

The best time to make a plan is before you have to implement the plan. If you don't have a plan, if/when an emergency happens, you will spend valuable time trying to come up with a plan.

While it isn't possible to plan for every contingency, you should have the basics covered. Your plan should be relevant to your area. If you are going hiking in the woods, that plan doesn't have to include being lost at sea, probably. If you live in Montana, hopefully you have to worry more about snowstorms than tsunamis.

Before you leave on the trip, know where you are going. It is helpful to know of any dangerous areas where you are going.

If you are going overseas, check out

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html> for travel advisories.

If you are travelling interstate or intrastate, see if the state has a travel information webpage.

West Virginia: [www.wv511.org](http://www.wv511.org)

Pennsylvania: <http://www.511pa.com/>

Ohio: <http://www.ohgo.com/>

Virginia: [www.511virginia.org](http://www.511virginia.org)

North Carolina: <https://tims.ncdot.gov/tims/>

Maryland: <http://md511.org/>

If you are going hiking or to a park, see if there is a map online you can print. If there is no online map and a paper copy isn't available at the destination, see if there is a "You are here" map at the location and take a picture with your phone or camera.

WV State parks and forests: <http://www.wvdnr.gov/Parks/Maps/maps.shtm>

WV Wildlife Management Areas: <http://www.wvdnr.gov/hunting/wma.shtm>

WV Lake Maps: [http://www.wvdnr.gov/Lake\\_Maps/](http://www.wvdnr.gov/Lake_Maps/)

PA Game Commission Maps:

<http://pagame.maps.arcgis.com/apps/PublicGallery/index.html?appid=e8ea0971b97749d8a1e8f4a126e5ffd0>

PA State Parks:

<https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks/StateParkMaps/Pages/default.aspx>

OH Wildlife Area Maps: <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/wildlifeareas>

Make a list of equipment needed. This list will have some basic equipment for all seasons, but will need to be adaptable to the season and weather. A hiking trip will need different equipment than a flood where you are unable to leave home. Travelling by SUV allows for more equipment than being on foot.

<https://www.backpacker.com/survival/survival-gear-ultimate-survival-kit>

<https://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>

<https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2019/03/12/prepare-unexpected-build-emergency-kit>

Water is important in either situation, but it weighs about 8 pounds per gallon.

If you are going hiking, tell someone where you are going. A map with your route marked is helpful to leave with that person. Filling out your own lost person questionnaire could also be helpful to rescuers.

[www.newsar.org/Training/LOSTPersonQuestionnaireGeneric.pdf](http://www.newsar.org/Training/LOSTPersonQuestionnaireGeneric.pdf)

Once you have given the map and your plan, stick to it. If you change something and get lost, your rescuers will be looking in the wrong place.

If you do get lost, stay where you are. A stationary person is easier to find than a mobile person.