Ways To Cook Without Power

All 12 of these ways to cook without power are great, but you’ll have to decide for yourself which methods are best for you. It will depend on where you live, what you can afford, the kind of resources you have, and so forth. Be sure to familiarize yourself with all of these, and have at least three of them ready to go (two of which should be portable in case you have to bug out). We’ll start with the most ancient method…

**1. Campfire Method**

This is easily the most obvious way to to cook food without power: a traditional, open, outside fire. Hopefully you already have some experience with this, but if not, all you have to do is:

Clear a round area of all plant material, leaving nothing but dirt behind.

Surround it with large rocks, bricks, or stone pieces.

Place your tinder (leaves, pine needles, etc.) in the center.

Build a teepee-like structure around it with sticks and twigs.

Leave an opening large enough for you to light the tinder.

Light it, blow on it, and add fuel if necessary.

Once the teepee falls, add some fuel logs to the fire.

Once you get a good fire going, lay large fresh logs right next to each other on one side of the fire and use them as a place to set your pots and pans. That’s all there is to it.

The great thing about campfires is they give you so many ways to cook. Want to stab your food onto the end of a stick and roast it over the flames? *Check.* Want to set a grate over the fire and boil a pot of water or fry some eggs? *Check.* Want to set a tripod over the fire and hang a pot of soup over the flames? *Check.* Want to wrap some potatoes in aluminum foil and set them next to the base of the fire for a baking effect? *Check.*

If you’ve never cooked this way, be sure to practice. If any of the following methods fail or are simply unavailable to you, campfire cooking will be your final backup.

**Note:** When you’re done, make sure you put out your campfire **completely**. Drown it with water, then mix the ashes and embers with the soil by stirring it up. Make sure everything is wet, then check if the ground is cool enough to touch. If it’s still too hot to touch, repeat the process. Be sure you didn’t miss an embers as it only takes one to [**start a fire**](http://sevin.lostways.hop.clickbank.net/?page=sff&tid=auto).

**2. Fireplace Method**

You probably never thought about using your fireplace for cooking, but if the power goes out for a long time, you might have to. Even though you’re cooking inside your house with a fireplace, it’s really no different than cooking over a campfire. Place a [**cooking grate**](http://amzn.to/2dpJurC) into the fireplace upon which you can set pots, plans, skillets, or food wrapped in [**aluminum foil**](http://amzn.to/2dpIvrs).

Next, place some fire logs in your fireplace and light them. Once the flames are at the right height for your cooking grate, start cooking. Just remember that cooking with a fireplace requires extra precaution on your part because, if not maintained or done correctly, it could potentially cause a fire in your home. Try to keep the fire down in order to minimize the number of sparks or embers that escape the fire place (this is why most open fireplaces are not located in a room with carpet).

Oak, maple, and hickory woods are the best choices for an indoor fireplace. Not only will they provide a good seasoning on your food (which is why they’re also good choices for outdoor fires), they will also burn longer and won’t create as much smoke.

**3. Grill Method**

A majority of homes in America have a grill in their [**backyard**](https://c57aahouq83qfze728q3inxr9z.hop.clickbank.net/?tid=auto) or garage, so there’s a good chance you have a grill in your home as well (even if it’s just a small model that can only cook one thing at a time). Most grills are powered with propane, and many people mistakenly believe they can only use their grills until their propane runs out. This is simply not true.

You can also use any normal gas-powered grill as a [**charcoal**](https://urbansurvivalsite.com/9-easy-steps-make-charcoal/) or wood-burning grill. Setting charcoal or pieces of wood inside of your grill and lighting them on fire will easily create enough heat for you to cook your food quickly and evenly. Better yet, get a grill that is [**half charcoal half propane**](http://amzn.to/2cQnwKb).

4. Camp Stove Method

A portable stove that runs on propane is a great thing to have. It’s easy to use, you can take it almost anywhere, and it can cook practically anything you want. Just make sure you have plenty of [**propane cylinders**](http://amzn.to/2dpQB37) (which, by the way, are a lot cheaper at the store than online).

The [**Coleman Road Trip Propane Portable Grill LXE**](https://amzn.to/2Jf0QU1) is great for cooking big meals. It easily ignites with the push of a button, folds up into a nice compact size with wheels and handles for easy transportation, and is constructed out of cast iron and porcelain surfaces that not only make it highly durable but easy to clean. The only downside is it’s a bit pricey.

A cheaper option is the [**Coleman Classic Propane Stove**](http://amzn.to/2du1eAo). I’ve been using this one for years and have never had any major issues except for the fact that the flame is always on high, even if you try to turn it down. But if you want to go even smaller, check out the [**Coleman Single Burner Propane Stove**](http://amzn.to/2d0tkUN). The cooking power is easily adjustable, it ships with one sixteen ounce cylinder of propane that can last up to nine hours, and it will keep going regardless of the weather conditions.

**5. Butane Stove Method**

In many ways, butane stoves are even better than portable propane stoves. They’re a little larger than a big textbook, they get hot enough to cook anything, and they’re safe to use indoors as long as you use them by an open window.

However, butane stoves go through fuel a lot faster. **[GasOne canisters](http://amzn.to/2dYprSf" \t "_blank)** only last one to two hours, whereas propane cylinders can last several hours. Because of this, butane stoves are best for short-term cooking (such as a camping trip) and not something you want to use day in and day out for a long time.

**6. Folding Stove Method**

A folding stove is exactly what you think it is: a mini stove that folds up. The most popular are **[Sterno stoves](http://amzn.to/2dHcwjT" \t "_blank)**, and they require a certain type of fuel which is often referred to as [**canned heat**](http://amzn.to/2dHbSTF). These 7-ounce cans usually last about 2 hours and can be used over and over until the fuel gel is gone. If you’ve ever been to a catered event, you may have seen canned heat being used to keep platters of food warm.

Although I’ve used canned heat indoors before, the label says to use them in a well ventilated area. So if you want to be on the safe side, be sure to use it near a window that is open at least a few inches. But if you’re in a scenario where it’s very cold outside and you don’t want to open a window, you could get some [**Biofuel by Greenscapes**](http://amzn.to/2e73vBy) which is completely non-toxic and safe for indoor use.

Because they’re so small and lightweight, folding stoves are also great for bug out bags. The only downside is they don’t get nearly as hot as other stoves, and it’s even worse if you’re outside in the wind. They can be used to boil water (eventually), heat up canned food, or even fry eggs, but you should never ever try using a folding stove to cook raw meat.

**7. Solo Stove Method**

If you’re worried about running out of propane, butane, or canned heat, consider getting a [**Solo Stove**](http://amzn.to/2dPBwpM). It’s a portable stove that runs on twigs, leaves, pine cones, and other small pieces of wood. This one is also great for bug out bags, especially since you don’t need to bring any fuel with you.

The company behind it also makes [**stainless steel pot sets**](http://amzn.to/2dq6fvv) and [**wind screens**](http://amzn.to/2dc2Ope). If the Solo Stove seems too expensive, check out the [**Solo Stove Lite**](http://amzn.to/2cQdXA0) which is a good bit cheaper.

**8. Wood Burning Stove Method**

Speaking of wood stoves, a good old fashioned wood stove is another great option. Not only do they cook food, they can also be used to provide heat in the winter (which is why people used to put them near the center of their houses).

Take note that while some wood burning stoves are intended for heating rooms and not necessarily for cooking, you can still use them for cooking if you need to. When heated enough, you can set pots or pans on the tops of these stoves and cook practically anything you want.

They’re not particularly hard to find, either. Just check eBay, Craigslist, and large flea markets on a regular basis until you find one.

**9. Rocket Stove Method**

This is yet another type of wood-burning stove that most preppers and survivalists should be familiar with. Basically, it’s a chimney-like structure of bricks with an opening at the bottom. A fire is started at the bottom and the heat travels up the chimney to a pot or pan sitting on top. Not only is the rocket stove a very efficient method for cooking food, it’s also dirt cheap. As long as you have bricks and a cooking grate, you can construct your own rocket stove in a matter of minutes. Watch the video below to see it done.

The real beauty of the rocket stove is how it’s able to create a large amount of heat with a minimal amount of fuel. The reason is because the chimney traps all the heat generated by the fire, making it very hot and very efficient. With a rocket stove, you can cook anything you want.

**10. Solar Oven Method**

[**Solar**](http://trk.mdrtrck.com/aff_c?offer_id=8747&aff_id=1219&source=auto) ovens, as the name suggests, use the power of the sun to cook food. As long as you have enough sunlight, you can cook just about anything. Also called solar cookers, solar ovens are inexpensive and [**easy to build**](http://solarcooking.org/plans/) if you aren’t able to buy one. And since they only use the sun for heating and cooking food, they require no additional fuel. This makes the [**solar**](http://trk.mdrtrck.com/aff_c?offer_id=8747&aff_id=1219&source=auto) oven one of the best methods for cooking food in areas where fuel is scarce, such as the desert.

If you’re not interested in building your own, you can buy them online for a reasonable price. The **[Sunflair Portable Solar Oven](http://amzn.to/2dHpO4m" \t "_blank)** comes with a thermometer, a baking tray, a dehydrating rack, 2 silicone pots, and a carrying bag. They also make a [**smaller one**](http://amzn.to/2dqeVBS) for about 2/3 the price.

**11. Kerosene Heater Method**

Kerosene heaters are very popular for heating up rooms. While they have not traditionally been used for cooking, they can still be used that way if they get heated up enough. The tops of them will sometimes become hot enough for you to boil water, make coffee, or heat up a can of soup. If you live in a cold area and need a heater anyway, this is a great option.

Kerosene heaters, such as [**this one**](http://amzn.to/2dqgq3a) by Dyna-Glo, are safe to use indoors as long as there is plenty of ventilation.

**12. Car Motor Method**

This is really a last resort option but it’s very doable. As the name suggests, you use the motor of your vehicle to cook food. This method is best done outdoors so carbon monoxide doesn’t build up in your garage.

To do this, turn on your car and allow the engine to run for a period of time. Wrap pieces of food in aluminum foil and place them strategically around your car motor. Wait until the food has cooked through, then remove them from your car and shut off the engine.

The biggest disadvantage to the car motor method is that it wastes a lot of gasoline. This is why it’s a last resort option that should only be used when no other methods are available. In a true grid down scenario, all of the gas stations are going to be shut down, meaning you will only have the gasoline you stockpiled. You’ll obviously want that fuel for driving or running your generator.

On the other hand, if you’re [**bugging out**](https://4eaa3kogmbgxbt9zydse8byus3.hop.clickbank.net/?tid=auto) and your motor is nice and hot anyway, consider using it for foods that don’t need much heat.