart, and find convenient gear that will save your butt!

- **Multi-functionality**

By picking gear and items that serve more than one purpose, you cut down on the amount of items you will need to carry and keep track of. This will also increase the amount of redundancy that you have in your pack. In a stark contrast to the rest of life, in a survival situation, redundancy is essential. In survival, “Two are one and one is none.” When you’re down in the dirt and you need something the most, Murphy’s Law says that is when things will probably go wrong. The more redundancy you have built into your gear, the better your chances will be to get what you need.

It’s important to understand and keep in mind the limitations of your EDC.

Even though we’re talking about your EDC kit in this report, it’s important to remember that there are higher levels of preparedness when it comes to your gear. The purpose is to have a plan and the gear to accompany that plan. Your Every Day Carry is a compliment to your entire plan. Without the plan, the EDC won’t get you very far because that’s not its design or purpose.

This is how your different levels of gear



should be designed to work together:

- 1. Every Day Carry:** This is what you carry with you every day. Its purpose is to help you get to your next level of preparedness. This kit is to get you to your Get Home Bag.” This kit is meant to be the minimum amount of gear you will carry on you. It is extremely important, but don’t go overboard with it. When it comes to your EDC kit, remember the acronym—K.I.S.S. (**Keep It Simple Stupid**).
- 2. Get Home Bag:** This gear bag should be kept close by in your vehicle or other quickly reachable location. Mine never leaves the car, and I check the supplies often to make sure that they are still good since the heat and cold can affect their lifespan. If you use public transportation, you can keep this bag at your desk at work or school. Its purpose is to store the gear you need to get home.
- 3. Bug-Out Bag:** This is the last gear bag in your arsenal that you want to have ready. When you can’t stay at your “home” location and it’s safer to leave—it’s time to “bug-out” to a secondary location, or any other safer place. This is the gear bag to use during that transition. This bag should have a 3-day supply of water, food, shelter and anything else you need to reach your bug-out location, or your next supply cache.

Depending on where you live and where you travel on a daily basis, you’ll need to determine the types of items for your EDC.

First, consider your environmental risk factors by asking yourself these questions:

✓ **What season is it?**

Whether it’s Spring, Summer, Fall or Winter, each season has specific factors you should consider when building your EDC kit.

✓ **What’s the regional climate?**

If you are in the desert, an important inclusion to your EDC would help you stay hydrated. A small flask with water is a good idea. Perhaps you could even make your EDC kit fit in a water bottle. On the other hand, if you’re in the Pacific Northwest, you may want to carry a poncho to keep you dry.

✓ **What type of population area will I be in?**

In an urban environment, food can be found everywhere, but risks of violent encounters increase. In areas with low population density, you may have to rely on your nature skills for sustenance.

✓ **What’s the social climate?**

In areas with unstable social conflict you may want to consider carrying more gear, especially in war-torn countries and populated areas with low economic development.

✓ **What are the local laws?**

Some municipalities, depending on

where you live or travel, often may have stringent laws on carrying weapons.

Know what laws you need to follow based on where you're location is going to be.

Regardless of where you live, travel, work, go to school or run errands, the best EDC items are the tools that will help you scavenge. Tools that have multiple uses, are light weight and thin are the easiest to carry. These will ensure you the best chance of having them on your person when you need them the most.

### **Where you carry your EDC items...**

How you carry your EDC kit is another factor to consider when picking out your items. This is a very flexible factor that is based on your personal preferences. If you find a need for more items than you currently carry, you can solve that issue by modifying your carrying method.

Your clothing is your first method of carrying your EDC items. The number and size of pockets available limit what we carry. To maximize your carrying ability, cargo pants are a great solution. They come in different styles, from tactical to dress casual. Dockers makes a nice dress casual cargo pant.

Woolrich clothing now has an "elite tactical series" of clothing that is well suited to EDC gear. They manufacture everything from blue jeans to dress pants that have flexible waists and hidden pockets.

Cabela's has a reasonably priced line of tactical clothing that is very functional and not "obviously" tactical in appearance. Tactical clothing often has extra hidden pockets that are arranged more ergonomically than fashionable clothing.

### **Should You Carry a Bag so You Can Have More Gear?**

Most preppers don't carry a bag for their EDC. Part of the challenge is to see what items you can carry in your pockets. It's not a bad idea to be over prepared, and it's ultimately up to you to decide what makes you comfortable.

Women have been carrying excess EDC gear for as long as the purse has been invented. Not many women leave home without one, and it's usually packed full of stuff!

You won't catch me with a "European man purse" but if you carry a backpack, laptop bag, or courier bag you have a great place to store extra survival items—specifically for items that would be difficult to carry on your body.

If you do carry a bag of some sort on a daily basis, it's recommended to stay away from anything that is unusual or may stand out.

Military-style bags can make you a target for theft. These bags can alert desperate people that you are prepared and may have items they want. Try to carry inconspicuous bags

that blend in with the types primarily used where you will be most often. If you are a college student, then a standard school backpack is the best recommendation. If you work in a professional environment, then a messenger or laptop bag would blend in most effectively.

When a little extra gear is needed and you don't want to carry a bag, a small belt pouch can work very well. They're small, attached to your body and fairly unnoticed by most people. These are like the slightly cooler cousin to the fanny pack that won't cause strangers to point and laugh at you.

This photo below is a small belt-worn pouch that can store a surprising amount of survival gear:



Small Pouch with Belt Loops (Photo by Nick Gillick) mini-Bic lighter for size comparison

## Should You Include Food in Your EDC?

For most people the answer to this question would be no. It's not easy to carry food with you unless you carry some type of bag on a daily basis.

We all know that hunger is not enjoyable, but it takes days for the effects of hunger to leave any lasting physical damage. Hunger is a "wake-up call" to feed your body and it's a strong survival mechanism not to be ignored.

Lack of food can cause low blood sugar levels. This can negatively affect the brain since glucose (sugar) is the brain's only fuel. Low blood sugar can impair cognitive function, leaving you unable to think properly in a survival situation. Bad decisions lead to a poor survivability outlook.

The best EDC items to carry are those items that can help you get food. Small barter items such as rings, jewelry, cash, gold and silver coins can be traded for food and water.

Useful survival items such as wire for snares, fishing line with hooks, folding military can openers, and multi-purpose eating tools should be considered when picking your EDC items in case you aren't able to barter for the food you need.

During a survival situation, the best, most important item to prepare is your own mind. Learn what the native edible plants in your

area are. Test them out and know where they are likely to be found ahead of time. If it's gardening season, look for community gardens that you can scavenge from.

If you do have the extra space and wish to carry food with you, I recommend something that is small and not thirst-inducing. I carry Millennium food bars inside my car kit and water bottle kits. They are small (about the size of a candy bar), provide around 400 calories each, and last about 5 years.

Diabetics should consider keeping energy or protein bars in their EDC because low blood sugar can quickly cause major health concerns.

## **Water, Water Everywhere and Not a Drop to Drink...**

Staying hydrated is the first necessity in any disaster situation. Water is almost everywhere we look... but most of it is unsafe to drink.

If you can't get potable water directly from a municipal water supply like tap water from the faucet in your home, then you'll need to get resourceful and think outside the box. Stagnant water that has been sitting in the sun is the last water source you should utilize—even if you boil and filter it! Clear, cool running water is the easiest to purify and filter. Small streams and creeks with moving water are the best sources, even though the water still has to be treated.

You can use the tools that you have with you in your EDC kit to help with your water needs. Keeping a few water purification tablets in your EDC could work for you if water purification is one of your main concerns.

Not everyone carries water purification tablets or filters in their EDC. Some survivalists choose to rely on their ability to find clean water. I have 2 LifeStraws and some water purification tablets in my Get Home Bag and my Bug-Out Bag at all times.

If my travels take me to a harsh environment without a ready supply of water, I'll carry a decent size water bottle. There are many water bottles you can clip on your belt, or stick in a pocket on your backpack. Extreme environments call for extreme preparedness!

## **Exposure is Deadly, Take Shelter.**

Shelter is well known as one of the most basic human needs. Every Boy Scout learns the basic skill of emergency shelter construction and practices it over and over.

Everything you need for shelter should be fairly easy to find, no matter where you are. If you're in an urban environment, you could most likely find enough debris, pieces of wood, plywood, pallets, tarps, canvas, newspaper, cardboard or just an empty or abandoned structure.

**WARNING:** Seeking shelter in abandoned structures can be very dangerous. In



populated areas vagrants, criminals, drug addicts and the homeless can occupy abandoned buildings. Use caution and avoid confrontation if at all possible.

If you find yourself out in the wild, a shelter can be made from what nature provides. This is especially easy in wooded areas. Grasslands and desert areas often are sparse when it comes to vegetation for building materials. Luckily, most American deserts and grasslands still have enough plant life to build a “lean-to” shelter or debris hut. If you find yourself in these areas often it would be wise to add Mylar survival blankets to your EDC.

Many people die every year due to exposure to the elements. From 2003-2008, there were 263 deaths reported among Texas residents with exposure to excessive natural heat as the underlying cause of death. During this same time period, there were 115 deaths reported among Texas residents with exposure to excessive natural cold as the underlying cause of death.

## What Tools Are Important to Include in Your EDC?

This is a question only you can really answer. You want to choose tools that are easy to carry and will make the situations you encounter easier to deal with. These decisions have to be made based on the environment that you are exposed to on a daily basis.

Good tools do a couple of different things.

Great tools do many different things.

Leatherman style multi-tools can't be beat, and there are some very small versions on the market. The Swiss Army knife is the go-to tool for the most compact gadgets you can fit in one pocket.

Some things to consider when choosing your EDC tools:

- ***How many functions does this tool perform?*** Is there another that is comparable but has more functions?
- ***Is this tool usable?*** Get it and try it out, if it doesn't work for you just return it and pick another one.
- ***How much should I spend?*** Quality gear costs more than sub-par gear. Do your research and remember that this is an investment into your survivability. If you don't have the budget, simply get what's in your price range now and upgrade soon.
- ***Is this the lightest, most compact version I can find?*** As the tools get lighter and smaller the chance that you will actually carry it with you on a daily basis goes up. We naturally don't like being burdened by unnecessary weight, and EDC weight adds up fast.
- ***Will this tool help provide me with what I need to survive?*** If a tool does a thousand functions but can't help you do what you need then it's useless. If the only food you can find is in cans and you're

multi-tool can pick a safe but not open a can, you're going to be hungry.

- ***Is this tool useful to the region in which I live?*** If your daily route is in town, that's where you live and work then picking a multi-tool because it has a compass is not ideal. This would be a tool for someone who lives and frequently travels in rural areas.

## **Should Your EDC Include a Self-Defense Weapon?**

Just like the previous conversation about survival tools, this is something that is really that is up to you. Everyone will have a personal preference and can feel very strongly about their choices. Some people may prefer to rely on whatever primitive weapons they can pick up and find—like sticks, rocks, pieces of pipe or tube, chains or anything else that can be physically threatening.

However, I choose to rely on something that can level out the playing field if I have that choice. If other people carry rocks, then I'd rather be carrying a bigger rock! You'll have to consider what you're comfortable with and then find the best balance of size, weight, cost, lethality and safety.

Whatever weapon you choose to carry daily, make sure you become intimately familiar with exactly how it works. Training, practice and maintenance are the best ways to know how to use your weapon safely without hurting yourself in the process.

At this time go ahead and start thinking about the types of weapons that you have training and experience with, or that you may feel comfortable carrying on a daily basis. We'll come back to this subject later so we can decide if it's right for you.

## **Should You Add Medical Care to Your Everyday Carry?**

Not everyone is accident-prone, but it's never a bad idea to address medical care in your EDC. It can be as simple as a few Band-Aids, duct tape to adhere dressings, unflavored floss, a stitching needle, and a few NSAIDs (non-steroid anti inflammatory drugs) like Advil or Ibuprofen.

An increasing number of adults and children rely on medications on a daily basis. If you rely on a daily medication then it's probably a good idea to include a 72-hour supply of your medication in your EDC. Consider how important your medication is to your survival to determine if you should carry your medication with you or not.

Remember that many medications can become unstable with temperature changes and are highly susceptible to moisture in the air. Change out the medication in your EDC often and check the labels and information included with your medications to find the sensitivity to light, moisture and temperature.

**“There's Too Much to Think About, I'll Just Get a Pre-Made Kit.”**

While there are a lot of great kits on the market (and other great kits that you can copy), they may not be the best kit for your individual needs.

If you do get a pre-made EDC kit it can take some of the hassle out of building your own, but if you choose that route please only use it as a starting point. As you familiarize yourself with its contents, take a little time and customize it to your own personal needs.

## **The Biggest Mistakes You Can Make When Building Your EDC...**

Throughout this report we've talked about the important considerations you need to think about when choosing your Everyday Carry items. At this stage of your EDC build, let's take a moment to outline the biggest and most common mistakes made in Everyday Carry.

### **MISTAKE #1 Carrying too much gear**

Carrying more gear than is reasonable for your situation will burden you on a daily basis. It gets easier and easier to make the conscious decision to leave your gear at home the day you may need it most. Also, the more items carried means more items you have to keep up with. Keeping it simple is the best way to combat this common mistake.

### **MISTAKE #2 Cheap, low quality gear**

Better gear is going to be lighter, stronger

and more compact. Sometimes it can be a little more expensive, but you are definitely getting what you pay for. I may have some cheap gear in my EDC, but I upgrade it when I can. It is better to have cheap, low quality survival tools than to have none at all! The most important item to spare no expense with is with your multi-tool and/or pocket knife. You want these to hold up to some severe punishment when your life is on the line.

### **MISTAKE #3 Relying on your cellphone**

While a cellphone is one of the most important EDC items ever, it's very important to remember that technology and electronics can be easily compromised. All it takes is one little slip and that cell phone is a useless chunk of plastic.

### **MISTAKE #4 Not maintaining your gear**

Your survival gear needs routine maintenance and inspection. If you carry perishable items, it's important to replace them routinely. It's important to keep your tools sharp and in good working order as well. Rusty and worn out parts can cause a failure when needed the most.

### **MISTAKE #5 Not knowing how to use your gear**

Being familiar with the function of your gear is always important. If you decide to

include a lock-pick in your gear and have no idea how to use it, you may be S.O.L. during a disaster. Read the information that comes with your chosen gear and learn how to use it properly.

## **We've Discussed 'Why' and 'How' to Choose Your EDC Items ...Now it's Time to Discuss What to Include.**

Learning why we pick the gear we do is more important than what we pick. These specific items aren't the only things you can consider for your EDC, but it's a darn good start:

### **You Want Food in Your EDC... Here's What You Should Include**

If you've decided to include food in your EDC because of a medical condition, exposure to rural areas or you're just a really hungry person, then there are fairly easy options for you.

Prepared foods items that are compact and easy to store are your best choice. Think about temperature exposure and pick items that won't spoil easily. It's also good to choose a food that has a high energy density—which means more calorie intake. Pure sugar foods aren't always the best energy foods. Some good ideas are:

- Trail mix
- Candy bars
- Energy and protein bars

- Granola bars
- Glucose tablets (for diabetics)
- Military rations
- Freeze dried astronaut food

If you need to utilize your EDC during a major crisis, a good food item may be a great bartering tool as well.

Most EDC kits don't include actual food items. Most people carry the tools that will help them obtain food during a crisis. Having the preparedness and tools to find and access food is a much more reliable EDC approach than actually carrying food.

“Give a man a fish and he eats for a day.  
Teach a man to fish and he eats for life.”

Here are some tools to consider including in your EDC for accessing food.

#### ✓ **P38 and P52 compact military can openers**

These can openers are compact and lightweight. They're durable and can be used to strike Ferro rods (fire starter), as a small screw driver, pry bar, cutting instrument and spent round extractor just to name a few. If you carry a multi-tool that serves this purpose then you can skip carrying one of these. But they can also be easily added to key chains making them easy to carry.

#### ✓ **A lock-pick set**

This compact toolset can help you



gain access to structures and locked containers that may have food items inside them. I don't promote theft, but in dire circumstances it may be time for extreme action.

#### ✓ **A wire snare or Speedhook**

Wire snares are easy to carry for trapping small animals. They are a smart addition to your EDC if you are frequently in rural areas. A Speedhook is a great trapping tool for emergency use. It's so effective that some areas have outlawed their use unless it's a survival situation. The Speedhook is included in the military fishing survival kit. It can be used to catch fish and small game.

#### ✓ **Native Edible Plants Guide**

Information about the edible plants native to the region you live in should already be in your home library. I recommend having a concise pocket version that you can at least keep in your car and Get Home Bag as well as your Bug-Out Bag. It may not be needed in your EDC if you are in an urban environment, but it's knowledge that we should all learn. I've found many small guides that fold up and fit inside a wallet taking up no more room than a credit card.

#### ✓ **Fire starter or lighter**

These items can be your best friend in a crisis. They can help you build a fire on which to cook the food that you gather. It

will also help you keep warm, which can save your life.

## **How Can You Include Water in Your EDC?**

There are a variety of ways to include water in your Everyday Carry. Since water is actually fairly heavy—and there's no way to make it lighter—it all depends on how much water you want to carry. If you frequent dry desert environments, you'll want more water in your EDC. I like to have a plan ahead of time depending on where I'll be. Here are some great ways to carry water with you in your EDC:

- **Camelback Hydration Packs and Bladders.** Camelback is a manufacturer of hydration backpacks, water bladders and water bottles. This is a flexible carrying solution. The bladders come in different sizes and can be tucked into virtually any bag.
- **Water Bottles** come in many different varieties, sizes, shapes and materials. There are even water bottles that have their own filtration units that can purify virtually any water as you drink it. If you want the empty bottle in your EDC and know you'll find water when you need it, you can use the bottle as a container for extra EDC items.
- **Canteens** are just another type of water bottle that were used before the water bottle was popular. Canteens are usually

more rugged and made for ease of carry often with a shoulder strap.

- Lock Sacks are waterproof bags originally developed for people who are active in water sports. They keep important items dry so well that they have become very popular in the emergency preparedness community to protect everything from emergency food, to electronics. You can use one of these to contain your EDC items, or even keep a folded one in a pocket. In a pinch they can serve the opposite function—holding water in! If you keep your gear in this bag to keep it dry, then you can easily rely on having dry fire starters.

Since a water bottle and other water carrying devices can be bulky and cumbersome, there are many survivalists who prefer to rely on their ability to find water when they need it. Most preppers that I know don't carry a water container in their EDC, but keep one nearby when at all possible.

However, many still carry some way of purifying the water they find. One of the easiest and smallest water purification systems you can carry are “point-of-use” water purification devices and field water disinfection techniques.

1. Water purification tablets are the smallest and easiest to carry disinfection technique. Aquatabs are the world's most recognized and largest selling brand of

water disinfecting tablets. There are also many other options, including iodine tablets that are common potable water treatments as well. Even plain iodine liquid can be found in any pharmacy and can be used to disinfect water. In a crisis, keep an eye out for iodine to scavenge, but you should be aware if you or anyone you'd be supplying water to has an iodine allergy. These tablets often do nothing to help with particles suspended in the water and don't aid in the taste of water. They're purely for disinfecting water and making it safe to drink.

2. Straw water filters come in many compact sizes and are great as a point-of-use water purification device. Not only do they remove bacteria and other dangerous elements that can potentially be in the water, but they help filter out bad tastes and materials suspended in the water. No one likes drinking nasty tasting water, unless you're extremely dehydrated and in a life-or-death situation.
3. Other water filtration devices, such as Katadyn water filters, can process more water than a straw style filter. They make an “ultra light” product line of filter bottles and mini pump filters that may work well for you in your EDC.
4. Remember to use your survival knowledge as your main EDC water-supplying tool. Think about what

you have that can help you harvest water from your surroundings. Water is all around us as long as we know how to get it and how to make it safe to drink. Think about rain catching, dew collection, and the various places that water is likely to collect naturally.

## **If You're Exposed to the Elements on a Daily Basis, What Items Should You Carry to Aid in Finding and Making Shelter?**

We can't ignore the importance of shelter. Humans aren't designed to handle extended exposure to the elements for extended periods of time, and many survival situations hinge on whether you can find adequate shelter. Let's look at the ways you can include shelter into your EDC kit:

1. Your clothing is the first resource that you have to provide yourself with shelter. Choose clothing that is durable and paired to the climate in which you are going to encounter. If it's cold and wet, dress in layers that can be shed if needed. If it's extremely hot and dry, loose cotton clothing is often preferred because it breathes easily. You may be tempted to wear shorts and t-shirt while traveling through the desert, but lightweight cotton pants and long sleeve shirts can help shield you from the sun. Don't forget about covering your head, face and neck

if you risk being exposed to the sun for extended periods of time.

2. A Mylar blanket is one of the smallest and lightest forms of shelter that anyone can carry. These blankets typically weigh only 3.5 ounces and fold up to just a few inches in size. These survival blankets are fairly insulative, reflective and flexible in their use. You can curl up in it, suspend it over branches, stretch it over rope, paracord or debris. The silver, shiny Mylar blankets can be used to signal for help as well. If you don't include one in your EDC then please put a few in your vehicles and emergency bags. Mylar blankets and tarps are often used not only for shelter, but as rain-catchment devices to collect water.
3. A tube tent is a very compact emergency tent that is made of polyethylene for strength and water resistance. They're also commonly made in blaze orange for high visibility. Simply run a string between two trees, drape the tent over the string, stake it to the ground and you have an emergency shelter. It's lightweight and can serve many purposes. This is great to add to your EDC kit if you are going on a day hike, or if your daily travels take you through the wilderness.
4. An emergency bivvy is another emergency shelter product that is basically a reflective and insulating body

bag that reflects up to 90% of your body heat back to you. While this product fits into a very small pouch that can be clipped onto your belt or added to a small daypack, it probably isn't best for your EDC unless you're in the backwoods daily.

Regardless of whether or not you decide to carry shelter, your EDC must have tools to aid in the construction of emergency shelters. It's also fairly easy to piece together emergency shelters from objects that are found all around us. Learning how to be resourceful and inventive is your best EDC preparation for providing shelter.

## **The Most Important EDC Items Are Your Tools. Which Tools Should You Carry?**

The first tool to consider carrying in your EDC is your primary communication device. For most people this would be a cell phone. However, like I mentioned earlier, you can't rely solely on your cellphone to save your life. Sometimes when a cell phone doesn't have a signal to make calls, the ability to send and receive text messages is preserved. This feature sometimes remains because cellphones send and receive text through data connections and not the voice connection.

Recently, a Texas police chief fell into a well and couldn't make a call on his cell phone, but was able to use the text feature to notify others that he was trapped in a deadly

situation. He survived because he carried a cell phone with him every day.

Not only can a cellphone with an active plan save your life, but a cellphone without service can save your life as well. In the U.S. all cellphones retain their ability to call 911 for emergency situations, even if they are not connected to an active plan.

Even the survivalists who want to stay completely "off the grid" can carry a cell phone to call for help. You can just keep it turned off, not have it in your name, and no one will know you have one.

Since this technology is cheaply available, it doesn't make much sense to not carry one. Even the most stubborn "old timers" I know are finally starting to carry cellphones.

Now that we've gone over the importance of carrying a communication device, let's move onto all the other tools that you've been waiting to read about.

## **What Should You Carry to Stay Warm?**

For fire, the basic tools that you can expect to find in someone's EDC would be a fire stick and striker—usually consisting of flint and steel. You're also likely to find lighters and matches. Humans have been carrying fire strikers since the beginning of the Iron Age (around 1200 BC), and some evidence shows iron being used as early as 3000 BC! I guess we can't go wrong



with such a time-tested technology. Luckily our modern fire strikers are much more effective than their ancient counterparts.

Lighters are quick and easy to use. Many of them are windproof and waterproof. I've even found lighters online that are small enough to be used as zipper pulls on your jacket or other clothing! Now that's EDC ingenuity...

There are also a variety of waterproof matches that can be added to your survival and EDC kits. One advantage that matches have is their longevity. I've heard of matches that were easily 40-50 years old still striking easily and lighting a fire. However, they can be highly susceptible to water—even water resistant and water proof matches can be ruined over time by moisture,

A great trick to combine some of your survival supplies is to wrap some of them around a lighter and hold them in place with tape. One example I saw had a small fishhook laid against the lighter, then they wrapped it in fishing line and covered all of it by wrapping it with multiple layers of duct tape. This combined many different things into one convenient little package.

## **What's The Most Flexible Survival Tool?**

Rope and string have been crucial to every society that's ever existed. Rope and string have been used to bind together devices used for everyday living. They're also used for

home and shelter construction. The uses for rope and string are virtually limitless, and in my opinion there is no other more versatile survival tool.

Ropes are great to save your butt in a life or death situation! Here are some common emergency situations for which you may find yourself wishing you had rope:

- Climbing is dangerous even when help is nearby. If you fall, you can break limbs, sustain internal damage, severe cranial damage, and die. Ropes help secure you against falls.
- A tourniquet is sometimes the only way to stop heavy bleeding. Rope and string can be easily used for an impromptu tourniquet.
- To help build emergency shelters, a rope can be stretched between objects to suspend your covering. It can also tie your covering to anchor points, and it can even be used to lash together objects to make a frame work for your shelter.
- Sometimes it's necessary to make a carrying device for yourself or an injured person. Rope can aid in the construction of a carrying device such as a stretcher or a-frame style drag.
- Do you need to find food? Small ropes, strings and cords are what you'll need to make a snare.
- Rope and string can be used in some very

ingenious ways to repair broken objects that will help aid in your survival. I've seen it used to hold boats together to get back to shore, as impromptu throttle cables on ATVs and other motorized vehicles, and to hold emergency rain catchment devices in place—just to name a few.

## What's the Best Rope and String For Your EDC?

Rope and string come in many different sizes and materials. Different ropes are made for many different purposes, and for Everyday Carry it's best to pick one that is small, strong and fills multiple uses.

Dental floss can be used for many different applications besides cleaning your teeth, but sometimes a dental emergency can be pretty bad as well. I can use floss as a thread for repairing clothing, stitching up bad cuts and even as a wire snare for birds and other small animals. It can also replace my fishing line for catching fish as well. Just make sure you carry the unflavored type as the flavored scent can scare off animals or irritate stitching.

To me, the best all-around rope or string is military grade 550 paracord. Authentic military paracord is rated to hold 550 pounds per square inch without breaking per strand! This is some heavy-duty stuff. It's small, lightweight and easy to work with.

With paracord, the entire length of cordage

is useful, and each cord contains 7 inner strands. Each inner strand is not much bigger than a piece of floss, but can hold 50 lbs of pressure without breaking.

This dramatically increases the amount of useful cord you have on hand (which can be in serious shortage when you actually need it).

In recent years the popularity of paracord survival bracelets has dramatically increased. Not only are they nice looking bracelets, but they can also be made to contain fishing kits and fire strikers! Most of these survival bracelets contain anywhere from 8 to 10 feet of paracord that you can unwind and use in a crisis.



Paracord bracelet and lanyard  
(Photo courtesy of Nick Gillick)

If you go online you can even find people who replace watch bands with paracord bracelets and add small compasses. Paracord can be used to make other daily carry objects such as key chains and lanyards, as well as full size rifle slings and even belts. Imagine how many feet of paracord you could have in just one belt... 100 feet? Maybe 150 feet or more!

Another great little hiding place for paracord is your shoelaces. Most shoelaces wear out and snag easily anyways. By switching to paracord your laces will most likely outlast any shoe you own.

When you get paracord, make sure that you are getting real paracord. Many places are now selling knock-of “emergency bracelets, which are more fashionable than useful. Many of them will only have the outer sheath and not the inner strands.

## **What Is the Best Utility Tool for EDC?**

The best utility tool for your EDC would be a compact and high quality multi-tool. The Leatherman multi-tool has been around forever and it was fairly revolutionary at the time it was first introduced—and rather expensive. Now, just about everyone I know owns one and uses it often due to it’s handy nature. Most survivalist and preppers rely on this style of multi-tool for their go-to carry tool.

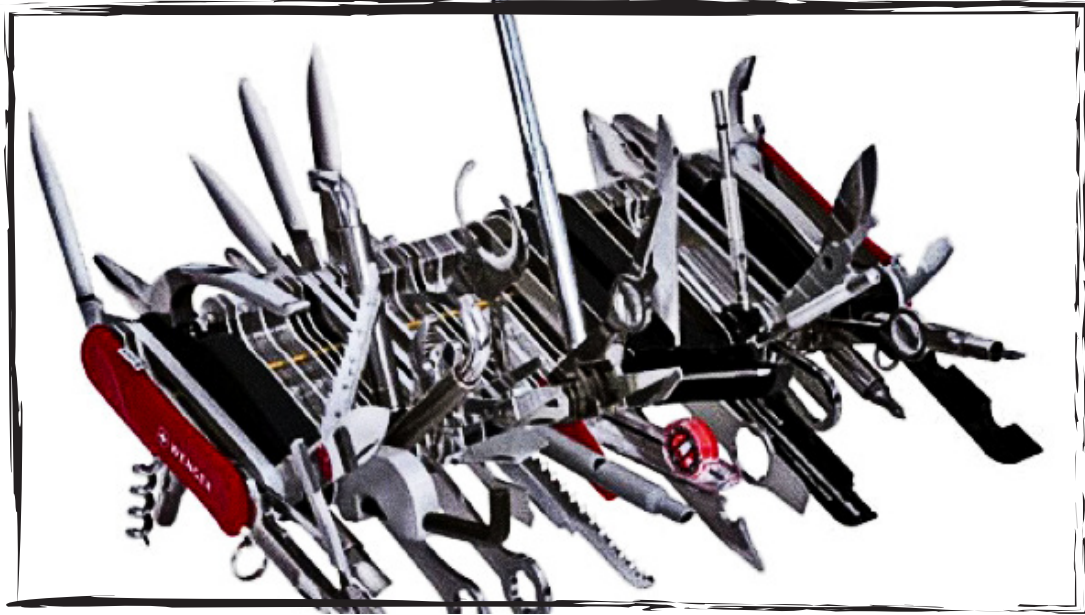
The Swiss Army knife was one of the first true multi-tools because it was one of the first pocket sized knives that had many different functions. It’s hard to beat the compact design and the usefulness of a Swiss Army knife! But the Swiss Army wasn’t the first multi function pocket tool. There are many folding pocket knife style multi tools that date back to the early 1900s sitting on shelves in antique stores. This antique multi-tool pictured below even has full size eatery.



(Antique multi-tool from 1960s of unknown maker) Photo by: Nick Gillick



A utility tool for EDC doesn't have to be crazy complicated to save your life. Some multi-tools can have hundreds of functions, but their size increases with each additional tool.



In the world of Everyday Carry, smaller is better.

Your utility tool can be as simple as a quality lock-back folding pocket knife. Simple tools like this can serve many different purposes with just one simple blade. Here are some ways I've seen a pocket knife used for other than cutting:

- Screwdriver (the tip for phillips screws, the backside for flat head)
- Pry bar
- Spear tip
- Fighting weapon
- Eating utensil
- Barter Item
- Shaving (gotta be super sharp!)
- Completing an electrical circuit on a car starter (hotwiring)

Some people may say your utility tool for EDC should be a simple razor blade. This probably wouldn't be highly recommended as razor blades are difficult to hold and the metal is thin and brittle making it prone to breaking. Now does a razor blade have a place in your EDC? It sure does as long as you find a safe way to carry it and you have room for it. A good trick is to tuck a razor blade away safely inside an Altoids tin in your EDC kit.

### **What About All the Random "Survival" Tools You Get at Christmas?**

If your family is anything like mine, they know that you are "into that survival stuff." We'd spend entire evenings around the Christmas tree exchanging pocket knives, flashlights and random little survival tools that can be stashed in cars, desks, backpacks



and just about anywhere else.

Some of them are just novelty items, but some of them are pretty darn useful. You'll have to determine yourself if one of these has a place in your EDC because everyone's situation is different. I'll list out a few and mention who may consider carrying one daily.

### → **WINDOW BREAKER AND SEATBELT CUTTING TOOLS**

This is something that you should probably only need to use if you're inside a motor vehicle. If you ride in a friends car often or maybe you carpool over a large body of water daily, you might want to include one of these. Also, if you're a professional truck driver or courier, one of these would be highly recommended to carry daily.

### → **PERSONAL ALARM/ WHISTLE/ PEPPER SPRAY COMBINATIONS**

If you're often alone in an environment that is ripe with crime then you may want to carry one of these tools in your EDC. Women are most often victims of crimes that one of these tools could have deterred.

### → **MINI FLASH LIGHT COMBINATIONS**

There are so many different little flashlights given as gifts, and some of them are actually pretty cool. A little keychain flashlight might just be what you need in your EDC. Some people only carry ones that take standard batteries

like AAA, and many mini-flashlights use tiny 3-volt watch batteries that are harder to find in an emergency.

## **If You Don't Want to be a Victim of Violence or Theft, What Weapon Should You Carry Daily?**

The first category to determine your weapon of choice is to choose whether you want to carry a weapon that is LETHAL or LESS-THAN-LETHAL.

- **LETHAL**

This is a measure sufficient to cause death. A weapon is lethal because it is designed to cause death—it's the nature of the device. Some examples of lethal self-defense weapons are firearms, knives, swords or any weapon designed to primarily cause death.

- **LESS-THAN-LETHAL**

This category didn't exist until fairly recently. Before, they were considered non-lethal but the name was updated since sometimes their use can cause death albeit unintentionally. Some examples of these weapons would be rubber bullets, beanbag projectiles, tasers, pepper spray, tactical batons, clubs and brass knuckles.

When deciding whether you want to carry a LETHAL or LESS-THAN-LETHAL weapon, you need to be able to use it without hesitation. The best defense is one that you know you can and will use.

If you know in your heart that you can't kill another human being even if they will kill you, then a LESS-THAN-LETHAL weapon would be better suited for you. However, a LESS-THAN-LETHAL weapon may not be able to deter your attacker, especially if they have a weapon that is more effective than yours.

Most gun stores, sporting good stores, and self-defense sites offer a variety of LESS-THAN-LETHAL self-defense items and can help you pick out the perfect one for you. Pick one that is easy to carry daily and fairly effective. We won't spend much time on less-than-lethal weapons because they are insufficient to deter violent crimes.

Make sure you know how your weapon operates and make sure you are familiar with it. Just because it's LESS-THAN-LETHAL doesn't mean you can use it anytime you feel threatened. Just like with a firearm, you'll get in trouble if you can't prove it was used in reasonable self-defense. This is a "last ditch effort" when you have no other option, and the use of a LESS-THAN-LETHAL weapon has been proven to cause death in some instances!

What if you use a taser on someone with a heart condition that was just going to ask you directions and they die because you made a bad judgment call? You have to realize that you can and might possibly take a life—even though it's less likely!

If a robber or rapist pulls out a gun and you

respond with a knife, taser or pepper spray—the odds are definitely not in your favor.

If you know that you can kill another human that is coming to kill you, then a LETHAL weapon is your best choice. A LETHAL weapon is not a weapon that you would ever use to intimidate an attacker. If it works that way—then you've gotten lucky. Any reputable self-defense instructor will confirm that you only pull out a LETHAL weapon when you have intent to use it on the other person.

It's obvious that a personal defense firearm is the best defense for yourself and your property. In most states, you can get a concealed firearm license so that you can have a personal firearm with you most places you go.

### **If You're Considering a Firearm, What Should You Carry?**

**WARNING!** As with most things in life, you get what you pay for. There are a lot of cheap pistols on the market that may be tempting due to their price point. Reliability and quality should never be overlooked when purchasing a carry pistol!

The best caliber for self-defense is a hotly debated subject among concealed carry permit holders, but these are also the people you should really listen to. A retired policeman once told me that it didn't really matter what firearm you carried, how big it

was or how powerful. It was about what you would carry on a daily basis so that you were always armed and ready to defend yourself.

This retired law enforcement agent carries two firearms almost everywhere he goes—a .380 caliber Walther PPK and a mini .22 revolver. The Walther in the small of his back, and the little mini .22 revolver in his left-front pants pocket.

Any firearm is better than no firearm, but size does matter. You need to pick the smallest quality firearm in the largest caliber that you can carry. Nowadays there are some pretty powerful firearms in small packages.

You CAN carry a .45 auto caliber pistol with a double stack magazine and have some serious firepower, but we're talking EDC, and a full-size handgun is NOT reasonable to carry on a daily basis. Keep in mind as the caliber increases so does the knock down power—and the recoil. These are common compact handgun calibers and offerings below:

- **.22 caliber** These little pistols can be easily concealed. They don't weigh much and can be just enough to save your ass in a life or death situation. Just make sure you have the muzzle against your intended target. It's only effective for self-defense with point blank shots. I wouldn't rely on it for my main defense, but instead as a back up just in case.
- **.25 caliber automatic** Originally

developed in 1906 by John Browning, this caliber isn't very common and is seen more as a novelty in the modern market.

- **.32 ACP** This caliber while only having a short effective range has been fairly popular among concealed carry and compact pistol buyers. In the past it has been one of the few automatic cartridges that could be used in a very small firearm. Modern ammunition makes it fairly effective, but the ability to manufacture comparably small sized firearms in more powerful cartridges has caused it to become less popular than it was just years ago.
- **.380 ACP** The .380 is one of the most popular concealed and compact handgun calibers to date. It packs a fair amount of punch and is often considered the smallest caliber to be effective for personal defense. Ammunition is fairly easy to find and available in many different self defense loads. This caliber was the most popular caliber in the famed Walther PPK because of its low recoil and decent stopping power.
- **9mm auto** The 9mm is probably the most popular handgun cartridge ever introduced for the pistol market. It's a go-to caliber for many police departments and militaries around the world. Now with advanced manufacturing technology, gun makers have been able to chamber very

small handguns in this caliber offering a compact package with substantial stopping power. The 9mm bullet is barely larger than the .380 but it has more weight and more gunpowder behind it. It will penetrate farther but this isn't always good for self-defense when there may be bystanders.

- **.40 ACP** This is a very popular and powerful round for self-defense. Some manufacturers are now releasing a sub-compact pistol for concealed carry in this round. It packs a lot of punch, and like the .45 it would only be recommended for an experienced and strong shooter.
- **.45 ACP** Just recently a few firearm manufacturers have started offering a sub-compact pistol that shoots the massive .45 automatic round. Springfield has been able to design a pistol shooting this great round that weighs only 21.5 ounces. It is only 1 inch wide and it holds 6 rounds. I would only recommend this caliber in a sub-compact pistol for the seriously experienced and confident shooter!

Although it may sound great to have a sub-compact handgun in the most powerful caliber you can get—there is a downside. These little guns have one hell of a kick. It's important to remember that there is a delicate balance between power and size with handguns. You need to be able to handle the gun well, manage the recoil and

be ready for follow up shots. This isn't the time to be the toughest guy on the block.

The best way to find the right fit for you is to go try them out. Many ranges have a variety of self-defense pistols that you can test out. Ask your friends who have concealed carry pistols how their chosen caliber handles, and if you're really good friends they might let you shoot theirs.

Most experts that I've consulted with say that the .380 is the best self-defense pistol for daily carry. Now that the 9mm is available in a pistol that is virtually the same size and weight, you may consider it over the .380 if you're able to handle the extra recoil.

## **The Best Pistol is Useless Without the Right Ammunition**

Not only do you have to pick out the right pistol for your needs, but you need to make sure you have it loaded with the correct ammunition. Purchasing a quality pistol is expensive, and so is the best ammunition for self-defense. There are a lot of great ammunition manufacturers who are producing superior products.

Hopefully your local gun store has a good selection of ammunition for you to pick through, and I'm sure that they can make a good recommendation for you. When it comes to self-defense ammo, the only choice is a quality round made for that purpose. Manufacturers such as Golden Sabre,



Hornaday, Powerball and others are industry leaders in self-defense ammunition.

## How Do You Carry Your Self-Defense Pistol in Your EDC?

First and foremost—know and follow the laws for where you will carry your firearm. A concealed carry permit will most likely be required. Each state has different rules and processes for getting a concealed permit, and some large cities may ban concealed carry entirely.

Everyone who carries a firearm struggles with this question. It usually just takes a bit of experimentation to see what works best for you. You want to make sure your carrying method will have your firearm completely concealed and secure at all times. You NEVER want to accidentally flash your firearm or let it fall out in public.

There can be legal consequences to accidentally showing your firearm in public. Know your local laws and stay up-to-date with changes. Also know where and when you can and can't carry a concealed firearm. This is serious business and shouldn't be taken lightly.

Here's some firearm carry techniques you can test out to see which one works best for you.

### ◆ *Pocket*

If you have large pockets and can conceal the firearm without it showing through the fabric, this carry method can work

well. There are many purpose made pocket holsters, even some where you don't have to unholster the weapon to be able to fire.

### ◆ *Inside the waistband*

This is one of the most common forms of carrying a concealed firearm. This carry style should use a slim holster that protects your skin from the gun. The holster usually clips onto your waste band or your belt. The gun can be located anywhere inside your waistband, including the small of the back.

### ◆ *Outside the waistband*

This is exactly what it sounds like. A holster is attached to your belt and the gun is carried outside of your pants. A long shirt or jacket is used to conceal the firearm. Accidental exposure of the firearm is more common with this carry option.

### ◆ *Mexican carry*

This method is where the gun is tucked inside the front of the pants with no holster. Carrying a pistol this way is often uncomfortable; the gun slips around and can fall out fairly easily. It can also make it difficult to get a good grip on the firearm when you need to pull it out quickly. You can use a String Holster to help when using the Mexican carry. This is a string or cord tied around your belt with a loop going inside your pants to slip the muzzle of the pistol through. The British OSS came up with this idea to help

resistance fighters conceal their pistols effectively in World War II.

### ◆ **SmartCarry**

Is a brand name holster that is basically a flat fanny pack that is worn inside the pants. There is an open pocket where you insert the firearm to hold it inside your waistband. This is a very secure and comfortable way to carry a sub-compact pistol. With a little practice, accessing the firearm is actually quite easy.

### ◆ **Shoulder holsters**

Are notorious in gangster movies where they pull a pistol out from underneath their suit jacket. A quality shoulder holster can be fairly comfortable and useful for someone who has to sit down or bend over often. It's easy to conceal under a jacket or coat.

### ◆ **Ankle holsters**

Have a time and place but most people I know who've tried them didn't like them. The firearm can be difficult to access and the holsters tend to be uncomfortable. You can test this out by putting on two tube socks one over the other and inserting your pistol between the two. If it seems like a possible option to you then try out an ankle holster.

New holsters and methods of carry are being developed all the time. Recently, in Concealed Carry Magazine they ran a story about a new upper arm holster that is basically an ankle holster strapped around

your bicep. There are many concerns with this carry, and I would only use it when there is no other option. (It comes with a warning about shooting yourself in the underarm!)

Keep testing and experimenting with your preferred method of carry and find the best that works for you. For the beginner, the best recommendation is inside the waistband using a comfortable holster that covers your trigger well.

## **What's the Best Medical Kit for EDC?**

When it comes to medical kits in your EDC, the best kit is one that you have put together yourself consisting of only what you believe you will need the most. Medical kits can be made small. Some are even small enough to fit inside a small pocket tin such as an Altoids container.

- ◆ **Complete First Aid Kits** are sold in almost every store. These kits are available from a full-size duffle bag stuffed with every goodie imaginable to a little kit that can fit in your bag or even your pocket. The Sawyer Pocket First Aid Kit is a small package that is only 5 inches square and 1 inch thick. This would fill an entire pocket if you decide to carry one. Most EDCs will consist of only a few specific medical items that take up very little space.
- ◆ It's a good idea to consider a **disinfectant** in your EDC. Alcohol wipes and hand sanitizer can help you avoid

getting a bad infection if you sustain an open wound. You may not have room for these items in your EDC, so remember places that you can likely find antiseptics. In an emergency situation, many types of liquor can be used as an antiseptic and almost every home and store has alcohol somewhere. First aid kits are also stored in most businesses and in the trunks of their cars.

- ♦ **Bandages** are extremely useful for small cuts and scrapes. Most times that you would want a bandage aren't going to be life-threatening injuries. Big absorbent bandages are bulky and unlikely to be carried daily. Be prepared to utilize clothing and other items as bandages in the case of a bad wound. Bandages are also available with antibiotic pre-applied to help avoid infection. A small gauze roll may fit your EDC needs as well. The more active you are in low populated areas, the more you are at risk to needing more bandaging.
- ♦ **QuickClot** produces a clotting bandage for injuries. It is compact and a great life saving tool. Even the U.S. military issues these in their field medical kits. I would at least have one of these in my Get Home Bag, and my Bug-Out Bag.

## For Those With Glasses and Contacts!

Your vision is very important to your ability

to survive. If you rely heavily on glasses or contacts then you should consider adding related items into your EDC. Carry extra contact lenses, back up glasses, tools to repair your glasses with and other items of that nature. Consider a pair of sport style glasses that have shatterproof and scratch resistant lenses.

The more active you are in sparsely populated areas, the more you are at risk to needing more medical gear. Consider your daily risk and exposure to needing medical gear and carry the appropriate items in your EDC. Remember most medical needs can be scavenged from many common places.

## Sample Everyday Carry Kits

Now we've gone over what you should consider when choosing the gear for your EDC—light weight high quality gear that can help you access what you need to survive.

Also we've gone over specific gear and reasons why you may or may not choose to carry those items. If you're thinking there is no perfect EDC kit that would suit everyone's needs—you'd be right. Everyone will have different concerns and skills that determine what they will carry.

Lets look at a few samples of real life EDC kits. The first one we'll look at is from a contributing writer on [survivallife.com](http://survivallife.com). I'll tell you about the items he carries and why he carries each one. He's chosen to carry minimal gear

that will help him access what he needs to survive. If you've seen his writing, you know that he is experienced in adapting whatever he finds to his survival needs.



EDC carried by Nick Gillick, contributor on Survival Life

### Items in this kit:

1. **Cabela's Multi-tool.** This was a gift that replaced his full-size Leatherman. It is aluminum, stainless steel, and very light weight. This has a built in mini-flashlight as well.
2. **Business card sized multi-tool.** This tool stays inside the wallet and is a nice back up if the other multi-tool gets lost.
3. **The leather wallet** contains ID, emergency contact info and other important items common to most wallets.
4. **.380 caliber sub-compact concealed carry pistol.** This is his pistol of choice because it's reliable, accurate, and powerful. Above all, it is small and light making it easy to carry every day. It also has a built in laser for ease of sighting.
5. **The silver ring** pictured is not his wedding ring. This is an extra ring that he wears to use in a barter situation.
6. **Toothpick tin** containing important items. There are Band-aids, fishing line, floss, a fish hook, allergy medication, anti-inflammatory medication, water purifica-



tion tablets and a few toothpicks stashed in this tiny tin.

7. **Cellphone** for communication. He charges his phone fully every night to help ensure he's not caught with a dead battery.
8. **The keychain lanyard** is made with nearly 10 feet of paracord and uses a carabineer to attach to belt loops. He also has a key shaped multi-tool on the lanyard which has many uses included a single bulb LED light.
9. Since you never know when you may need to start a fire, he carries a **small Bic lighter** wrapped in duct tape. You also never know when some duct tape can come in handy.
10. (Not Pictured) **Watch with compass function and bands made from paracord.**

Some items in his EDC may change occasionally, but the purpose stays the same. Your EDC doesn't have to be the exact same all the time. You can adjust it by removing and adding items based on where you're going and what you're doing.

Here's another approach to an EDC for someone who may have more concerns about weather and supplying water. I originally put it together to go in the car, but it could be



carried easily in a backpack or on a belt loop.

Here's a little breakdown of what is in this EDC emergency kit.

- A folding pocket knife
- Paracord bracelet (roughly 10 feet of cord)
- Aqua Mira: Frontier emergency water filter.
- 8 LED flashlight with batteries and adapter (takes either 1 C Battery or 3 AAA's)
- Bright yellow emergency poncho
- Mylar survival blanket
- Stainless steel water bottle (also used as a container for the kit).
- Not pictured is one 400 calorie ration bar from Millennium simply because it was time to rotate it out and... I was hungry. Millennium makes a great compact energy bar that fits just about anywhere.

I also created an EDC tin from an Altoids container that I keep in my desk. Aside from the odd look I get when politely refusing a

mint to a coworker, this fits effortlessly in my pocket or my desk—or just about anywhere, and no one will ever be the wiser. Inside the Altoids tin I keep an array of items.

The most common items are.

- Small screw top pill holder filled with Vaseline: Vaseline has a variety of uses. It can be used to prevent and cure chapped lips and hands, can be put on cuts and scrapes to help prevent infection and is extremely effective as a fire starter.
- Cotton balls
- Weatherproof matches
- A small wire saw
- A small assortment of fishing supplies
- A few hard candies and or bouillon cube if there is room, a small amount of sugar can give you a great energy and moral boost after a crisis.

## **Great Gear Recommendations for Your EDC**

- Universal Handcuff Key
- Mini Lighters (Some are small enough to use as a zipper pull!)
- Quality Pocket Knife (A strong lock-back or lock-blade knife is highly recommended)
- CRKT Eatn' Tool (It's a spork with wrenches, a pry tip and a bottle opener. It seems they overlooked the can opener however)
- Swiss Army knife (They do almost everything!)
- Small Leatherman
- Tactical Extending Baton (Easy to carry and legal some places concealed carry firearms aren't)
- 3M shatterproof prescription safety glasses (They have many fashionable styles!)
- Tactical Pen (Not just for writing!)
- Cellphone—With or without service! It will still dial 911 and help triangulate your location.
- Paracord can't be stressed enough. It is the most flexible item you can carry daily.
- Sub-compact or mini pistol with a valid Concealed Carry Permit! Check out North American Arms for some of the smallest on the market.
- Tactical clothing helps you stash all your EDC goodies... and they're durable.
- Fire strikers
- Self-defense Ball Cap—these caps have metal weights in the top so you can use it to strike an attacker.

- Extra valuables like small silver and gold rings can be bartered for things you may need.
- Water purification tablets are small and easy to carry.
- Speedhook for trapping small game and fish.
- Unflavored floss can be used to catch fish and to stitch a wound.
- Small clips or carabineers are handy to hold your gear and plunders together.
- A mini-flashlight can't be more highly recommended. I've dropped stuff in low-light situations and really wished I'd had one with me!

Regardless of the gear you choose the best Everyday Carry that you will ever have is your ability and experience. Learn your survival skills and take advantage of the resources around you.

By carrying the most versatile and useful compact tools, you can ensure that you have the best chance of surviving a crisis. What makes humans so adept at surviving is our ability to use tools. Not many other creatures have figured this out, and those that have are very limited in their use of them. We shouldn't take this for granted.

Whatever you carry in your EDC, don't get caught unprepared!

To your survival!

*"Above Average" Joe*  
Survival Life



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