



SET YOUR CLOCKS

CHECK YOUR STOCKS



Cheap stockpiling: How to be prepared on a budget

When money is tight, adding extra items to your shopping list can be hard. However, with a bit of planning, there are lots of ways to build your emergency preparedness supplies on a budget.

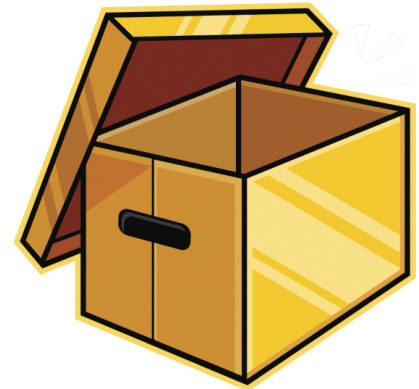


American
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Start with the supplies you already have

Your first step should be to look at an emergency stockpile checklist. This will help you get an idea of the different things that should go in an emergency preparedness kit and help you come up with a plan for building your own kit.

Though the list may seem daunting at first, you'll likely find that you already own a lot of the items you'll want to include in your kit. Start the process by pulling together items that you have on hand at home. For example, you may have enough canned goods to start your food stockpile or extra bandages that can go into your emergency first aid kit. Once you've pulled together the items you have, check them off the list and start making a plan for the others.



Save on space by storing your supplies in containers you already have. That plastic bin that held your children's toys when they were young or a laundry basket that is no longer used can become the perfect organizer.

Build your kit a little bit at a time



As you build your preparedness kit, don't feel like you have to do it all in one day. It will likely be easier on your budget if you spread out the items over several weeks or months.

Consider adding a few extra dollars to your weekly shopping trip and buy just a few items each time you go to the store. Another important thing to remember is to keep an eye out for sales. Carry your checklist with you so you'll know what you still need when you find a good deal.

Take a lesson from families that save on groceries regularly by shopping at stores that offer double coupons and by buying generic. Canned foods are often less expensive to stockpile than

other ready-to-eat shelf food, but watch out for high sodium. You don't want foods in your stockpile that will make you thirsty, as clean water supplies may be limited during an emergency or disaster situation.



Use the buddy system to create a less expensive stockpile

Another good option for saving money is to look for deals at bulk grocery stores. The only catch is you may end up with more than you can store. To solve this problem, think about partnering with a neighbor or friend and building your kit together. This way, you both will be able to take advantage of discounts by splitting your purchases.



As an added benefit, partnering up with someone else is also a great opportunity to talk about your family's emergency preparedness plan and make sure that you are doing everything you can to be ready for emergencies.



Save more with these Get Ready stockpiling tips

Make sure and stock the right batteries

Don't stockpile rechargeable batteries in your emergency supplies, emergency experts advise.

While rechargeable batteries are an economical choice for items you use every day, they can lose their charge when left unused for long periods in storage.

To make sure that your emergency flashlights and other supplies are ready to go when you need them, stockpile only regular batteries.



Artwork courtesy Microsoft Clip Art Gallery

Still need more ideas? Try some of these money-saving tips:

- ◆ Don't know what to do with those napkins and plastic forks and spoons you receive at fast food restaurants or with your take-out food? These freebies make great additions to your emergency supply kit.
- ◆ Free condiment packets such as mayo, ketchup, jelly or taco sauce can add some flavor to meals during an emergency. Expiration dates vary and aren't usually marked on the packets, so throw them out after a few months or if they are punctured, become hard or are rancid.
- ◆ Go veggie! You can save a bunch on your stockpile by bypassing meat products and loading up on canned veggies and fruits. Canned beans are a great option, as they are filling and pack a lot of protein.
- ◆ Take a tip from your grandparents and grow and can your own food. A few dollars of seed packets can yield enough canned tomatoes, cucumbers and green beans to last you for months. Look for canning information and supplies online.

For more tips on creating your emergency preparedness stockpile, visit www.getreadyforflu.org/clocksstocks

