

Common Sense Guide to Surviving Crisis

10 Essentials Items to Secure Now



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“It is better to have and not need, than to need and not have.”

Franz Kafka

“Life belongs to the living, and he who lives must be prepared for changes.”

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Underlying Conditions That Could Cause the Crisis

I want to start off by saying that I don't consider myself a doomsayer and I hope that my predictions turn out to be completely wrong. I believe that everyone should continue living life to its fullest, enjoying time with family and friends, remaining positive, present, engaged, while continuing on a path of learning and loving.

That being said, any honest and objective assessment of the current financial and geopolitical situation has to lead the observer to conclude that we are in a very bad and unstable state. The U.S. dollar and stock market look highly overvalued and are vulnerable to collapse. The banking system remains highly leveraged and prone to another crisis. The geopolitical landscape is more threatening than ever, with serious conflicts developing between nuclear power in the United States and Russia/China.

The fractional reserve fiat monetary system is a giant Ponzi scheme that is unsustainable. The 2008 crisis was just the tip of the iceberg and rather than addressing and correcting the problems, our leaders have simply created a short term fix that has been successful only at delaying the inevitable crash.

However, the further the government kicks the can down the road, applies band-aid solutions and allows moral hazard to continue unabated, the more severe and lengthy the final crash will be. The response of printing Trillions of dollars, handing it to the banks while propping up the housing and stock markets, does not create healthy, organic, sustainable growth and does not address the root cause. It only encourages more of the same behavior that got us into this mess. Indeed, we are in a **worse** situation now than we were just prior to the 2008 crisis and the eventual resolution is not going to be pretty.

The debt situation in the United States and many other nations worldwide has become unsustainable. We are witnessing desperate and unprecedented moves in an attempt to prop up the market and keep the entire system from imploding. You may already be familiar with these statistics, but they are worth repeating in order to grasp the gravity of the situation:



- ✓ The U.S. debt recently passed 100% of GDP as revenues declined and the annual deficit hit a record \$1.65 Trillion – a 10X increase in just 4 years!
- ✓ The total U.S. debt is estimated at over \$100 Trillion, when including unfunded liabilities such as social security and medicare.
- ✓ Consumer debt has also increased more than 10X since 1980 to \$14 Trillion!
- ✓ The FED printed more money in 2009-2010 than was created in the previous 200 years combined!

The U.S. government is essentially broke and is forced to borrow over \$1 Trillion every year to close its budget gap. In my view, the government has been hijacked by elite corporate and banking interests. They have been systematically working to transfer wealth away from the middle class and to the top 1%. We now have a dangerous form of fascism in America.

Much of the nation's wealth has been looted, with the government handing over Trillions in taxpayer dollars to the banksters. There are rumors that the nation's gold has been sold off and national parks have been pledged as collateral against our exploding debt.

Although this all sounds like some impossible bad dream, we really should not be that surprised. The [founding fathers repeatedly warned against the nation falling into the hands of the banking elite](#), who would wind up bringing the country to its knees and buying up its assets for a fraction of their true worth.

The citizens of a free nation must be constantly vigilant, informed and ready to fight this type of threat and corruption. But Americans have been dumbed down by the media and are more interested in American Idol, Football or the new iPad, than protecting their country and ensuring that their children and grandchildren have the same freedoms and opportunities. It is truly pathetic, but there are some signs that people are awakening.

What to Expect – How the Crisis Might Unfold

So, given the fact that the entire house of cards could come crashing down at any point, what might this scenario look like and what should you do to prepare?

Today's dollar is backed by nothing but faith in the U.S. government, which is widely known to be bankrupt, both morally and financially. Would you have faith in a government that starts illegal wars based on false premises and then has to borrow over \$1 Trillion every year just to pay the bills? If your answer is "no," you might want to consider getting out of dollars while you still can and perhaps out of the country all together. The world is waking up to the scam of fiat currencies and the shoe could literally drop at any given moment.

In this scenario, the government is likely to announce bank Holidays, prohibit the withdrawal of money from banks, the stock market, IRAs, 401k, etc. You may not be able to get your money out or if they finally allow you to withdrawal a portion, it will be worth a fraction of what it was before the crisis. I know it is hard to stomach and difficult to envision such a thing happening in the U.S., but there is certainly historic precedent. Furthermore, the conditions that caused hyperinflation in the Weimar Republic, Argentina, Russia, Zimbabwe and other places are arguably worse in the United States currently.

Geopolitical tensions are at the most heightened point in decades, with the world's major nuclear powers staring each other down. Russia has moved its military into the Middle East for the first time in decades and is confronting Western powers looking to overthrow Assad. China is threatening military action to protect its claims in the South China Sea.

Of course, nuclear war would be the worst possible outcome. But even if panic ensues, there will be runs on the banks, which only hold a fraction of the full deposit on their books. The FDIC is already broke and will be unable to stop the bleeding. The only solution will be to print more money, which just reduces the value of whatever dollars are already in circulation, forcing everyone holding fiat currency to take a hit.

From there, it is easy to see how food shortages, civil unrest, martial law and plenty of other ugly scenarios could easily develop. I have no idea how likely each is, but I think the rational approach is to hope for the best, but prepare for the worst.

10 Steps You Should Take to Prepare & Survive the Crash

I see these common sense steps as having no downside and the ultimate potential upside – survival, in addition to comfort and peace of mind. Even if a major war or economic crash does not materialize, it will be invaluable for you to learn critical skills and stockpile essential goods, which can be used even absent a crisis and whose value is likely to go up regardless.

I have spent hours researching the items below, as I like to make sure that I am getting a quality, reliable product at a good price. I have comparison shopped, read reviews and tried most of the products below so that you don't have to. These are the items that I believe to be most critical, sorted roughly in order of importance.

#1 Get Out of Dollars and Into Precious Metals

If you want to preserve your wealth, you should get out of fiat dollars and into gold and silver bullion as soon as possible.

Think twice about storing your precious metals in a bank "safety" deposit box. Hide it well around your home or get a safe and bolt/cement it to your foundation. Keep 3 months worth of living expenses in cash with your precious metals and make sure to set aside enough cash to purchase the rest of the items listed below. I allocate about 50% of my wealth to physical gold/silver, 40% in mining stocks and the remaining 10% or so in cash (U.S and Canadian dollars).



#2 Store and Be Able to Filter Water



Water is absolutely the most important thing to have in the event of a crisis. You can survive without food for a few days or even weeks, but won't last long without water. Do not rely on your local municipality to continue supplying water to your home or the power company to continue supplying the energy necessary to pump the water. If you have a well, consider installing a [manual or solar pump system](#). Also, having a good water purification system can be life saving. You need one that can remove dangerous living organisms and harmful bacteria, while filtering without the need for power. I ended up settling on the [AquaRain system](#), which uses gravity to filter the water and can turn rain water, creek water or even swimming pool water into safe drinking water ([video](#)). There are a number of gravity water filters, such as the [Berkey](#), ranging from \$90 to \$300 to suit all budgets. I ordered mine from the website <http://www.homestead-products.com/water-filters.htm> and found them to have the lowest price and good customer service.

I also picked up a few 5-gallon and 7-gallon Aqua Tainers. [Amazon carries them](#) for \$20 each, but I found them for half that price at WalMart. I like these better than the [large 55-gallon containers](#), as they can be more easily transported.

#3 Purchase Food Storage

Having at least 3-months supply of food for each member of your family is also critical, as history shows how quickly store shelves are emptied at the first sign of a crisis. Bulk freeze-dried and dehydrated foods have shelf lives of 20 years or more and can provide months of nutritious meals in the event of an emergency. Furthermore, the containers allow you to store a large amount of calories in a small space. [Thrive Life](#) has a variety of regular and organic food storage. You can customize your boxes of #10 cans. Costco also has a limited supply of food storage, usually at lower costs.



#4 Start Gardening and Purchase Non-Hybrid Seeds



Hybrid seeds are critical in the event that the crisis lasts longer than a few months. It is incredibly valuable and rewarding to learn to garden, generate your own food supply and not have to rely on others for basic nutrition. Gardening can also be a relaxing/meditative process, allowing you and your family to get your hands dirty, reach into the soil and connect to the Earth. Make sure that you buy non-GMO, non-hybrid, organic seeds, that will

regenerate new seeds for future seasons. I opted for [this kit from Amazon for \\$49](#) which offers 50 varieties of fruits, vegetables and herbs. [Costco also offers a seed pack for \\$49.](#)

If you have yet to start a garden, get on it! The sooner that you get the plants growing, learn from mistakes and develop your green thumb, the better. Not to mention the joy of nursing a plant from seed to food and then getting to eat the freshest and best-tasting produce you will ever taste. If you set up an automatic irrigation system, you can limit your gardening time to just a few hours per week. The book "[Square Foot Gardening](#)" was a huge help in reducing our learning curve with gardening.

#5 Camping Stove and/or Solar Stove

A camping stove will allow you to cook food and heat up water in the event that your electricity or gas goes out. It also allows you to cook meals on the go. I chose the [Coleman](#).



#6 Back Up Power Generators

This will allow you to power critical items in the event that the power goes out. This includes lighting, heating, battery charges, computers, stereos, cell phones, small refrigerators and other appliances. If you have a good amount of sunlight in your area, I would recommend a solar generator system, rather than a gas generator which can be noisy, difficult to transport, produce nauseous fumes and is obviously non-renewable.

There are a variety of solar kits available starting around \$500 and up, dependent on how much power you want. You can choose a kit like [this was on Amazon.com with everything that you need for \\$1,799](#). However, if you have some DIY skills, you can buy the individual components and build this same kit for closer to \$1,000.

#7 Heat Source in Cold Climates

If you live in a place with cold winters, heat is essential to survival should the power company stop supplying your home with gas and electric. An added bonus of having a generator is that you can plug an electric heater into it to keep a room warm.



However, for larger areas you should consider purchasing a pellet stove and/or propane heater. [This site](#) is a great resource for some of the best pellet stoves available and has advantages and disadvantages of each. Pellet inserts do a much better job of heating the home than a fireplace because there is not as many fumes and the exhaust does not have to be as large. Instead of all the heat simply going up the chimney, it will be used to heat the room it sits in. Another reason for the higher performance is the fact that the pellets burn hotter and longer than traditional wood.

You may also want to consider a portable propane heater such as the [Mr. Heater Big Buddy](#). It sells for about \$140, produces 18,000 BTUs and can be powered by small one-pound propane tanks or the larger 20lb tanks with a hose adapter. It is safe for indoor use, has a built in fan and gets high reviews on Amazon and elsewhere.

#8 Protection

Protection will become important if civil unrest develops and mobs of people become desperate and start roaming from home to home looking to loot and steal. It would obviously be ideal if you were outside



of a major city, in the wilderness and not visible from the street. Either way, you might want to consider investing in a gun for self defense. For close range, you want a shotgun such as the [Mossberg 500](#). However, you don't necessarily need a 12-gauge to get the job done. Particularly for the elderly or smaller-framed individuals, a 20-gauge might be better.

For hand guns, there is nothing wrong with the popular and trustworthy Glock series. I personally prefer the [Springfield XD series](#). Make sure to also stock up on plenty of ammunition and if you are new to firearms, get out to a local range and practice shooting. Shot placement and accuracy under pressure are critical components to firearm self defense. I hope to never have to use my weapon, but I like the security and peace of mind that it provides. If you want a hand gun or semi-automatic rifle such as an AK47 or AR15, you will need to go to a gun show or shop. Other excellent methods of protection include a good guard dog, security system and [bullet-proof vest](#). Having family and friends around will also be important, as there is safety in numbers.

Two additional considerations that fall under the protection category include night vision and

perimeter defense. Stay away from Generation 1 night vision and opt for Gen 2 or Gen 3 if you can afford it. Digital night vision is making leaps and bounds lately, offering Gen 2 or 3 type quality at much lower prices. Check out the [Nightowl iGEN 20/20](#) or [Pulsar 550R](#) for digital monoculars under \$500. Ebay also has deals on new and used night vision devices. Note that certain states like CA prohibit sales of the higher level units.

#9 Medicine, First Aid and Personal Care Products

What types of medicine do you personally need on a regular basis? Do you have asthma or other life-threatening ailments that need a particular medicine? Something to reduce fever or for chronic pain? Stock up on all of these items as the local pharmacies are likely to run out of supplies or shut down for a period of time. Also consider things like soap, shampoo, toilet paper, razors, wet wipes, etc. which you would not want to do without for several months. Lastly, a [first aid kit](#) is critical for treating any wounds or injuries that you or your family might sustain.



#10 Batteries, Lighters, Headlamps, Radio, Tools



If the power remains out for an extended period of time, you will want to have [head lamps](#), [multi-purpose lighters](#) and plenty of [spare batteries](#). Pick up the value packs or if you have a power source such as the solar generator mentioned above, pick up recyclable batteries and a charger. Multi tools are also nice to have and allow you to be able to repair a variety of things at home or on the go. The Leathermans are nice, but I opted for [this Gerber Multi-tool for just \\$33](#).

Parting Shot

These common sense steps can help you and your family get prepared, but don't obsess or hide out in a bunker waiting for a crisis. The chaos will eventually dissipate and a new system will emerge that I am confident will be much better than our current one.

We will be forced to learn some hard lessons, correct some of our thoughtless, violent ways in favor of a more intelligent, responsible and compassionate system. If you are properly prepared, you will enjoy the transition as a long vacation or camping trip, bonding with family and friends. It is also an opportunity for intellectual incubation and finally to get involved in creating a better world for yourself and for future generations.

In the meantime, continue living, learning, loving and enjoying life to the fullest. I hope this information benefits you in some way and I wish you the best. If you wish to receive access to all GSB guides, our model portfolio and monthly newsletter, [click here to sign up](#).



Cheers,
Jason Hamlin

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