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SELF RELIANCE

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*Teaching Our Youth & Passing
on the Tribal Knowledge*



Self Reliance in the Southwest: My Arizona Survival Kit Battery

By Scott Foster



The author's Arizona Survival Kit Battery – Winter Supplemental Kit, Summer Supplemental Kit, Vehicle Kit including Personal Kit, and other essentials.

Survivalism and survival kits are a hot topic these days made popular by the many new reality shows bearing survival themes. There is a reason why these shows are so popular. People are recognizing that planning and equipping themselves for potential emergencies away from home makes incredible life-saving sense! Consequently, interest in the art and science of self-reliance is on the rise. For nearly everyone, except those living in highly urban environments or those confined to their homes, the question is not whether to assemble and own a survival kit but rather how to assemble one that will do the job – one that will keep you alive in an emergency! The answer is not a simple one. To assemble a truly effective survival kit requires a well thought out analysis addressing three

factors: environment, conditions, and functional needs, all taking into account the region of the country where you live and travel.

My home is Arizona, a land of incredible beauty and environmental diversity highly typical of the Southwest. It is also a land of extremes. In the Sonoran Desert, temperatures can exceed 115° F in summer with available water sources fifty miles away or more. While the mountain forest regions can

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The author's vehicle kit is well stocked with an array of essentials that all fit into a heavy duty nylon utility bag. Where his vehicle goes, it goes.

exceed -20° F in winter with heavy snow conditions. How do you create an effective all-purpose survival kit taking into account the environment, conditions, and functional requirements that match all these extremes and everything in between? For me, the sensible answer was to create a survival kit battery consisting of a core survival kit that I always carry in my vehicle combined with separate, supplemental kits that are season-appropriate - one supplemental kit for winter, and one for summer. Completing the battery is an off-road emergency kit for my vehicle and a few other essential items.

My core survival kit is actually two kits in one – a personal survival kit and a vehicle survival kit. I have a compact personal kit containing core survival essentials that fits easily into a fanny pack which I carry with me when I'm hiking, hunting, or fishing. At all other times, I store the personal kit in my vehicle kit. My vehicle kit consists of additional important survival tools that I may need to access but don't necessarily want to always carry with me due to their bulk and/or weight. When heading out on

Arizona Survival Kit Battery

- Vehicle Kit
- Winter Supplemental Kit
- Summer Supplemental Kit
- Off Road Emergency Kit
- Other essentials - .40 pistol with two 15 round magazines, water, cell phone

Personal Survival Kit

- Small coffee can wrapped in cord or mule tape with lid (container, cooking vessel).
- Disposable lighters (2).
- Metal match w/striker.
- Box cutter with break-off, disposable blades
- Emergency poncho.
- Heavy duty, 3 mil 42 gallon trash bag (emergency sleeping bag/shelter).
- Mini roll of duct tape.
- Gallon zip lock bag.
- Pocket comb (to remove Cholla Cactus needles).
- Mini-first aid kit (including band aids, pain reliever, lip balm, hand sanitizer, super glue).
- Dryer lint (kindling material).

Vehicle Survival Kit

1. Red Space Blanket
2. Canvas, multi-pocket utility bag with shoulder strap.
3. Personal kit
4. Magnifying glass
5. Fluorescent orange hunting smock.
6. Tube tent
7. Folding fillet knife
8. U.S. Army Survival Handbook
9. Freeze dried food in gallon zip lock bag.
10. 100' Nylon Paracord, 550lb test.
11. Hand saw with belt sheath.
12. Collapsible red umbrella (More for sun protection than rain).
13. Poncho
14. Dry gas backpacking stove filled with fuel.
15. Watercraft Air horn
16. Toilet paper in gallon zip lock bag.
17. Small coffee pot.
18. Additional aluminum pot.
19. Ace bandage
20. Camp candles
21. Neck wrap (when immersed in water, it expands and keeps you cool).
22. Commercial mini-first aid kit including sun block.
23. Mini-duct tape, electrical tape, gallon zip lock bag, heavy duty 3 mil, 42 gallon trash bags (2), 50' nylon cord, all contained in gallon zip lock bag.
24. Emergency strobe light with extra size D battery.
25. Dryer lint in zip lock bag.
26. Hunting knife with sheath.
27. Clear plastic safety glasses.
28. Plastic clip on sunglasses
29. Antibiotic ointment
30. Swiss army knife.
31. Small magnifying glass
32. Emergency space blanket
33. Moist wipes packaged individually.
34. Additional first aid supplies.
35. Signal mirror
36. Mini-Leatherman with flashlight.
37. Belt Pouch.
38. Full sized Leatherman.
39. Fishing kit with 10lb. monofilament line, snelled hooks, mini-bobbers, split shot, orange Power Bait.
40. Emergency whistle/match holder/compass
41. Collapsible lantern-style flashlight.
42. Two-way Radio
43. Head lamp flashlight
44. Extra 2A batteries.
45. Pen
46. .22 revolver with holster
47. .22 ammunition
48. Energy Bars (2)



The author carries his personal kit along in a fanny pack when enjoying the outdoors on foot. The rest of the time, it has a permanent home in his Vehicle Kit.

foot, I'll pack along my personal kit and pocket a few select items from the vehicle kit including my Leatherman, signal mirror, and survival whistle.

My supplemental winter kit contains additional items to match the potentially harsh winter conditions typical of the Arizona high country. It mainly consists of cold weather clothing with a few additional items. My supplemental summer kit contains season-appropriate clothing and a few extra items for the extreme desert summer.

Vehicle failure is a principle factor in many emergency survival situations. Consequently, when traveling off road or away from civilization I carry a separate off road emergency kit for my truck. This includes items to help me get unstuck and keep my vehicle functioning.

Lastly, three additional items complete my Arizona survival kit battery and I always carry them in my vehicle and/or on my person when I'm away from home. They are easily the most important items of all – my cell phone, one or more firearms with ample ammunition, and water. Cell phone range and coverage areas are ever expanding and there is no better survival implement in the event of an emergency than communication with the outside world. A firearm can keep you alive three ways. It gives you the ability to take game for food, to protect yourself from predators - both human and animal, and it can also be used to communicate distress by



During summer months in the Arizona desert, you've got to do all you can to protect yourself from the sun. A wide brim hat, long sleeve lightweight shirt, sunscreen, and these other items are survival essentials.

firing three shots in succession. Water is the most important item of all in any survival kit. Without it, your window of survivability is extremely limited in any situation under any conditions in any environment. People can survive for weeks without food but only 3-5 days at most without water. In the Arizona desert having water is the difference between life and death.

How much will it all cost? It doesn't have to be expensive. If you already spend time in the outdoors you probably already own many of the key

ingredients. Most of the items in my battery I already owned. I just had to organize and pack it all accordingly. I also keep an eye out for bargains at garage sales and discount stores for additions to my battery. You never know what you may find that has direct or indirect application to being self-reliant!

Through methodical planning, anyone can assemble and utilize an effective survival kit battery that can not only keep you alive, but even comfortable in any survival situation. Start by assembling your personal/vehicle kit and give it a



The author's truck has its own survival kit to help keep the author from getting stranded!

Winter Supplemental Kit

- Plastic tarp
- Nylon duffle bag
- Pack
- Waterproof, insulated hunting jacket
- Insulated bibs
- Waterproof insulated boots
- Fluorescent orange wool cap
- Insulated gloves
- Wool socks
- Long underwear
- Hooded sweat shirt
- Sweat pants
- Wool sweater
- Cold weather sleeping bag
- Fluorescent orange upside down marking paint.
- Single mantle propane lantern (mainly to heat your shelter at night).
- Extra propane tanks (2)

Summer Supplemental Kit

- Pack
- Wide brim ventilated hat
- Sunscreen
- Ventilated long sleeve cotton fishing shirt
- Cotton tee shirts (2)
- Hooded sweatshirt
- Knee braces
- Roll of duct tape
- Headlamp
- Extra flashlight
- Extra folding knife
- Heavy duty plastic sheeting (for solar stills)

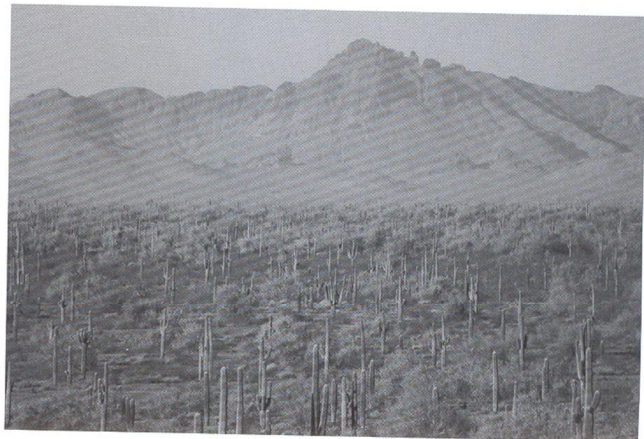
Off Road Emergency Vehicle Kit

- Come Along
- Tow strap
- Vehicle tool kits
- Steel cable
- Fire extinguisher
- Ax
- Bolt cutters
- Jumper cables
- Tire iron
- Shovel



Many who've never been to Arizona think it is all desert and sunshine. Much of the state is high mountain forests with brutally cold winter temperatures. The state record is -70°F. When venturing out into the high country in winter, be prepared for cold!

permanent home in your vehicle. When traveling beyond the limits of civilization, throw in your supplemental kit, your off-road emergency kit for your vehicles with the other essentials, and you are ready to enjoy your region of the country prepared, confident, and self-reliant.



The Arizona desert – beautiful, but potentially deadly.