

Fire

Fire is definitely essential. You need it for staying warm, cooking, boiling water, or even signaling. Not to mention, if you have to sleep outside, a fire can be very comforting in a stressful situation as it tends to keep animals and bugs away and give you light. In fact, fire making is so important that I recommend you have at least 2 different ways to make fire in your bug out bag. One would be the obvious cigarette lighter. But you would also want a low tech way of making fire as well. Firesteel A Swedish Firesteel is an excellent option for a bug out bag, but please PRACTICE USING IT! Having one is great, but if you don't know what to do with it you might as well have not bought it! I keep thinking back to watching Survivor. I don't remember which one it was, but the teams were given a magnesium/flint fire starter to make fire. The problem was, nobody knew how to use it! I guess they just assumed the magnesium part of it was just a handle, so they just kept whacking at the flint until the flint was all gone and they never made a fire. It was kind of funny, but it just goes to show you...learn how to use your tools!

RAT Fire Kit While writing this, I came across a fire making kit by RAT Cutlery that looks promising. It apparently makes little molten balls of metal that act as an ember [long enough to get your fire going](#). This would work a little better than just flint or even flint and magnesium.

So this is pretty straight forward...just pack a couple of options for making fire. The most important thing here is practice. Making a fire even with a cigarette lighter can be difficult if you don't know what you are doing. The term "build a fire" isn't just a collection of words. "Build" is the operative word. If you are unsure how to do it, Google it and practice. It also doesn't hurt to prep some things to aid you in starting a fire. One thing that I have found is great for starting a fire is dryer lint. Everybody seems to have tons of dryer lint that you trash on a regular basis. Stuff a bunch into an empty medicine bottle and you've got a great starter for building a fire. Another good aid is cotton balls covered in petroleum jelly. They burn for a pretty good amount of time...usually enough to get your kindling going. There are tons of ideas for this, but these are just a couple to get you thinking.