

Is There a Hierarchy for Acquiring Preparedness Needs?

"I beg you take courage; the brave soul can mend even disaster." Catherine II

This is one of the most frequently asked questions. Unfortunately, one size does not fit all. There are so many variables that will influence this answer. From how probable a disaster or emergency is going to hit your area, to what each of you considers a disaster or emergency, to the type and duration of the disaster/emergency.

Between my personal experience, the experience of my friends and what people are saying on all the various blogs – there is a basic hierarchy. *Just keep in mind for this list to work for you; it will most likely have to be tweaked a bit.*

Although I have accumulated this list from various resources, it is "tainted" with my slat on When and What type of disaster/emergency is most likely to occur.

For me that is the collapse of one or more of the major infrastructures to our country, which will domino effect into economic and civil/social collapse. IE: The breakdown of a key physical component of said infrastructure. These infrastructures are: Electrical Grid; Water – drinking, run-off, waste, dams; Transportation/Distribution – roads & bridges. Coupled with the human infrastructures: Law enforcement; fire/rescue/health professionals and communications.

Keep in mind that some of these items may be done concurrently, except for budgeting. Without a good debt-free financial plan, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to acquire what you need AND keep under the radar at the same time.

With those disclaimers in place - here goes ...

Basic Preparedness Needs List

- Budget
- Inventory of Existing knowledge, skills and goods/supplies
- Inventory of Needed knowledge, skills and goods/supplies
- Preparedness Plans: Procurement; Shelter in place; bug-out/evacuation; including regular practice drills for both scenarios
- 72-hour Go-bags & first-aid kits: household, auto, individual, pet
- Food, Water & Medical Supply/Storage
- Survival tools, knowledge, skills and supplies
- Barter goods

Build your Barter/Trade list for in the post-SHTF world based on:

- Just like the rest of your preparedness needs, two lists will be needed: One for if you must go mobile (bug-out) and one for if you can stay put.

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- Someone who has extra food, ammo or whatever that is willing to barter and trade, most likely needs something that they do not have. Unless this is the early throws of economic collapse, money, precious/semi-precious metals and gems are not it.
- Money or coinage will most likely only be good for bribes at roadblocks and closed borders or the like, or for purchasing say seeds for growing your own and that's about it. Because of its weight and bulkiness, it will not be good for the bug-out scenario.
- If the barter/trade item won't keep you warm or cool; if you can't drink or eat it; if it won't allow you to hunt or procure skills, shelter or clothing, etc, then it won't be worth it for the person who has what you need to trade with you.
- You have to have room to store all this stuff.
- **Anything that will be easy to scrounge will not be a valuable trade good.** This is one rule of thumb that was repeated over and over.

Bottom Line: *"You can prepare, stash, cache, save and survive the end of the world as we know it, but chances are, you will run out of something or have overlooked one important item. That leaves you a few options":*

- Do without
- Make what you need, if you can
- Try to buy it, and pay inflated prices (if it's available for purchase & someone actually wants money for it)
- Barter for it

Most resources start with the basics to human life and these also tend to be the things you will need the most of, especially in the long haul. These items include not only the specific item itself, but the knowledge and skill to use it, or make it. So my researched list starts with the basics and the items you need the most of.

First and foremost one needs to collect those items that are a necessity to human life: **food, water, air and protection from the elements.** If you have a medical condition that requires medication, like diabetes, include that medication as a necessity to life. Understand that this does not mean you need two years worth of this stuff ASAP. Start small, like a three day grab-and-go supply. For stationary needs, think a month and then build upon it, until you reach either the recommended two year supply or the amount you desire to have.

The **second** thing you must immediately think about is **shelter and something for keeping your warm or cool.** This too needs to be looked at from a mobile and stationary standpoint. Again, start small. Think sweats (both light/breathable and heavy), space blanket, tarp, fire stick, etc. for the immediate on the go needs. Think in terms of your long term shelter or stationary items as what you already have on hand. This stationary shelter can be your primary residence to some kind of survival retreat. If you have the time and the resources, you may have both a primary and retreat residence or two that you can stock.

Third on my list is **first-aid and medical supplies and capabilities; any tools and survival supplies** that enable you to not only handle the immediate three day scenario, but also the two or more years long haul scenario. Again remember that if you are mobile you will need to limit your tools, etc to multifunctional items that are easy to carry along with all your other stuff. If you are stationary, you have the luxury to really stock up on these items, including all the how-to books to go with them. Just remember that how-to books won't take the place of good hands on training.

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The **fourth** group of items you will need are going to be those **things you can use to barter or trade** for anything else you don't have. Again, being mobile will limit this type of item unless you have caches or stashes out there somewhere. However, if stationary over the long haul this list can be rather extensive. For this list you will need to think of what will become valuable when SHTF in a long term disaster or emergency. Basically these items will be goods, skills, livestock, garden produce or seeds and the like, that will be difficult to obtain in the post-disaster/emergency. I have accumulated a list of these things at the end of this letter. For the short term it will be more like MRE or freeze dried meals in a packet, first aid and that kind of stuff or some kind of currency if you must go mobile and cross the DMZ.

Fifth on my list is **some kind of currency that will still be viable in the post-SHTF world**. This rules out paper money, stocks and bonds and the like; which pretty much means precious and semi-precious metals and possibly gems. Actual currency coinage is viable, even if you can't get face value for it.

One must also remember that this "currency" will be rather difficult to lug around if you are mobile and will require an extremely strong, safe and hidden storage – in your retreat or cache. In a disaster or emergency you most likely *will not be able* to retrieve this stuff from a bank or ATM.

How much "currency" you will need, will depend on if you are mobile or stationary and just what else you already have to use in place of currency. IE: Your bartering stockpile.

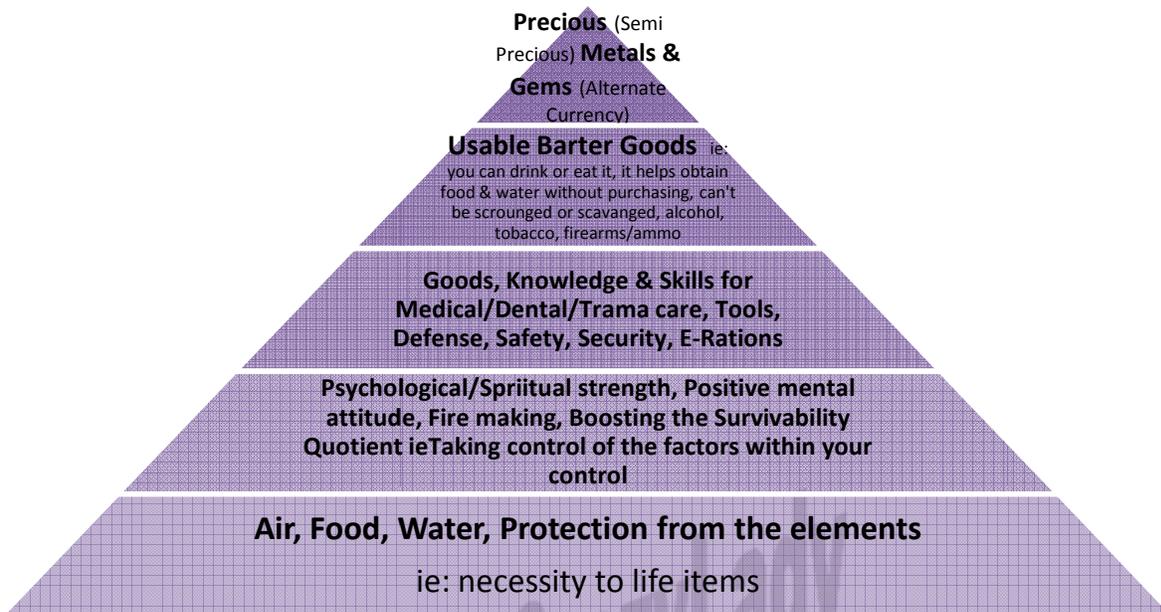
Also keep in mind that in a post-SHTF world this "currency" could change value; become worth much more than face value or stay at face value, to being worth less than face value, depending on what phase of the disaster/emergency you are in.

There are two excellent articles about this by David Morris at: <http://secretsofurbansurvival.com/forums/content.php?127-Gold-vs-Food-A-hierarchy-of-survival-needs> and <http://ezinearticles.com/?Hierarchy-of-Survival-Needs&id=3833953>

"No man who is not willing to help himself has any right to apply to his friends, or to the gods." Demosthenes

Hierarchy Recap

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**** Special Note:** The *Precious and Semi-precious Metals and Gems* discussed or visualized in the above two "Hierarchy" documents have several important "truths" that **must** be understood:

- They refer to *having the actual metal or gem in your hand*, NOT the paper certificate
- They are bulky, heavy and require extensive security
- They *don't* make *good* mobility items
- They are only viable for some specific crises and for only a small timeframe at the very beginning and or very end of the duration of these crises.
- Discussing this in an open environment, *where anyone can overhear*, puts **you and your household in danger** in the here and now.



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



The graphic itself models Maslow's Needs Hierarchy and is like the Food Pyramid in that it does *not* mean you eat *all* your grains for the first meal of the day or purchase all of that type of preparedness need first and then the next brick or food group second. Rather it means that for **each dollar you spend on preparedness needs, these are the recommended proportions of cents of that dollar that are to be devoted to that type of need.**

During any major crisis or "end of the world as we know it" scenario - IF:

- You can't eat it
- You can't drink it
- It won't assist one in gaining food and water without actually purchasing it (like rifles for hunting)
- It is easy to scavenge and or scrounge

It is NOT a viable barter and or trade item.

Top items for barter/trade: Alcohol; Tobacco; Firearms/Ammo

“Learning is not compulsory... neither is survival.”

W. Edwards Deming

There are two kinds of Necessities to Human Life:

- ❖ Physical
- ❖ Psychological

Physical needs are what the human body needs to keep functioning or what it needs to stay alive. These include: Air, Water, Food, Protection from the elements (shelter, clothing, protection from heat, cold, water, snow, etc.), Defense and Safety, along with physical Security.

The survival rule of thumb is:

- 3 days without water
- 3 weeks without food
- 3 hours without shelter/protection from the elements in extreme weather conditions (heat, cold, precipitation, wind)
- Air is a bit trickier, spanning minutes to hours.

Surviving without air greatly depends on age and health, as well as the situation. Young children have gone for up to an hour without air in cold water drowning situations. If humans are breathing in a low oxygen environment, such as when another gas is present, then the oxygen at some point moves from the blood to the lungs. In that case a human will usually pass out within 1 minute and die within another minute or two. If the person is simply cut off from air, as in under water or being strangled, they may take several minutes to pass out and several more to die. With a full breath they could last for 5-10 minutes -without one less.

Psychological needs are all those ‘mental’ and spiritual items we humans require to keep our minds and souls thriving. These include: Faith, Hope, Good Will, the Will to survive, the Arts (visual, tactile, music & touch) and the sense of Security. All of these items influence how we ‘feel’ and the depth of human feelings and our will to survive is something that our civilization has been struggling to measure and quantify for millennia, however it has ***never been measured in minutes, hours or days.***

If a situation is critical and one must choose between these items – ALWAYS – take care of the physical needs first, as without our physical human bodies we can’t even begin to address our psychological necessities to life.

As a Prepper we must distinguish and prioritize these two types of needs.

Think of the pyramid and devote your time, monies and efforts to each ‘block’ proportionally to the block size. Failure to do so may well cause injury or death.

*“We are driven by five genetic needs:
survival, love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun.”
William Glasser*

Potential Bartering Goods & Services List

This list is by no means all inclusive, complete or in any particular order. Other than what the resources seemed to point to as the most important are discussed first. You will find these non-explained items repeated in the alphabetical list.

Skills



Skills and knowledge may be one of the biggest assets when it comes to trade or barter post-SHTF. Medical skills: Doctors, EMT'S/Paramedics, nurses and other medically trained individuals, dentists, herbalists, homeopaths and veterinarians, throughout the entire crisis.

As the crisis lengthens: the ability to build shelters, garden, set up and run a distillery, hunting and trapping, collecting and purifying water, gun repair, reloading, blacksmith, butcher, bake, candle stick maker, cobbler and the like. Any skill filling a need for a number of people or that will be hard to obtain/replace over the long haul, would be an asset and a valuable trade commodity.

Gold and Silver, Precious/Semi-precious Metals & Gems



Just about everyone I talked to and at most of the preparedness/survival sites list this as a barter good. Yet these same sources all stated that these would most likely be of no use except in the early stages of the situation, or at the very end and not much use if mobile. The “currency” that will be most valuable are those coins minted before 1965. All the

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others will most likely be taken at face value or less – a dime is a dime. If you are lucky enough to purchase bullion bars or nuggets, then these may become handy, especially if currency is needed to move from place to place.

Ammunition & Firearms



In a long haul disaster/emergency anything to do with protection and hunting will become a much needed item. The problem here is what kind of person will you be bartering this with? Think in terms of large scale drug deals. The person you are trading with may just as soon shoot you and keep their barter good for later use, plus take yours too. This shouldn't stop you from bartering these items, this just means you must be very careful. If you are going to keep extra ammo, reloading tools and supplies, be sure they are for common rounds and are well hidden and secure.

Hand Tools



Hand tools such as saws, hammers, drills, knives, ax heads and handles, shovels, garden hoses and other tools will be in great demand in an urban or suburban location. These are the people who used to call someone to come and fix things and usually do not have more than the everyday household tools on hand, if that. Most rural folks are more or less self-reliant already and will most likely have all the standard tools and then some on hand any day and every day. What these rural people will need are large tools and or replacement parts to their specialized farm or ranch equipment.

Booze and Tobacco



The “Comfort Goods” of alcohol and tobacco will become very valuable items if the normal supply were suddenly stopped. Having a still or growing tobacco with a supply of rolling papers will most likely be easy to use for barter. Just keep in mind that the government has a long time history of controlling firearms, alcohol and tobacco items and even if their “watch dogs” are slow and scattered in a post-SHTF scenario, they will still be out there trying to do business as usual. Not to mention that if you “indulge” too much before the SHTF, you will appear on the government’s radar.

Combined List:

Now some of these items I personally challenge. I mean what are you doing bartering a generator if you can’t get fuel? If you can make fuel, ok that’s cool, but then this had better be a small generator, otherwise how on earth do you transport it? Or what happens when propane goes bye-bye? One will need more basic lanterns and cook items than a propane camping stove, etc. When it comes to the nuts, bolts, screws and nails, etc. – well I currently scrounge these all over the place so I really don’t see how these are a viable barter/trade goods.

Oh well, you decide; here is the combined Bartering Goods and Services list:

- "Survival-in-a-Can" type kits
- Ace bandages
- Air Pump (don't trade the pump trade the air)
- Alcohol (isopropyl/rubbing)
- Aluminum foil Reg. & Hvy. Duty
- Ammo 22 LR, 5.56 NATO, 7.62 NATO, 9mm, .45 PARA, 12 gauge shot shells in #2 buck, #4 buck, and assorted birdshots as well
- Ammo reloading equipment & supplies
- Animal traps
- Atomizers & spray bottles (cooling off, bathing, etc)
- Baby clothes
- Baby Diapers cloth, pins & plastic pants
- Baby formula (powered)
- Baby Supplies: formula, ointments, aspirin, eye droppers, aspirators (suction), etc
- Baby Wipes, oils, waterless and anti-bacterial soap
- Backpacks and Duffle bags
- Band aids (all sizes & shapes)
- Batteries – all kinds

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- battery chargers Solar
- Beer/Wine/Liquors
- Belts (expandable kinda like one size fits all)
- Bible, Beans, Bullion and Bullets
- Bicycles - Tires/tubes/pumps/chains, repair kits etc.
- Binoculars/scopes
- Blankets, pillows
- Bleach (plain, not scented: 4 to 6% sodium hypochlorite)
- Board Games, Cards, Dice
- Bolt cutters
- Books : Cook, recipe, etc
- Books, Pocket-sized Bibles, other spiritual books
- Books: Novels, entertainment; How-to; Food prep and storage; Gardening; Building; Candle-making; Soap making; Edible and medicinal wild plants; First aid; Basket-weaving; Leather making; Homeschooling books/lessons
- Books: Survival/wilderness Guides
- Boots, heavy duty all purpose (Wellington's)
- Bow saws, axes and hatchets & Wedges (also, honing oil)
- Bows and arrows
- Boy Scout Fieldbook (not handbook)
- Brushes & Combs for grooming
- Buckets
- Bug repellent
- Calculator Solar
- Camping Equipment: tents, sleeping bags, lanterns, cook stove, cook ware, etc.
- Candles
- Candy
- Canned and Dried Food
- Canned Fruits, Vegetables, Soups, stews, etc.
- Canning supplies (Jars/lids/wax)
- Canteens
- Carabineers, locking
- Carbon Monoxide Alarm (battery powered)
- Cast iron cookware; metal enamelware
- Cattle
- Caulk gun and silicone caulk
- Charcoal and Lighter fluid
- Chewing gum/candies
- Chickens
- Children's clothes (durable)
- Chocolate/Cocoa/Tang/Punch (water enhancers)
- Cigarettes, cigars, tobacco products and papers

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- Clothes pins (single-piece)/line/hangers
- Clothing sewing patterns
- Clubs, Bats & Slingshots
- Coffee
- Coffee filters: paper can be used as a basic water filter; reusable for coffee
- Coleman's Pump Repair Kit: 1(800) 835-3278
- Condoms
- Containers for storage: ammo, fuel, food, water, etc.
- Cooking Oil
- Cook stoves (Propane, Coleman, Kerosene)
- Coolers (ice chests)
- Cots and Inflatable mattresses
- creosote
- Disposable gloves
- Dogs, working
- Drink flavors (powdered)
- Duct Tape
- Dynamite, caps, detonation cord
- Ear muffs
- Eating & Cooking utensils
- Enamelware (plates, bowls, pots, pans, coffee pot, etc)
- Eye Glasses – sun, reading
- Eye glass repair kits
- Eye Protection goggles
- Feminine Hygiene/Hair care/Skin products
- Fire extinguishers
- Fire grate for open fire cooking
- Fire Starters: matches, Flint & steel, Magnesium, lighters
- Firewood, Seasoned
- First aid kits, Snake Bit Kits, Dental Emergency Kits & supplies, how-to
- Fishing hooks, line, flies and lures, weights, bobbers, sinkers, supplies/tools, etc.
- Flashlights - Windup (cranking)
- Flashlights, light sticks, lanterns and spare parts
- Flip-flops
- Food for Animal, Pet, Livestock
- Baking soda and powder
- Food: Flour, yeast & salt, sugar
- Food: Garlic, spices, pepper, vinegar, baking supplies
- Food: Rice, beans, wheat
- Food: Tuna Fish (in oil)
- Fuel: containers (Plastic or Metal): Gasoline, diesel, etc
- Fuel: Propane canisters for camping equipment

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- Fuel: Diesel, kerosene, lamp oil, propane, gas, Lighter Fluid, charcoal, firewood
- Garbage bags
- Garbage cans, Plastic or metal (med to lg)
- Garden seeds (Non-hybrid and open-pollinated)
- Garden tools and supplies
- Generators, associated replacement parts
- Gloves (work/garden/winter)
- Glue (all kinds)
- Glue, nails, nuts, bolts, screws, etc.
- Goats
- God, Grub, Gold, Guns, Goods and Ground
- Gold and silver: precious & semi-precious metals and gems
- Graham crackers, saltines, pretzels, Trail mix/Jerky
- Grain Grinder (hand-operated, Non-electric)
- Guns, Ammunition, Pepper Spray, Knives, Clubs, Bats and Slingshots
- Hand pumps and siphons (for water and for fuels)
- Hand-operated kitchen tools: can openers, hand egg beaters, whisks; grain/coffee grinder
- hand-tools Non-electric
- Harmonica; guitar
- Hatchets/axes
- Hats – hard/helmet protection
- Hats and cotton neckerchiefs/scarves
- Hats: Broad Brim, knit
- Honey/Syrups/white, brown sugars
- Horses; bridle, halter, saddle, etc.
- Hunting Knives
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Insulated ice chests/coolers
- Journals, Diaries & Scrapbooks – to keep a record for history
- Kerosene heater
- Knitting needles/crochet hooks
- Knives - Fillet
- Knives & Sharpening tools: files, stones, steel
- Lamp Oil, Wicks, mantels, Lamps
- Lantern Hangers
- Lantern Mantles: Aladdin, Coleman, etc
- Laundry Detergent
- Levi bib overalls (kinda one size fits all)
- Light Sticks
- Lip balm
- Liquor
- Lotion

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- Lumber
- MACE or pepper/bear spray
- Magnifying glasses
- Mantles: Aladdin, Coleman, etc. (Without these items, longer-term lighting is difficult.)
- Manual Can Openers
- Matches (preferably strike-anywhere)
- Material, bolts of denim, flannel, twill, cotton, etc.
- Medical & Dental Kits/Supplies
- Men's Hygiene: Shampoo, Toothbrush/paste, Mouthwash/floss, nail clippers, etc
- Milk - Powdered & Condensed, evaporated (unsweetened)
- Mirror, signaling
- Mirrors, vanity
- Mosquito coils/repellent sprays/creams
- Mouse/Rat/Ant/Cockroach traps & poison: d-Con, Mouse Prufe II, Roach Killer
- Nail clippers
- Nails and screws
- Napkins, Towels, Handkerchiefs - cloth
- Needles (cloth/leather/canvas)
- OTC – aspirin, all doses infant to adult
- OTC medicines, all doses infant to adult
- padlocks
- Paper plates/cups/utensils
- Paper writing
- Paraffin wax
- Pencils and sharpeners
- Pencils, paper, note pads
- Pigs
- Plastic bags (larger sizes)
- Plastic sheet
- Playing cards; dice for games
- Popcorn, Peanut Butter, Nuts
- Portable Toilets, accessories
- PVC pipe
- Rabbits
- Radio – hand crank or solar
- Rain gear, rubberized boots, etc.
- Razors
- reflectors-- put on trees to mark known range
- Roll-on Window Insulation Kits
- Rope, Twine , string, cordage, nylon, repelling, parachute, etc
- Rubber bands
- Rubbing alcohol

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- Safety Pins (all sizes)
- salt blocks for hunting or livestock
- Salt, spices
- Scissors
- Scissors, fabrics, buttons, zippers, hooks and like sewing supplies
- Screen Patches, glue, nails, screws, nuts and bolts
- Sharpening Stones for knives, axes, saws, etc & honing oil
- Shaving supplies (razors and creams, talc, after-shave)
- sheets of galvanized steel or tin
- Shirts, flannel, durable like chambray
- Shoes and laces
- Silicon spray
- Simple water filters
- Skills
- Sleeping bags and blankets/pillows/mats
- Small metal pots or bowls
- Snare wire, traps
- Soap – waterless anti-bacterial soap; liquid, bar, powder
- Socks, Underwear, T-shirts, etc.
- Soy sauce, vinegar, bouillons/gravy/soup base
- steel safety plate ("diamond pattern")
- Storage buckets w/lids
- Sugar
- Super glue (clear bandage)
- Surveyor's tape
- Sweeteners: Honey, Syrups, white & brown sugars, and other sweeteners
- Tar Paper
- Tarps/plastic sheeting
- Tarps/stakes/twine/nails/rope/spikes
- Teas
- Thermal underwear (Tops and bottoms)
- Toilet paper
- Toilet Paper, Kleenex, paper towels
- toilet seats
- Tools: hand non-electric
- Tools: kitchen non-electric
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- trip devices for perimeter alerts (light sticks, horn blast, lighting (solar))
- Tuna Fish
- Tweezers
- U.S. History Documents: Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights

- Utility knives
- Vegetable oil (for cooking)
- Vegetable seeds (heirloom or open pollinated)
- Velcro
- Vitamins & supplements
- Wagons and carts
- Washboards, Mop Bucket w/wringer (for Laundry)
- Water Filters/Purifiers and tablets
- Wine/Liquor
- Winter coats and rain gear
- Woolen clothing, scarves/ear-muffs/mittens
- Work boots, belts, Levis and durable shirts
- Writing paper/pads/pencils/solar calculators
- Yarn and thread
- Zip lock baggies

“The more you depend on forces outside yourself, the more you are dominated by them.”
Harold Sherman

Keep On Preppin !

TNT

A 50 Something, Homesteading, Prepper ;-}