

Ready At Home

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I am often asked via phone or email prior to a student attending one of our classes what "gear" do I need for the class. This is an especially common question when it comes to our carbine and shotgun classes. Oftentimes students show up with the latest and greatest tactical gear such as drop leg holsters, tactical vests, bandoliers etc. While some of this gear can be helpful in a class I question the utility or realism of having such gear as a citizen. Don't misunderstand me, I have plenty of gear that I use all the time in various training events and classes but none of it is what I have at home in preparation for protecting myself, family or those I am responsible for.

It is important that those interested in personal protection train within and strive to operate within the context of their specific situation, job description or lifestyle. I am not a police SWAT operator or military serviceman who may need 100 extra rounds of ammunition on my person in order to act as a force multiplier in a combat zone. I am a citizen whose duty is to protect my family from harm and that is how I approach my personal training. It doesn't make much sense to me to attend a carbine class in full battle rattle since it is unlikely I am going to jump off the couch or out of bed and throw my tactical-vest on to answer the door at 3am when two unknowns are standing on my front porch. Maybe you disagree, which is fine.

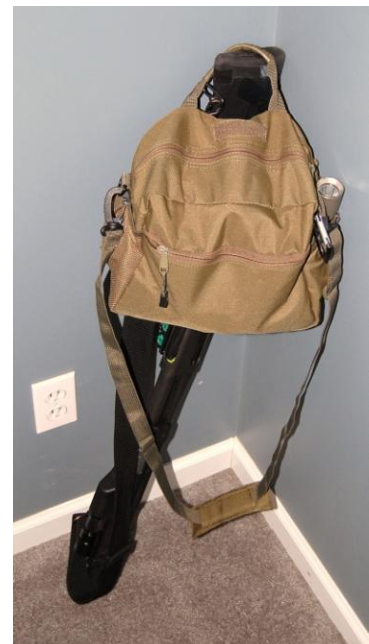
So, to be as prepared as possible and able to grab the gear I may need as fast as possible I utilize pre-loaded and pre-positioned ready bags. One upstairs slung on or next to my shotgun/on a door knob and one downstairs securely stored in a kitchen cupboard high enough the kids cannot get to it. With a simple system like this I can grab a firearm, throw the bag over my shoulder and go very rapidly no matter what clothing I am wearing.

Essentials

There are essential items I feel are necessary or may come in handy if I have to rapidly prepare to protect my home from intruders or possibly even looters (Katrina type disaster). Everyone's idea of what they will need can vary and those included here are simply my suggestions based on my personal beliefs and training:

1) A cell phone. If power is out or has been cut the home phone will not work and my top priority is contacting 911 to call for assistance, whether that is Law Enforcement assistance or Emergency Medical Services.

2) Spare ammunition for ANY firearm I grab. I may have my shotgun ready to go or my pistol or carbine or even a combination of two. Because of this I cannot have 3 separate ready bags for each individual weapon platform. So, the bag I utilize needs to have multiple pockets within which I can store extra shotgun buck shot, at least (1) spare pistol magazine and (1) spare carbine magazine. This way, it doesn't matter which gun I grab under stress, I have extra ammunition if needed.



3) Medical Supplies. If I am involved in some type of home protection scenario there is a good chance that me or one of my family members may be injured. This could involve actual gun-fire related injuries or something more common like tripping over the dog and cracking your head open. Either way, having a tourniquet, some type of pressure dressing and maybe a hemostatic agent could go a long way toward continuing to protect you or family after an incident has occurred.

4) A light source. Some people believe in lights on guns and some don't, which is fine. Regardless, sneaking around in the dark during a power outage or intentional power cut off is not conducive to effective home protection. A light source is necessary for navigation, identification of possible threats and engagement of those threats if justified. Even if you have a weapon mounted light remember it's not a good idea to use that light for administrative tasks such as opening doors etc. Also remember that the weapon mounted light can and will break so having a back up is a good idea.

5) An edged tool. Nobody knows what can or will happen or predict what type of fight or disaster will occur. Having some type of edged tool available is good common sense and while they make effective personal protection tools it is more likely they will be used for prying open an object or cutting away some debris or clothing from an injured family member or yourself.



6) Short term food & water source. Again, we cannot predict what type of situation can or will occur. Regardless, being prepared for a variety of situations is smart planning. Maybe we are trapped or simply barricaded in a safe room or basement. Having a small bottle of water and a power bar will at least help make those with you such as small children a little more comfortable during a tense, scary situation.

Conclusion

If you have taken the time and spent the money to attend training then don't let your preparation stop when the class ends. Plan for the worst and hope for the best. It is unlikely you will ever have to use your home readiness kit but at least you have it, just in case. Awareness + Preparation = Success!