



WHAT TO HAVE ON HAND

by Pauline Canzani

If the power went out for a week, would you be prepared? What if a natural disaster hit—what food would you have to keep you going? Have you thought about how you'd cope if life as you know it was suddenly disrupted?

When I was growing up on a farm, there were times when money was tight. We'd have pasta and applesauce for dinner for days in a row. Meals were simple, but we never went hungry. Why? Because my mother always planned ahead, preserving fresh produce during the summer to carry us through the winter months.

Now, at 80, I'm shocked by how expensive food has become. It reminds me of those days relying on my mother's careful planning. That's part of why I started this blog—to share tips on stretching your food budget and feeling secure, no matter what life throws your way. In this edition, we'll dive into some great strategies for being prepared!

Tip: Always try to have preserves that represent the different food groups on hand: grains (especially rice), tinned meats, dried and/or canned beans, canned or dried fruit and veggies, powdered milk, etc. Pasta and pasta sauce are excellent staples to have and keep well.



I believe that people make their own luck by great preparation and good strategy -Jack Canfield

HELPFUL TOOLS FOR EMERGENCIES



My mom asked me to write a brief intro about my brother, Walter, who is this edition's chief contributor. Walter has always been the family tinkerer, mechanic, self-made engineer and mad scientist. I remember as a little girl how he made us parachutes out of our mom's old sheets so we could glide across the icy field on toboggans on a blustery snow day. "Don't let go!" he'd warn me, "No matter what!" and so, I'd fly across the field at warp speed, holding on for dear life, screaming with joy.

Here are his life hacks for when an emergency hits.

-C.Canzani

NOTE FROM YOUR EDITOR



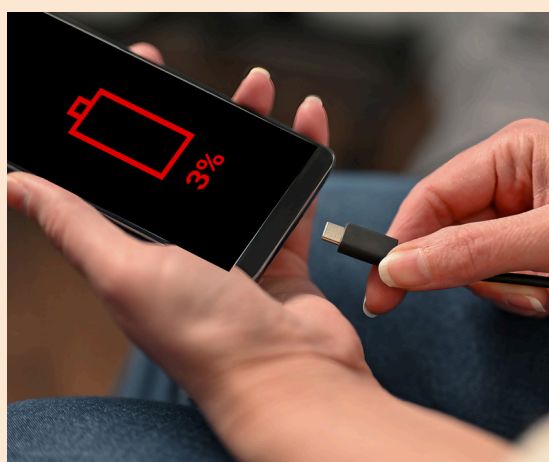
Frontal headlight: 3 different brightness settings. Can be used to charge your cell phone if your battery runs out. Very powerful and inexpensive from Amazon. Perfect for power outages.



Rechargeable light: 4 brightness settings, lasts several hours on a charge (USB), can either be flat on tabletop or hanging, can be used to charge cell phone, very good source of light.



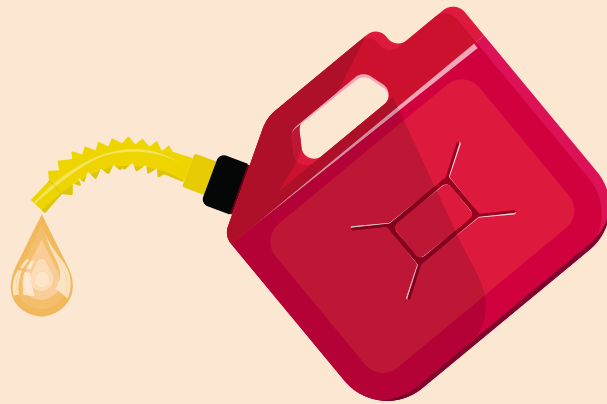
Car battery: If you have a charged spare car battery, connect a cigarette lighter adapter to the terminals, then plug in your phone charger to charge it at home. You can also use a booster pack or charge your phone in the car.



Generator: A generator can run on gas or propane, and there are even solar ones on the market now. It's best to have an electrician connect it to your home's breaker panel safely. For an average household, you'll want a generator with at least 5500 watts. If the wattage is low, run only a few appliances at a time. If you are older, you will want to make sure you get an electric start button.

Start the generator every 1-2 months to keep it in good shape. Use fresh gasoline and add fuel stabilizer. Keep a couple of full gas cans ready. After using it, turn off the fuel valve to prevent old gas from clogging the carburetor, so it starts easily next time.

A propane generator might be easier to use as long as you always have a backup tank at the ready.



Water, matches, flashlights, batteries, candles: You should always have a good supply of water, matches, functional flashlights, batteries and candles in the house. These are necessary in any emergency. You can also use kerosene lamps which are bright and burn for a long time.



Cash: It's always good to have some cash on hand just in case credit cards and/or debit cards don't work or bank accounts become frozen. You'll be glad to have some spare cash to buy the essentials.



LOOKING BACK...A BIT OF HISTORY



What a change it was for me—16 years old, living in the big city of Montreal, taking care of a family, and going to night school. It didn't take long before I started missing the freedom of our beautiful farm in Sutton: being with my family, working, laughing, singing, talking, and having lively conversations (and squabbles) with my siblings.

As I mentioned in my last blog, one of the daughters where I worked had the same first name as me—Pauline. One day, I was washing the floor when the phone rang. An English-speaking man was on the line, asking to speak to Pauline. Naturally, I responded, since my name was Pauline too. The man invited me on a date to watch the ballet *Swan Lake*. I knew full well he thought I was the other Pauline, but I happily accepted—I had never been to the ballet!

What a surprise he had when he came to pick me up! But he rolled with it. The ballet was simply magical, and to this day, I still remember every detail. Apparently, it was even more magical than I realized, because when the evening ended and he drove me home, after being a perfect gentleman, he asked me out on another date, told me he loved me, and proposed! I was so shocked that I blurted out "No!" and ran out of the car and into the house as fast as I could.

Before I knew it, night school ended for the year, and I decided to quit my job and go back home for the summer to help my parents run the Auberge. I never saw that man again, but I was sure glad to be back home after my big city adventures.

