

A Long-Term Survival Guide - Specialty Survival Tools:

Survival-minded people tend to collect tools, equipment, supplies, and self-defense weapons, because having these items, and knowing how to use them, can increase your self-reliance. But in addition to the normal survival gear and supplies you might own, there are a number of less common items, which I tend to call specialty tools, that can also be useful, in certain situations.

There are three basic types of these specialty items, hideout (or concealable) weapons and tools, disguised (clandestine, covert, or camouflaged) weapons and tools, and combination (multifunction) weapons and tools. (There is some overlap between these three categories.)

Here are some examples of specialty survival tools, so you can decide if any of them might have a place in your long-term survival plans. Please note that the legality of owning, carrying, or using any of these weapons or tools will vary greatly, depending on where you live. Also, items that are currently legal can be banned by new laws, and owning or using these items may very well prejudice a jury against you. This information is presented to help you survive a long-term disaster, not to get you into legal trouble, so use these items for survival situations only.



Hideout Guns: The Downsizer single-shot derringer is roughly the size of a deck of cards.



The five-shot North American Arms mini revolver can be outfitted with a folding handle. Either of these guns are good candidates for use as hideout, or concealable weapons, among others.



Hideout Knives: These tiny concealable knives are known as lapel daggers, or sleeve daggers, because they are designed to be hidden in your clothing, and were used by spies and agents. You can buy a lot of these specialty items, but once you have seen the designs, you could also make your own versions, if you need to, or just because making your own equipment is a lot of fun.



These little knives are thumb daggers (the handle is pinched between thumb and forefinger).



Plastic versions of many knives are available, and work ok for defense, but not as cutting tools.

There are many small knives that would make good hideouts, like these examples:





Disguised Weapons: These weapons are designed to look like something else, and run the gamut, from sword canes and sword umbrellas, to briefcase guns and folding machine guns.



Knife pens have a tiny blade hidden inside.



Knife combs can be had with steel blades, or plastic blades (to pass through metal detectors).



Here are two different types of belt buckle knives, but there are many more styles available.



Shown here are a cigarette lighter with knife, and a compass & thermometer with knife.



This knife is designed to fit into the oil filler tube on a Harley Davidson motorcycle, but a similar item could be made for many other locations that have an exposed handle. Use your imagination.



Shown here are a key with a tiny knife blade, and another with a blade and a handcuff key.



Lipstick knives, such as these, are a good item for ladies to carry.



This little knife is designed to hide on your key chain.



Here is a blade that looks like a dog tag, & has lashing holes for adding a stick handle.



This sword cane has a reversed blade (it is mounted on the lower end, instead of the handle end, like most sword canes), and this bike seat has a spike welded on (that hides in the bike frame).



Closeup of bike seat spike.



This little titanium spike is hollow, to encourage blood loss, and looks like an ink pen.



This titanium knife (and this knife & fork set) fit into credit card-sized sheaths.



Both of these tools are also the size of a credit card, so they can hide in your wallet.



Sharpeners: This diamond hone is credit card sized, and the speedy sharp is even smaller.



Handcuff Keys: These plastic hideout keys are designed to be sewn onto your clothing.



Here is a belt buckle with a hidden handcuff key, and how to modify a safety pin, so that it can be used as a handcuff key (with a little practice). When the pin is closed, it looks like any other.



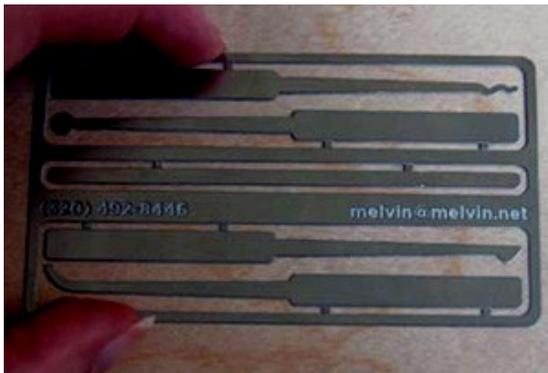
Thumbcuffs are small enough to carry, as a hidden restraint device.

Lock Picks: There are a number of covert types of lock pick sets available, and you can also make your own picks out of wire, hacksaw blades, steel strapping, or windshield wiper metal.

Note that we are not trying to encourage you to become a burglar. In a long-term survival scenario, you may have to be your own locksmith, so you should acquire the skills and equipment now, while you can. Once you have the skills, you can also help other people.



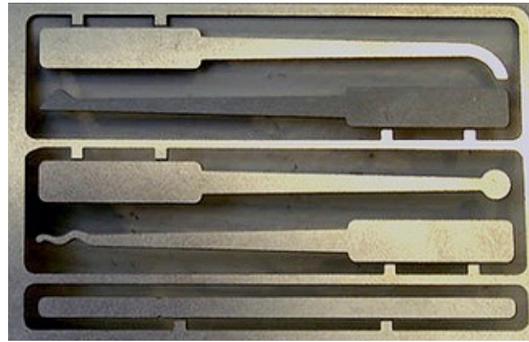
These lock pick sets are designed to look like small pocket knives.



Here are two types of credit card size lock pick sets, which will fit in your wallet.



This fake credit card has a set of lock picks hidden inside, and the lock pick set on the right is designed to look like an ink pen. (The pick heads store inside the pen body, until needed.)



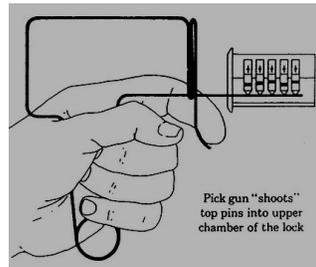
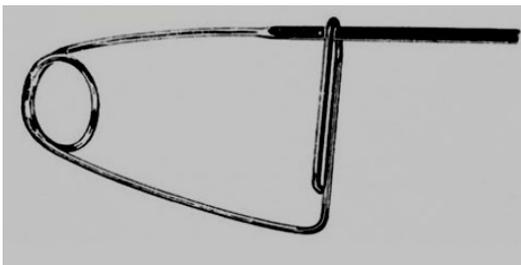
Credit Card Keys and Lock Picks: If you need to make keys or lock picks, but don't have any key blanks, or suitable metal to improvise them out of, you can fashion both items from credit card plastic. You need the original key (or a picture of the key), to whittle out a copy, but this trick works ok with most locks (try it). Lock picks made from card blanks also work ok.



Lock Pick Guns: These tools are available in both manual, and electric versions.



Here is a pen-style pick gun, and an improvised one, made from electric scissors.



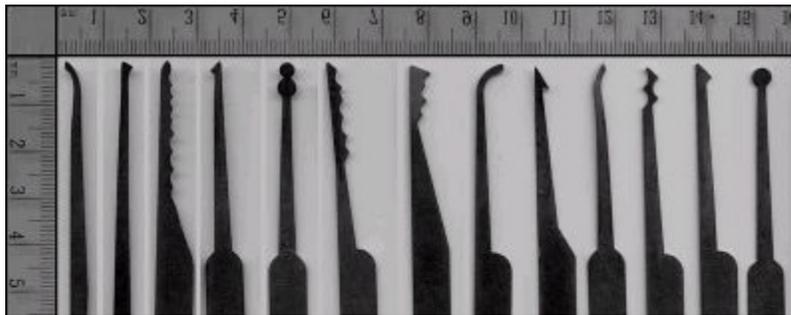
Snap picks can be improvised from springy wire. Flatten the end, to fit in the lock.



Here is a wire snap pick, with a rubber band spring, and picks made from hacksaw blades.



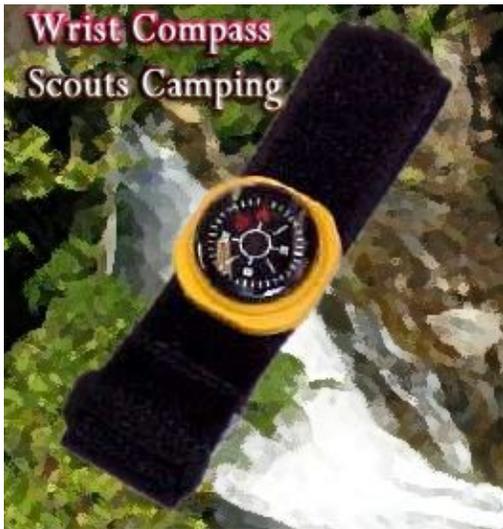
Hacksaw blade picks (above) work almost as well as professional picks (below).



Tension tools are needed to lever the lock gently as you pick the pins, and can also be improvised from the same materials as lock picks.



Padlock shims are one way to open a padlock without the key (they are used in pairs), and they can also be improvised from empty soda cans, or beer cans, like the example on the right.

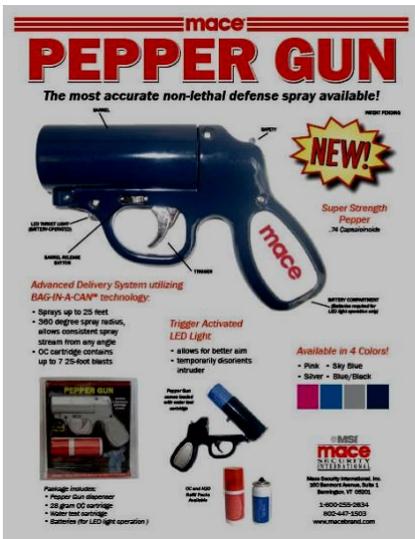


A compass is a useful tool for survival escape and evasion, as well as basic navigation. Here are two styles of wristwatch compass, a carabiner compass (and a similar thermometer), and two compasses that are small enough to be covertly sewn onto, or pinned onto, your clothing.





Disguised Stun Guns: These stun guns are designed to look like flashlights, cell phones, etc..



Pepper Spray is available in a pistol dispenser, or a variety of disguised dispensers.



Disguised Blackjacks: These gloves are sap gloves, weighted for impact, and so is the hat.



Combination Tools: These tools have larger blades than other multi-tools.



Clip-On Tools: These tools have a built-in carabiner, for secure retention.



Here is a knife with a knuckle sheath, and another with an attached blowgun.



This knife has a built-in single-shot pistol.



Here is a knife with a six-shot pistol in the handle.

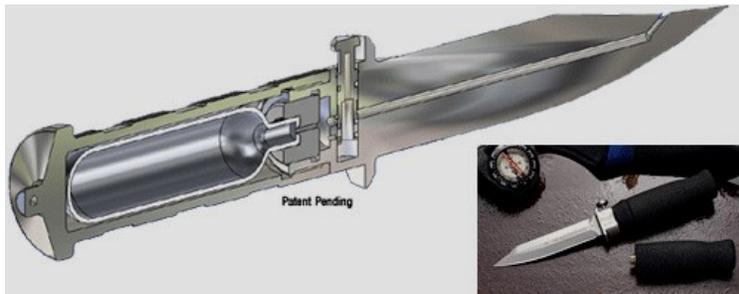


The ballistic knife uses a heavy spring, to shoot the blade at your target. I like these, but don't launch your weapon if you don't have any others handy.





This wasp knife can inject a blast of carbon dioxide into your target.



Cutaway of wasp, showing CO2 cylinder, and effect of wasp on a watermelon.

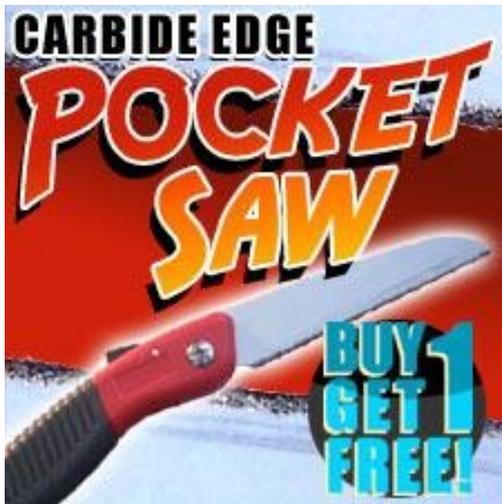


Magpull FMG Folding Machine Gun: This functional gun folds up into an innocent square. Currently you can't buy these without a federal firearms license, but the idea is still cool.

Other Useful Items:



Pocket Chainsaws: An effective saw, that folds up into a compact package.



Carbide Saws: A carbide saw blade will cut hardened steel, such as padlocks.



Carbide grit blades are available for hacksaws, saber saws, and other power saws.



Crash Axes: Crash axes are used to cut your way out of a downed aircraft, but they will chop and pry through most barriers. Surplus units have insulated handles, for cutting through power lines.





Wire Cutters: Used for defeating barbed wire obstacles, and for constructing them.



There are several styles of military surplus wire cutters; I like the folding version best.



Some military style bayonets have a wire cutter function built into their design.



Titanium Prybars: A little prybar like this can come in handy for many basic tasks.



Titanium is stronger than steel, non-magnetic, and never rusts.



Titanium prybars come in several styles; they are light and strong, but pricey.



Grappling Hooks: These miniature grappling hooks disassemble, and store in the handle.



There are several styles of small grappling hooks, including micro-sized versions.



Here are two kinds of folding grappling hook.



This grappling hook is made with two pieces, which store flat, until assembled.

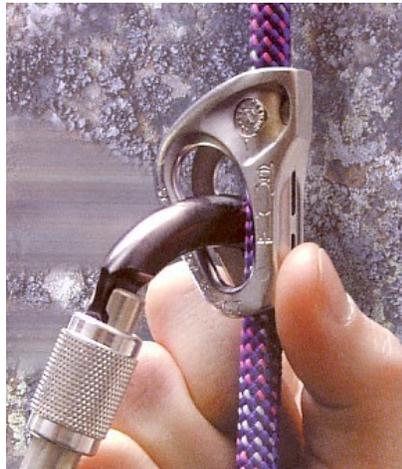


Ballistic Briefcases: Like bulletproof vests, these shields can protect you in a gun battle.



These ballistic cases can protect your most important clients – your self and your family.





Climbing Gear: These are Petzl Tiblocks (my favorite ascenders), and a small descender. When combined with a decent rope, these tools enable you to climb and rappel, using an improvised harness. (Escaping from a burning building, or climbing up or down a cliff that is in your way?)



Blood Tracking Flashlight: Having one of these lights makes it easier to track a wounded game animal in the dark, if you shoot one at dusk. Losing game is bad, when you really need the food.



A tiny monocular, or compact binoculars, make it easier to spot what you're looking for.



Driver Alert: This little device clips on your ear, and alarms if you fall asleep while driving. It is also ideal for helping you stay awake if you must stand guard all night, in any survival situation.



Caltrops: These are four-pointed spikes which are designed so that one spike will always point upwards. They are used to damage the feet, tires, or horse hooves of enemy troops. There are several different ways to make caltrops, and they can be placed or thrown on roads or paths, to hinder an enemy advance. Like spike boards, these are just a nuisance weapon, unless poisoned.



A list of this type can never be complete, because new gadgets are constantly being invented, and new ideas, new materials and new manufacturing processes can result in improving on old ideas.