



THE EDC *you wear*

by Kerry Cartier

When I lived in Alaska, I carried canteens, MREs, and a fanny pack with survival gear that I brought along whenever I left the truck. After moving to “The Lower 48,” the fanny pack became my Every Day Carry (EDC), comprised of whatever I had in my pockets or on my person. Here’s what I typically bring:

My keyring has 5 keys, a metal whistle, a cut-down ferro rod, a P-38 can opener, a ball compass, and a dog tag. I got a dog tag with my name and address, wife’s phone number, religious affiliation, and blood type at [\[tag.com\]\(http://www.dog-tag.com\). I have four dog tags: one on my keyring, one in my change purse, one on a neck chain I wear outdoors, and one I gave to my wife to put in her purse. As in the military, my dog tag identifies the body it is on, which can be useful if you are unconscious or unable to communicate.](http://www.dog-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Instead of a wallet, I carry a change purse with zippered compartments. Nothing falls out by accident. I have a driver’s license, one credit card, and a piece of aluminum foil shaped like a stick of gum to prevent the cards from being scanned inadvertently. I carry with me \$60 “emergency

money” and \$12 spending money, and I have a money belt with a zipper, but I only carry cash in it if we’re on a trip. Another compartment has a Medicare card, a healthcare identification card, and a card with family phone numbers and an out-of-state contact.

Also, I carry two Band-aids, a folded plastic bag from the grocery store, half of an emery board, a BIC lighter, and a packet of sugar reinforced with clear tape for emergency treatment of low blood sugar (for diabetes). Additionally, there’s a pocket knife with a ceramic blade; not as

strong as steel, but sharp, sharp, very sharp! I wrap it in a napkin, so it won't accidentally open up in my pocket. If I'm alone, I will carry an iPhone SE, turned off. I also bought my wife an iPhone SE, so we know how to use each other's phones, and they both use the same charger.

We live in the boonies, and though we may not be able to consistently make a voice call, texting each other usually works. I have a holster that clips on my pants right behind my belt buckle, but I carry it only if I think I might need it. A small .38 fits it well, and I told my wife that if either of us pulls a gun and shoots it, it's going to cost us \$15,000 in lawyer fees.

I've gone into considerable detail about my on-person EDC because I have not read any article with such details. I think folks are smart enough to figure out why I carry what I do, but I've added a little reasoning there. As you might guess, what I decided to carry has changed since I left

Alaska. It changed again when we moved from the city into the countryside. I eliminated any items that go bad, like food, because my EDC should always be ready to use. What you decide to bring should fit your personal needs. I was a Scoutmaster for a couple decades, until Scouting went under. I'm comfortable outdoors, probably having spent 3 years or more sleeping under the stars.

My wife is a city girl, uncomfortable if she can't sleep in her own bed. She realized before she married me that I was a savage, which was okay as long as she didn't have to come along. My wife would need a lot more gear than I do in her EDC because she prizes comfort. I've been cold, wet, and uncomfortable enough times that while I don't like it, I can accept that as part of the deal.

Your EDC should ideally weigh half a pound or less. This is not a 3-day or one-week survival kit. It's what you put on with your clothing before you

leave your house. You may notice that you already have most of the EDC, and the only expensive item is a cell phone. Periodically, check to see if there are items you can delete or add. Independence Day and Christmas are when I do this.

Finally, I recommend that you photocopy everything in your EDC and keep the copies in a safe place, such as with your will or other important papers. Having details like driver's license numbers makes them easier to replace. *KC*

Kerry Cartier ran the "DisasterGuy" website for a couple decades and writes about emergency preparedness. He was an LDS Scoutmaster for decades, has built and flown experimental aircraft including gyroplanes, and has been married for than half a century.