



20 COMMON SURVIVAL ITEMS, 20 *UNCOMMON* ALTERNATIVE USES

by Dan Stevens - ModernSurvivalOnline.com

20 common survival items,
20 *uncommon* alternative uses

...that's 400 uses in total!

by Dan Stevens

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Last but not least, do not use the advice below in any way which breaks the law or hurts someone.

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One of the most important skills any prepper should have is **improvisation**, that is, knowing what to do without certain items in disastrous situations. Why? Because when SHTF, if anything can go wrong, it probably will:

- **you may be separated from [your bug out bag](#) or your get home bag...**
- one of the tools [inside your EDC](#) may stop working (such as your lighter)
- **you may be robbed from your gear**
- you may get to your bug out location, only to find out it's already been looted and that your entire stockpile is gone

A lot of things can go wrong, which is why redundancy is such an important thing when it comes to survival. We need several ways to start a fire, several ways to communicate, several ways to keep ourselves warm.

One of the way to get ourselves out of predicaments is to use our tools and gear for other purposes than the intended ones. As you are about to see, some of the most popular survival items are also the ones that have dozens of survival uses... so let's not waste any more time and see what they are...

Dan



#1. Baking Soda

Baking soda can be used for a lot more than just baking and it's been a long-time favorite of preppers, particularly of those who prefer bugging, especially since it has an indefinite shelf life, even after you open the packaging.

The other survival uses of baking soda:

#1. To put out a small fire. Simply toss it over the flames and, because of the carbon dioxide it will release, the fire will eventually die out.

#2. To make homemade toothpaste. It's no secret that having tooth issues post-collapse is going to be a huge challenge. By keeping your teeth clean, you avoid cavities and A LOT of pain. Keep in mind that, while toothpaste has an expiration date (because of the fluoride inside it which starts to degrade), baking soda doesn't.

#3. It can be used as an antacid to relieve heartburn. By the way, did you know that your pancreas produces sodium bicarbonate on its own¹? The way it works is, it prevents stomach acid from accumulating in the esophagus (which could cause damage to it in the long run).

How would you use it? You simply add it to a glass of water and drink it. Though I am not a doctor, I can tell you that MayoClinic.org recommends taking one dose an hour after lunch and another one after 2 more hours². The recommended dose is a quarter to half a teaspoon of baking soda for kids between 6 and 12 years old and between 1 and 2.5 teaspoons for adults, though you should consult your doctor before taking it.

#4. As a cleaning agent. Whether you ran out of soap post-collapse or you simply don't want to use regular soap because it irritates your hands, know you can use baking soda to clean a variety of things:

- dishes
- your bathtub
- the kitchen sink
- grills and ovens you use for outdoor cooking
- children's toys
- clothes, curtains
- furniture
- brushes, combs
- and even your [survival knife or pocket knife](#)

#5. To wash your hair. Simply mix it with water or with water and your current shampoo. Needless to say, hygiene is a huge issue post-collapse as head lice and other parasites can become a problem in your household.

Not only that, but baking soda can actually help remove the oil and other substances that accumulate due to the use of regular shampoos. These are full of chemicals such as sodium Lauryl, diethanolamine and parabens³.

#6. To clean corroded batteries. Since you're probably gonna need your batteries post-collapse, know you can use baking soda to get rid of acidic corrosion.

The solution needs to be pretty thick, though. You need 3 parts of baking soda for one part of water.

#7. To remove and prevent odors. If your carpet smells bad, sprinkle some baking soda on it on the area, let it sit for 20 minutes and then vacuum.

You can also sprinkle baking soda at the bottom of ash-trays, litter boxes, trash cans and even your fridge to prevent bad smells. The trash can usage is of particular importance in a post-collapse world where trash will be a problem if you can neither burn it in your backyard nor take it to the dump.

#8. Use it to exfoliate your skin. Mix 3 parts of this ingredient with 3 parts of water and scrub.

#9. Use it to make shampoo. Water, apple cider vinegar and baking soda.

#10. Mix salt and baking soda to keep ants away.

#11. Mix with water and use it to relieve bee stings. I too was stung by a bee a long time ago and all I can tell you is... it hurts!

#12. Use it to remove bad odors. Post-collapse, smells can attract critters as well as looters and that's the last thing you want.

#13. Put 1 tablespoon of baking soda into the water you use to boil eggs so they peel easily.

#14. Make a paste of baking soda and salt to scrub your contact lens and make them crystal clear.

#15. Use it to unclog a pipe. Add one cup of baking soda mixed with 1 cup of vinegar down the pipe. After 5 minutes, add 1 gallon of boiling water. It also works to unclog a toilet.

#16. Use it as deodorant under your arm pits. This may sound like a silly idea now but, post collapse, hygiene is going to be crucial.

#17. Use it to remove stains (including oil stains).

#18. Though I don't have any proof, baking soda is said to remove venom from a jelly fish bite.

#19. As rain repellent. Just rub it on your windshield with a wet cloth.

#20. Remove odors from shoes. Simply sprinkle some inside each shoe.



[#2. 550 Paracord](#)

[Parachute cord](#) is a lightweight yet incredibly strong rope that was originally used as suspension line for parachutes. The most common one is type III cord or 550 Paracord because **it can withstand up to 550 pounds of weight.** That's more than enough to hold your entire weight when you're trying **to climb up or down an obstacle or a tree** or even to **pull someone out of a body of water** such as a flash flood.

Oops, it looks like I've already given you a few of its survival uses, but don't worry, there are plenty more:

#1. To secure items in a bug out scenario. For example, you may want to tie them to your car if your trunk is full or you can tie them from a tree branch so bears and other people don't get to your gear.

You may also want have to secure items from your bug out bag. For example, you may keep your hiking boots attached to your survival backpack using Paracord so that, when it happens, you can grab everything with one hand and just go. You'll later have time to change whatever shoes you're wearing with your hiking boots.

#2. As a makeshift belt. You can't run as fast if your pants keep dropping.

#3. As a clothes line. During a prolonged bug out, with very few spare clothes, you need to keep washing the ones you wear in order to stay clean. Carrying a clothes line in your bug out bag or INCH bag is impractical but Paracord will do the job.

Warning! Avoid cutting Paracord into pieces as you use it for various purposes. You'll end up with lots of small pieces you can't put back together. Try using it without cutting it.

#4. As dental floss. You first have to remove the inner threads, then use *those* to clean your teeth. Personally, my teeth are too crowded as even most brands of floss don't work for me, but maybe it'll work for you.

#5. To tie someone up. In a WROL (without the rule of law) situation, it's very likely that you'll be attacked by various individuals. Depending on the circumstances, you may want to tie them up.

- #6. To tie a tarp or a poncho to poles or trees to make your wilderness shelter.
- #7. To make a tourniquet to stop blood loss.
- #8. To lock a door or a window.
- #9. To replace a zipper pull.
- #10. To hang an emergency light over a campsite.
- #11. To help you cross a river.
- #12. To pull someone out of the water. Just keep in mind that Paracord is very light so, if you're going to throw it to someone who's about to drown, you're going to need to attach a weight on its end. Something to keep in mind and even practice.
- #12. To make a hammock.
- #13. As a fishing line.
- #14. To replace torn boot laces. By the way, you may want to get [these amazing shoe laces](#) that are also designed to quickly start a fire with built-in ferro rods.
- #15. To make a rifle sling. You're gonna need at least 30 feet to make a good one.
- #16. To make the bow used in the bow drill method for starting a fire. By the way, did you know you can get bow drill kits off Amazon? Of course, you can also make a real bow to hunt with.
- #17. For towing a car. Useful if you're stuck in mud or snow and you have a prepper friend who's willing to use his bug out vehicle to help you out.
- #18. To make a dog collar or a dog handle. Your pets are going to be of immense help post-SHTF so it's good to prepare with their needs in mind.
- #19. To make a stretcher to carry a wounded person. You will need two long and sturdy sticks, then run Paracord between the two.
- #20. To hang items from your belt. This way you won't have to carry so much stuff on your back and put less pressure on it.

You can get some kick-ass Paracord survival kit [right here](#) so you always have some handy.



#3. Trash Bags

The main purpose of trash bags for survival is, of course, to keep it in one place and make sure there's as little smell coming out as possible. The smell of food can attract both rats and hungry humans.

Still, there're a number of alternative uses for trash bags, including:

#1. To be used as flotation devices. If you have to cross a body of water such as a river, you can fill them with air, tie them up with duct tape or [Paracord](#) and put them inside your backpack or even attach them to your body. If, for some reason, you're being pulled down in the water, these trash bags may save your life.

#2. Use them as a second pair of socks. Simply put your feet inside them and then everything inside your boots or running shoes.

#3. Keeping some of the items inside your bug out bag waterproof. You can put anything, from duct tape to flashlights and spare clothes.

#4. Use them for a hat. Who says it'll be sunny when you bug out (except for those prepper reality shows and documentaries)?

#5. Use them to carry water. Who says you need a condom to do it?

#6. To collect water from tree leaves. Simply cover a branch with a plastic bag and the perspiration will fall right into the bag for you to drink. More bags means more water.

#7. As a camping shower. Though a real one is much better, you can fill a trash bag with water, hang it from a tree, then make a small hole in it at the bottom.

#8. To make a tourniquet. Lots of items can be used to make one and a trash bag is no exception.

#9. To make a solar still. Useful when you've run out of drinkable water.

- #10. As thermal underwear. I'm not saying it's ideal, but when you're in danger of hypothermia...
- #11. To make shelter or to better insulate your existing one from the elements.
- #12. To make a pillow by filling a trash bag with leaves.
- #13. To put clothes contaminated after a nuclear meltdown or explosion. You might want to take a long shower shortly after and use lots of soap.
- #14. As flotation devices (maybe you want to cross a river).
- #15. You can put them over tree leaves to catch their perspiration. Free drinkable water.
- #16. As thermal underwear.
- #17. Fill them with leaves and use them as pillows.
- #18. As portable shower. Simply fill them with water, let it warm up in the sun, hang them from a branch, then poke a few holes at the bottom.
- #19. As part of a solar water still.
- #20. Use as socks to keep your feet dry inside boots.



[#4. Bandanas](#)

There are numerous survival uses for a bandana, including:

- #1. As a tourniquet (obviously).
- #2. To stop bleeding, by applying direct pressure on a wound.
- #3. To gather dew. Simply tie a couple of bandanas to your legs, then walk around through the grass. Once they're soaked up, pour the water into a recipient and repeat until you have enough to drink.
- #4. To filter water, though you will still need something such as a [lifestraw](#) or unscented bleach to purify it by getting rid of most pathogens.
- #5. To clean your gun.
- #6. To dry yourself to avoid hypothermia. If you're going to use it as a towel, you need to keep it dry so I advise you keep it inside a Ziploc bag.
- #7. To forage. Easily gather and carry wild edibles.
- #8. As a dust mask.
- #9. As a hair tie. It'll be easier to bug out with your hair not getting in the way.
- #10. As an arm sling. You need to place a rock inside it, then throw it to either hunt something or protect yourself from someone.
- #11. To mark a trail. Simply cut it into pieces using your survival knife or your edc knife and hang those pieces in trees as you move along the trail. Useful in order to get back if you get lost.
- #12. As cordage (by cutting it into strips).

#13. To protect yourself from tear gas during a riot. To make it really effective, you should soak it in lemon juice first, though some say that doesn't help. Also, putting it around your mouth will also protect you from ash in case of a volcanic eruption.

#14. Soak it in water to wash yourself.

#15. Open a jar that's stuck.

#16. To temporarily fix a leaking hose.

#17. As a salad spinner.

#18. To make a snare.

#19. Soak it in water, then use it to send smoke signals.

#20. As a weapon sling.

#5. Glass Canning Jars

We all know canning jars are crucial for canning purposes because, in a post-collapse world, there's no way of getting new ones when the old ones break. That's why the more the better. Now, if you'll happen to have more than a few of them on hand, know that you can use them for the following purposes:

#1. As first aid kit containers, because they are water proof.

#2. As lanterns. Simply put a candle inside and rest assured the wind will not put it off.

#3. To store food such as condiments.

#4. To bury stuff underground. The jars will do a great job at protecting the items inside.

#5. To store dried medicinal herbs.

#6. As self-defense weapons. You'd need to break them into shards, then pick a good one to defend yourself. Careful when you break them, though, you may want to use [gloves](#). You should also be careful about smaller shards, a.k.a. glass dust.

#7. To make an arrow head. As long we're talking about breaking the jars, why not use the shards that look like arrow heads as arrow heads? You simply have to attach a triangular shard to a stick with duct tape and you've got yourself quite the hunting spear.

#8. To [start a fire](#). You'll have to fill that jar with water and then focus the sun rays over the tinder you're trying to spark.

#9. To grow plants. Some of the plants you can grow inside include Oregano, Basil and rosemary. The sweet part is that if you have to bug out, you can just take them with you inside your bug out vehicle (though you may want to use bubble wrap to make sure they don't break along the way).

#10. To store dehydrated food, not just canned food.

#11. As part of a solar still to distil sea water. The mason jar can be the container in which the clean water eventually ends up.



#12. To make oil or kerosene lamps.

#13. To bake.

#14. To make fruit vodka. Sounds like a great [comfort drink](#) post-collapse.

#15. To keep your sewing supplies in one place. Post-collapse, I have a feeling things like needles and scissors are going to be hard to find and you certainly can't make them on your own.

#16. To store your DIY antiseptic ointment. You're going to need something sterile to keep the mixture in.

#17. To hide things in from looters. Fill up the jar with something nobody would want to steal (such as beans, then hide the valuable inside).

#18. To make a salad from your wild edibles. Dandelion greens, clovers, ground ivy, malva, throw them in there, add the dressing and stir really well.

#19. To make apple cider vinegar at home.

#20. To throw at an attacker in self-defense. Any heavy object will do, of course.



#6. Aluminum Foil

- #1. To start a fire. You will also need cotton and a battery.
- #2. To cook on hot coals. Simply wrap the meat inside aluminum foil and then put it on hot coals or on a hot rock.
- #3. To make a solar oven. The aluminum will redirect the sun rays towards the center of the cardboard box that you use.
- #4. To make a Faraday Cage. No one really knows whether it will work in an EMP but you can wrap your electronics in several layers of heavy-duty foil to improve the odds. The devices should first be wrapped in paper cloth so they don't make direct contact with the foil.
- #5. To signal for help. You can cut the foil into strips and use it as a flag.
- #6. To mark a trail path. Just like with bandanas or colored duct tape, you can cut strips of aluminum foil and hang them in trees or put them inside bushes to find your way back.
- #7. To make a frying pan for outdoor cooking. Wrap the foil in
- #8. To improve antenna reception. Simply wrap the antenna in aluminum foil and notice an instant improvement in reception quality.
- #9. To mark a trail. Just cut some thin strips and conceal them on branches to find your way back.
- #10. To reflect light in case your home is confronted with a heat wave. Just wrap cardboard with it and place it over windows.
- #11. As fishing lure.
- #12. To make a solar oven.

#13. Keep 2 and 4 legged predators away by wrapping food and anything else that might give odor in tin foil.

#14. Keep things like matches dry by wrapping them in aluminum foil.

#15. Use it to block the wind from putting out the fire in your alcohol stove.

#16. Use it to give more light to indoor plants and help them grow.

#17. Wrap it around trees to protect them from pests over the winter.

#18. Use it to grow seeds by lining a box with foil, poking holes at the bottom for drainage, then add the soil and seeds.

#19. Put it underneath your sleeping bag to stay dry.

#20. Use it to protect fruit trees from birds by wrapping them with fishing line that has strips of aluminum foils attached to it.



#7. PVC Pipes

#1. To cache survival items in the ground. Simply put whatever it is you want to store inside, screw to fittings over the caps and expect to find your stuff intact even after 20 years.

#2. To aid you in collecting rainwater. Whether you're looking to install a rainwater harvesting system at your home or bug out location or to improvise one in the wild, a PVC pipe can collect the water gathering on your roof or on the tarp or aluminum foil you use to catch water and direct it to a container of your choosing.

#3. To carry your valuables. We already said you can put various things inside PVC pipes but who says you have to bury them? No one will ever think of looking inside PVC pipes to find things that are worth stealing.

#4. As a self-defense weapon. Whether empty or filled with items, this can be a veritable self-defense weapon that no government can confiscate.

#5. As a blow gun.

#6. As a fishing rod.

#7. To carry water. I'm not saying you'll ever have to but it's good to know that you can.

#8. As a livestock feeder.

#9. To make an improvised stretcher.

#10. As a temporary splinting device for a broken arm or leg.

#11. To store water. You will need a thicker one so you can store more of it, of course.

#12. For well casing.

#13. As a quiver for your arrows.

#14. To make a longbow.

#15. A gun case or a gun holster.

#16. To make a snare. This video will show you how: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tZabOOKZlg8>

#17. To make a mouse trap. You're also going to need a bucket. This video will show you how: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKs0nAEPMOI>

#18. As a walking stick. No point in buying a trekking pole when you can improvise.

#19. As a pole for your wilderness shelter.

#20. As a primitive shovel (they used something similar in the T.V. series Lost).



#8. Tampons

#1. To stop bleeding.

#2. To start a fire. As long as it's dry, it makes great tinder, so make sure you keep them in Mylar bags inside your survival bags.

#3. As blow dart fletching.

#4. To filter water.

#5. To prevent blisters. Just put them inside your shoe over your blister and cover them with duct tape like you would with a wound.

#6. To make a pillow (though you'd need a lot of them).

#7. As a fishing bobber.

#8. As earplugs.

#9. As candlewick

#10. To clean your firearm.

#11. To insulate your survival shelter.

#12. To stop nosebleeds

#13. As dental cotton.

#14. To clean out your dog's ears.

#15. To remove mildew. Soak tampons in bleach, put them near the spot, let them sit for a few hours and then rinse with hot water.

#16. Keep rabbits away from your garden by soaking them in distilled white vinegar and placing them in plastic containers. You'll need to drill a small hole so the smell releases slowly.

#17. To tie things up. You can use the string at the end for that.

#18. As an improvised [LifeStraw](#). Ok, so sipping water through a tampon won't remove pathogens but if you think the water doesn't need purification, a tampon can do a good job filtering it.

#19. To plug bullet holes.

#20. To treat a dental abscess.

#9. Floss

Floss is going to be one of the most important items to have post-collapse. It's one thing to use toothpaste (or the DIY version made using baking soda) but floss removes food from places your toothbrush just can't.

Even better, it has numerous alternative uses, such as:

- #1. To tie things together (especially since it's pretty strong).
- #2. To stitch wounds. It's probably best you get a professional to do it or learn yourself.
- #3. As shoe laces.
- #4. To stitch torn clothes. They won't look prettier but who cares?
- #5. As an improvised belt.
- #6. To make a bow for either the bow drill method or for hunting.
- #7. To make a snare.
- #8. To secure your tarp from a pole or a PVC pipe.
- #9. To make a rope (by braiding the strands together).
- #10. To make a spear by tying your knife or something else that's sharp to a pole.
- #11. To hang up food or gear to keep it out of reach of certain pests, thieves.
- #12. To tie down your trunk lid. Yes, it should hold.
- #13. To make a net.
- #14. As trip wire (because it's really thin, making it hard to see).
- #15. To cut food.
- #16. To secure extra pouches to your [survival backpack](#) (if it's not MOLLE compatible).
- #17. To make snow shoe bindings.
- #18. As clothesline.
- #19. To repair your reading glasses. Just run it through the hole where the screw was.
- #20. To seal leaky pipes.



#10. Zipper Bags

What would preppers do without Ziploc bags? Here's 20 good reasons why you should get them:

#1. To waterproof the items inside your bug out bag. Things like batteries, fishing hooks and band aids will be worthless when you need them most if soaked with water.

#2. Use them as socks to keep your feet dry and prevent hypothermia.

#3. To start a fire by filling one up with water and using it as a lens to focus the Sun's rays in one point.

#4. To gather water in an emergency situation.

#5. To collect water from tree leaves by securing them to branches and letting the leaves perspire.

#6. To knead dough without getting your fingers dirty and sticky.

#7. To make a cold compress by filling it with ice cubes.

Remember that Ziploc bags, while waterproof, are NOT puncture proof. If you're using them to store your first aid supplies, make sure you put them in a sturdy box.

#8. As a funnel. Simply cut one of the corners or poke a hole near the bottom.

#9. To store smelly laundry and even shoes as you're bugging out.... or maybe even diapers.

#10. As a hat to protect from rain.

#11. To insulate shelter from the ground.

#12. To help create a wilderness shelter. Who else can say they have windows on their shelter?

#13. As gloves to keep your hands warm or if you have to pick up something you don't really want to touch with your bare hands.

#14. To make a water filter.

#15. To turn them into a rope. This video will show you how:

<http://https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KiZXRK5h44>

#16. To cover a wound. Use duct tape to secure the bag to your skin.

#17. To make a primitive balance scale. Two identical Ziploc bags tied to the two ends of a stick and you're done.

#18. To heat water. You'd have to paint them black on the outside, first, though.

#19. For making blocks of ice.

#20. Use them to marinate food inside.



#11. Tarps

We all know a tarp is great to make shelter in the wilderness (although, truth be told, it won't protect you that well from the elements) but what other uses can we think of?

#1. To gather rainwater.

#2. On the floor of your survival shelter or your tent to provide (extra) insulation.

#3. As a container. To carry wood, for instance.

#4. To cover a leaking roof.

#5. Put one on top of a pile of wood to allow it to dry faster.

#6. To carry an injured person.

#7. To carry dry wood. If you're going to build a fire or make shelter in the wild, you're gonna need lots of.

#8. To provide shade for your survival garden.

#9. Use it as an emergency blanket to keep yourself or someone else warm.

#10. Hang a black tarp from a window in a post-collapse situation to avoid

#11. To cover the windshield of your car to prevent it from freezing.

#12. To cover your plants during cold, winter nights.

#13. To build the Kochanski super shelter

#14. You can poke a lot of holes in it and use it as a net.

#15. To make a hammock.

#16. To cover your preps on a car trailer.

#17. You can use this to sail a small boat.

#18. Use it to butcher an animal.

#19. Covering a leaky roof.

#20. As a stretcher to carry a wounded person.



#12. Socks

Socks are mandatory in any bug out bag. **Keep them waterproof by placing them in Ziploc bags** and, if need be, you can also use them for other purposes such as:

- #1. To carry things inside them.
- #2. To filter water (or snow because, as you know, eating snow is no good for you).
- #3. As a towel (after you cut it with your survival knife)
- #4. As an ice pack (you just fill it with ice).
- #5. As a bandage.
- #6. A sweater for your dog (provided he's small).
- #7. As a cup insulator, to keep your drink hot longer (you'll have to cut the sock the match your cup and even cut a small hole in it for the cup's handle).
- #8. As compression bands if you have wrist problems.
- #9. For lashing things together, of course.
- #10. As gaiters for when you're bugging out.
- #11. As masks (fill with lemon juice and cover your mouth tightly with the sock to minimize the effect of tear gas if trapped inside a riot). Caveat: some say lemon juice and apple cider vinegar don't work against tear gas but you can still use socks as dust masks.
- #12. For self-defense if you fill them with rocks or coins.
- #13. As gloves (obviously). To do it, simply cut the top half of the sock, and then a small hole about an inch from the top for your thumb to fit.
- #14. To keep your tarp (you will need a longer sock for this).

#15. To dry wet kindling (put twigs inside sock and squeeze them so the moisture is absorbed by the cotton or wool sock).

#16. Lint from cotton socks can be used as tinder.

#17. As bandages to stop bleeding wounds.

#18. As tourniquets.

#19. As pillows (stuff a bunch of them with leaves).

#20. Put a bar of soap inside a sock, tie it in the middle and use it to better scrub when showering (and make your soap last longer). This works well to keeping your soap clean.



#13. Pantyhose

- #1. As a dust mask.
- #2. To dry herbs, onions and peppers.
- #3. As a tourniquet.
- #4. To filter water.
- #5. To prevent blisters when you're bugging out.
- #6. To sprout seeds.
- #7. To catch really small fish by creating something akin to a net.
- #8. To keep those really small fish until you're ready to use them as bait.
- #9. To catch crabs (put rotten fish or chicken skin inside the pantyhose and they'll get stuck when trying to get it).
- #10. As cordage, but you should first twist the two legs together to make it stronger.
- #11. As a sling for your arm.

Warning! Avoid wearing pantyhose when dealing with fire.

- #12. As an emergency fan belt for your car.
- #13. As a mosquito net.
- #14. As tea bags or even to make coffee.
- #15. As a pouch to carry stuff (many of the uses are the same with the ones for socks).
- #16. Put it over your car's air filter to remove large particles of ash in case of volcanic eruptions.

#17. To store potatoes. Add a potato, make a knot, add another one, make another knot and so on. Whenever you need one, use scissors to cut the bottom one and leave the rest intact.

#18. Wear them to keep warm and prevent insect bites while bugging out.

#19. Making a trot line by cutting and sewing together several pairs of pantyhose.

#20. To prevent blisters during a prolonged bug out on foot. You will need them.

#14. Toothpicks

#1. As tinder (though you will have to shred the toothpicks first).

#2. As fishing bobbers.

#3. As needle to sew your clothes (needles might be hard to find post collapse and there's no way you can make your own).

#4. As candles.

#5. To teach math to your kids (in a post-apocalyptic scenario, your kids will have to be homeschooled).

#6. To reset your phone or other devices by reaching those tiny reset buttons.

#7. To put really small amounts of glue.

#8. To check if something you're baking is ready.

#9. As a self-defense weapon to poke someone in the eye or even trying to stick it inside the ear or neck.

#10. To fix a leak in a hose (just stick the toothpick inside the hole if the hole is not too wide).

#11. To remove garlic cloves from a marinade.

#12. Stick them to the end of your duct tape to mark the end and make it easier to use.

#13. When boiling water, you can place it between the pot and the lid to allow steam to escape.

#14. Use it instead of a golf tee to fix a loose door hinge.

#15. As darts if you're willing to make a toothpick dart gun like this one:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XF33YO9OuME> .

#16. Clean the small spaces inside certain items, such as button crevices.

#17. To straighten the stem of a plant if it folded over.

#18. Can be used as brushes by your kids to paint post-collapse.



#19. To clean a showerhead.

#20. Check to see if a plant needs to be watered by inserting a toothpick inside the soil and seeing whether or not it is wet.



#15. Belts

The cool thing about leather or canvas belts is that they don't look tactical. In addition, you won't look weird wearing one because everyone does. By contrast, having some of the other survival items on you may make you look suspicious.

I bet you can probably already imagine some of the alternative uses for belts. Here they are:

#1. As tourniquets.

#2. To tie someone up.

#3. To secure things into together such as gardening tools or firewood.

#4. To hang things from a tree branch to keep them away from animals.

#5. To help someone climb a wall or getting them out of a pit by throwing them the belt and dragging them towards you.

#6. To secure a knife to a pole when making a spear.

#7. To sharpen a knife instead of using a belt strap.

#8. As a [self-defense weapon](#). You can whip or choke someone with it. Here's a video demonstrating a few moves: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8dWFGuFOil>

#9. To make a stretcher using two long and thick sticks and several belts.

#10. To climb a tree. You throw it over a branch you wouldn't normally be able to reach with just your hands.

#11. You can really get creative here. For instance, you can tie two belts together to jump rope. One way I used one a couple of weeks ago was for a knee-pain relief exercise where I would sit on the ground with both legs stretched, then I would use a belt to slowly bring one knee towards my chest using a belt to slowly pull it with both hands while the foot would press on the belt.

#12. You can wrap a belt around the handle of a bucket to protect your hand if the thing is heavy.

#13. As clothesline to dry your clothes in the woods.

#14. As a leash for your dog. Particularly if you're bugging out in a hurry using your vehicle, someone is gonna have to keep an eye on Lucky while you're driving as he's probably going to be very agitated.

#15. You can hide things on them by gluing them on the inside of your belt.

#16. As sling for your arm.

#17. To help you carry someone who's injured.

#18. As part of a pulley to raise heavy objects.

#19. To make a leather book strap for the survival books you've stored for the Apocalypse.

#20. You can use it as a maternity belt in a post-apocalyptic world to straighten your posture when pregnant.



#16. Wood Ash

The composition of ash (phosphates, calcium carbonate, potassium hydroxide etc.) makes it useful in a variety of scenarios. I bet you didn't know these uses:

- #1. Use it to protect your garden from certain bugs.
- #2. Put it in a container for your chickens to roam in.
- #3. Treat blisters by mixing ash with coconut oil.
- #4. As camouflage.
- #5. Add ash on acidic soil to help plants such as garlic and onions grow.
- #6. To put out a fire.
- #7. Add a layer of ash over your plants during winter to prevent them from freezing.
- #8. Applying small amounts of ash on an open wound because it irritates the wound and causes to scar, but please be very careful when inserting foreign things into your body. Better to consult a doctor on this one.
- #9. Use it as algae deterrent.
- #10. Throw ash over a colony of ants to force it to relocate.
- #11. Use it to keep moths away.
- #12. Use it to melt ice faster.
- #13. Make lye water, a great sanitizer for your floors, windows and even clothes. Another way is to put a damp rag inside the ash.
- #14. You can brush your teeth with ash.

#15. To preserve fruits and veggies. Dig a hole in the ground, fill it with ash and produce, then cover it with wood. Make sure the fruits don't touch each other or the soil. You can read an excellent article on ways to preserve food in the absence of a fridge [here](#).

#16. Add 1 tablespoon of ash for every 250 gallons (or 1000 liters) of water to nourish your underwater plants.

#17. Use charcoal to make a DIY water filter.

#18. Preserve seeds by putting them in a clay container and covering them with wood ash.

#19. Mix it with clay, rice, salt and lime and apply the mixture on eggs.

#20. Last but not least, you can use it as sunscreen by rubbing it on your body.

#17. Plastic Bottles

- #1. To make a DIY water filter. More details [here](#).
- #2. To make a sling shot. You'll also need a balloon as demonstrated in this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FboCxknC5tY>
- #3. Use it as a container when foraging for wild edibles.
- #4. For making a spoon.
- #5. As a flotation device that you can place in your bug out bag in case you have to cross a river.
- #6. You can make an entire raft out of plastic bottles. This will help you bug out faster if you have a river near your location.
- #7. To make an improvised light. This is what people in 3rd world countries do. Fill it with water, add bleach and make a hole inside your shed's roof to light the whole place during the day.
- #8. You can make a broom from a bottle by cutting it into long, thin strips.
- #9. You can make an entire greenhouse out of plastic bottles.
- #10. Fill a bottle with water, add bleach, strap a headlamp pointing towards the bottle, turn it on and now you can light up your entire camp site.
- #11. You can make a mouse trap (details here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNjyLRQutXs>)
- #12. You can cut the top and bottom off of 2 liter bottles, then cut the remaining portion in two to make plastic roof tiles.
- #13. You can make mouse traps...
- #14. Cut the top part and use it as a funnel...
- #15. Use them to protect herbs during winter.
- #16. You can make a bowl by cutting the bottom, of course.
- #17. Use the cap to seal plastic bags.

#18. Fill a few bottles with water and put it in the freezer to create blocks of ice.

#19. To keep foods and seeds dry.

#20. You can make a pair of sandals using two 2 liter water bottles and cordage.

#18. Ponchos

#1. As a tarp. If you're stuck in the woods with no shelter while you're bugging out, you can use them to shield yourself from wind, rain and snow. Don't expect it to provide any insulation, though.

#2. As a basket (for foraging or carrying various things). Just pull the 4 corners together.

#3. Make a cold compress by putting ice on it and wrapping it up.

#4. Make a sling for your arm.

#5. Use it as a cooking surface. Just put it over a rock and make sure it's clean.

#6. Wrap it over a wound to keep it and the bandage dry.

#7. Since it's waterproof, you can use it as ground cloth for your tent or to simply sit on it.

#8. Use it to sail a small boat.

#9. Since it has a pretty large surface, you can use it to collect rain water to drink.

#10. As trash bag. Leaving trash behind can be dangerous in certain situations.

#11. Since it's waterproof, you can use it to keep your fire wood dry.

#12. Use it as a scarecrow or even as decoy to lead someone to believe there's someone in it.

#13. As a quiver for your arrows.

#14. Use it to cover your bug out bag or preps to keep nosy neighbors out of your business.

#15. As a signaling flag.

#16. As window cover (though you're gonna want a black one) but keep in mind some light might come in through

#17. Use it to butcher an animal you hunted.

#18. Roll it up and use it as a pillow.



#19. Use it to protect against nuclear meltdowns or nuclear blasts particle leaks. The protection is not bulletproof but it helps.

#20. You can make a mattress by filling it with leaves.

#19. Paper Clips

#1. As a magnet to find north.

#2. You can keep your sleeves rolled up when working the garden.

#3. Stick it at the end of a roll of duct tape so you know where it is and to be able to easily open it.

#4. To clean out your gadgets or press their reset buttons.

#5. As a keyring.

#6. As a money clip (so you don't have to buy extra ones for your survival bags).

#7. As a fish hook (of course).

#8. As a zipper slider.

#9. Use one to clean your finger nails (clipping them is the obvious solution).

#10. Use it to replace a button.

#11. Use them to make holes in things such as Ziploc bags or clothes.

#12. As a hook.

#13. Use it as a screwdriver for small screws.

#14. As a hair barrette, to keep your hair into place when bugging out.

#15. Use it as a toothpick.

#16. Use it to cover a small blade as a safety precaution.

#17. Use several of them to secure open ended plastic bags.

#18. Use two paper clips and a pen as a corkscrew. More details [here](#).

#19. For lock picking.

#20. A bookmark for your survival books.



#20. Tin Cans

#1. Make a DIY alarm system by hanging 3 or 4 of them in places where intruders might think to sneak in through.

#2. You can make an alcohol stove.

#3. Punch a couple of holes in them and insert some sort of cordage to use them as buckets.

#4. For target practice.

#5. You can make a small knife by cutting the lid in half, then sticking it to a stick.

#6. Speaking of the lid, you can use it as a signaling mirror.

#7. Use it to boil water or for cooking over an open fire.

#8. Use it to make a water filtration system. Poke a few holes at the bottom and then add layers of charcoal and sand.

#9. To keep your [DIY first aid kit](#). Remember you need a container that's puncture proof, not just waterproof. This is why Ziploc bags aren't enough.

#10. Keep a small survival kit inside. No one will ever think to look inside.

#11. You can plant your seedlings into tin cans before you plant them in your garden.

#12. Use it as an emergency candle.

#13. Punch holes in one and use it as a shower head in the wilderness.

#14. Turn it into a small shovel for digging. Maybe you need to plant seeds, bury a cache or even dig yourself or your car out of snow.

#15. Use it as an emergency water container. When you hear word that the water supply will be cut off, you need to turn on all faucets and save as much of it as you can in any available container, including your bathtub.

#16. Flatten it to cover a hole in your chicken coop and keep predators out.



#17. To make booby traps. Remove the lid, cut them into strips with your knife from top to bottom to make really sharp edges, then place them near bushes, where you expect bad guys to sneak through. Most likely they will step on them and get hurt.

#18. Use them as shingles for your roof.

#19. Use one to keep any sharp objects.

#20. You can make a shuriken from the lid, of course.

References

- #1. <http://www.healthline.com/health/gerd/baking-soda#HowItWorks2>
- #2. <http://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements/sodium-bicarbonate-oral-route-intravenous-route-subcutaneous-route/proper-use/drg-20065950>
- #3. <http://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-8953/diy-this-baking-soda-shampoo-saved-my-hair.html>