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## 5 Ways to Make Candles From Household Items

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When an extended emergency occurs, using the resources you have on hand or around your property may be your only option and hope at surviving.

Emergency lighting will be an important aspect of your preparedness supplies. If you find yourself without lighting, with a little creativity you can make your own candles using [bush craft techniques](#) <sup>[1]</sup>, or with items found around the home.

Here are five easy ways to make candles if you happen to find yourself in a pinch:

1. **Candle Stubs** - The easiest way to make a new candle is to cut up older, burned down candles, melt the wax and make a new one. Old candle stubs can also be used as a base with other candle waxes poured on top. Finding a wick may be your largest challenge. Read below for some suitable replacements:

- Cotton string or twine
- Paper towel
- Torn pieces of cloth
- Shoe lace (with the plastic coating cut off)
- Old cotton sock (that is clean) torn into strips
- Cotton towel torn into strips

Whichever alternative wick you choose to use, ensure the wick is a suitable size to burn the candle. Further, remember to prime the wicks by soaking them in melted wax and stirring for a minute or two and allow to dry. This makes the candle burn more efficiently. When placing the wick in the melted wax, be very careful not to burn yourself. Tying the wick to a pencil that will sit on the top of the container or mold is a good way to ensure the wick stays in place and your fingers are away from the hot wax.

2. **Broken Crayons** – When I was a child, my church showed me how to do this and I never forgot it. To make a crayon candle, simply remove the paper from the crayons and place them in a container to melt such as a used metal coffee can, soup can, etc. Place the container in a pot of hot water (resembling a double broiler method) and allow water to come to a boil. Melt the crayons over medium heat. Pour into the desired mold and add a wick. Be sure that the wick is fairly centered and running the entire length of the container. Allow the candle to sit until it has hardened.

3. **Lard or vegetable oil** - Used cooking oils and even oil-packed canned goods can be used to create lighting. Canned meat in oils are great for a makeshift candle.

- Simply trim your wick to about double the size of the can.
- Hammer a nail through the middle of the can and wiggle it around to make a larger hole.
- Stuff your wick inside the hole and leave about 1/2 a millimeter exposed.
- Place the can in a dish and light it up.
- The candle should burn for a few hours.
- The food content can be eaten after the oil has burned out.

4. **Vaseline** – This is another household item that can be used as a makeshift candle that burns on it's own for 30 minutes. This method can also be used as an easy firestarter. All you need is some used foil, a cotton ball and some vaseline. To see directions for how to make this type of emergency candle, [click here](#) <sup>[2]</sup>.

5. **Bayberry** – Early colonists used these berries as a way of making candles. Note that large quantities of bayberries are needed to create one candle. In fact, four pounds of berries produce approximately one pound of wax. Bayberry wax is collected by boiling the berries. The waxy substance rises to the top of the water. This is skimmed off and made into candles. Bayberry candles give off a delicious scent that many enjoy and are virtually smokeless. The directions are below:

- Boil your bayberries in water to cover.
- Chill and remove the sheet of wax that forms on the top.
- Melt a candle stub (white) or a cake of paraffin to make a candle base.
- Add the bayberry wax and strain through cheesecloth. Keep on the back of the stove.
- Add your wick into a desired mold and then add melted wax. Allow to cool.

Bayberry wax is very brittle, therefore, keep your candles small or make tapered candle sticks to ensure the candles stay in tact.

Getting creative and thinking outside of the box could help you meet some of your basic survival needs. Using the aforementioned ideas for making candles can help keep the lights on when the lights go out. Candles do emit carbon monoxide, so please keep you and your family safe by ensuring that candles are placed in a well ventilated room and never leave a candle burning unattended.

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[1] bush craft techniques: [http://readynutrition.com/resources/bushcraft-emergency-lighting\\_18112011/](http://readynutrition.com/resources/bushcraft-emergency-lighting_18112011/)

[2] click here: <http://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Vaseline-Candle>

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