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Alternative Cooking Sources for SHTF Planning

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So, the power is out. You have all of this wonderful food stored away but no way to cook it. Before you resign yourself to baked beans at room temperature out of the can, consider your options. You may not have a full kitchen but you can still do some cooking.

As with all things prepping, you should have a back-up plan, a back-up plan for your back-up plan, and if you can, one more for good measure. Further, having an ample supply of items to use to create fire with will be paramount in an emergency situation. Therefore, keep the following items stocked up in your supplies:

- Stock [plenty of fuel](#) ^[1] for your cooking methods. (Be sure to [store your fuel properly](#) ^[2] and in accordance with local fire regulations.)
- Store matches in waterproof containers.
- Lighters
- Dry wood
- If you have a place to store them, tightly roll newspapers and magazines to use for fuel.
- Fireproof cooking vessels

Here are some options to cooking without your kitchen stove.

(* = see instructions below)

Outdoors:

- Solar Funnel Cooker *
- Propane BBQ Grill
- Charcoal Hibachi (you can burn nearly anything in this as long as it is non-toxic)
- Outdoor Fireplace*
- #10 Can Cookstove*
- Sun Oven (commercial or DIY)

Indoors:

- Votive cooker (like a buffet pan – some use votive candles and others use Sterno)
- Kerosene heater with a flat surface
- Toilet Paper Stove*
- 1 burner camp stove
- Woodstove

How-To's:

Solar Funnel Cooker - This simple cooker is very efficient, easy to make and can be constructed from very common, every day items. The design was invented by the Physics Department at Brigham Young University. Details about the cooker can be found on the [internet](#) ^[3] or can be [viewed on this page](#) ^[4].

You will need:

- A large piece of cardboard that is pliable enough to be shaped into a cone shape
- A box of aluminum foil

- A large glass jar with a wide mouth
- Black paint
- A block of wood
- A non-toxic plastic bag that is big enough to hold the jar and the block of wood (Reynolds cooking bags work well)
- A sturdy box to hold the entire set up

Outdoor Fire Place - An outdoor fireplace can be as simple as an old tire rim containing your wood fire or as elaborate as a brick and mortar creation. This is for something in between the two.

You will need:

- Concrete blocks
- A reclaimed grill from an old barbecue

Directions:

Make an open square on the ground from one layer of concrete blocks. You should be able to lay the grill all the way across the back 2/3s of the foundation. The front third should not be covered by the grill so that you can tend to the fire.

1. Remove the grill and build up 3 sides of the fireplace with blocks until you reach the desired height for your cooking surface.
2. Lay your grill atop the back 2/3 of the fireplace. Hold it in place by adding another layer of blocks on top of the grill. Now you are only building up the area around the grill. Add 1-4 more layers of blocks.
3. You can use any type of cooking implement that you would use over an open campfire. If you happen to come across something like an old hibachi, the top can be placed over anything you are cooking directly on the grill. Cast iron works beautifully for this type of cooking.
4. Be very careful to use long handled utensils and to use heavy towels and oven mitts for anything taken off of an open fire.

Toilet Paper Cooker - There are times when we have to use what we have on hand and toilet paper a great alternative cooking source. **This will also provide heat for your room in the winter.**

You will need:

A roll of unscented toilet paper

- A bottle of rubbing alcohol
- A clean, empty #10 can
- A metal rack (something used for cooking so it is heat proof)

Directions:

1. Remove the cardboard center from the toilet paper and place the tp down into the can.
2. Pour rubbing alcohol into the can to saturate the tp. Wait for a few minutes to allow the tp to act as a wick and soak up the alcohol
3. Light your tp on fire. This burns hot and does not create dangerous carbon monoxide, but any fire creates gases – use in a ventilated room.
4. Place the grill on top of the can. Put your food or water in a pot with a lid on top of the grill.

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URLs in this post:

[1] plenty of fuel: http://readynutrition.com/resources/the-6-most-popular-types-of-fuel-to-store-for-emergencies_20092011/

[2] store your fuel properly: http://readynutrition.com/resources/safety-tips-for-emergency-fuel-storage_20082011/

[3] internet: <http://www.solarcooking.org/plans/funnel.htm>

[4] viewed on this page: http://readynutrition.com/resources/add-some-solar-flare-to-your-cooking_06082012/

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