

## ED'S SOMEWHAT COMPREHENSIVE SURVIVAL BOOK READING LIST

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12/05/09

I highly recommend the following survival and preparedness books in order to gain a healthy understanding of what to expect before, during and even after a serious societal collapse.

Bear in mind that in such a chaotic situation, it is highly likely that there will be many facets to the difficulties you will be facing. For example, an economic collapse could easily lead to many, many types of hardships other than simply shrinking (or eliminating) ones bank account. Hunger, disease, violent attacks from equally hungry mobs, unrestrained crime, no electricity, water or gas; all of these could accompany such an event. Therefore it is wise to be prepared for all such contingencies, as you will likely be facing many of them all at once.

Preparedness – true preparedness – involves *far* more than just knowing how to make a fire using flint and steel. During a societal collapse, having a merit badge in fire-starting is not going to help you much; if at all. True preparedness involves much more than the popular concepts of wilderness survival. Read these books and learn this important difference.

Also bear in mind that some of these books are novels and are therefore, merely figments of the author's imaginations. These particular novelists, however, have quite an admirable grasp on the minutia of the hardships likely to be encountered in their character's survival and hence these details should serve as excellent examples for assisting the reader to get used to thinking *outside the box*. It is my firm belief that attention to such minute details could spell the difference between life and death in such serious situations.

Lastly, in survivalist circles, it is common to hear the phrase, “it is impossible to have too much ammo.” While this is certainly true, I would also like to add that it is equally impossible for you to have “too much reference material” upon which to rely in a dire situation. Information – after all – is *ammunition for the mind*.

**Buy them, read them and survive!**

Let's begin with the NOVELS:

*Truth is stranger than fiction?*

*Let's hope not, because these will downright scare the pants off of ya'!!*

- [\*Patriots: A Novel of Survival in the Coming Collapse\*](#), by James Wesley, Rawles.

This book, as far as many survivalists (including me) are concerned, is *The Bible* of preparedness novels. Mr. Rawles, who's fame stems from his widely popular survivalist website [SurvivalBlog.com](#), is a former U.S. Army Intelligence Officer with great experience in contingency planning. The book centers around a small group of survival-minded people preparing for and then surviving in a society which devolves from economic collapse into total anarchy and tyranny. It serves as an excellent example on just what one should consider in order to be prepared for anything that might arise during just such an event.

- [\*No Blade of Grass\*](#), by John Christopher

A bleak and unimaginably frightening novel from British author Christopher about just what could happen if an especially virulent virus was to dispense with all the grasses of the Earth. This book is excellent in how it depicts the shortcomings of those *who thought they were prepared*, but really weren't. Note that this book was also made into a [movie](#) in 1970.

- [\*Alas, Babylon\*](#), by Pat Frank

Originally published in 1959 at the apex of the Cold War and subsequent fear of nuclear holocaust, this book also serves as a prime example of how a seemingly prepared person can be left lacking in so many ways if all bases of preparedness are not addressed. The calamity depicted in this book is a so-called limited nuclear exchange between superpowers and frankly – in my own humble opinion – the situation would likely have been much worse and hence, far less survivable than the author purports. For example, there was almost no concern for radiation due to fallout or any other nuclear-specific matters by the author. But, nonetheless, it still serves as yet another good example of the lack of true preparedness by those *who thought they were prepared*.

The following three books comprise a trilogy, written over the course of six years (2003, 2006 and 2009) by the author, Matt Bracken. These books may be purchased directly from the author (there is even an option to receive signed copies) at his website at [www.enemiesforeignanddomestic.com](http://www.enemiesforeignanddomestic.com), or you may also purchase them from Amazon.com:

- [\*Enemies Foreign and Domestic\*](#), by Matthew Bracken

This is the first book of the trilogy, published in 2003. Bracken explores the devolution of the United States into a police state and the dire consequences encountered by those patriots within our nation who still believe in Constitutional Governance. An excellent read.

- [\*Domestic Enemies: The Reconquista\*](#), by Matthew Bracken

This, the second book in Bracken's trilogy, deals with the continual devolution into tyranny within our own government, while also having to deal with the added problems associated with racial unrest within the American southwest; specifically the areas including California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas sometimes referred to as [Aztlan](#) by radical elements within the hispanic communities in the northern, central and southern Americas.

- [\*Foreign Enemies and Traitors\*](#), by Matthew Bracken

The final book in Bracken's notable trilogy, published in 2009. This installment depicts the United States collapsing into the abject tyranny of a total police state and the subsequent breakup of it's states into separate regions with disparate social and political aims. It also deals with the resurgence of freedom initiated by the patriot community, which then leads to the dissolution of the federal tyranny and reformation of parts of the union. A fine ending to the trilogy.

- [\*One Second After\*](#), by William R. Forstchen

A vividly plausible and frightening account which merit's inclusion on your shelf. Forstchen tackles the seemingly benign scenario of an EMP (Electro-Magnetic Pulse) burst over the United States. Although there's no real *immediate* damage done as with an all-out nuclear exchange, this novel proves that with the fragility of our modern society, that frankly doesn't matter! When hundreds of millions of citizens are suddenly without power “for the long haul,” the vast majority of the populace will be *wishing* they died in an instantaneous fireball!

- [\*Unintended Consequences\*](#), by John Ross

Having dealt with firearms for the past forty years and having received my first gun (a .22 rimfire “gallery gun”) at age twelve, I truly thought I was a bona-fide, life-long member of the so-called *Gun Culture*. I was wrong. This book showed me just how naïve I am when compared to the hardcore members of that unique group of enthusiasts. Ross has his youthful characters, for instance, receiving gifts of *20mm Cannons* under the 'ol Christmas tree. Yikes! Besides being an excellent book for learning about the many different types and calibers of firearms and what one can (and cannot) expect from each, this masterful novel is also an excellent resource for studying the “what ifs” associated with a government plummeting into abject tyranny.

- [\*Molon Labe!\*](#), by Boston T. Party

Boston T. Party, the pseudonym of prolific author Kenneth W. Royce, is usually found within the non-fiction book section, with many such patriot-oriented “texts” to his credit. This is, to my knowledge, his only novel and it is noteworthy and unique. It is unique in that it delves into the subject of States Rights as a means by which a state (in this case Wyoming) successfully secedes from an increasingly intolerable, totalitarian federal union. The steps his characters take in the book are ingenious and practical and the tribulations they face from the federal government are credible as well. An interesting read to be sure.

- [\*Lucifer's Hammer\*](#), Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle

The least likely scenario (several massive pieces of a comet striking the earth) to occur in reality, yet it serves to not only scare your ever-lovin' socks off, but also to give you a good understanding of just how many hardships you might be likely to face in a total-meltdown of society. All the things you now take for granted can quickly become seemingly insurmountable obstacles in such a scenario. An excellent read.

Although I'm sure I could continue with naming, linking and critiquing survival related novels *ad infinitum*, the several novels listed above should give one an excellent grasp of most “what if such-and-such should happen” situations and that is the primary purpose of this list. If you wish to read more novels such as these, it would be an easy search within a site such as [Amazon](#) to find myriad books on this subject.

## And now for the “BASIC REFERENCE” MATERIALS:

- *How to Survive the End of the World as We Know It: Tactics, Techniques, and Technologies for Uncertain Times*, by James Wesley, Rawles

Rawles' most recent book (© 2009), which is a detailed “how to” guide for preparedness for yourself and your retreat. It is well organized and essentially lists the preparedness items and methods which he *alludes to* within his aforementioned novel. As with Rawle's *Patriots* novel, I consider this newest addition to be the definitive work on just what one should do to prepare for almost any given anarchical scenario. Buy it, study it and heed it.

- *Dare to Prepare!*, by Holly Drennan Deyo (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 2009)

Whereas Rawles' *Patriots* might be considered the *Bible* of the preparedness genre, Deyo's masterpiece should be considered the *Encyclopedia Britannica* of preparedness references. Rawle's *How to Survive...* book (see above) covers things such as what to have on hand and how to prepare a retreat, etc. Deyo's book is more of a “how to” book rather than a “what to do” book. They are equally important and both should be firmly ensconced on every Survivalist's book shelf! To give you an idea about just how massive and thorough this reference truly is, I suggest you peruse the [Table of Contents](#).

- *The Encyclopedia of Country Living (10<sup>th</sup> Edition): The Original Manual for Living Off the Land & Doing it Yourself*, by Carla Emery

A classic and an absolute plethora of do-it-yourself wisdom. Very well written too I might add.

- *When Technology Fails: A Manual for Self-Reliance, Sustainability and Surviving the Long Emergency*, by Matthew Stein

Stein's well researched contribution to the survivalism genre. It's close to being on a par with Carla Emery's classic work. Stein covers both short-term survivalism as well as survivalism for the long-haul.

- *Back to Basics: A Complete Guide to Traditional Skills (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)*, by Abigail R Gehring

Originally published by *Reader's Digest*, this book is also one of the truly classical works of self-sustained living. Not quite a in-depth or detailed as the above two books, but a great addition to your retreat library nonetheless.

- *PERMACULTURE: A Designer's Manual*, by Bill Mollison

*THE* book on setting up your property the natural way. Mollison's book is considered by many to be the absolute Bible on looking at sustainable life with a new set of eyes. He incorporates a very unique and practical methodology to all aspects of sustainability and not “fighting the land” but rather, using it to your advantage in ways you probably never imagined before.

- [\*How to Grow More Vegetables \(and Fruits, Nuts, Berries, Grains and Other Crops\) Than You Ever Thought Possible on Less Land Than You Can Imagine\*](#), by John Jeavons

... and he means it! Yet another unique and brilliant approach to so-called “natural gardening” that should be in every Survivalist's library.

- [\*Test Your Soil With Plants\*](#), by John Beeby

A very important topic which you might not have considered with regards to your agricultural efforts. This book provides the *Olde World* methods of determining soil viability and conditions using the same methods used prior to modern soil laboratories and Agricultural Extension Agencies. Just how *did* the farmers of old know what to plant where? (Hint: they simply took a good look at what plants were growing where and knew from experience what the soil conditions were in that area!). This book fills that very important gap; especially since it's doubtful you'll be able to tootle down to the Ag Agent's office during a long-term SHTF scenario.

- [\*Rawles on Retreats and Relocation\*](#), James Wesley, Rawles

The inimitable Mr. Rawles' on just where to go within the United States to assure yourself as safe and secure a retreat as possible. A must read prior to spending valuable resources on any retreat.

- [\*The Survival Retreat: A Total Plan for Retreat Defense\*](#), by Ragnar Benson

Benson is yet another long-time author of survival oriented books and highly esteemed within most survivalist circles. This book, originally published in 1983, is his definitive work on setting up a retreat.

- [\*The Modern Survival Retreat: A New and Vital Approach to Retreat Theory and Practice\*](#), by Ragnar Benson

An updated version (1998) of Benson's previous book above.

- [\*Tappan on Survival\*](#), Mel Tappan

Considered to be an early trail-blazer in survival circles, Tappan's work is a must have for any survival bookshelf. Being first published in 1981, it is a bit dated in some respects\* , but is still an excellent resource.

\* For instance, some of the guns he recommends may have better, more modern alternatives, which simply didn't exist when this book was written. However, *don't let these minor shortcomings deter you from getting the old tried-and-true resources*. They're as handy and pertinent today as they were when they were written!

- [\*Preparedness Now!\*](#), Aton Edwards

Edwards, director of the non-profit [\*\*International Preparedness Network\*\*](#), gives us this handy resource which covers many facets of preparedness for myriad types of potential crises.

- [\*When All Hell Breaks Loose\*](#), Cody Lundin

Lundin proves that even such a bleak subject such as Crisis Preparedness can be downright entertaining! His rather unorthodox (there's not another survival title like it that I'm aware of) method of writing is not only entertaining but he also covers some rather seldom-thought-of topics; far beyond "just the basics." A good read.

- [\*Basic Preparedness: A "How To" Guide For Preparedness & Self-Reliant Living\*](#), The Survival Center, Inc.

The good folks at [The Survival Center](#) have produced their own comprehensive resource manual for all-things-preparedness and this is it. The many "checklists" they include in this book are invaluable. Note that they are also a great resource for many types of survival related gear as well.

- [\*Emergency Food Storage & Survival Handbook: Everything You Need to Know to Keep Your Family Safe in a Crisis\*](#), Peggy Layton

Layton's book is an excellent resource for all things related to long-term storage of food and even cooking them as well. There's not much depth on other issues related to survival, but on the topic of food, this is an admirable resource indeed.

- [\*Life After Doomsday\*](#), Bruce D. Clayton, PhD

Dr. Clayton gives us this manual which is predominantly geared toward surviving a nuclear exchange. It is quite comprehensive in this regard, with a smattering of other topics covered as well. A good book to read if you wish to understand what it will take to prepare for survival in a radioactive world (and no, it's most decidedly not the way you learned from Hollywood!)

- [\*Crisis Preparedness Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to Home Storage and Physical Survival\*](#), Jack A. Spigarelli

Spigarelli really does present a meticulously comprehensive compendium on preparedness issues with this excellent book. Many, many tips, tricks, charts and tables to assure that you can understand just how to tailor your survival items to your specific needs. A great book for your shelf.

- [\*Deep Survival: Who Lives, Who Dies, and Why\*](#), Laurence Gonzales

This is quite a different take on survival books altogether. Gonzales gives us a truly unique resource in that *Deep Survival* isn't about "how to" survive, but rather "how did others survive in actual scenarios." Many real life-or-death incidences are covered and the author gives us the valuable lessons inherent to understanding just why this person *did* survive and why this other person *didn't* survive. There's no lesson quite like a *real* lesson! A unique and valuable resource indeed.

#### **A bit on FIREARM REFERENCE MATERIALS:**

This is where it gets a bit "sticky!" As with cars or any other topics with myriad possibilities available, it seems that almost everybody has a weighted preference towards a given type of firearm(s); *and that includes the experts*. There are many universal truths regarding firearms, ammunition and retreat defense, however and these books should give you a basic understanding of what works in a

given situation and what doesn't.

On this specific subject, I highly recommend that you seek out any pals who might be knowledgeable about guns to ask their advice on given firearms and their intended uses and capabilities; especially if you're a bona-fide greenhorn. Guns, their many accessories and even ammunition are both expensive and potentially dangerous when handled inappropriately by those lacking a respectable knowledge of them. You will want to neither waste valuable finances on “the wrong thing” or hurt yourself or others by delving into a subject in which you should always have assistance from a knowledgeable mentor.

- [\*\*\*Boston's Gun Bible\*\*\*](#), Boston T. Party

As of this writing, on Amazon, Boston's masterpiece has received one hundred twelve five-star ratings, nine four-star ratings and only five ratings below that! 'Nuff said about the value of his book. This truly is *the* Gun Bible; hands down. Get it prior to even thinking about getting a defensive firearm of any type.

- [\*\*\*Defending Your Retreat: A Manual for Combat After the Collapse\*\*\*](#), Delta Press, Ltd.

This excellent guide from the folks at [\*\*Delta Press\*\*](#) (use their “Search” box to lead you to **Item #C-011**) is a succinct treatise on how to set up your retreat for serious defensibility. Once you're at Delta's site, I urge caution about having your credit card “too handy” or you'll likely be working extra hours to pay your rent next month. There are just too many books you'll just “have to have!”

**Yet another must-have collection is MEDICAL RESOURCES:**

As with firearms, any medical resources you might need will be directly proportional to your own fluency with the subject. It never hurts to have “above your head” books on your shelf, but nonetheless, always start with the basics. A general *First Aid Guide*, such as the one published by the [\*\*American Red Cross\*\*](#), is always a great place to start and should be on every shelf, regardless of one's own capabilities. For a bit more depth, it can never hurt to consider the many [\*\*Emergency Field Service Manuals\*\*](#) produced by our own military (after all, you've already paid for their design and production!)

Note that thanks to the miracle of computers and the internet, there are now sites available where you can order PC-DVDs which contain literally hundreds of [\*\*Military Field Manuals included in Adobe® .pdf format\*\*](#) that you can access via your computer. This is an inexpensive method of getting a *lot* of information in your hands for very little cost, with the caveat that during a grid-down crisis, you won't have access to your computer and hence, your manuals.

- [\*\*\*Where There Is No Doctor: a village health care handbook\*\*\*](#), David Werner, with Carol Thuman and Jane Maxwell

If you find yourself in the unenviable (yet quite likely) predicament of having no access to professional medical care during a crisis, then this is definitely your book! It was written from first-hand experiences gained by the authors and many other health professionals around the world, from treating people in isolated, third-world environments. A very handy reference to have in a survival situation.

- [\*Where There Is No Dentist\*](#), Murray Dickson

The worthy companion to the above book. Don't skimp on the subject of dentistry! It is every bit as important as other “general health and first aid” topics. A “simple” abscessed tooth can quickly lead to complications, such as [sepsis](#) and other life-threatening reactions.

- [\*Ditch Medicine: Advanced Field Procedures for Emergencies\*](#), by Hugh L. Coffee

A valuable resource for the Survivalist's medicine library; especially in a long-term survival scenario. Coffee's book is well-written from first-hand knowledge in the field in remote situations around the world and could very well be a life-saving tool.

- [\*Survival Medicine: Nature's Way\*](#), Marilyn Moore

Yet another resource from *Delta Press* (search Item # C-143). The proverbial *other side of the coin* with respect to healing and first aid. More and more folks are beginning to swear by naturapathic (herbal) remedies and some swear *at* it, but in times of serious crises, it never hurts to maintain resources from *both sides* of the medical spectrum.

### **Now for the oft-overlooked subject of SURVIVAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

So you're left without internet, cell service or even a land line. Heck, you can't even find a telegraph key or Pony Express rider laying around! Just what are you to do? That's precisely what the following books will address. As with the previous topics, it always pays to search around in your area to find someone local who might be of assistance. A local HAM club or a friend with a CB in their car; all can potentially assist you to understand your options in this regard.

- [\*Guide to Emergency Survival Communications: How to Build and Power Your System\*](#), Dave Ingram  
HAM, Shortwave, CB, GMRS/FRS ... all will be explained in Ingram's excellent resource. He even goes into how to off-grid power your gear and setup your antennas. A must have.
- [\*Communications for Survival and Self-Reliance\*](#), Michael Chesbro

The next rung on the ladder from the previous title. Just think of it this way: Once Ingram turns you into a *Tenderfoot Radio-Nerd*, Chesbro will complete your transformation into an *Eagle Scout Radio-Nerd*!

*Lastly – on purpose - comes the genre in which most people first envision when thinking about “survivalism” and “preparedness”:*

### **WILDERNESS SURVIVAL:**

Ah yes, the many posers faced by Navy SEALs and Army Rangers: *“Is that green lizard most suitable with a nice snifter of chlorinated mud-puddle, or should I opt for the brown?” “Does the piquant of prickly pear juice overshadow the sweetness of raw grub?”*

Although these are the tough questions our valiant men and women in uniform must face from

time to time, it's far less likely that we mere mortal civilians will ever have to face them; even in just about any crisis situation. Knowing how to tackle spider-mites on your lettuce using easily obtainable, natural insecticides or how to defend yourself against a hungry mob who wishes to string you up for that can of diced tomatoes you're holding is a vastly more important skill set in just about any situation you're likely to face.

Nonetheless, it never hurts to know how to make a fire using flint 'n steel and it definitely never hurts to know just what plants are edible (and especially palatable) and which ones will send you on a journey through Timothy Leary-land!

Here are a couple of wilderness survival books tailored to us civilian-types:

- [\*SAS Survival Handbook: How to Survive in the Wild, in Any Climate, on Land or at Sea\*](#), John “Lofty” Wiseman

The absolute best “Boy Scouts on Steroids” book I've ever perused, bar none. Wiseman also produces a physically smaller, somewhat whittled-down version, the [\*SAS Survival Guide\*](#), which is a perfect fit for your [bug-out bag](#).

- [\*The Essential Wild Food Survival Guide\*](#), Linda Runyon

Runyon has decades of practical experience living off the land (yes, by choice) and has become a leading authority on the subject of eating wild foods. She also has other resources pertaining to this same subject on her [website](#).

I should also recommend that obtaining Field Guides – which must be chosen for your specific area of the country – are a good addition to your reference shelf. The popular [Peterson's Field Guide](#) series are readily available via Amazon or just about any other online book resource.

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In conclusion, I'm sure there will be plenty of folks who will say, “you should have included this book because ...” or, “you shouldn't have included that book because ...” To them I say, “write your own stinkin' list and get it to the masses quickly, for the entire point of producing such resources is to educate as many patriotic, liberty-minded individuals as possible in the short time we likely have prior to the next life-and-death crisis! Regardless of our personal idiosyncrasies, that is the way we can all benefit our fellow patriots!”

Also, never forget to [READ ABOUT LIBERTY](#) – perhaps the most important facet of survivalism of all – lest we forget why we wish to survive in the first place!

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*When our world falls apart, may it do so with the knowledge of how to fix it being firmly planted in the minds of those who truly deserve to pull through and rebuild it ~ Ed Boyd*