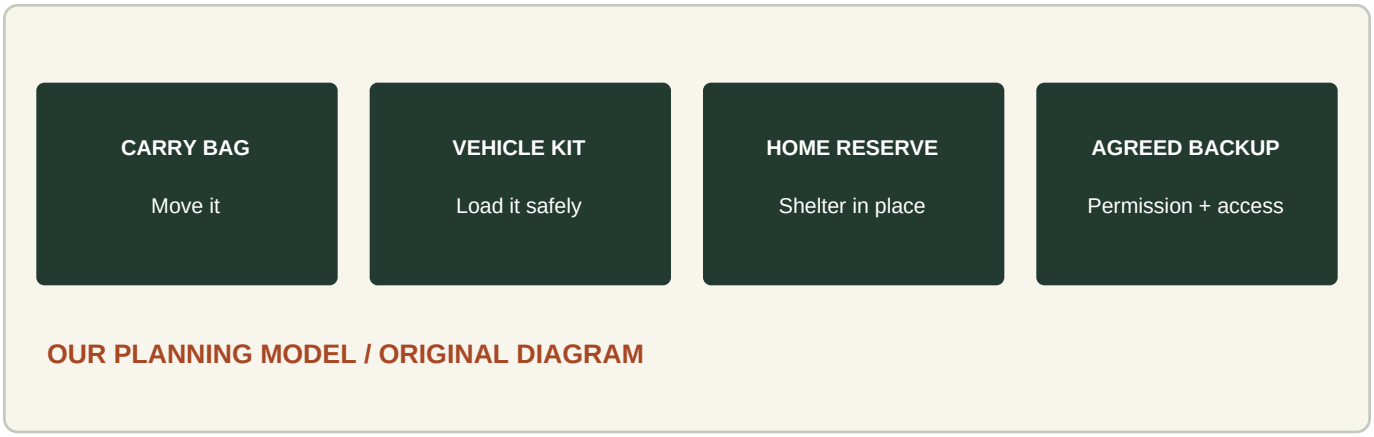
IDAHO MODERN PREPPER / STARTER GUIDE

Practical Preparedness for Beginners

Build a manageable household plan, one useful step at a time.



OUR PLANNING MODEL / ORIGINAL DIAGRAM

A starter field guide and workbook. This is our planning framework, informed by the references listed at the end. It is not a promise of survival, a substitute for local emergency instructions, or a report of equipment testing. Start with ordinary disruptions, use what you already own, and change the plan to fit your household.

First edition - November 8, 2026

Free first edition. Expanded books remain planned. No signup required.

1. Start with a decision, not a shopping cart

Pick two or three disruptions that are plausible where you live: a short power outage, an interrupted water supply, severe weather, or a need to leave home. Ask what each one interrupts before deciding what to buy. A lost refrigerator, blocked road, and unsafe building are different problems.

Write down what would make staying reasonable and what would trigger leaving. Include official evacuation instructions, the condition of the building, access to essential care, and a reachable destination. Avoid a rigid rule that always says stay or always says go. Check local alerts as the situation changes.

Our suggested first task is a 20-minute household conversation. Identify who needs help, who can drive, who checks official information, and where everyone meets if separated. Someone who cannot comfortably carry a bag needs a different loading and assistance plan, not pressure to meet an arbitrary weight target.

- Choose a nearby destination and a farther-away option, with permission.

- Record routes and alternatives; do not assume roads or fuel will be available.

- Include pets, children, medication, assistive equipment and communication needs.

- Keep completed plans private; avoid publishing addresses or medical details.

Idaho Office of Emergency Management supports discussing household needs, communication, meeting places and evacuation planning. Our timebox and worksheet structure are editorial suggestions. [1]

2. Spread backups across four locations

Redundancy is about having another usable way to meet an important need. It does not mean packing two of every item in one heavy bag. Our four-location model is a carry bag, vehicle loading kit, home reserve, and an agreed backup location.

Begin with the things that must remain accessible if you cannot return home. Then place additional water, food and comfort items where they can be stored and moved safely. A vehicle kit should have a loading plan and secure placement. A backup location should have permission, appropriate conditions and a realistic access plan.

Check independence. Two containers in the same flood-prone room may fail together. Supplies at a distant destination are not a useful immediate backup if every route is closed. List the failure each backup is meant to cover and the circumstances in which it would be unavailable.

- Carry: essentials you can move, open and use with your actual ability.

- Vehicle: extra supplies that can be safely loaded and secured.

- Home: reserves for sheltering when the building and local situation allow it.

- Backup location: supplies placed with permission outside the same likely loss.

The four-location model is our editorial planning framework, not an official required packing list.

3. Account for water before bag weight

CDC's emergency storage baseline is at least one US gallon per person per day for three days. A longer reserve is worth considering where possible. Some people and pets need additional water. This is a stored reserve baseline; it is not a requirement to put the entire amount in a backpack. [2]

One US gallon of water weighs about 8.34 pounds before its container. Two people for three days at that baseline need six US gallons, about 50.1 pounds of water. Smaller containers may make moving and pouring easier, but they add packaging and can require more trips.

Map what is already stored, what can actually travel, and how safe replenishment might work. Treatment must fit the hazard. CDC explains that boiling or disinfecting cannot make water contaminated with fuel or toxic chemicals safe. Use a safe alternative source and follow public-health instructions. [3]

- Calculate stored water separately from carried water.

- Count containers, accessibility, lifting and secure storage.

- Record the official guidance to follow for the local water emergency.

- Include the water needed to prepare food, and do not double-count it.

Storage baseline: CDC emergency water supply [2]. Chemical contamination limits: CDC water safety [3]. Weight conversion is an approximate physical calculation, not a personal hydration prescription.

4. Put familiar food and essentials to work

Our starting approach is familiar ready-to-eat food that fits the household's allergies, dietary needs and preferences. Plan full days rather than counting cans. Check calories, protein, fats and variety using labels and appropriate individual advice. Include an opener when needed, safe portions and waste handling.

Account for medication and its storage needs with a clinician or pharmacist. Include first aid, sanitation, clothing, lighting, communication, documents, mobility equipment and pet needs. No generic kit can decide every household's medical or accessibility requirements.

For cooking, map a primary method, a safe backup, and a no-cook alternative. Fuel-burning outdoor stoves and grills belong outside as directed by their manufacturer. CDC warns that carbon monoxide can cause serious illness or death. Keep generators outdoors at least 20 feet from windows, doors and vents. [4]

- Try opening containers and locating essentials before an emergency.

- Prefer manageable portions when safe refrigeration may be unavailable.

- Record what is ready to eat and what requires water, fuel or equipment.

- Spend on a specific missing capability before buying a larger pile of supplies.

Generator placement and carbon monoxide precautions: CDC [4]. Meal, budget and accessibility workflow is our editorial approach.

5. Practice safely, then revise

Choose a short walkthrough with normal utilities and help available as a fallback. Lift a container, load a bag, open a meal, locate the contact sheet and explain the destination plan. Stop at pain, unsafe lifting, fatigue or a condition outside the agreed exercise.

Do not interrupt medication, essential medical equipment, safe water, or necessary heating and cooling to create a realistic scenario. A controlled exercise can reveal an awkward zipper or missing tool without exposing anyone to a real hazard.

Record actual measurements and limits: packed weight, the heaviest individual container, the assistance used, preparation time and cost. If you publish results later, include the conditions and what they do not establish. A successful short practice is not proof of long-term safety or reliability.

- Change one problem at a time.

- Replace consumed supplies and restore normal access after practice.

- Schedule a review when needs, medication, vehicles or destinations change.

- Keep test observations separate from product marketing and outside guidance.

This practice method is an original planning suggestion; no completed tests or measured product results are claimed.

ORIGINAL WORKSHEET / COPY FOR YOUR OWN PLANNING

Household decision sheet

Likely disruption and affected services

_____

Official alert sources and who checks them

_____

Conditions for sheltering / leaving triggers

_____

Nearby destination, permission and route

_____

Farther destination, permission and route

_____

People, pets, accessibility and medical-supply needs

_____

Contact and meeting plan if separated

_____

Next small action, budget and review date

_____

ORIGINAL WORKSHEET / COPY FOR YOUR OWN PLANNING

Four-location capability map

Essential need (water / food / light / communication / other)

_____

Carry bag: item, packed weight and who can use it

_____

Vehicle loading kit: item, load order and lift assistance

_____

Home reserve: location, storage conditions and access

_____

Agreed backup: permission, access and shared hazard exposure

_____

If home is unavailable, what still works?

_____

If vehicle is unavailable, what still works?

_____

Observed failure, next change and review date

_____

ORIGINAL WORKSHEET / COPY FOR YOUR OWN PLANNING

Practice and cost record

Date, participants, scope and safe stopping conditions

_____

Total packed weight / largest individual load

_____

Total actual cost / borrowed or already-owned items

_____

Food + water + fuel + equipment + packaging weight

_____

What we actually did and conditions observed

_____

What failed or required assistance

_____

Changes agreed, responsible person and cost

_____

Supplies restored and next review date

_____

Sources, scope & rights

Sources checked November 8, 2026. Follow current instructions from local officials and the relevant publisher. Links support the specific notes marked in the guide; they do not imply review or endorsement of this publication.

[1] Idaho Office of Emergency Management: Creating an emergency plan

https://ioem.idaho.gov/creating-an-emergency-plan/

[2] CDC: How to create an emergency water supply

https://www.cdc.gov/water-emergency/about/how-to-create-and-store-an-emergency-water-supply.html

[3] CDC: How to make water safe in an emergency

https://www.cdc.gov/water-emergency/about/index.html

[4] CDC: Carbon monoxide poisoning basics

https://www.cdc.gov/carbon-monoxide/about/index.html

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