



Mainstay

Field Guide No. 02

# Prepper Inventory & Expiration Tracker

*A workbook for logging what you have, how much, and when it expires — the paper version of the Mainstay app.*



EVERY SUPPLY — COUNTED AND DATED

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## B Shelf-life reference

Typical unopened shelf life, stored cool and dry. Treat these as a guide for setting expiration dates — always defer to the date printed on the item.

ITEM	TYPICAL SHELF LIFE	NOTE
<b>WATER &amp; FOOD</b>		
Bottled water	1–2 years	Safe longer if sealed and cool; rotate for taste.
Canned vegetables & fruit	2–5 years	Discard any can that is bulging, leaking, or rusted.
Canned meat & fish	2–5 years	High-acid foods sit at the shorter end of the range.
Dry pasta & white rice	2+ years	Brown rice is far shorter — about 6 months.
Dried beans & lentils	1–2 years	Edible longer, but they cook up tougher with age.
Peanut butter	~1 year	Unopened. Oil separation is normal, not spoilage.
Energy & granola bars	6–12 months	One of the first things to lapse — check often.
Powdered milk	~1 year	Longer when kept cool and sealed.
Honey, salt, sugar	Indefinite	Stable for years; honey may crystallize harmlessly.
<b>POWER &amp; EQUIPMENT</b>		
Alkaline batteries	5–10 years	Store at room temperature; remove from devices.
Lithium batteries	10–15 years	Best shelf life — worth it for critical gear.
Fire extinguisher	Check yearly	Inspect the gauge; recharge or replace as needed.
<b>HEALTH &amp; FIRST AID</b>		
Prescription medications	Per label	Rotate with normal refills so the kit stays current.
Over-the-counter medications	1–5 years	Effectiveness fades past the date; replace on schedule.
Antiseptic & ointments	2–3 years	Check the first-aid kit at every quarterly pass.
Sunscreen & insect repellent	~3 years	Heat shortens this; don't leave it in a hot car.

## C Keep it rotating

An inventory is a habit, not a project. Three simple rules keep it honest.

**RULE 01**

**First in, first out**

New supplies go to the back; older stock moves to the front. You use the soonest dates first, naturally.

**RULE 02**

**Date everything**

Write the purchase month on each item as it comes in. Guessing later is how things quietly expire.

**RULE 03**

**One pass a quarter**

Four short reviews a year. Pull anything within ninety days of expiring and put it on the grocery list.



**Let the dates watch themselves.**

Mainstay holds this whole log for you — and sends an alert before anything expires or runs low. No quarterly pass required.

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