

Live Free USA Survival Book List

By James C. Jones, CHCM / EMT
(Updated December 2017)



I am frequently asked “What books would you recommend for me to learn more about survival?” After 40-years of study many of the books I started with are out of print. I have a few hundred on the shelves and more in tote-bins. I tend not to buy the newest books because most of the information is already on my shelves. Since there is such a great variety of survival concerns and every person and family will have a unique set of attitudes and challenges, there can be no one or two books that will contain everything someone would need to know. Some books are dry manuals, others are pure data, and some contain survival information in a narrative or as a novel. The reader should seek out the information that fits his or her greatest concerns and is the most readable and understandable. This list is not completed and will continue to change as newer publications are added and others are deleted. I have categorized my recommendations for your convenience. I welcome the reader’s comments and further recommendations.

Recommended Survival Books

General Survival Preparedness and Self-Reliance

Back to Basics, edited by Abigail R. Gering. A very well illustrated and organized book that covers many basic rural self-reliance subjects, including gardening, well digging, food preservation, raising chickens, sheep and goats, and many other skills. 450 pages, 8 ½ x 11”, hardcover, \$24.95 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

The Ultimate Guide to US Army Survival Skills, Tactics, and Techniques, edited by Jay McCullough. Actually a reprint of rearrangement of US Army survival manuals. This is a very big, black and white illustrated manual covering outdoor survival, first aid, navigation, fire craft, combat, shelter-building and much more. 953 pages, 8 ½ x 11”, softcover, \$24.95 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

Advanced Survival by James C. Jones. This book covers basic alternative methods of replacing each essential survival need and service now provided by our public utilities, services and business. Included are methods to provide food, clean water, sanitation, protection, transportation and all other necessities of life when the grid fails. 191 pages, 5 x 8, softcover, \$16.99 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

Total Survival by James C. Jones. Ten ways to gather and purify water, ten ways to survive street crime, ten ways to find or make a shelter, ten ways to procure and preserve food and ten methods for dealing with many more survival needs. Illustrated with drawings and photographs. 8 ½ X 11”, 179 pages, softcover, \$16.99 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

150 Survival Secrets by James C. Jones. [150 survival related issues addressed in a questioning and answer format. Many critical and controversial issues are included in this](#)

[comprehensive survival manual and survivalist manifesto. 5 x 9', 282 pages, softcover, \\$17.99 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com](#)

The Complete Guide to Edible Wild Plants. Originally created as a US Army manual. This book covers identification and location of common edible wild plants and how to prepare them as food. 149 pages, softcover, \$12.95 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

The Survivalists Handbook by Rainer Stahlberg. Equipment lists, food storage plans, and much more. Scenarios are covered on a what to do on day one, day two, day three, etc. plan. Disasters include fire, flood nuclear disaster, epidemic, tornadoes and even volcanoes. 5 x 7'. 430 pages, softcover, \$14.95 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

Living off The Grid by David Black. Basic information on alternative sources of water, electricity, heat, food and other necessities when the grid goes down. 7 ½ x 5", 253 pages, illustrated softcover, \$12.95 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

Everyday Survival Kits by Mark Puhaly & Joel Stevens. Urban "bug out bags", day hike kits, car kits, cold weather kits, everyday kits and more. 5 ½ x 8", 182 pages, softcover, \$17.99 from Living Ready Books, www.livingreadyonline.com

Preppers Food Storage by Julie Languille. A well-organized book on how to set up a survival food storage system. Includes, charts and calculation tables on nutritional needs and shelf-life. 6 x 9", 255 pages, softcover, \$12.95 from Ulysses Publications www.ulyssespublications.com

Petersons Field Guide to Medicinal Plants and Herbs, By S. Foster & J. A. Duke. This book covers 530 of the most common medicinal and edible plants in the central and northern United States. Well illustrated in color. 456 pages, softcover, HMH publishers, at \$21.00

52 Prepper Projects, by David Nash. Well described and illustrated projects that you can do with minimal tools and materials that can improve your survival potential. Fun and easy stuff to do. 198 pages, 9 x 6", softcover, \$16.95 from softcover, \$17.95, from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

100 Deadly Survival Skills by Clint Emerson. A clearly illustrated manual of SEAL and CIA survival tricks and techniques. Lots of improvised methods that could save your life. Only a few are deadly. 5 ½ x 8", 256 pages, 8 ½ x 5 ½, softcover, \$18.00 from Simon and Shuster. www.Simonandshuster.com

Soldiers of Fortune Guide to Surviving the Apocalypse, by N. E. MacDougald. Cover a number of survival situations and survival techniques in well-written and illustrated

chapters. 193 pages, 9 x 6", softcover, \$14.95 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

SAS Complete Survival Manual, by Barry Davies. Escape and evasion, navigation, shelter, self-defense and much more. Fully illustrated in color. 6 ½ x 9", 276 pages, softcover, \$14.95 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

Preparing to Survive, an SAS and Elite Forces Guide: By Chris McNab. Everything from home bunkers, home security, street combat and nuclear war survival to wilderness survival and first aid and combat techniques. 5 x 7", 320 pages, softcover, \$19.95 from Lyons Press. www.LyonsPress.com

What to do When the Shit Hits the Fan: by David Black. Basic preparedness and survival techniques for most natural and manmade disaster situation. How to survive terrorist attacks, fire, floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, civil unrest and many other situations are covered. 5 x 7 ½", 290 pages. \$12.95 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

Preppers Communications Handbook: Lifesaving strategies for communicating with family and group members when the phone systems and internet fail. Include use and limitations of satellite phone, GMRS, FRS, CB, VHF etc. 9 x 9", 132 pages, softcover, \$15.95 from Ulysses Publications. www.ulyssespress.com

The Pocket Guide to Preppers Supplies. Lists and evaluates over 200 items that you need to be prepared. Details on storage methods, what to carry, shelving and packs. 156 pages, 4 ½ x 6 ½", softcover, \$9.99, from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

The Preppers Water Survival Guide, by Daisy Luther. How to gather, treat and store water before and during survival emergencies. 6 x 9", 216 pages, softcover, \$14.95 from Ulysses Publications.

Bugout: by Scott Williams. A well written book on how to plan and equip for escape and evacuation from various kinds of disasters. Covers motor vehicles, boats, bicycles and foot travel. 6 x 9", 301 pages, softcover, \$15.95 from Ulysses Publications. www.ulyssespress.com

How To Survive Anywhere: by Christopher Nyerges. Written by a very experienced survival school instructor, this book covers survival techniques for forest, desert, coastal and cold weather environments with plenty of good advice, clear illustrations and photographs. 8 x 5 ½", 264 pages, \$19.95 from Stackpole Books, www.stackpolebooks.com

Self-Sufficiency for the 21st Century: By Dick & James Strawbridge. One of the best all-around self-reliance instructional books you can buy. If you are planning on moving beyond basic survival to full self-sufficiency this is the one book you should start with. Covers all aspects of food production, water harvesting, alternative energy. And much

more. Extremely well illustrated and written. 9 x 7 ½ “ , 304 pages, softcover, \$22.95 from Penguin Random House.

Survival Foods Handbook: By Janet Groene.

The author bases recommendations on her extensive experiences in stocking boats for long voyages and from wilderness camping. There is a glossary of shelf-stable foods and her own “top thirteen foods for storage”. This is a great little book for survival preparedness and wilderness camping. 9 x 6 “, 154 pages, softcover, \$20.00 from McGraw Hill Education.

Outdoor & Wilderness Survival

How to Survive Anything, Anywhere, by Chris McNab a well-illustrated readable manual that covers outdoor survival, survival psychology, kits, and some urban survival situations. A very good starter manual. 7 x 9”, 320 page, soft-cover, \$14.99 from McGraw-Hill publishing

The Encyclopedia of Survival Techniques: By Alexander Stilwell. , A nicely illustrated outdoor survival manual covering survival techniques by region. Desert, tropics, polar and mountain survival are well covered. There are sections on natural disasters and first aid as well. 7 x 9”, 192 pages, soft-cover, \$19.95 from The Lyon Press.

SAS Survival Guide: (colleens Gem Edition): This 383 page miniature, 3” x 4” paperback book is loaded with information on food, water, shelter, navigation, first aid, shelter construction and other survival skills. A must for your pack. \$8.00 from Harper Collins Publishing.

Wilderness Survival: By Gregory Davenport. A well-illustrated manual on basic outdoor survival techniques, 5 ½ x 8”, 129 pages, soft-cover, \$19.95 from Stackpole books, www.stackpolebooks.com.

Surviving Cold Weather: By Gregory Davenport. Lots of photos and drawings to illustrate the hazards and techniques of cold weather. 5 ½ x 8”, 240 pages, soft-cover, \$14.95 from Stackpole books, www.stackpolebooks.com.

The Complete Survival Shelters Handbook, by Anthonio Akkermans. Step-by[step instructions to building shelters for every climate and location with what is available. 146 pages, softcover, 15.95 from Ulysses publications.

Bushcraft: by Richard Graves. A well written and illustrated hand-book on all aspects of outdoor survival including fire, water, shelter, navigation, trapping, fishing and mush more. 5 ½ x 8”, 344 pages, softcover, \$16.95 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

Urban Survival & Self Protection

Defend Yourself: by Rob Pincus. Well illustrated with color photographs, this book covers passive home security devices and techniques, defensive weapons selection and use. Special attention is given to armed defensive combat with handguns, shotguns and rifles. 6 x 9", 248 pages, \$24.99 from Gun Digest Books.

Urban Emergency Planning: By Jim Cobb. How to survive a variety of disasters in an urban environment. What to do when the electricity, sanitation, water supply and food sources are interrupted and civil disorder and chaos reign. 6 x 9", 176 pages, softcover, \$17.99 from Living Ready Books. www.livingreadyonline.com

The Urban Survival Handbook: By John Wiseman, A good survival and safety manual for anyone living in town. The book covers a lot of basic home and street safety information as well as emergency plans and disaster survival. There are some well-illustrated self-defense techniques and lots of information on crime prevention. 9 x 9", 316 page, soft-cover, \$20.00, from Harper Collins publishers.

Ragnar's Urban Survival: A good manual for those who would stay in an urban area under desperate circumstances. Covers ways to forage, find water, avoid troops and gangs and much more. 5 1/5 x 8" 200 pages, soft-cover, \$20.00 from Paladin Press, 7077 Winchester Circle, Boulder, CO., 80305, USA, 1-800-392-2400, www.paladin.press.com

How to be Safe: by Ira L Chapman. Written by the founder of Guardsmark LLC, one of the nation's largest private security firms, this book focusses on crime prevention and travel safety on the personal and business level. Well written and easy to use. 5 x 9", 359 pages, hardcover, \$25.95 from Readers Digest Association Inc.

Military Manuals

FM 21-76 "Survival" published as "Survival Evasion and Escape". The original "survival manual". This military manual covers outdoor survival under a wide variety of conditions such as arctic, swamp, jungle, desert and ocean. Lots of information on water sources, edible plants, trapping and shelters. 6 x 9", 288 pages, softcover, \$14.95 from Barnes & Noble

The U. S. Armed Forces Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Survival Manual: By Dick Couch, Capt. USNR retired. Not an official government printed manual, but a good overview manual on NBC survival. 8 x 5 1/2, 242 pages, soft-cover, \$14.95 from

SAS and Elite Forces Preparing to Survive by Chris McNab. A well-illustrated handbook that combines military and civilian survival techniques for everything from floods and tornadoes to assaults and power outages. 319 pages, softcover, 19.95 from Lyons Press. www.lyonspress.com

US Airforce Survival Handbook. A military manual covering a wide range of outdoor and military survival skills including shelter building, navigation, trapping, mountaineering, edible plants and much more. 575 pages, 8 1/2 x 11", softcover, \$17.95, from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

General Preparedness & Self-Reliance

Dare to Prepare, by Holly Drennan, Deyo. A big 8 x 11", 624 page, soft-cover, fully indexed, illustrated, home preparedness manual, including scores of data tables on food requirements, food storage, fuel needs, etc. etc. A must have. Published by: Dayo Enterprises LLC, P.O. Box 7711, Pueblo West, Colorado, USA, 81007, \$42.98 + P&H, www.daretoprep.com

Back to Basics, edited by Abigail R. Gehring. An extremely well-illustrated and narrated how-to guide to twenty six basic self-reliance skills. Subjects include keeping bees, milking cows, planting gardens, canning, pickling, preserving, and using natural energy (wind, water, sun) and much more. The perfect book for anyone trying to become more self-sufficient. Back to Basics, 9 x 11", 354 pages, hardcover, \$24.95 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com.

How to Survive Anywhere, By Christopher Nyerges, A well-illustrated and readable book that combines a variety of outdoor and home survival skills and projects. Some things you can get started on with little cost. 5 ½ x 8" 259 pages softcover, \$19.95 from Stackpole books, www.stackpolebooks.com.

SAS and Elite Forces Guide to Preparing to Survive: 5 x 7", 318 pages, soft-cover, from Lyons Press, www.LyonsPress.com. A very well organized and illustrated handbook covering most common emergencies and disasters in urban and wilderness environments.

Living off the Land in the City and Country: The title says it all. While not covering everything, it does have a lot of information on self-reliance that can be used in most environments. 5 ½ x 8", 270 pages, soft-cover, from Paladin Press, 7077 Winchester Circle, Boulder, CO., 80305, USA, 1-800-392-2400, www.paladin.press.com

Wilderness Living: By Gregory Davenport. Basic information for those contemplating retreating to the backcountry. 5 ½ x 8", 240 pages, soft-cover, \$18.95 from Stackpole books, www.stackpolebooks.com.

Survival Combat

Combat Leaders Field Guide: A compact combination survival manual and combat guide. Covers navigation, tactics, field fortification, weapons, first aid and more. 4 x 6", 268 pages, soft-cover, \$7.95 from Stackpolebooks, P. O. Box 1831 Harrisburg, PA 7105.

The Ultimate Guide to US Army Combat Skills and Techniques: Reprinted US army training manual covers tactics, weapons, self-defense, field craft, camouflage, fortification and movement. 950 pages, 8 ½ x 11", soft-cover NY, Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

First Aid & Emergency Medicine

US Army, Special Forces Medical Handbook: By Glen K. Craig. Diagnostic and treatment instructions for a wide variety of medical emergencies. Includes primitive medicine, veterinary medicine and obstetrics. 4 ¼ x 7", 608 pages, soft-cover, \$30.00 from 7077 Winchester Circle, Boulder, CO., 80305, USA, 1-800-392-2400, www.paladin.press.com

Tactical Combat Care and Wound Management: Published by the US Department of Defense. This is a well-illustrated medical care manual focused on combat field trauma such as burns, soft tissue injuries, fractures, penetrations and evulsions. 6 x 9", 175-pages, soft cover. \$16.99 from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

Emergency War Surgery: A revision of a NATO handbook this volume covers advanced techniques for care of wounds, burns, chemical, and blast injuries and much more. 5 ½ x 8", 391 page, soft-cover, from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

Special Operations Forces Medical Handbook: A revision of a Defense Dept. Handbook. Extensive and detailed information on medication dosages, dental procedures, child delivery, veterinary medicine and much more 5 ½ x 8", 500 page, soft-cover, from Skyhorse Publishing, NY. www.skyhorsepublishing.com

Do It Yourself Medicine: By Ragnar Benson. Ways to find and use various antibiotics, and anesthetics without prescriptions. Necessary information as the medical care system collapses. 5 ½ x 8", 126 pages, soft-cover, \$20.00, from 7077 Winchester Circle, Boulder, CO., 80305, USA, 1-800-392-2400, www.paladin.press.com

Dr. Prepper's Survival Medicine: By Scott Finazzo. A well-illustrated first aid handbook that also covers some basic survival issues and includes information on biological and radiological medical care. 6 x 9", 241 pages, softcover, \$15.95 from Ulysses Press www.ulyssespress.com

Merck Manual of Medical Information: Thoroughly indexed to cover virtually all medical conditions and injuries, by symptom. Covers all medications and techniques. This is the one your doctor uses! 1767 pages, 4 x 7" (home edition) from Pocket books, New York, NY

Survival Story Novels (Fiction & Non-fiction)

Note: I am not including any "survival novels" that are just for recreation. These books have heavy content of practical information and/or tactical lessons.

Defiance, By Nechama Tec, This is the story of how Jews who fled from cities under Nazi occupation in Poland during World War Two were able to escape, evade, resist and survive for years in the Nalibocka Forest. They established a fully functional survival camp with shops, infirmaries, school and of course a military force in "defiance" of all attempts to exterminate them. Stuff other books only guess about. 369 pages, 8 x 5" soft-cover, \$15.00 from Oxford Press.

Patriots, By James Wesley Rawles, A multifaceted novel of people and families escaping and surviving a general collapse of civilization. Scenarios include long foot-marches

through hostile country, establishment and defense of a well-stocked survival retreat and reestablishment of community security and self-reliance. The book is heavy on philosophy and detailed data on how to do things and what to have. A highly readable story and a manual combined. 6 x 9", 400 pages, 8 1/2 x 6" soft-cover, \$14.95 from Publisher Group West.

Survival Psychology

Deep Survival, by Laurence Gonzales. This book uses true stories of endurance and survival to illustrate how people think under stress and what kinds of mental techniques and philosophies work. Highly readable and highly educational. 299 pages, hard cover, 6 x 9 1/2", \$25.95, published by W.W. Norton & Company of New York

Surviving Survival by Laurence Gonzales. The author follows up the cases from his Deep Survival book by exploring the effects of disaster on the individual psyche months and years later. Although people did survive the original disaster or attack they often suffered disastrous mental debilitation. Why does some people shrug off horrible events while others are traumatized to the point of suicide? 242 pages, hard cover, 6 x 8 1/2", \$15.95, published by W.W. Norton & Company of New York

The Survivors Club by Ben Sherwood. The secrets and science of survival that could save your life. An in depth study of how people react to emergencies and disaster situations. Details the mental attitudes and propensities of those who are most likely to survive. The book includes a link to an on-line test that analyzes your survival strengths and weakness. 9 x 5 1/2", 383 pages, hardcover, \$24.99 from Penguin Books.

Collapse: By Jared Diamond. A Pulitzer Prize winning author and professor of geography uses historic examples and scientific data to predict the inevitable and already in progress collapse of civilization as we know it. This is THE most compelling argument for survival preparedness. 5 1/2 x 8", 573 pages, softcover, \$17.00 from Penguin Books.

The Unthinkable: By Amanda Ripley. An in depth analysis of how people respond to disasters. The author takes us through the experiences of people who have survived a variety of real disasters to illustrate how the mind goes through three stages before acting to survive. The book explores why some people freeze and die while others act and live. The Unthinkable, Who Survives When Disaster Strikes and Why, By: Armanda Ripley, 6 x 9 1/2", 265 pages, hardcover, \$24.95 from Crown Publishing,

The Gray Rhino by Michele Wucker. Not a traditional "survival" book, but very relevant to understanding how and why we fail to recognize and react to impending disasters. The book explores why the individual, society and governments are blinded to the obvious (charging rhino's) multiple and unavoidable catastrophes of the future. It also explains the unpopularity and frustration of preparedness advocates. 6 x 9 1/2", 252 pages, hardcover, \$27.99 from St. Martin's Press, NY.

Survivors: By John B. Letterman, 23 of the most brutal tales of true survival known to man. Starting with the epic journey of Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca who was stranded in

Florida in 1528 and managed to reach Spanish colonies in Texas in 1536 moving through shipwrecks, arctic expeditions, POW escapes to modern air crashes. 6 x 9 ½", 460 pages, hardcover, \$26.00 from Simon & Schuster

The SAS Mental Endurance Handbook: By Chris McNab, Based on various British Army methods for staying focused and handling stress. Illustrated tests and examples. A good section on surviving prison camp. 7 x 9", 190 page soft-cover, \$19.95 from The Lyons Press, Gilford, CT , www.lyonspress.com.

Information provided by:
Live Free, P. O. Box 3295, Munster, IN 46321, USA.
www.AmericanSurvivor.org, E-mail lfinow@aol.com