

# Bug-Out Bags

By Jeff Randall



For years FEMA and other government agencies have been telling us we should have an emergency survival kit, and while most people think of a survival kit as tools to use when the lights go out, in my opinion, they should be mobile and easily transported on foot or in a vehicle. In many cases, sheltering in place (in your own home) is just not feasible or safe. Hurricane Katrina and Ike are good examples of this. The survivor is always going to be the man who can think and move on his feet without wasting a lot of time doing it.

When built right, a survival kit can supply the individual with everything needed to survive in the short-term, no matter if they're home, on the road, or on foot escaping a threat. Most survival practitioners call these kits "bug-out bags" or "BOBs." I prefer the term "go bag" since that's exactly the way I treat mine - if I'm going anywhere then it's with me. My bag is designed to provide all the necessary tools to survive in my home, in my truck or on my back should I have to stray off the reservation. When combined with my every day carry items, it's set up to handle all the essentials of short-term survival including food, water, shelter, navigation, signaling, communication,

personal defense and first-aid. Having weathered a few storms in my life I realize that you can't skimp when putting together a survival package that you will bet your life on.

## The Anatomy of a Bug-Out Bag



After going through a lot of different bags, I finally settled on the Maxpedition Pygmy Falcon II Pack as being the best setup for my go bag. I like this pack since it has plenty of room for expansion and allows modular build-out with various pouches. After attaching the separate Maxpedition Admin Pouch, Battery Pouch, Radio Pouch and Single Mag Pouch to the outside of the pack using Malice Clips, and adding all of the gear spec'd out below, the total weight comes to 20 pounds. This kit comes in my house every night and goes out to my truck every time I leave the house. By simply taking out the chemical devices (flares, chem lights, etc.) and ammunition, the bag can be flown as checked baggage on a commercial flight. Of course if you're flying private, as I often do, then everything is good to go as is including your sidearm and other weaponry.

## What's Inside

The following items are attached and fitted to the outside of my go-bag:

Nylon poncho  
32-ounce Nalgene bottle w/ attached SteriPen pre-filter  
Stainless steel cup  
MultiMat sleeping pad  
Adventure Lights VIPIR Gen 4 signal beacon  
Blade-Tech double mag holder for .40 caliber Glock (w/ magazines loaded)  
Maxpedition Admin Pouch  
Maxpedition Battery Pouch  
Maxpedition Radio Pouch  
SpecOps Brand Map Case  
Small carabiner with handcuff key and various split rings attached  
Survival Tin (Easy access, bare-bones survival kit that fits in your pocket when you need to travel without the pack)

### **On The Pack Straps:**

Ranger beads  
Whistle (attached to small carabiner)  
MicroLight (attached to small carabiner)  
Tick Tweezers (attached to small carabiner)  
Maxpedition Single Mag Pouch

### **Inside The Maxpedition Admin Pouch:**

Pentagon Light EX2 Flashlight  
SPOT Satellite Locator Beacon  
Silva Ranger compass

### **Inside The Maxpedition battery Pouch:**

8 ea. CR123 and 4 ea. AA Lithium spare batteries

### **Inside The Maxpedition Radio Pouch:**

Garmin 76S GPS

### **Inside The Maxpedition Single Mag Pouch:**

SOG PowerAssist multi-tool

## Main Pack Compartments



The Maxpedition Pygmy Falcon II has three main pack compartments with zipper closures. By separating these compartments for the type of gear you have an organized system that's easy to access under stress or low-light conditions.

### **Pack compartment 1 (First Aid):**

Adventure Medical Kits Ultralight Traveler with user add-ons  
Adventure Medical Kits Dental Kit  
User configured surgical kit (includes injectable Lidocaine local anesthetic, surgical instruments, hypodermic needles, sutures, etc.)  
Compression bandage  
M2 one-hand ratcheting tourniquet

### **Pack Compartment 2 (Survival):**

RAT Survival/ E&E Kit  
Mini glass breaker tool  
Trioxane tablets (in Ziploc bag)  
Compact gill net  
Adventure Medical Gear Aid kit  
Toilet paper (in Ziploc bag)  
Toothbrush and toothpaste (in Ziploc bag)  
Rite In The Rain notepad  
Fisher Trekker Space Pen  
Mini screwdriver set  
Ben's 100% Deet  
BIC cigarette lighter  
Carmex Lip Balm  
DMT compact diamond hone  
RAT fire steel  
GreatLand rescue laser flare  
Signal mirror  
Orion aerial flares  
AmeriGlow chemical lights  
Katadyn water purification tablets  
MIOX water purification device

### **Pack Compartment 3 (Camping Gear / Survival):**

Pocket Ref Book (in Ziploc bag)  
Compact shortwave receiver (in Ziploc bag)  
3 ea. Trailfoods complete meals w/ plastic utensils  
TOPS ATM knife in Kydex sheath  
Waterproof / wind-proof jacket in stuff pouch  
6' x 8' Sil tarp & Go-Lite shelter net w/ floor  
MultiMat pillow / cushion  
50' orange paracord  
Gloves  
7" folding saw

I think any survival guru would agree that the above contents make for a fairly extensive survival kit for the 20 pounds of weight it requires. There's no doubt it's probably more than most folks need for their 72-hour survival kit, but it should also be noted that this basic kit (less the ammunition and chemical flares) has been used on numerous occasions to survive multi-week trips into deep jungle, and more recently in the mountains while working on a long-term survival project.

Whatever you choose to put in your go-bag, always make sure it fits the purpose of a bug-out bag. For example, if you live in Alaska then your bag may concentrate more on cold weather survival gear and less on sub-tropical gear like my bag. You should also look at the safety of the area you live in and build your bag accordingly. For every day stateside life, a bug-out bag is more likely to be something I use if I become stranded in my vehicle, since where I live is not as susceptible to major crime or violence in the streets, thus I doubt I will be evacuating to a safer area. Your situation may be different. If you live in the city and government collapses with anarchy in the street, then you may need to set your BOB up more for E&E so you can escape and evade the idiots until you make it to my house. So, adding tools to "acquire" a vehicle, or to fend off the thugs while escaping may be something you need to look at.

**Contact:**

Maxpedition Hard-Use Gear  
P.O. Box 5008  
Palos Verdes, CA 90274  
Ph: (310) 768-0098  
FAX: (310) 515-5950  
Web: [www.maxpedition.com](http://www.maxpedition.com)