

Natural Disasters - Terrorist Attacks - Food Shortages
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and many other situations threaten us

Mini Urban Survival Kit

Many of us have regular day jobs and go into the city every day to get to work. For those who work in an office setting there is no way to bring a BOB. If you drive to work you can leave your BOB in the car. For those who take public transit to work a BOB is just not possible. As 9/11 showed there are a few items that every office worker should have. An emergency can happen at any time, and we should be close enough to gear to get out of the office and on your way to escaping the general area.

This sort of situation requires a small kit that we can keep with us all or most of the time. If we base our mini urban kit on the average office worker we can also apply that to any other work setting. The average office worker has a minimum amount of room to carry things with them, plus those items must fit into the general attire of the office worker.

Regardless of the specific threat, we are likely to face fire or dust, lighting being out, and debris. Since we're in a city we need a minimum of equipment, even a few blocks is enough to put most dangers far enough away that we can relax for a bit and worry about getting home from there.

Working within the attire of the office worker we need a small kit with enough items to get us out of the immediate area. If we limit the size of our mini urban kit so that it fits into part of a briefcase, laptop bag or other small bag we don't have much room. The kit itself needs to fit in these small bags yet remain easily grabbed. A small waist or fanny pack of no more than 4 inches thick by 6 inches high by 10 inches wide (about the size of a 1 gallon ziplock bag) is enough room to fit everything we need. In this kit we can keep the following:

- BIC lighter
- Nitrile and/or gardening gloves (leather palm)
- small AM/FM radio with bud earphones (shortwave/weather if there is room)
- compass/whistle/match container with matches
- small tube of anti-bacterial, waterless hand cleaner
- small pack of baby wipes
- flat pack of duct tape (3 to 10 feet)
- first aid kit (extra anti-bacterial wipes and assorted band aids)
- Emergency "space" blanket (2 if there's room)
- Money. Roll of quarters, \$10 in ones & \$20 in fives (vending machines/pay phone)
- 20 oz bottle of water (empty 1 liter platypus type bladder if there is room)
- tea/cocoa/coffee packets, sugar and creamer
- hard candy/granola or power bars
- Sunglasses, reading/spare glasses as required
- windbreaker (folds up into it's own pouch)
- bandana
- Knife or multi-tool
- keychain LED light, 2AA maglite or LED light. Extra batteries if there is room.
- military type manual can opener
- safety goggles
- 3 day supply of prescription medications
- 2 dust masks

Small first aid kit



Most of the items above are to aid you in getting out of the building you are in, protecting your hands and eyes, making sure you do not breath in dust, and in cleaning yourself up once away from the immediate threat. In fact the first six items will fit into the first kit I suggest, while the first aid kit (with extras), the emergency blanket and the duct tape will fit into a 1 quart ziplock bag. If you were to purchase a windbreaker with zippered pockets you could fit the all of the items, minus the water bottle into the pockets of the windbreaker. You would have to grab the windbreaker and the bottled water and be on your way.

Items in a quart ziplock bag



Items in a gallon ziplock bag



The entire contents



- 1) leather work gloves with money and roll of quarters inside fingers
- 2) bandanna
- 3) whistle/match case/compass
- 4) 20 oz bottled water
- 5) LED flashlight on keychain
- 6) Gerber pouch with knife & military style can opener & folding scissors
- 7) plastic spoon
- 8) 10 feet camo duct tape
- 9) travel pack of wet wipes
- 10) emergency "space" blanket

11) radio and headphones

12) Bic lighter

13) first aid kit with waterless hand cleaner/sanitizer & pair of nitrile gloves

14) 2 chocolate bars

You will notice that there is no dust mask, safety goggles or windbreaker. The windbreaker wouldn't fit on the desk tray and I normally keep the goggles and dust mask with it. The goggles and dust mask will fit into the gallon ziplock bag but the windbreaker doesn't with the water bottle.

Normally I keep the Gerber multi-tool, which has a small 3 inch Gerber Paraframe knife, Shortcut folding scissors and military style can opener, on my belt. I also keep a lighter or two in my pocket along with my keys which have the LED flashlight (\$5 Dorcy AAA from Wal-Mart).

The kit moves from waist pouch to jacket to vest, etc as need dictates. I put it in the ziplock bags to demonstrate the size of the kit. The two biggest items in the kit are the water bottle and the safety goggles, although items can be packed into the goggles.

You may want to consider adding the following if there is room:

- spoon, lexan/plastic (does not set off metal detectors)
- folding city/state map
- a small folding mesh or nylon duffel/backpack (for anything that is found)
- small tube of vaseline (help safety goggles seal to your face)
- small tube of sun screen
- water tabs
- sport bottle type water filter
- parachute cord (10 feet)

- sardine can type/size survival kit
- disposable poncho or garbage bags

The knife or multi-tool can be kept on your belt or in your pocket, as can the lighter, keychain LED and sun glasses. A bandana can be kept in your back pocket and the military style can opener on your keychain. This will free up some room in your kit for other things

If you spend all day at a desk then you can keep a few things in your desk drawer, or in your locker if in a factory, like a polar fleece pull over or light jacket, running shoes or hiking boots, spare socks, pair of jeans, t-shirt, long sleeve shirt, some extra food, bottled water and maybe a fleece throw in a small gym type duffel. Grab the duffel and survival kit and get moving until you have time to change. Many office workers keep a small gym type duffel at their desk with shoes and athletic gear for when they go to the gym during lunch or after work. Many office workers can be seen on the public transit systems with a briefcase/laptop bag and a gym duffel.

The idea behind a mini urban kit is not to keep you alive in the woods, but to get you out of buildings and to your car, on your way home, or to safety. When you think about it, most of the items on the list are fairly common items that we see many office people with. These should not attract any attention, but can make the difference between life and death or reduced injury.

If you do not have room to keep a spare pair of shoes make sure that whatever shoes you do wear have a good rubber sole and are comfortable for walking. With some looking you can find shoes that meet these requirements and remain appropriate for dress wear.

For those times when a waist pack or small duffel is inconvenient or not allowed you could get yourself a photographer's or fisherman's vest with multiple pockets. If you're getting a fishing vest and plan on wearing it in the city you may want to carefully remove the fly patch. You wouldn't come close to using all of the pockets on the vest and your items would be with you at all times.

You can see pictures of my vest with the Urban Survival Kit contents above in it.

Front View



Contents of the pockets:

- 1 - headphones
- 2 - Bic lighter & spoon
- 3 - EMPTY
- 4 - water bottle
- 5 - EMPTY
- 6 - EMPTY
- 7 - EMPTY
- 8 - 2 chocolate bars

Rear view



In the rear "Poacher's Pocket" is the windbreaker.

Inside view



Contents of the pockets:

- 1 - EMPTY
- 2 - pen
- 3 - duct tape and survival ("space") blanket
- 4 - Gerber Pouch
- 5 - travel pack of "wet ones"
- 6 - leather work gloves & bandanna
- 7 - first aid kit
- 8 - EMPTY
- 9 - radio
- 10 - waterproof match case/whistle/compass
- 11 - EMPTY

Front view with windbreaker over vest (zippered)



Front view with windbreaker over vest (unzippered)



Below are examples of other vests - a fisherman's vest and a photographer's vest, both are very similar and they usually have around 20 pockets to keep your stuff in.

Fishing Vest



Photographer's Vest



Another option for outerwear is a safari jacket. It has less pockets than a vest, but will have enough to keep your mini urban kit in. Below are a couple of examples of safari jackets from Cabela's (www.cabela's.com).



If you want dressy with more pockets then consider a jacket from Tilley Endurables (www.tilley.com), these are more expensive but have a reputation for long life and toughness along with up to 10 pockets on the dress styles. They also have safari and women's styles as well. Below are the two men's dressy jackets.



As you can see, no matter the situation or surroundings you find yourself in there is an option that will allow you to keep your mini urban kit, or at least most of it, with you at all times. For dressy situations you will have to expend more money, but that is the price you pay for having your kit with you in the board room.

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