

Bug out bag and contents

You've probably all heard of the terms bugging out and bugging in. In other words staying put where you are, or alternatively, leaving and going to a secondary location.

My own take on whether to bug out or bug in is that where ever possible I will bug in. My home and garden can provide me with food, water, shelter, warmth, light, security and all the creature comforts I am used to.

In a SHTF event I would rather shelter in place with all these benefits, than leave and try to survive in the bush. Obviously if you have a secure location to bug out to, that can offer you a safer and better stocked place to ride out the event - whatever it may be - then bugging out, in this case, would be a good option.

Although my preference is to bug in, I still have a bug out bag, just in case I do have to "get out of dodge" due to circumstances beyond my control. At our last Prepper Group meeting, we went through my Bug Out Bag to critique what I had included and what I had missed out.

Here is the bag in photo below....complete with Machete, Pry-Bar, Water Bottle and Solar Panel on outside of the bag.



The bag itself is a Kathmandu 40 litre pack. Please forgive the black and white image. It is blue by the way. It has good padded shoulder and waist straps and is comfortable to carry. I have backpacked with it around Europe for several months. The waist straps help to distribute some of the weight from your shoulders and back, to your hips.

I find that a 30 to 40 litre sized pack is adequate to carry what I need without being too overweight. The bigger the bag, the more you'll be tempted to fill it. Generally speaking your bag and contents should not weigh more than 20% of your body weight. If you're going to be on foot for any part of the journey, the lighter the pack, the better.

When it comes to packing your bag, if possible pack light and bulky items at the bottom and heavier items at the top. This makes it easier to carry.

Next photo below is of the contents of the bag (excluding food).

petroleum jelly (to use as tinder to get a fire started), 3x lighters, electrical tape and earplugs, spare batteries for torches (one on belt and one inside the first aid kit), compass/thermometer (there is a second compass in the first aid kit pouch).

Bottom row - Sharpening Stone (To keep knife blades sharp), Leatherman Wave Multi-Tool, Tactical Pen (For writing/breaking glass/self defence), Emergency Blanket (Plus an emergency bag - big enough to use as a sleeping bag - inside the first aid pouch), Wire Saw, Note Book, General purpose wire (for repairs and snares).

Also in the First Aid pouch - other than the usual bandages, plasters, gauze, wipes, pain and allergy meds.....is also a knife/fork/spoon set.

Pretty much everything I have in the bug out bag can be sourced on line through Trade Me. However I bought my folding saw, machete, tarp, general purpose wire and electrical tape from Mitre10. The sleeping bag and liner, thermal gloves, thermal beanie, emergency radio - were all from Kathmandu. The respirator and goggles - were from Bunnings. The portable stove and fuel were either from The Warehouse or K-Mart. The solar panel was sourced from the USA. The Multi-Tool was from Rivers to Ranges - Nelson Street, Hastings. The 2 fixed blade knives were from Crafty's Hunting and Fishing Stortford Lodge. The power bank was from Noel Leeming (bought using FlyBuys). The LifeStraw water filter was from Cornucopia, Hastings. And the torch (on the belt) was from Uncle Bills...of all places! The rest of the gear I have either had for a long time, or bought off Trade Me.

A few things missing from the bug out bag - which should be included are - Cash money (I would suggest \$200 in small bills - or more if you can afford it), Copies of important documents such as Mortgage/Deed of Sale/Passport/Birth Certificates/Marriage Certificate/Driver Licence etc - either paper copies or digital copies on a memory stick...or both. Food to sustain you for 72 hours. You may want to include something that you feel comfortable with as a means of self defence. Also a means of communication - Cell Phone, Walkie Talkie etc. - We will cover communication in another post soon.

The Bug Out Bag is also known as the 72 hour bag because it is meant to sustain you during your journey from your home to your bug out location - which ideally should take no more than 72 hours on foot.

What is in my bag, suits my needs. Your bag needs to suit the purpose that you intend to use it for. There is no right or wrong thing to include in a B.O.B. - it's a matter of personal choice as long as you have the usual prepper bases covered - Food, Water, Shelter, Fire, Security, Medical/First Aid.

Take care.

Prepare for the worst....Hope for the best.