



SURVIVAL PAPER #SP09-1

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A beginners guide to the survival arsenal

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Alright so you've gone out and gotten yourself aware of what's going on around you your eyes are open and your not one of the sheep any more. Maybe you've even gone so far as to join a group like L.F.I and have taken some instruction and made some preparedness provisions like a cache of food, bug out bags and other necessities. Who knows maybe your really on top of things and have gotten yourself and a few select folks into a group and have a little retreat to bug out to when the fit hits the fan. That's great now the harsh reality of all of this is...how do I defend it all from the people who didn't make any provisions for anything??? My self and my neighbors are all agreed to be a collective in such an event and will basically hunker down and stay where we are until we can no longer stay or decide to move to an alternate location. This being the safety in numbers approach to survival and the agreed reality that bugging out will not be an option as we are close to the city and the roads will probably impassable or even road blocked and all contraband goods such food stores and weapons will be confiscated at said point. This article is written in the hopes that all of you reading this will go out armed with this information do some research and make your own evaluations this is just an opinion and is what currently works for me.

Hand guns.

This is usually the first purchase a person makes so I will start here. There are a great many really good guns on the market every thing from single shot pistols in fifty Caliber on up through full auto machine pistols in the seventeen caliber range, I'm going to recommend something in between. The question a lot of people ask is what's the best handgun? My reply is the one that's in your hand when something goes bump in the night, or as my dad used to say "the first rule of gun fighting is have a gun". The first category to rule out is the sub compact micro caliber guns, these range from 22 through 32 cal and are basically hideout or belly guns these come in a wide array of configurations from revolver to semi auto and are not acceptable for our mission at hand .The terminal ballistics of these micro calibers put them at a great disadvantage to a gun of major caliber and by this I mean any gun of 38 cal and up. Any expert will tell you that the minimum caliber of choice should be no lesser than a 38 or 9mm.

The next category to rule out is the single action revolvers I know that the old colt .45 was the gun that won the west and was in use by the army as late as the Philippine

insurrection but that was then this is now. Yes these great old guns come in a variety of great calibers from .38 through .45 and the modern reproductions can be had in .357 magnum and .44 magnum but the reality is they are too slow to get into play and are very complicated to maintain in an in the field environment and replacement parts are non-existent except as special order and in a Katrina or L.A riot situation this ain't happening. So what we are left with is large caliber double action revolvers and single action or double action semi auto pistols a double action revolver by definition cocks the hammer and rotates the cylinder with a pull of the trigger it also has a swing out cylinder unlike its single action predecessor with its archaic loading gate and thumb cocking of the hammer each time you want to fire a shot. You can choose from .38 special all the way up to a .500 caliber in these guns but remember the gun's biggest limitation is its ammo if you have a monster .500 you can kill a fifty Buick at 100 yards but when that ammo dries up it just became a really pretty club or hammer you must stock up ammo for it or learn to re-load you do re-load don't you? So tactically we see the disadvantages of exotic guns stick with something you will be able to pick up ammo or barter for something common. If you don't already own a gun I recommend you get to a range and rent some guns to see what fits you and your capabilities in other words what can you confidently and continuously hit a target with.

Semi auto pistols come in a variety of flavors from 9-mm to the monster .50 action express and manufacturers range from A to Z all of them good the most popular are Colt, Glock Smith & Wesson, Springfield Amory, Ruger just to name a few and these are all really great guns get out to a range and see what feels right for you I like a Colt government model in .45 acp because of its ease of operation ease of maintenance and the availability of parts you will find this gun every where I also keep a Smith and Wesson revolver in .44 Magnum as a back up . For a semi auto I recommend at least ten spare magazines and about 500 rounds as for the revolver an equal number of speed loaders and ammo again buy what feels right for you nothing worse than going into a bad situation with a gun you have reservations about.

Shot guns:

What can I say there is no gun more menacing than a scattergun and or the sound one makes when you rack a round into the chamber every one in the world knows what they sound like and all felons admit to soiling their skivvies when they hear a pump gun cycled. Also with the right loads they are perfect for a myriad of tactical purposes from signaling to spraying your opposition with a variety of projectiles from Sabot slugs to steel flechettes semi auto or pump you decide I will caution you to not go under 20Gauge as the smaller shells are harder to get 12Ga and 20 being the most popular. I will also caution against pistol or folding stock versions, as they are almost uncontrollable in use. Stick to a gun with a full stock I gravitate toward 18" barreled models of a pump nature as when they bung up the fix is usually easy whereas a semi with a bad gas cylinder or piston is now a single shot at best and a bat at worst also stay away from the venerable old side by side when they break they are useless and are impossible to reload fast

under a full head of adrenaline. Now if you really wanna get some heavy ordinance you can pick up a mag fed bull pup version of the scattergun or you can get a pretty nice semi auto version based on a beefed up AK-47 design marketed by Saiga, again get to a range rent some guns and find out what agrees with you.

Battle rifles:

You will notice I used the term "Battle rifle" not rifle. This is because your favorite target or hunting rifle is not what we are talking about bolt guns and single shots even lever actions need not apply here these are all excellent weapons in the right environment but in a tactical situation are highly impractical the single shot well you know does not stack up to a mob situation they can get ya between reloads and when that adrenalin dumps and the tunnel vision kick in it feels like trying to stuff square pegs into round holes. Lever actions are great for cowboy shoots where the only thing on the line is a bad score or a lousy time, when its your butt on the line lever guns are verboten because even the best of them break down or jam and you gotta be a gunsmith to put em back into action, also loading them is slow they are limited in capacity and are not chambered in readily available cartridges also they are relegated to round or flat nose ammo so they don't set off a bomb in your face when recoil bounces that tubular magazine around, also if the mag tube gets bent or dented the gun is out of service with a detachable mag you just change magazines. Bolt guns unless they are of a military configuration are a handicap as well there aint gonna be a lot of 270 or 220 swift ammo out there for pick up 30-06 .308 .223 and the .50 bmg are the majority of what's out there if regular operations of the country come to a halt most of this will be from field pickups or barter. All that surplus ammo for the Mausers and British Enfields is gonna dry up like a puddle in the desert that's just a sad fact so unless you are a re-loader or have a huge stock pile stick with the current service rounds of your local armed forces or police force. Pump action rifles are out for the same reason the lever guns are. Camp rifles or carbines in pistol calibers are kind of pointless, as they have limited effective range

So that leaves us with the .308 and the venerable 30-06 as cartridge choices, ballistics wise they are close the .308 being more portable of the two read more carry capacity the 06 having the slightly higher velocity and being able to use a heavier bullet that's the differences both are excellent killers out to 500 yds and beyond Just ask Major John Plaster Master sniper U.S Army ret: or U.S.M.C Sniper Carlos Hathcock. There a great many platforms for these cartridges The 30-06 M1-Garand is a great rifle for the money and can be had at any gun show or even through the civilian marksmanship program surplus rifles and parts abound. In the .308 camp there are so many I cant list them all but the most popular are the FN-FAL , H&K 91 , Cetme , M1A1 etc these are great battle rifles and you have to get out and research which is best for you rent hem and shoot them and buy the one that suits you best I have an M 1 Garand for back up to my FN-FAL I also have a U.S model of 1917 in 30-06 just in case everything goes to hell. I also have on hand 500 rounds of ammo for each gun and around twenty magazines or clips for each.

Battle carbines

Last but not least I have this category a battle carbine is a rifle chambered for an intermediate cartridge usually selective fire, designed to be a light assault or close quarters combat weapon. These are great for close distance fighting 300 yds and under or for urban maneuvers, read inner city building to building fighting or other close operations. These guns are generally chambered in .223 and the Russian 7.62x39 these are not the only intermediate calibers out there but are the two most popular the 7.62x39 may be plentiful and cheap right now but watch for this to change. If you gotta have a mouse gun around I prefer the AR-15 you may like the Ruger mini-14 or any of the AK variants or even an old SKS. Again it is what you feel confident with, the battle carbine is better for younger members of the family or for the ladies who don't like the recoil and weight of a full out battle rifle also inexperienced shooters will be able to learn easier with a gun in this category. With all this said just owning a gun does not automatically prepare you for situations where a gun will be needed in other words practice, practice, practice it is your duty to you group to be well versed in all aspects of your firearms go out and take a class from a certified instructor in the firearm discipline of your choice you can get info from the N.R.A website for all aspects of firearms training in your area or check out your local sportsman's club or shooting range they will be happy to assist in any way possible. Most gun guys or gals are happy to share any knowledge they may have and will be only too happy to help you get started just ask me I know.

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