

Creating Your Three Day Plan

Learn the fundamentals of emergency preparedness and create your own personal three day survival plan!



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Introduction

This book is designed to take you from a zero preparedness situation to being prepared for a generic three day event such as a blizzard or an extended power outage.

By running through this book and taking the action steps I give you, you'll make immediate progress with your preparations. This actually puts you in a better situation than the vast majority of the public at large! That should help you sleep a bit better at night!

A Little About Rudy

I'm a family man with six kids and a beautiful wife. I have been into preparedness for about fifteen years now, and have a true passion for sharing what I know.

To facilitate that sharing, I run a small publishing company called Preparedness Press, and I have a personal blog called Preparing Your Family. Somewhere in there I find time for my day job that pays the bills and keeps a roof over our head!

My goal is to teach everything I know to anyone who wants to learn. There's nothing more satisfying to me than to know that I have impacted someone's life for the positive and have helped that person be more prepared for the curve balls life tends to throw at you.

How To Get The Most Out Of This Book

First, you'll need to get some supplies! I recommend getting yourself a three ring binder and printing out this Action Plan sections of this book. This keeps all of the action steps you need to take in a well-organized reference manual, and you'll be able to insert other collateral as needed!

If you don't want a binder, you can just use loose leaf printouts or simply take notes in a notebook. But I highly recommend using a binder!

You'll also want to have a spreadsheet handy. I recommend Microsoft Excel, because that's what I used to create the spreadsheets you'll get in some modules, but Open Office or Google Spreadsheets are also options if you don't have Excel.

I have some very specific ideas on how to get the most out of this book. I'm a bit of a stickler on this in my personal life. I consume a tremendous amount of classes like this on various topics myself, and have developed certain habits that have had a huge impact on the value I get out of them.

First and foremost, repetition is the key to retention. You should plan on reviewing each module more than once. I recommend that you go through each module once without worrying too much about notes. The

first time through you're getting a solid foundation on the material. Somewhat like priming a pump!

Then go through the module again, this time taking good notes. By doing this you'll retain more information than you would if you only went through it once and you'll have more success with the course.

Sometimes when I'm taking a class I'll take lessons three or four times, and every time I do, I get more information out of it that I missed the first time through.

Finally, make sure you go through the action plan for each module and follow through on the action steps! Don't feel like you have to actually complete everything, because sometimes your circumstances will prevent that. But the most important thing is to formulate your personal plan and make steady progress!

What To Do If You Need Help

If you need any help with the course material, please feel free to email me directly at rudyp@preparingyourfamily.com ... Of course you can ask me any other questions you might have, even if it's not related to the course itself!

Module One: Preparedness Basics

Why Would I Want To Prepare?

I'm going to guess that if you're reading this, you're not a child in a family, and you're a parent who is trying to figure out what this whole 'preparedness' thing is all about. Or maybe you're not a parent and stumbled across this and just like my writing. That's fine too. Bottom line, you're an adult. And despite what seems to be the prevailing opinion in this country, YOU are responsible for your own well-being, and that of your loved ones.

Read that again. YOU are responsible for your own well-being. YOU are responsible for your family. YOU are responsible for your mother in law (Sorry guys...). But there's a critical problem here. It's not in style right now to be responsible for yourself. The culture we have developed here in the United States has gone from a self-sufficient independent life style to one that is a dependency oriented life style.

Look around your life today. Chances are that most of the people you come into contact with on a daily basis are simply living their life on autopilot. For most of them, things are going reasonably well. After all, even if you're "poor" in the United States, you're rather well off in terms of how the rest of the world lives. I don't say this for self-righteous reasons. Quite frankly, I enjoy my luxuries just as much as the rest of you. I like being able to run down to the grocery store and get some

bizarre food item I happen to be craving at the time, or picking up the latest and greatest gadget at the local electronics box store.

Most of the people around you depend on The System far more than they realize, and chances are, so do you. Therein lies a critical problem. When things don't go perfectly, and sometimes even when they DO go perfectly, those things we are dependent upon just aren't there. Or they're late. Or you don't get as much as you might have hoped or planned on.

Maybe you lose your job, or maybe foul weather hits. We'll talk about WHAT we're preparing for in a few minutes. Just assume for a minute that a Bad Thing happens to you. Now what? If you're like most people in this country, you're going to wait for the government to step in and help. After all, that's why we pay taxes, right? They just HAVE to come help us! Sure, they'll show up. Eventually. Problem is, you'll probably be up a creek until then. Having worked for the government, they are SLOW.

Like I said above, it is YOUR job to be prepared. You don't need to prepare for an asteroid hitting the planet if you don't want to, but taking an honest look at your life and deciding what sorts of Bad Things are likelier than not to happen is a fantastic idea. But when I see supply problems at the gas station on the corner or the empty grocery store shelves after a winter storm it just reinforces the need to prepare.

At the end of the day, it comes down to a choice to take ownership of your future, and prepare for things that have a reasonable probability of occurring. If you're prepared when it happens you will be far more likely to ride it out in reasonable comfort or security. If you're unprepared, well, hopefully you don't end up in a refugee or FEMA camp somewhere riding out the aftermath of some natural disaster...

Preparedness as a Mindset

Preparedness is a mindset. You have to realize that getting prepared isn't a one-time thing. It's a fundamental shift to the way that you think and the way that you live your life. And honestly, everyone is different and everyone will have a different level of preparedness that they're comfortable with.

Preparedness is truly a way of life that's different from what our society considers to be normal today. It wasn't always like this. If you look back in history, most people were prepared for a broad variety of events as a rule.

But today it's rather rare for someone to be prepared for random events or emergencies. In fact, if people know that you are a 'Prepper' they will often look at you like you're crazy. And this can be a problem for you.

I know that you're feeling pretty excited about getting prepared. You're going to want to share your new views and opinions and knowledge with

the world. But I want to caution you to be careful about that for two reasons.

The first reason is the old fable of the Ant and the Grasshopper. You know the story. The grasshopper plays all summer while the ant works hard at putting away food for the winter. The winter comes and the grasshopper comes to demand that the Ant share. You don't want this to happen to you.

The second reason is a bit more pragmatic. If people know you have preps, they may tell others, and you could have a swarm of people on your doorstep in an emergency situation. Or worse yet, you could be accused of hoarding. Not a good day.

So be extremely careful who you share information about your preps with. Sometimes close friends and even family can be that Grasshopper. Be low key, be subtle, be private, and be careful.

What Should You Prepare For?

Most people who are getting started in preparedness have no idea what they should be preparing for. Usually there are one or two things that push you into the preparedness mindset, but as soon as you start thinking about it, you realize that there are a whole slew of other things to add to the list.

The key thing to remember is that in some ways preparedness is like insurance. You spend your resources on it, and hope you never have to use it. Now that's not completely true for many areas of preparedness, like food storage, because you should be using that as part of your regular life. But your major disaster plans are things you don't want to have to use, right?

At the same time, your preps should be dual purpose. They should improve your life even if nothing ever happens. If you set your life up to be better overall while being more prepared for what comes, you just can't lose.

When thinking about getting started in emergency preparedness, you have to think about what kinds of things are likely to happen to you given your life circumstances, your environment, and the people around you.

Things To Consider During This Course

Throughout this entire course you need to be thinking about everything I'm teaching from your own perspective. Look at things and decide how they apply to your own unique situation.

I'm teaching primarily concepts with concrete examples that are from my life or completely fabricated. You need to take the concepts I'm teaching and modify them to your lifestyle.

Fair warning, I approach things from a very family oriented mindset. There's no way around that when you have as many kids as I do! So if you don't have kids living with you, you'll want to pay extra attention to changing these concepts to fit your life.

And above all, use your common sense at all times, and ask lots of questions!

Module Two: Rudy's Four Preparedness Rules of Thumb

So I have four rules of thumb that I live by. They're pretty straight forward and I certainly didn't make them up myself. But I use them and teach them. Since they are a foundational building block of the preparedness mindset I teach I share them here.

Rule One: The Rule Of Threes

So this isn't a hard and fast rule and it's not intended to be taken literally. This rule sets some basic escalating guidelines on how long you can survive without certain necessities. Do not take this rule as canon law, but use it to guide your triage and prioritization.

The rule is simple:

You can survive for three minutes without oxygen.

You can survive for three hours in severe environments without shelter.

You can survive for three days without water.

You can survive for three weeks without food.

As you go about preparing yourself and your family, you should use this rule to help guide your preparation triage. Sure, these are obviously rough estimates. But as far as a rule of thumb goes, they're great. It puts things in perspective. Yeah, you might be hungry enough to eat a horse, but if you don't have water, you're screwed. Should you work on water purification or go off looking for lizards to eat?

Some things are more relevant than others. For example, you probably don't have to worry TOO much about oxygen if you're in your house during a survival situation. But if you were in New York during the 9/11 attack, having an air mask to keep out all that dust would have been critical to your overall health.

Rule Two: Two Is One and One is None

Every Prepper needs to understand the art of redundancy and how to apply it to your planning process. You don't want to end up being up a creek without a paddle when something breaks and you have no spare!

All too often we add something to our prep room but don't think about redundancy. I have a bit of a leg up on most folks in that my profession doesn't even consider things as single instances and anything worth buying is worth buying a backup unit for. The same thing goes for preps.

We can't even imagine the ways in which something can break or fail. And according to Murphy, that failure will happen at the worst possible time. So we need to prepare for that as well.

In real terms this means that you never ever only buy one of something. If you are forced to break that rule for some reason, financially or space wise for example, then you absolutely must have a contingency plan.

I would go so far as to advocate that one extra isn't even enough. In my profession we have the concept of N, N+1, N+2, and so on. It basically represents the number of a given item we require based on our needs (N) and the desired backup level. N+1 is one backup unit, N+2 is two backup units, and so forth.

Using the above model, N+1 is really the bare minimum, and in many cases I would recommend going to N+2 or N+3 levels of redundancy if possible. You may not be in a position to replace something that fails or breaks, and that extra stockpile may be the only thing between you and not having a valuable tool.

In many cases it's worth adding a percentage based buffer in addition to a standard N+ model. I always do this for consumables. For example I take my N+3 redundancy and add 50% or even double the amount and plan to store that much of whatever I'm looking at. I'd rather have too much than not enough.

Let's try out a quick practical example here using fizbang widgets. You know that every adult needs to have two fizbang widgets in storage. You are planning on having your in-laws with you in case of emergency, so you need to account for four adults, or eight fizbang widgets.

After discussion with your wife you decide that N+2 redundancy is reasonable here, so you now need a total of ten fizbang widgets. Finally, since you read my tip above this paragraph you decide to add a safety buffer of 50% for a final fizbang widget count of 15.

As an alternative way of calculating redundancy you might want to add adults instead of widgets. So in this example N+2 redundancy would mean calculating widget needs for a total of six adults instead of four adults.

Quick math results in: Six adults (N+2) X 2 widgets per adult = 12 widgets, buffered for a total of 18 widgets. I usually use this model if I am accounting for extra bodies instead of just loss/theft/breakage of the item in question.

Rule Three: Slow Down and Survive

This rule has a bit of a contradiction. On one hand, not reacting quickly in an emergency situation can kill you. On the other hand, reacting too quickly without thinking can kill you too.

Using your head is the key to survival. But there's one little problem with using your head. If you're under too much stress it will absolutely reduce your ability to think straight. You may not even be able to think at all!

So you have to game out your action plan for different emergencies ahead of time. This way you can walk through things slowly, decide ahead of time how to react, and plan for various contingencies.

The chances of you hitting each of your plans are next to nothing. But by planning, you've thought about it, and you'll have already put your brain through most of the paces it will need to make a good decision, so reacting to that emergency situation will be easier.

Rule Four: Don't Panic!

It's very common for people just getting into preparedness to feel something that is borderline panic. They see the potential for disaster everywhere they look, just like Rowdy Roddy Piper in 'They Live'. Suddenly they feel like they have to get prepared for everything at once.

Enter panic, an overwhelming fear, and the glories of the Fight or Flight reaction. And let me tell you, that messes with your body and your mind, and makes it pretty hard to plan correctly.

Chances are you won't be able to avoid the panicky feeling, but you need to harness it into a sense of urgency that you can use to keep yourself on track. Don't let yourself fall into panic mode!

Don't go out and start buying everything under the sun. Use this course and other resources you may find as a way to plan things out. And once you have that plan, be methodical and consistent about executing it.

Preparedness is a lifetime mentality. This isn't something that you do for a few months and never touch again. It fundamentally changes the way you look at the world and you won't be the same again.

Now sometimes life events, local or global, personal or societal, will make you worry even more. And rest assured, it's ok to change your priorities based on what you see going on around you. It's foolish not to, in fact.

But above all, Don't Panic, and always have a towel handy!

Module Three: Water

This module will be a quick one. Remember, we're planning on a generic three day supply stash. So we need to have enough water for each member of your family for three days. You'll need water for the following purposes:

Drinking – This is pretty self-explanatory!

Cooking – This is pretty straight forward too!

Sanitation – This is often overlooked, but super important. Don't skip this.

Now, I'm not going to go into details on water, water storage, and water purification in this introductory book, so for the time being you should plan on storing a total of six gallons of water per person. This gives you two gallons each per day. FEMA recommends one gallon per day, so this gives you a nice buffer.

I prefer to store half of this in regular water bottles that you get at the store. This keeps it easy to drink and easy to keep track of how much water you've used. This is particularly important with kids since it can be tough to keep track of how much they're drinking.

The other half you can store however you like. You can use gallon jugs from the store or recycled from milk jugs. You can use rinsed out 2 Liter soda bottles. If you have a water service, just get extra and keep it on hand. Use your imagination. Again, we'll go over my recommendations for water storage when we talk about water in general.

Module Four: Food

Now normally for short to mid-term food storage I recommend that you store extra of what you cook with normally. And of course you should have your long term food storage integrated into your meal plans anyways. But that's for a future book!

What I want you to do is look at what you normally eat and see what you can adapt to be a disaster friendly meal. And then plan three days' worth of meals for your family.

This is basically a disaster ration plan, so you need to think about food from that perspective. You may not have access to electricity or gas, so having simple to prep meals is critical. And above all, these components shouldn't require refrigeration.

Ideally you'll want to use as many ingredients as possible out of your normal pantry so that you're able to easily rotate through these disaster rations.

One last tip is to plan your meals a bit larger than normal. Chances are you'll be using extra calories in an emergency situation so plan ahead and make sure you have enough caloric intake to cover your needs.

Module Five: Energy

In this module we'll be focusing on your three day energy needs, specifically for cooking, electricity, lighting, and warmth.

Cooking is pretty straight forward. You need to be able to prepare food. Most homes have a grill or barbecue in the back yard. Take advantage of that and keep extra propane or charcoal at all times. For charcoal make sure you have enough to cook four or five meals.

If you have camping stoves, such as a Coleman stove, make sure you have enough fuel for a few days' worth of cooking.

Above all, make sure you have more than one way to make fire. Have a few lighters, match boxes, or a magnesium stick. I actually like to have all three around for redundancy purposes. We'll talk about more options for starting a fire later on in class.

Electricity in this scenario is primarily used for keeping your freezer cold, not for comfort and lighting. An efficient freezer will stay cold if you give it power for a couple hours a day, depending on ambient temperature. Since we're planning on a three day disruption, you don't want to lose everything you have in your freezer.

I recommend using a small generator for this, but if you don't have one, don't go out and buy one! We'll talk about generators in a future module, and the last thing I want is for you to buy something you won't be happy with after you learn more about generators and your options.

If you have a generator already, make sure you have enough fuel for at least twelve hours of run time. This sounds like a lot, but even an el-cheapo generator will run for about that long on a five gallon gas can.

Another option you can use is to plug a power inverter into your car or truck and use that to power your freezer. Remember though that the current that can go through the cigarette lighter is limited so if you decide to do this, use the alligator clips that came with your inverter and connect directly to the battery.

Lighting is actually more important than you might think. Not only can it get pretty depressing to sit in the dark all the time, but it can be quite a safety issue as well. You should always have the following on hand:

- Long burning candles (hurricane candles, prayer candles, etc)
- Several flashlights with extra batteries
- A camping lantern (battery operated!)

Depending on where you live, you may not need to worry about warmth and heating, but in most areas you have to think about it. So make sure

you have an adequate heating source of some kind. If you have a furnace that doesn't depend on natural gas or electricity, make sure you have plenty of fuel on hand.

I also recommend that you always have several extra blankets as well!

One last point. DO NOT USE A COMBUSTABLE HEAT SOURCE INDOORS! That's a recipe for disaster and you are more likely than not going to die if you do this.

Module Six: General Items

The first topic for this quick start module is first aid. And it's truly a no brainer. You have to have a good first aid kit. As with everything else, we'll go into depth on this topic later on, but I want you to have the basics covered.

You need to have a simple first aid kit at minimum. You can get reasonably good ones at most drug stores or pharmacies. Pick up extra Band-Aids, anti-bacterial cream, and hydrogen peroxide to round out your kit.

No, it's not a full blown trauma kit, but this is the quick start module, not the medical module!

Life without all of the modern comforts can get kinda boring. You need to have ways to pass the time and stay entertained. This is especially important for kids, if you have them. And let me tell you, breaking monotony is a very important thing for keeping your spirits up in an emergency situation.

I recommend that you have board games, card games, books for various age ranges, and really anything else that you might be able to use as entertainment if you are in a grid down situation.

I highly recommend having a Hoyle rule book and a deck of cards. The number of card game options you get with one little book is astounding.

Probably one of the most important things to consider in a grid down situation, and honestly in general, is fire. Fire in a grid down situation can be completely devastating.

You MUST be able to detect a fire so make sure you have battery operated smoke detectors at LEAST on every floor of your home. Code nowadays is one detector per room, and I would recommend that. You should also have a few carbon monoxide detectors as well!

Make sure you have several fire extinguishers. You should have one on each floor, plus one in the kitchen, the garage, and the laundry/utility room if applicable. Be sure to keep up on the maintenance for your extinguishers or replace them before they are no longer effective.

Nobody likes to think about this, but it's entirely possible that you may need to seek shelter outside of your home. You need to be prepared for that contingency.

Make sure you have tent(s) for your family, a few tarps, or something else you can rig as a shelter. This doesn't have to be perfect, just make sure you have a way of getting out of the weather if need be. And as usual, we'll cover more in the future.

Action Plans – Get Started Now!

Module One - Action Plan

1. In your workbook, write down the trigger event(s) that caused you to begin your path to preparedness
2. Make a list of the top three things you can think of that you want to prepare for. This is in addition to the trigger events from step one.

Module Three - Action Plan

1. Figure out how much water you need to get
2. Go get the water!
3. Store it in a dark place (important!)

Module Four - Action Plan

1. Create your meal plan
2. Go shop!
3. Store your stuff in a dark, cool place

Module Five - Action Plan

1. Look at each section of this quick start module and make a list of things you need in order to be prepared for a three day grid interruption.
2. Shop around to get the supplies, but don't go overboard!

Module Six - Action Plan

1. Make sure you have each area in this module covered
2. Shop carefully and don't go overboard. Remember, we'll cover most of these areas in more detail soon. Your goal here is to set up a three day contingency plan, not prepare for the zombie apocalypse.