

Natural Disasters - Terrorist Attacks - Food Shortages
Pandemic - Economic Collapse - Social Unrest
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and many other situations threaten us

Cooking Gear

Cooking gear comes in two areas, hiking and base camp. Hiking sets are lightweight and are carried in your backpack while base camp sets are heavier and entail much more in the way of quantity and varied items. We have broken cooking gear into these two areas. At the very least you should have a set of hiking cooking gear.

There are two things we recommend against - aluminum and non-stick cookware. Aluminum is not as durable as stainless steel and doesn't cost much less while non-stick coated cooking gear can be scratched which effectively ruins it. Both have also been linked to various medical conditions, so why chance possible medical problems in the future and less durability in the present?

We recommend stainless steel with copper bottoms for hiking sets and either stainless steel with copper bottoms or cast iron for base camps. Many modern stainless steel sets come with aluminum on the bottom surrounded by stainless steel - these are fine if you can't find solid stainless steel or copper bottoms. Copper pots and pans intended for cooking food are fine, keep in mind that there are many copper pots and pans that are for decorative purposes and are not for cooking food.

Hiking

Your hiking set should be stainless steel, preferably with a copper bottom for even heat distribution. At the least your kit should have a 3 quart pot and a 1 quart pot along with the lid/fry pan for each. Here is a set from Coleman but it does not have a copper bottom. Wal-Mart has a decent "family" set for about half the price of the Coleman set pictured and it does have a copper bottom.



A percolator coffee pot is great for making coffee and heating water. Below are some examples of coffee pots of this type available from Cabela's, we suggest the 14 cup at minimum due to the handle that will allow it to be hung over a fire. Again stainless steel is preferred to aluminum. Sportsman's Warehouse and Gander Mountain also sell these types of coffee pots although their websites do not list much aside from store location and current fliers.



You should have a stove for those times when you can't have an open flame for whatever reason. The stove should be small, light, and burn multiple fuel types. The Coleman (left) will run on Coleman fuel (whitegas)/unleaded gasoline/kerosene while the Brunton (center) and MSR (right) will run on even more fuel types. If a repair or maintenance kit is available you should pickup at least one or two and store them with the stove. You should shop around for fuel bottles to keep spare fuel in and to allow quick change over if needed.



Along with the items above you should have one or two mugs per person to allow for hot and cold drinks. Insulated stainless steel mugs are perfect for this. You may want to consider a thermos or two to keep drinks or food hot (or cold) for when you are on the move. A slim pint (500 ml) thermos is great for coffee or liquids while a widemouth quart/litre thermos is also good for food. You can find good quality thermoses for \$10 to \$20 each, stay away from "pour through lid" type thermoses as these tend to leak.

Don't forget to bring along cutlery (including a steak knife) and basic utensils, dish soap, etc.

Base Camp

Base camp gear includes all the same things that you would normally have at home - pots, pans, cutlery, utensils, measuring cups, etc. We suggest that you stick with stainless steel measuring cups and utensils for durability. It also includes the means to do the actual cooking such as grills, fire rings, barbeques, stoves, etc. We suggest cast iron, stainless steel with copper bottom or all copper for pots, pans and other cookware. Pre-seasoned cast iron is available from many retailers.



Cast iron will last for generations and when properly seasoned will become non-stick after some use. Cast iron can be found at second hand and thrift stores as well as from retailers and manufacturers. Studies have also shown that women who use cast iron are less prone to being anemic or suffering from low iron.

Please note that none of these are requirements. Aside from pots, pans, etc the items shown below are to give you an idea of the many different options available.

Lodge - www.lodge.com - Manufacturer of quality cast iron cookware. Sportsman's Warehouse - www.sportsmanswarehouse.com and Gander Mountain - www.gandermountain.com both sell cast iron (and other base camp gear) although their websites do not have much other than store locations and current fliers.



The cooking system on the right has everything you need for cooking over open flame. A bus rim and a grate of some sort can make a great fire pit as well.



Below are three different types of grills for smaller fires.



A tripod comes in very handy when you have a dutch oven that can be hung from it's handle. It will allow for adjusting the heat by using the chain to adjust the height of the dutch oven.

This Dutch Oven table is a unique item. Designed for cooking with cast iron dutch ovens it uses charcoal like a barbeque but does not have a grill.



The Coleman 3 burner dual fuel stove uses Coleman fuel (whitegas) and unleaded gasoline, both of which are readily available.

Add one of these propane converters to the stove and you can use 1 pound propane bottles with your liquid fuel stove. These are available from Wal-Mart for about \$15 and are as easy to install as the fuel tank on the stove to the right.



Add a distribution tree and adapter hose and you can use up to three propane stoves or other items that work on 1 pound propane bottles.



Camp kitchens like these provide cooking space and convenience.



Water purifiers like the Berkey series (top), the Katadyn Expedition (bottom left) or Katadyn Base Camp (bottom right) ensure that the water you use to cook with and drink are safe.



A turkey cooker pot can be used for many things including boiling vegetables, etc.



Heavy duty propane stoves/burners for serious cooking.

A charcoal smoker to smoke your own meat.



Here is a neat stove/oven combo that runs on propane from a standard bulk tank or 1 pound bottles if you buy the adapter. For \$200 you can be baking cakes in the great outdoors as well as cooking on the burners.



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