

# **Pocket EDC The Ultimate in Everyday Carry Convenience**

By SnoMan

Everyday Carry refers to the small survival kit you carry every day, everywhere. For some people, keeping a pack at all times is just too much of a pain. Fortunately, there is a great solution — pocket carry, or pocket EDC.

If you don't want to carry any kind of pack, you have options. Cargo pants, vests, and jackets are your friends; just fill the pockets with all the stuff you would have put in the pack. Of course, weather is a factor, but almost any climate is suitable for vests, especially the lighter ones similar to fishing vests. In this type of EDC you can still carry everything you need for getting home, even water and a change of underwear. Depending how many pockets are available, you might have to trim the kit a little, but as always, some equipment is better than none.

## **Contents of a Pocket Everyday Carry Kit**

What you put in a pocket EDC will vary a little based on your choice of clothing, which we'll discuss in the next section. Consider these recommendations, and trim your kit or add to it as needed:

- Mini Survival Kit. I have previously reviewed a mini survival kit and listed the contents with photos and a video. It all fits in a waterproof hard case.
- Flashlight. Some years ago I bought a Surefire LX2 Lumamax. This is a top-shelf light, but I'm going to recommend something different for your kit because you probably need one that runs on common AA batteries; the Lumamax uses 123A batteries that are harder to find. But Surefire sets the standard of quality and performance, so study its features.
  - Crenelated bezel, which makes it a weapon.
  - Tempered glass lens for better optics (plastic lenses tend to become opaque in time).
  - Hard-anodized aluminum body for light weight and extreme durability.
  - Two levels of output for bright light or extended run time.
  - Reversible clip.
  - Weatherproof gaskets.
  - Press or twist end cap.
  - High-tech reflector which makes a tight beam for distance, with a smooth falloff for peripheral illumination.
- I also have a Fenix LD12, which runs on a single AA battery. It has four brightness levels, strobe and SOS functions, and several other features that look good on the spec sheet; unfortunately, it doesn't work right. Only the two dimmest settings work, even with a fresh battery. I'm on the fence about recommending it; my son has one that works fine, so my misfortune might be a fluke. Certainly the Fenix fits a lot more budgets, but the Lumamax really is a

- superior tactical light. Anyway, I already own it, so I won't switch anytime soon; until it burns out I'll just carry spare 123A batteries.
- Water. You can easily carry a Lifestraw or Sawyer straw kit, but you just need to be aware of one weakness with these systems — they don't have carbon. They are good at filtering out very small particles like bacteria and other pathogens, but carbon will extract other contaminants like heavy metals, pesticides, herbicides, and small amounts of oil or gasoline, and improve the taste of the water by removing volatile organic compounds. So my recommendation is my old standby, the Sport Berkey. You can always just carry the bottle empty to lighten your load.
  - Fire. This is likely an item in your mini survival kit, above, but it's so important I need to mention it here. The easiest way to light a fire is with a flame, so get some matches or a lighter. The next best thing is to use a striker on anything that will take a spark — cotton or drier lint. Strikers are definitely more cool and stuff, so keep one on hand to demonstrate it for the grandkids, but in the real world you're going to light your fire with a butane lighter.
  - Multitool. The Leatherman Wave was voted the #1 favorite multitool in a Lifehacker reader poll. I don't even own one, which might surprise you if you've seen my knife collection in the article about choosing a survival knife. I have a Victorinox Swiss Army SwissTool, but honestly, my go-to multitool is the good ol' fashioned Swiss Army Knife. There's like a million models, so take your pick, but you need a few basic functions:
    - Blade. A straight, non-serrated blade is best because it's easier to sharpen in the field. Many models have a large and small blade.
    - Screwdriver. Many models have a large flathead on the bottle opener and a small flathead on the can opener. A micro flathead is available as an accessory that screws into the corkscrew.
    - Bottle opener.
    - Can opener.
    - Reamer.
    - Tweezers.
    - Some other interesting functions: corkscrew, wire stripper, saw, file, mini pen, magnifying glass, compass.
  - First aid. This is not your major first aid kit; it's just your EDC first aid kit. You need a couple of adhesive bandages and some antiseptic wipes. Flexible fabric bandages stay on longer. Betadine stains your skin, but it kills germs faster than alcohol while doing less damage to the flesh in open wounds, so I always recommend Betadine pads.
  - Change of underwear. Obviously this is not a critical item, but if you have room, why not?
  - Personal hygiene. Floss, toothbrush, toothpaste, lip balm, and a tampon. If you're a girl, the tampon is obvious. If you're a guy, you might someday help a damsel in distress, and if not, you can always use it for tinder — it takes a spark. Add a pea-sized dab of lip balm to make it burn longer.
  - Handgun. I'm not debating whether you should have a carry permit, and the only thing I'll say here about choice of caliber is that the smaller the gun, the easier and more convenient it is to carry. In a major emergency event, people become

dangerous, and a gun is a major consideration. Be sure you get training and plenty of experience with the specific gun you carry.

- Map. You should have a street map of the city where you live/work. This will help you find water sources and chart the shortest path home.
- Pen.

The foregoing is not an exhaustive list; it's illustrative. Adapt the list to your specific needs.

## **Clothing for a Pocket Everyday Carry Kit**

We'll consider two ways to increase your carrying capacity; pants or shorts with cargo pockets, and tactical or fishing vests. (Of course a jacket or coat is a possibility, but you want your carry method to be as versatile as possible, and a jacket will get left behind in hot weather).

Cargo pants come in dozens of varieties, but what makes them relevant to our discussion is the big pockets. Practically, there's only so much you'll want to put in the big panel thigh pockets, because big heavy items will flop annoyingly with every step. Light, bulky stuff is perfect for the pants, and put the heavy things in the vest.

Tactical vests are like fishing vests, but with heavier material and more pockets. The one I wear has concealed carry pockets with a hook-and-loop field so you can attach a holster in them. It also comes in a lighter version. If you already own a fishing vest, there's no reason you couldn't adapt it as an EDC vest.

As you put your Pocket EDC system together, start small, cheap, and simple. The idea is to make sure you have your stuff with you, so don't go overboard; the Bugout Bag goes in the vehicle, not in your pocket!

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