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Surviving on Very Little

Posted By [Editor](#) On May 10, 2010 @ 1:47 pm In [Financial Frugality](#) | [17 Comments](#)

For a lot of people, the word survivalist leads to visions of people living in some cult compound deep in the countryside of some remote area, caching supplies of ammunition and food in preparation for a cataclysmic event. In a few cases that may be the case, and undoubtedly there are several more who wish they could do that if only they had the means. But the vast majority of survivalists are everyday people just trying to get by as best they can in an increasingly complicated and desperate world. In fact, the current economic turmoil has turned a growing number of people into survivalists, whether they acknowledge the moniker or not (most would rather be called "preppers" or something similar).



Many Americans who would never have dreamed of classifying themselves as survivalists are finding it necessary to adopt the same techniques used by people preparing for the worst. True survivalists know that the time to learn a new skill is long before it becomes a necessity of life. That's why they are constantly learning new skills such as gardening, alternative medicine and home chemistry long before they are actually forced to use such skills. These days, financial hardship is making these skills more and more necessary for those people struggling in a failing economy. For them, the time to survive has arrived and many are turning to the techniques used by the poor all over the world.

Modern life offers us many conveniences, and they often take on the form of necessities for those who have never lived without them. By knowing some practical, if perhaps more primitive, replacements for many of these everyday conveniences, economic survivors can save a lot of money and ease the struggle to live caused by financial hardship. I want to share a few examples offered by readers.

Dishwashing and laundry soap can be made by the gallon using items that every survivalist should have in their possession, whether living in the mountains of Montana or a high rise in Manhattan. Mix 1 cup of Borax, 1 cup of baking soda and 1 gallon of water to make laundry soap. For dish soap reduce the water to 2 cups. For washing pots and pans add a couple of tablespoons of salt. A little lemon juice will add a fresh aroma to both dishes and laundry. With this formula your dishes and clothes will be just as clean as with expensive store bought brands and will cost you pennies on the dollar.

Bread is one of the simplest food staples that we have, yet it is vastly overpriced in supermarkets. Humans have been preparing bread for thousands of years and there is no reason why modern man can't do the same. The first thing you will need is bread starter. In a large jar, mix 1 cup flour and 1 cup water and place the jar in a warm place. 24 hours later you will need to pour half of the starter into another jar and add a half cup of flour and water to each jar. This feeds the starter and keeps it going. This needs to be repeated every 24 hours until the mixture begins to bubble, usually in about 4 days. Now find the bread recipe of your choice and prepare your loaf. Total cost for a loaf prepared this way is \$1 or less and will be much healthier and tastier than that which you buy in the store.

A healthy diet demands fresh vegetables, but growing them is time consuming and requires space, and buying them can leave you broke. A good alternative is a sprout garden. Many plants begin to grow nutritious sprouts a few days after planting the seeds, alfalfa perhaps being the best. Buy a



large bag of alfalfa seeds for about \$6 or so, which will last for a long time. Put a few tablespoons of seeds into a jar, fill with warm water and let them soak for about 6 hours. Strain out the water and shake the jar to stick the seeds to the sides. Now place the jar in a sunny place and in about three days they'll be ready to eat. Soaking and straining the seeds daily will speed the process. Several jars sitting in a window will provide you with a nutritious addition for soups and sandwiches and will cost you mere pennies.

These are just three examples of things that can easily be done to save you money, regardless of the political or economic situation. The idea is to begin to learn as many of these "old fashioned" tricks as possible and become less dependent on society for your basic needs. Of course they are not "perfect" and there are other ways to "skin the cat" (no offense to our feline friends). Many people never imagined that they will find themselves in a situation where they have to survive, but as millions of unemployed and under employed can tell you, it can happen.

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