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## Dealing with Close-Up Confrontations

On a regular basis, police officers approach within several feet a suspect they believe to be armed and dangerous. The officers weapon is drawn and pointing at the suspect. They instruct him to put his hands up. Some of these officers will not go home at the end of their shift because of a simple truth I'm going to share with you.

There are times when we must be the one to confront a suspect or offender. Whether you're in law enforcement and taking the fight to the bad guys or a citizen and you're an unwilling participant in a violent encounter, the rules are the same.

During such confrontations many people, including experienced law officers, believe that they have the ability to fire their weapon the moment they see the attacker go for his weapon. They further believe that their shot or shots would hit and neutralize the attacker before he could draw and use his weapon.

In the situation described above, these officers were wrong, some of them were dead wrong.

Reaction time is the time it takes to start to move after the perception of danger. In the case of a well-trained shooter, that reaction time is around two or

three tenths of a second. Well trained, in this case, could be considered someone who is doing at least 100 dry fire and/or live fire repetitions per week as well as constantly gaming scenarios and pre-defining trigger points for confrontations.

So, if you see a need to discharge your firearm, it's safe to assume that it will take AT LEAST a quarter of a second or so before you can take action.

What does this mean? At close range, if you are confronting an offender who has a knife in his hand, and his hand by his side with the blade pointing downward, you are at great risk. Even if your gun is already drawn and pointed at the suspect, you are likely to lose the fight.

By the time you see him move and fire your first shot, he will be accelerating his weight towards you with his knife aimed at you. Physics being what it is, even if you are able to shut down his central nervous system with your first shot, his inertia may very well still drive the knife into you.

The reason--he acted first, and you reacted. And in reacting, you were at least a quarter of a second behind him. And worse yet, if you were talking to him, your reaction time would be even slower, up to as much as three-quarters

of a second—plenty of time for him to cover 5 or more feet.

This three-quarters of a second is important to know, because the distance that an attacker is able to move during the three-quarters of a second it takes you to react is called your “reactionary gap.”

### **Reactionary Gap**

EVERYBODY has a reactionary delay. It may be .2 seconds, or it may be 2 seconds. If your reaction time is three-quarters of a second and your attacker can close the distance within one-quarter of a second, they essentially get a free pass for the remaining half-second until you get up to speed and into the fight.

In 1983, SWAT Magazine ran an article by Salt Lake City Police Officer, Dennis Tueller that put concrete numbers to this abstract idea.

He had several officers see how quickly they could cover 21 feet while holding a knife. The answer was 1.5 seconds.

One and a half seconds was (and still is in many places) also the benchmark for how long an officer had to draw his firearm and fire two center of mass shots.

What that means is that if an officer has their firearm holstered and a knife wielding attacker decides to attack him at a distance of 21 feet or less, the officer should expect to be stabbed.

In this example, 21 feet is the reactionary gap if you've got a holstered firearm and are facing an attacker armed with a knife. If they're any closer than that and they

start their attack, you're likely to get stabbed before being able to fire two center of mass shots.

This is why one of the most important things that you can control in a violent force encounter is the distance between you and your attacker. This one single factor can both give you a big advantage if you have to go “kinetic” AND provide a trigger that you can use to take action.

Some martial artists develop the ability to float effortlessly. UFC lightweight fighter, Clay Guida is one of my favorite examples of this. He always appear to be within striking distance, yet when his opponents strike at him, they find only empty air.

Maintaining a safe distance between you and your adversary allows you time to react, move, defend, counterattack or even turn around and run away.

It makes no difference whether your opponent is using fists, a knife or striking weapon such as a stick, you must judge the proper distance and stay just out of range. If your adversary shifts his weight toward you to attack, you glide back (away from him) at the same time, maintaining exactly the same range. Skilled fighters often don't even bother putting their hands up in defense, knowing their opponent can't touch them. Many professional fighters use it as a show of disrespect and as a way to taunt their opponents into making silly moves. This kind of tactical skill seems almost mystical, but it can be learned with a little bit of practice.

### **Here's how you can develop this skill.**

Choose a partner and each of you

assumes an aggressive or fighting stance. Keep just enough distance between you and your opponent so you are just beyond his reach. Have your opponent begin to move about, trying to either get closer to you or farther apart than the set range. You, in turn, will move with him, always maintaining the proper distance. In effect, you must learn how to become your adversary's shadow. It's difficult at first, but with practice it becomes second nature.

If you've got more experience dancing than fighting...just think of it as being the same color called a different name. In both disciplines, you're simply mirroring your partner and maintaining proper distance.

Focus your glance on your opponent's chest. Your peripheral vision will enable you to see their feet and hands. If the distance you want to maintain is four feet, cut a string to that length and tie it onto each of your belts. As your opponent moves, you shadow him while keeping the string at full length. If you're too slow, the string will sag, if you move too far away the string will break loose. With practice you will actually be able to sense the proper distance and anticipate your opponents movements. Before long, your opponent will find it impossible to close or open the distance between you.

You, in effect, will be in control of the fight.

If your adversary can't hit you, he can't hurt you. You can simply stay out of his range when he's strong, yet be able to close in on him when he's weak. The important thing to remember is that you, not your enemy, must be in control of the fighting range.

This isn't an option for many readers because of age or injuries, and many environments don't allow for the freedom of movement that this requires. If, for whatever reason, you can't control the range, there are still other factors at play that you may be able to control that will shorten the reactionary gap.

As an example, having your firearm drawn and aimed center of mass, will reduce your reactionary gap considerably.

In addition, if you are in your kitchen with a firearm and your attacker is in your living room with a knife, simply moving a chair between you and your attacker or positioning yourself so that your kitchen counter is between you and your attacker will shorten the gap.

Each of these will reduce your reactionary gap (increase safety) considerably. If you can fire two center of mass shots in one-half second, then your reactionary gap drops to roughly 7 feet instead of 21 feet by having your firearm drawn. When you add in the time it would take for your attacker to get around the chair and/or counter would shrink your reactionary gap even more.

If you've got any confusion on the reactionary gap, think about drawing a dot on a piece of paper. Then draw a medium sized circle (the exact size doesn't matter) around the dot and assume that the circle represents a distance of 21 feet away from the dot. You are the dot. Place more dots on the page to represent attackers. Any dots that are within the circle are within your reactionary gap and could get to you before you could implement an effective defense. Any dots outside of the circle are outside of

your reactionary gap and you should be able to eliminate them as a threat before they can hurt you.

Reducing the reactionary gap simply makes the circle smaller and you safer.

**The one who acts first usually wins. (Also termed speed, surprise, and violence of action)**

If someone has approached you, has a visible weapon, has expressed their intent to harm you, they've ignored your pleas, retreat is not an option, and they're within your reactionary gap, your best choice may very well be to go on offense with the intent of attacking the central nervous system to the extent that they are no longer a threat to you. Because if they decide to start their attack within your reactionary gap they will, by definition, be able to hurt you before you're able to mount an effective defense.

This is a personal decision that everyone has to make, not only because of the moral and human consequences, but also because of how difficult it may be to justify your actions to law enforcement or a jury.

Unfortunately, few martial arts or self-defense instructors or studios teach the concept of pre-emptive attacks in a form that is moral, ethical, and hopefully legal. Most sell the fantasy that you'll always be able to react to a lethal force attack that happens at smell-the-breath distance if you advance far enough in their particular system. I don't know about you, but I've been arrogant/slow and caught punches square on the jaw enough times in fights that I like having a few tricks up my sleeve that will work if I face an attacker who is high on meth and faster than me on my best day.

One of the best books on this topic is "How to Survive The Most Critical 5 Seconds Of Your Life." by Tim Larkin and Chris Ranck-Buhr and you can order it on Amazon or get it for free as part of a package by going to [SurviveInPlace.com/targetfocustraining](http://SurviveInPlace.com/targetfocustraining).

Regardless, at smell-the-breath distances up to six feet, you have little chance of winning, no matter what the combination of weapons is in the fight—unless you attack first. If you react, you are depending upon pure luck, luck that he misses, and that you have a center mass hit(s).

At less than 21-feet, even if he only has a knife, he will have the ability to kill you, even if you also get him. Still not very encouraging.

So, if you are going to let him make the first move, you need to be beyond 21-feet, have your weapon drawn, or have an obstacle between you and your attacker. And that's no guarantee that you will survive, but at least it takes away most of his advantage.

At distances greater than 21-feet, you have the time to put additional distance or obstacles between you and your attacker.

**Here are some other things you can do to decrease your reactionary gap.**

Give short commands, but don't get into a two-way conversation. You can't do two things at the same time. If you are going to talk, talk. If you are going to shoot, shoot. Don't try to talk and shoot at the same time. Remember, talking adds time to your reaction time.

Ignore his questions. If you have to say

anything, only give commands: Stop; Don't move; Drop your weapon, are good examples.

If you can't find suitable cover, at least try to use concealment. Fight from a darkened area or in the shadows. An ordinary wall, shrubs or a darkened window will not stop a bullet, but it may make it more difficult for the suspect to locate you to begin his attack.

In your home, try to keep furniture, counters, or doorways partially between you and your attacker.

Set your mental trigger. When confronting a violent attacker, you must set your mental trigger to reduce your reaction time.

You can't pull the trigger on your weapon unless you have first made the decision to shoot. So what you need to do is say to yourself, if he does this, I will shoot.

You also want to shoot while moving laterally (left or right). This is called "getting off the 'X'" and has a physiological basis that's worth knowing.

As the heart goes past the pulse rate that's common for exercise and into the range that only happens in extreme

adrenaline states where the brain fears it's imminent survival, vision closes down to where it's similar to looking through a toilet paper tube or a paper towel tube.

By simply moving a few feet from where you were when your attacker begins their attack, they might not be able to see where you are anymore and their inertia may simply cause them to attack the empty space where you were.

For example, you give the command, "Don't move!" Your attacker has a weapon in his hand. You tell yourself that if he starts to move in the slightest way, you will slide to the left (or right) and shoot, or shoot as you slide, depending on your comfort at arms. No further thought is required. He has lethal force in his hand and has taken actions that indicate that he intends to violently attack you.

Don't have a firearm? The concept works without a firearm as well—just picture a matador stepping out of the way as a bull tries to gore the empty space where he just was.

These concepts are applicable regardless of whether you're facing an attacker armed with a bladed weapon, firearm, club, or empty hands.

**How can I apply this information immediately?**

Great question. As you're going about your day, aware of your surroundings and gaming scenarios, think about how long it would take you to react if something were to happen or if you picked up on pre-incident triggers telling you something was about to happen. Then, pre-determine your action in light of how long it would take you to react.

As an example, if I'm eating at my favorite lunch spot wearing my sidearm in a SmartCarry concealment holster and someone comes in shooting, I know that my method of concealment would increase my reaction time and require me to get to concealment before drawing my firearm and engaging the shooter.

In many scenarios, my first response to a violent encounter is not to take direct action...it's to get to a tactically superior position where the attacker will have to go somewhere where I have an unfair advantage if they want to try to hurt me. More on this concept in a future article. Until then, feel free to contact me at David@LamplighterReport.com with any questions.

## Escaping Restraints

### Answers to Questions about Escaping Restraints

The section from last month's newsletter on escaping restraints during a kidnapping situation brought up a few questions from readers that I want to address quickly.

**What if my hands are tied behind my back?** The pumping techniques still work, although it will take MUCH longer. It might take 1-3 hours to get your shoes unlaced or find cordage,

work it through your restraints, find your rhythm, and cut through your restraints.

**Cord too short?** Boot laces provide

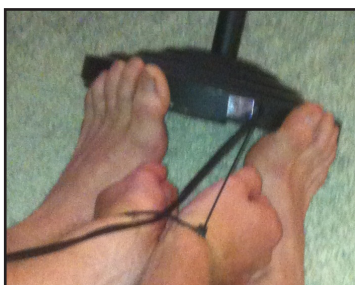


about the optimal length of cord to cut through restraints. They're long enough to allow you to tie loops big enough for your feet on both ends, but not so long that you have extra material. But what if you have on tennis shoes or boots with short laces? In short, you improvise, adapt, and overcome. You can make your loops toe sized rather than foot sized, you can make a loop for your toe on one end and bite down on the other end, or anything else that works for you.



**No laces?** There are several times when you might not have laces...heels, sandals, bare feet, or your captors take your shoes away from you. In those cases, it's very handy to have a para-cord bracelet or other para-cord based

accessories. It IS painfully slow to unravel para-cord accessories when your hands are tied, but you can do it if your restraints aren't too tight. If you don't have para-cord, you can use a phone cord, a lamp cord, or anything else that is strong and thin. In fact, with a lamp cord, you don't even need to disconnect the cord from the lamp...just wedge the lamp against something and start pumping.



In this particular case, I pushed against the lamp with my feet and held the other end of the cord in my mouth. Remember, the thinner your cord, the quicker it will cut through your restraints. In this case, the lamp cord is pretty wide. A little rubbing will get rid of the insulation, get you down to copper wire, and give you a thinner surface to cut with. Ideally, you'd split the cord, but it's not absolutely necessary.

If you don't have laces, para-cord, or other cordage, look for a sharp edge around windows, doors, or furniture that you could rub your restraints against.

Flat laces? It is very hard to concentrate enough heat and friction to cut through restraints with flat laces and my solution for flat laces is to get rid of them. If you have boots that have flat laces, you can replace them with round boot laces, or, I'd suggest replacing them with an equivalent length of paracord.

If you go the paracord lace route, you'll find out how difficult it is to lace shoes or boots with paracord because of fraying. An easy fix is to cauterize the ends of the paracord lightly with a lighter. I like to cauterize back about 1/2-3/4 of an inch so that they end up looking like laces with plastic covers on the end. I have also used electrical shrink tubing, but I've found that cauterizing makes for a simpler process and is also easier to run through eyelets.

More questions? Send them to [David@LamplighterReport.com](mailto:David@LamplighterReport.com)

## Caches

### Part III: The Issue of Theft and Loss

In the last installment on caches, I gave you a list of 10 household locations that you can use almost immediately without major work to set up the cache, or to cover it up. In this issue, we're going to cover specific advice for using these caches, including several common mistakes

- 1. The first one is in the tank of your toilet.** This location is a good one for hiding weapons or small items that aren't sensitive to water.

If you have an item or items that ARE sensitive to water that you want to store in your toilet tank,

you can still do it. Let's say that you have an item or items that will fit into a quart sized freezer zip lock bag. Simply take that bag, put it inside a second quart sized freezer bag, and attach the outer bag to the tank as high as possible with carpet tape.

If you need to grab-n-go or if you've got a plumber coming over to do work, you simply pull out the inner bag and leave the outer bag attached to your toilet tank. If you're pulling out your inner bag because a plumber is going to do work on your toilet, you can put a crescent wrench, a spare toilet tank cleaner, cleaning gloves, or something else that might make sense to keep in a toilet.

**2. Behind the kick-plate of any built-in cabinet in your house.** One of the great things about kitchen and bathroom built-in cabinets is that they are built up off of the ground, providing a 4" tall dead space you can use for storage. All you have to do is remove the kick-plate to get access to the space. A few considerations: If the trim is caulked to the floor, remove the caulk first.

Many kick plates are cheaply made by using compressed sawdust (particle board) covered with a thin veneer. If your kick plate is made from particle board, be prepared for it to crumble as you remove it, for it to be unsalvagable, and to need to replace it. As long as you're careful, you should be able to remove the veneer from the particle board if it falls apart on you.

No matter what your kick plate is made of, be very careful working it loose. After you remove any visible caulk, I'd suggest prying first with a utility knife, (not really prying, but simply opening a crack) a putty

knife, a painters 5-in-1 or 6-in-1 tool, and finally a thin pry bar.

When you reinstall the kick plate, details matter. You can secure the kick plate with cabinet latches, strong magnets, adhesive, or finishing nails, depending on how often you plan on accessing it. Whatever you do, make sure that the kick plate looks like your other kick plates. If other ones are caulked, caulk your cache. If none of the other ones use screws, make sure you don't use screws on your cache.

**3. In the wall, between the studs behind any medicine cabinets you have.** This is one that you can use in many older motels and bed and breakfasts in addition to using it in your own house. These can be a little tricky if they are caulked to painted walls. If your situation looks like it will work, here's how you do it:

First, using a razor, cut through the caulk all the way around your medicine cabinet (if there is caulk).

Next, remove any screws inside the medicine cabinet. It's very likely that there will only be 2 screws securing the medicine cabinet and you'll be able to find them in the corners.

Once you've got your medicine cabinet off of the wall, look inside to see how much room you will have for storage and decide on what container to use. Personally, I like using plastic cases that have a sturdy, integrated handle, like handgun boxes.

Whatever you decide to use, you'll probably need to lower it down to the floor. I like using 550 cord (also called para-cord or parachute cord), although you might need to use thicker rope or wear heavy gloves if you're lowering a particularly heavy container.

You'll also want to make DARN sure that you don't drop the end of your cord that's not tied to your case. If you can't find anything to attach your cord to, you will probably want to put a nail or screw into one of the studs and tie the cord off on that.

As you're putting items into this space, make sure that you don't overload it and put unnecessary stress on your walls.

When you're done loading the space, simply put the medicine cabinet back in place, re-screw it, and run a bead of caulk around the edges, if there was caulk there in the first place.

When you need to get to your cache, you can either remove the medicine cabinet again or make a hole in the wall, depending on the situation.

**4. In the middle of hollow core doors:** Most residential interior doors are hollow, a simple fact that can be confirmed with a few simple taps. They are made with a frame of solid wood or particle board with a thin veneer on both sides and around the edges.

The downside is that once you realize how fragile these doors are,

you'll realize that you could add 50 locks to them and they'd still be about as secure as a cardboard box. The good side is that this hollow design gives you a relatively large space to cache items. There are two straightforward ways to accomplish this—from the top and from the door knob opening.

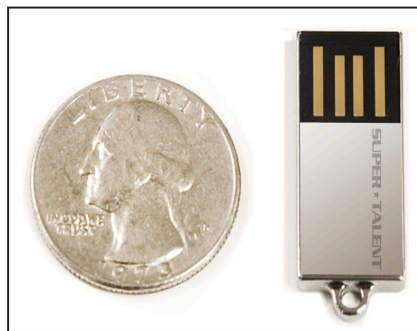
The door knob opening will be the quickest and easiest one to set up. Simply remove your doorknob and drill a hole straight into the door through the latch hole that already exists. In almost all cases, this hole will be 7/8" so you can use up to a 7/8" spade bit to punch through the door frame into the hollow core. The size of hole you drill will depend on the size of the container you want to cache in the door.



As an example, if you're using PVC type pipe, a 7/8" opening will hold 1/2" PVC, 3/4" CPVC or 3/4" PEX. 1/2" PVC will hold approximately 7-9 rolled bills and 3/4" CPVC and 3/4" PEX will hold 10-12. If you

need more than that in any one cache, simply make it longer.

This type of cache is best suited for small thumb drives like the "pico USB thumb drive", flash memory cards, cash, and important documents, like combinations and/or locations of other caches. The great thing is that it is almost impossible to detect and there are two methods of retrieval—removing the doorknob if you have time and breaking the door if you don't.



Three VITAL considerations: First, you must secure your cache container to the door frame, both to prevent rattling and to keep it from falling into the hollow core. One of the fastest and easiest ways to do this is with epoxy. Second, you need to tape off or otherwise close the end of the cache that is not accessible from the doorknob opening. If you're using a cigar tube or other container that's closed on one end, you won't need to worry about it, but if you're using pipe, you will. Third, make sure that you load your cache so that you can remove items later. If you're putting cash in your cache, I suggest tying a piece of cord around

the bills before rolling them up and inserting them in the tube.

The second way to take advantage of the space in hollow core doors is by drilling a hole in the top and using pipe or tube caches or removing a section of the top frame and placing items in from the top. Removing a section of the top frame is significantly more difficult than the pipe/tube caches, but it will allow you to cache documents without folding and would even allow you to cache a small firearm, although I don't suggest it because of weight and noise considerations.

Specifically, you want the door to feel and sound "normal" if anyone tries to open it. You don't want your cached items to bounce around making noise and you don't want to fill a hollow core door so full that it raises curiosity. If you DO want to cache something heavy like a firearm using a top-of-door cache, I'd suggest placing it as close to the hinge as possible and cutting foam for it so that it will be kept snugly in place inside the door.

Carrying this one out...if you think of your bedroom as a "safe room" in case of a home invasion, you wouldn't want to cache items in this door. Because of the flimsy construction of interior doors, you'd also want to

**5. AC return vents:** AC return vents are very versatile for caching, regardless of whether you have floor returns or ceiling returns. In either case, you

ideally want to make sure that your cache is not visible from the return vent, doesn't make noise or impede airflow, and that you don't overload your vent and cause it to break.

In addition, since there will be continual airflow past your cache, you will want/need to use an air-tight container. This could be double ziplock bags, vacuum sealed Foodsaver bags, a capped section of pipe, or a factory firearms case.

You'll want to retrieve these caches before you have any AC work done on your house.

One strategy you can use that will help with hidden placement and easy retrieval is to use fishing line. What you want to do is tie fishing line to your cache (and possibly reinforce it with epoxy) and secure the other end of the fishing line to the ductwork with epoxy, a strong magnet, or tape. This way, if you have a bend in your ductwork near your return, you can place your cache around the bend with a pole, stick, pipe, etc., so that it's out of sight and out of reach, but still be able to retrieve it by using the fishing line.

**6. In your attic, between rafters, under insulation.** The simple way to do this is to simply move some insulation aside, lay your cache down, and replace the insulation. Since the surface you're laying your cache on is the ceiling for the room below, you will need to be careful not to overload it.

A good rule of thumb is to keep the cache under 15-20 pounds.

The more involved way is to install support brackets between the rafters, lay down wood or another base material, put your cache on that and replace the insulation.

In either case, attics have extreme temperatures, and possible humidity, insect, and varmint issues, so load and seal your cache appropriately.

**7. In concave areas under heavy furniture:** Most sofas, dressers, and standalone cabinets like wardrobes and armoires have a considerable amount of hollow space underneath for caches.

I'll cover a couple of VERY simple ways to take advantage of this space, as well as a slightly more involved approach.

As far as simple, you can take a large envelope and secure it to the bottom of the furniture with double stick tape (I suggest carpet tape). This idea has been around a LONG time and many people have seen or used it. I first saw it 20 some years ago when we were emptying out my grandpa's desk after he moved to a nursing home. He'd forgotten about it, and possibly other caches that we never found, which is a good reason to make sure you have a way to find all your caches after you place them.

The second EASY cache you can use to take advantage of this space depends on the particular

piece of furniture, but many are built so that you can simply screw a gun safe up underneath. I prefer push-button mechanical safes, and this placement allows the contents to literally fall into your hands when you open them.

If you want to get more involved, you can create an entire false bottom. If you do this, I suggest using piano hinge (also called "continuous" hinge at big box stores) and one or more latches.

Have an old sleeper-sofa? If so, you can remove all of the guts, build a stable platform for the cushions to sit on, and have a cache big enough to hide several months of food or even a person.

**8. In the box springs of your bed:** This one's a little dicey because of both how drastically different the interior design of box springs is and how different the performance is. On interior design, some box springs have great natural spaces for storage, but others have such a complex network of springs that there isn't much room left. In either case, the base is normally little more than a "gauze" like sheet that won't support any weight.

Many box springs do absolutely nothing to affect the comfort of the bed and you can gut them and/or completely eliminate them. I've gutted and/or eliminated several throughout the years for myself and others and have yet to find one that actually makes the bed more comfortable, but I'm told they exist.



**Here are a few ways to approach using box springs as a cache:**

a. Remove the staples holding a small section of the bottom lining, place lite items inside the box springs, and re-staple the lining, using the same holes and type of staples, if possible.

b. Remove a section of the lining (see above), use cord/string/tape to suspend your items between springs, and re-attach the lining.

c. Remove the lining from 3 sides of the box spring assembly, remove a section of springs or all of the springs, secure the top as necessary (so that the mattress won't sag), add a wooden base, and re-attach the lining.

d. Buy or build a waterbed/airbed storage base that goes all the way to the floor and gives you countless options for visible and hidden storage.

**9. In dead spaces between sections of kitchen cabinetry.**

When you buy off-the-shelf cabinets (not custom), they're normally built in segments and put together like a set of legos. When the spacing of the kitchen and the sizing of the cabinetry don't match up, the extra space is often left "dead" and closed up so that it's inaccessible. This is particularly the case after a remodel when the space for the refrigerator or other appliance is expanded to hold their modern, larger, equivalent. You can use this space as a cache by accessing it from the top (for eye-level) cupboards, and from the front

with floor mounted cupboards, although this can be much more involved, depending on how they were installed. Again, the key is to plan out the entire process so that you know you can close everything up so that your work is not detectible BEFORE starting.

**10. In the dead space behind your dishwasher (or other built-in appliances).**

Depending on your particular dishwasher and the construction of your kitchen, you will probably have a dead space behind your dishwasher where you can place a cache. Even if there isn't a dead space, removing a built-in appliance can give you a GREAT way to access the dead space underneath your cabinets. One of the big bonuses is that you don't need to be too careful covering up the opening, since few, if any, thieves will remove a built-in appliance looking for entrances to cache hides.

This list is by no means all inclusive... depending on the construction of your house, your time, budget, and skill level, you can do caches behind walls, under carpets/floors, caches accessed through outlets, fake outlets, mirror caches, fake cans, bottles, books, etc. The reason why I included the 10 specific caches that I did is because most, if not all of them can be implemented within a matter of minutes, if not days by people living in big houses, condos, apartments, houses they own, or even rental houses. They can also be used by people who have no handyman skills and people with a lifetime of DIY experience.

I want to leave you with four pieces of advice. First, as I've mentioned before, don't do a cache half-way. If you do a kick-plate cache, but don't secure it in the same way that other kick plates are secured, it will draw attention to where your important items are stored.

Second, consider the elements when you are building your caches. You can't use too many ziplock bags, Foodsaver bags, descant (moisture absorbers) packages, or too much silicone caulk.

Third, caches are fun and have a secret agent element to them, but they're serious business. That being said, the best way to view caches is a way to protect your valuables from thieves rather than as a way to hide contraband from authorities. Some of my readers may find themselves operating in hostile nations where their chief concern IS authorities, but for the majority of you, in-and-out thieves is the main threat to your valuables.

Fourth, if you have shared the location of your caches with others, or if a reasonable person would expect you to have caches, consider setting up some false caches. Just like it's common practice to carry a "mug" wallet with a few bills and bogus cards, you can have a few fake caches in your house that have valuables that you'd be willing to give up in order to get someone to "just go away."

What are your experiences with caches? Are you going to implement any of these caches? Let me know by sending me an email at David@LamplighterReport.com from a real or fake email address...depending on the security level of the email.

# Think the U.S. Dollar Might Tank?

I find myself in rare agreement with the IMF and Chinese leadership—we all think that the US Dollar is in trouble. More specifically, the Fed's policy of inflating the money supply and the federal government's habit of continually spending more than they take from us in taxes make me think it's unlikely that the Dollar can hold its value.

We've seen the effects of this in the form of higher exchange rates, higher prices for imports, and higher prices for oil- and petroleum-based products.

You should get this article by email before you get it in the mail, but August 2<sup>nd</sup> is a key date for the Dollar. Between now and then, US leaders must determine whether to cut the budget, raise the debt ceiling, or both.

In addition, the Fed is now holding all of the \$600 Billion of Treasuries that they bought during QE2. They're still holding these Treasuries and will need to sell/roll them at some point. They've also got to decide whether it's in their (not necessarily our) best interest to make a third round of treasury purchases (QE3).

One of the difficulties with this particular period in time is that there have been similar periods with other countries throughout history, but none quite like now. The US is a superpower, many of the global markets are priced in Dollars, and foreigners around the globe hold their wealth in Dollars because, as bad as it is, they see it as being safer than their native currency.

As a result of these and several other variables, it's understandable that people united about the need to

prepare for disaster would have vastly different outlooks on the future of the Dollar.

If you're like me and think that the Dollar is likely to inflate (drop in value vs. other storehouses of wealth) in August and beyond, here are some options that you might want to consider. Some of them are only options for people with considerable wealth. Others only take a few dollars. In any case, I've got some unique nuggets here that you're going to want to check out.

Remember, NOTHING that I say below should be taken as investment advice. I'm not your financial adviser, and in a blame-the-other-guy society, I've got to tell you to seek qualified advice from a professional adviser before doing anything with your money. Chances are good that I have, am, or will be doing some or all of the following. If you do the same, you may lose all your money. Neither of us have a crystal ball, so it's anyone's guess. Now that that is out of the way, let's get on to some useful information :)

## 1. Land with water (and good drainage) that can support plants and/or livestock.

Places as distant as Texas, the upper Midwest, China, and Japan have been experiencing record droughts and record flooding. That, among several other factors, is pushing global food prices up, which, in general, makes land that can support plants and or livestock go up in value. If the dollar gets weaker, food imports go up in price and more food gets exported, it stands to reason that land will

be a good hedge against inflation.

I'm seeing a recurring pattern across the country where people who are able to are taking money out of the stock market and buying the ranch/farm/cabin that they always wanted so that they can have something tangible that they can enjoy and that provides more stability than dollar denominated assets. This is happening at all wealth levels and I believe it will cause a long term increase in land prices near urban areas.

**2. Precious Metals.** I always have an internal debate on whether precious metals really go up in value or if they just reflect the Dollar going down in value. Both silver and gold get used extensively in jewelry around the world...in fact, over 50% of the gold consumed is used for jewelry. The biggest consumer? Not the US...it's China and India. Silver, in addition, gets used extensively in medical, photography, and electronics applications and estimates are that only 10-20% of this silver gets recovered when the items are discarded.

So, in my mind, they are a better storehouse of value than a fiat currency like the Dollar, but with gold over \$1,500 per ounce and silver over \$30 per ounce, it's getting harder and harder to get small, widely recognized denominations. It's the whole "loaf of bread" argument that you can't trade an ounce of gold for a loaf of bread when you're starving...but now it's starting to happen with silver too,

although you can get around this problem by buying “junk” silver, or pre-1965 US silver coinage.

If you decide to go this route, you then have the issue of how to store it. Do you keep it in a bank that you may or may not have access to in an emergency? Do you keep it in your safe at home so that home invaders have one nice single location to focus on to get your guns AND gold?

This is one of the biggest problems that people face once they start buying precious metals...part of the reason to buy them is as a form of insurance and security, but once you have them, you start realizing that they've got their own issues.

There are a few options that I want to suggest. None of them are perfect and they all have their own particular risks, most notably reduced access, and long periods of time where you won't see your items.

**a. Inside climate controlled mini-storage facilities** (as opposed to exterior mini-storage). These are mini-storage units housed inside buildings. Most have limited access that is secured with personal codes and/or biometric locks. Once inside, your particular unit will also be locked like a traditional mini-storage units. Most facilities have extensive camera monitoring. Some of the more “aware” facilities have generator and battery backup and have taken precautions to protect against EMPs.

**b. Secure document storage facilities...particularly ones that specialize in helping businesses stay HIPAA compliant.** Simply put your precious metals in a file box with some filler files (or files that are actually important). You will have limited access, but you won't get wiped out in the event of a home fire or robbery.

**c. High-end wine storage units.** These are oftentimes found inside of climate controlled mini-storage facilities and have an additional layer of security between the exterior and the lock you put on your unit.

**d. Private vault facilities.** Depending on who you talk to, there are currently 6-7 private vault facilities that are open to the public in the US. They operate like a bank safe deposit box, but they are likely to stay open longer in the event of a banking system holiday or crash that closes banks. Most notably, several allow you complete anonymity (no ID required) and only take cash.

As a note, there have been over-hyped “concerns” by law enforcement that these facilities are used to hide ill-gotten gains and should be covered by the same ridiculous non-privacy laws that cover banks. These facilities are no more helpful for criminals who want to hide their money than digging a hole in the ground and burying a box—they're just cleaner and more convenient. They don't make crime happen, they don't facilitate the transfer of ill-gotten gains,

and they don't make it easier for criminals to launder money.

In fact, one of the most popular private vaults is 24-7 Private Vaults (24-7privatevaults.com) in Las Vegas. I'm sure that there is contraband in there...just like there is in bank safe deposit boxes, but one of the biggest classes of customers is serious gamblers who are scared to carry cash on planes or to try to deposit their winnings back in their banks and being tagged as a potential terrorist.

The best news on this front is that another 5-10 private vault facilities are likely to come on line in 2011, depending on the number that get approved. If you want a current list of private vault facilities in the US and want to be updated about when and where the new ones open, send me an email at David@LamplighterReport.com with “Private Vault” in the subject line.

What are the downsides? Private vaults are \$20 per month and up. The owners/employees could feasibly steal your items, although this would destroy their business. Regulation could freeze everything held at a facility, but this is why it's wise to diversify where you keep your valuables if you have a sizable amount.

**e. Frozen Storage Facilities.** This can be particularly useful for people who have more than a year of food storage. Frozen storage rates vary, but are typically between \$10-\$20 per month per pallet stored at 0 degrees Fahrenheit. One way to

take advantage of this is to take a section of PVC pipe, fill it with precious metals, cap it, and stick it in a container of food that you put on your pallet in frozen storage.

This strategy obviously isn't for everyone. You've got to have a reasonable expectation that you will be able to get to your food/precious metals in the event of a disaster, the honesty of the company and their level of preparedness for local disasters (backup power).

**f. In-home caches.** I've given several examples of in-home caches that would work for precious metals in this month's Lamplighter Report. The biggest advantage of in-home caches is that you don't have to pay a monthly fee and you limit the number of locations where you could have a loss. The downsides are that you

could be completely wiped out by a tornado, earthquake, fire, or other events.

**3. As we've discussed before, canned and other long life foods and items that you consume on a regular basis.**

**4. FOREX (foreign currency exchange) accounts.** I shared information on how my friend Jason does currency trading a few weeks ago, and if you've got the time and money, it can be VERY profitable...as well as a way to get some of your money out of dollars.

**5. Buying foreign/regional hard currency.** Don't have the time or money for currency trading but want to get some of your money out of US Dollars? Many people are unaware that you can simply go to local branches of major banks and request foreign currencies (physical cash in small bills) for little or no fee and

very favorable exchange rates.

If there IS a fee, simply ask them if there is another location where you could go where there isn't a fee. In most cities, only a limited number of bank branches focus on foreign currency exchange. These branches don't charge a fee, but other branches will.

I've included a couple of pictures of some of the most recent bills I purchased. FYI, the Euros are roughly \$1.50 and the Yuan are roughly 15 cents, so you can buy them with almost any budget. As long as China chooses to control the exchange rate between the US Dollar and the Yuan, it probably won't fluctuate too much. The Euro, might be another story if we have QE3. Two other currencies I'm watching are Russian Ruble, and Swiss Franc—both of which are partially backed by an ever increasing amount of gold.



For feedback, or to comment please contact:

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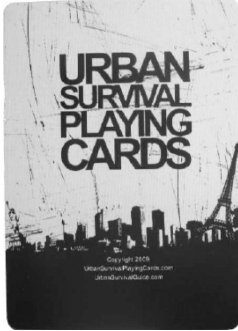




# Lamplighter Calendar and Resource Center

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12 Week Online Course That Will Teach You Easy Shortcuts  
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**Your First Plan Must Be To Survive In Place.**

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## Welcome To The Lamplighter Report!

I wanted to take a moment to say thank you for your membership to The Lamplighter Report. This issue is packed with some powerful information that will help you to prepare you and your loved ones in the event of terrorist attack, natural disaster, economic collapse, or a pandemic.

### **In Future Issues, "Lamplighter Report" readers will get....**

- My ESSENTIAL Survival "How-To's" (3 - 5 EACH MONTH)
  - New "Off-The-Grid" Books, Videos, and Sites I've discovered
  - My Private "Intel Report" on Global, National and Local Situations I'm Monitoring
  - Real Life "Case Studies" of How other Families are Preparing
  - "What Went Wrong" - My Analysis of COMMON Mistakes That Most Preppers are Making and much, MUCH more...
- 

UNTIL NEXT MONTH, MAKE SMALL FORWARD STEPS EVERY DAY IN YOUR PREPARATIONS AND GOD BLESS!, DAVID MORRIS  
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