

\$20 72-Hour Emergency Kit: DIY!

72-hour emergency kits don't have to cost a lot of money. This \$20 kit was designed for a college student living in a dorm:

Carrying bags. Use plastic bags from the grocery store. Put bags in bags - so the plastic is four layers thick. Make 2 sacks. **Or use a school knapsack/backpack.**

Water is next. One gallon per person per day is needed. 3 days = 3 gallons. Store water in 3 clean 1-gallon jugs. Put two jugs in one sack, and one jug in the other bag. Put bags on ends of a tote stick, Chinese coolie style. Put the stick over your shoulders.

72-hour kit storage. Use a big coffee can or #10 food can with plastic lid. Use the can to boil more water if you run out.

Canteen. Use a 24 oz. plastic water bottle with a loop of twine for a handle.

Raincoat and shelter. Wal-Mart sells a plastic rain poncho and an emergency space blanket. You won't freeze if you sit down on insulation, pull your knees up, and droop the blanket around you. Wear a cap to keep your head warm.

Fire-making. Put a BIC butane lighter and a paper matchbook in a plastic bag. Put dryer lint, steel wool, or toilet paper for tinder in another plastic bag.

Signaling. Bring a flashlight (LED is best).. Store its batteries with one battery backward so they can't run down. Bring spare batteries. Bring an old CD for a signal mirror.

Communications. Use a transistor radio to get news. Store batteries with one backwards. Bring a cell phone. If circuits are busy, send a text message instead.

Finding your way. Get a free city and county map from the Chamber of Commerce. Buy a magnetic compass from a sporting goods store or Wal-Mart.

Survival tools. Bring a pocketknife, a can opener, some slip-jaw pliers, a roll of dental floss (for repairs), a roll of black electrical tape, and fork/spoon.

Personal hygiene. In a plastic bag, put 1/2 roll of toilet paper, a bar of soap from a motel, a toothbrush, and for toothpaste--12 salt packets from a fast-food restaurant.

First Aid kit. In a plastic bag, put a box of band-aids, Moleskin for foot blisters, 3 days' prescription medicines, and medicine cabinet items.

Food. Raid the cupboard for high calorie, low-weight foods that don't need cooking.

Clothing. You can get by for 3 days with what you have on. A warm jacket and knitted cap are nice to stay warm at night, even in summer.

Other: 1) Personal ID, 2) Spare house and car keys, 3) Out-of-state contact for checking on family members, and 4) Family/friend phone numbers/addresses on paper.

Customize this kit for special needs: Family size, age of family members: Baby formula, diapers, wipes, toys and changes of clothes for children, feminine hygiene items, spare eyeglasses, etc. *People come first. Don't bring pets.*