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EVERYDAY CARRY ISSUE 2021
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EVERYDAY CARRY 2021

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Invite Through
the Front Door



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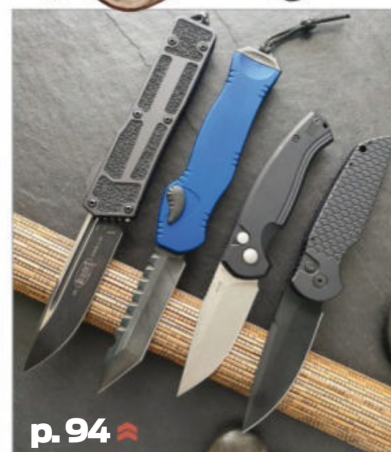
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BEYOND THE GUN



A low-profile backpack like this Osprey Nebula does a great job of blending in while still offering the organization of a more tactical backpack.

Everyday carry items ... that aren't guns.

It used to be that if you heard the acronym EDC, it was understood that the conversation was likely about carry guns; that isn't the case so much anymore. Everyday carry is a cool concept, so it shouldn't come as a surprise other people have embraced the idea that a quality set of tools can make your life better and safer.

The form of EDC that has made it into mainstream culture encompasses nearly every aspect of normal lives, which begs the question, should we reevaluate how we think about EDC as well? Allowing concepts and skills to mature and evolve not only drive innovation, but it's also the best way to push beyond what was previously thought impossible.

Looking past the overly simplified list of what we previously thought of as EDC and approaching it as a tiered system might be just the ticket. If you select your gear carefully so that everything works together to give you more capability, the theory is that it'll improve your level of preparedness as well as potentially make life a touch easier.

Since EDC items can be hyper specific to one's lifestyle, I'm going to try to stick to defensive-oriented items as best as possible without boring you with mundane details like what model legal pad is my go-to. With some luck and careful reflection, what we talk about will hopefully prompt you to break down what you use into three tiers that make scaling your EDC reasonable straightforward.

NO ONE IS RIGHT; NO ONE IS WRONG

As is often the case with gun people, no one agrees on a singular wise approach. Anyone who claims to have the magic EDC loadout for everyone is, at best, being irresponsible.

Even though this might upset your retired [insert generic police/military role here] uncle with the badass Harley owner mustache, the reality is everyone's individual needs change based on several factors like: what region you live in, do you live in a rural or urban environment, what you do for a living, your physical build and dozens of other factors that make us individuals.

While I can't in good conscience recommend specific items that fit your unknown needs, hopefully this helps

you come up with your own solution to serve your needs best.

Figuring that out means you probably shouldn't mindlessly follow the advice of some dude on Facebook. Even though someone claims they're a subject-matter expert, they have no idea what your specific needs are. Applying a healthy dose of critical thinking is like going through life with cheat codes on.

EDC'S THREE TIERS

Having all the things on your person you could possibly need for any situation sounds nice but that hasn't been realistic since JNCO jeans went out of style. Rather than wearing pants with more pocket space, break your EDC into three layers: 1) pockets and belt, 2) EDC satchel and 3) car carry.

Tier 1: Pocket & Belt Carry

When you walk out of your door, the things that you can't imagine not being in your pockets or on your belt are what make up the first tier. The obvious objects like your car keys, cell phone, wallet and pocketknife live in

this tier, along with anything else you strap to your belt or dump in a pocket.

Since space is at a premium, what actually makes up this tier is very fluid—with your carry gun as the centerpiece. Before we move past the pistol, it may make sense to look at several methods to carry. Figuring out how to conceal a gun in workout shorts might mean

embracing nontraditional carry gear like PHLster's Enigma or even deeper concealment gear like Thunderwear.

Adding a can of Sabre Red or POM pepper spray with the right stream pattern is going to take the fight out of an aggressor a heck of a lot faster. Should that fail, a good concealable fixed blade and some training from

From top to bottom: Skallywag Tactical MDV Plus One, Matt Helm Dogbone by Dauntless Manufacturing, Benchmade Infidel with modified single edge blade and Skallywag Tactical D2 Dagger.



A smaller light like the Wedge or Macrostream USB from Streamlight is a great on-body option, but supplementing it with a larger light in your EDC bag is wise.

A good concealable sheath is a must. If your defensive knife is on your hip, you're more likely to use it to open boxes. Keep a pocketknife for utility cutting; your defensive knife needs to be sharp when it counts.



Not all pepper spray is created equal. Find one with 0.7 percent or greater Major Capsaicinoid Content.

someone like Craig Douglas would be a solid addition. Whatever you do, make sure you buy an inert trainer and practice—less-lethal needs dry-fire just like your carry gun.

The last thing that you might really consider adding to your on-person EDC kit is medical gear. As a solid rule of thumb, resorting to lethal force to change human behavior probably means someone is trying to put holes in you too. Between ankle med kits and other intelligent solutions, you can conceal a bare-bones trauma kit on your person.

I don't know about you but not dying is super high on my list of things I like. Adding a SOFTT-W tourniquet is worth the bulk to me, and it might be something to think about adding to your own kit. If you want to add more tools to patch yourself up, a low-

profile ankle medical pouch with some Combat Gauze, gloves, and a pair of chest seals isn't too hard to conceal on your person.

Tier 2: EDC Bag/Backpack Carry

Almost every bag company has some form of EDC backpack or bag, which means there's likely one out there that fits your needs almost perfectly. A nondescript bag that doesn't scream tactical like an outdoorsy day pack is a solid choice that'll give you the functionality you need without making you stand out. If backpacks aren't



Just like your defensive firearm, knives and pepper spray require practice to be effective.

your thing, look into messenger and photographer shoulder bags. Again, flexibility is awesome.

I can't stress the importance of remembering that the EDC bag's mission is to carry the things that you rely on often enough to carry daily but might not use every day or are too large for your pockets. Our focus here should be medical items, flashlights, batteries and what you need for work. It might make sense to carry a defensive knife, pepper spray and a spare mag to allow you to plus up your on-body carry while out, but that's about as far as I'd go.

Being able to take care of a headache, foot blister or even a severe cut without the need to locate a first aid kit is extremely nice. Make sure that you can get to your medical stuff easily in a pouch designated for just that purpose.

Also consider adding another tourniquet or two, hemostatic gauze, more wound-packing material, a packable splint and some pressure dressings. You can build on that, but remember that this isn't a mobile hospital.

Some other items that can be an asset are a power brick with the cables to charge your tech items as well as any adapters or dongles that might be needed for the day. Also, consider some Rite in the Rain notepads and pen, a Sharpie, ink pens, a pencil and a few notepads. Adding a flashlight and spare batteries to your bag to supplement the handheld light you have on your person is a solid call, especially if the light on your person is something that has limited output. You might also choose to add a multi-tool like a Leatherman to your bag as well as some 550 cord or similar.

Tier 3: Car/Truck Carry

While it's nice to have everything on you all the time, that just isn't practical. Rather than try to guess right with everything, using your car like a mobile cache is a great way to ensure you're never left wanting when away from home. You can take a pretty minimalist route here, or you can load your truck like you're off to take back Kabul; the choice is yours.

As has been the case so far, most of the EDC gear I keep in my car is going to be medical stuff. I'm a fan of having a dedicated trauma kit in the car that's specifically for handling big bleeds caused by a gunshot or more likely, a major accident. In addition to the easy-to-access trauma kit, a more expansive first aid kit separate from the trauma kit to handle small cuts, scrapes, headaches and other minor inconveniences



A Mystery Ranch zip bag is perfect for keeping a larger med kit in your EDC bag.

is invaluable, especially if you have a family with reckless children.

Storing a long-gun in the car packed inside a discrete rifle bag allows you to have a fighting rifle at hand without raising any eyebrows. Inside the rifle bag, it might make sense to have everything you need to run the gun, like spare loaded mags, mag pouches and a solid sling. You don't need to have a full-on combat load stashed in there, two spare mags should be plenty if you choose to keep a rifle handy.

Some might also include a certain kind of armor in their car; if you decide that's a need you have, go nuts. Personally, I feel space is probably better utilized for some bottles of water and several energy bars. Being hungry sucks and so does being thirsty.

Ultimately, the way you outfit your car is dependent on your region and lifestyle beyond those basics. You might want to add things like work gloves, blanket, ponchos or even a

chainsaw if you might need to move downed timber from the road or driveway. Do you have road flares, maybe chem lights, flashlights and other things to help with a simple flat tire in the middle of nowhere in the dark? Keep your focus on making sure you can get to where you need to go and not on battle implements, and you'll do alright as long as you don't let yourself get carried away.

BE PREPARED

Growing up heavily involved with the Boy Scouts taught me a lot of valuable life lessons, but being prepared is probably the one that has been most impactful.

When you started thinking how your approach to EDC differs from mine, did you start making mental notes about some shortcomings you might have? I hope that you were able to identify the deficiencies and have already started to think about a flexible system that you can plus up or down to meet anything life gives you.



The TUFF Products ankle kit makes concealing a pair of gloves, two chest seals, hemostatic gauze and a compression bandage a snap.



Carrying the basic components of an IFAK is possible between the TUFF Products ankle kit and the Snake Eater Tactical IWB pouch.



Tier 1 Examples

Depending on need, items are added or subtracted from this list:

- Concealed pistol in holster
- Spare magazine
- Pocketknife
- Defensive knife
- Car keys with 128GB thumb drive
- Wallet with emergency cash
- Pepper spray
- Tourniquet
- Ankle med kit
- Handheld flashlight

Tier 2 Examples

Depending on need, items are added or subtracted from this list:

- EDC backpack
- Spare defensive knife
- Spare pepper spray
- Spare magazine
- Larger med kit
- Tourniquet
- SAM splint
- More powerful handheld flashlight
- Gift card with tape wrapped around it
- Rite in the Rain notepad and pen
- Regular pens
- Black Sharpie
- Pencil
- Legal pad(s)

Tier 3 Examples

Depending on need, items are added or subtracted from this list:

- Trauma kit
- Larger first aid kit
- Rifle in covert rifle bag
- Two magazines
- Rifle mag pouch
- Water
- Nonperishable snacks
- Work gloves
- 550 cord
- Tow strap
- Flares/chemlights
- Flashlight
- Rain gear
- Blanket
- Warm clothing (winter months) **GDTM**



PHLSTER ENIGMA

When PHLster introduced the Enigma, I doubt they foresaw it being called a “pants optional holster.” As weird as that might sound, the Enigma gives you the ability to carry nearly any size pistol in a proper kindle holster without needing a gun belt or even pants for that matter.

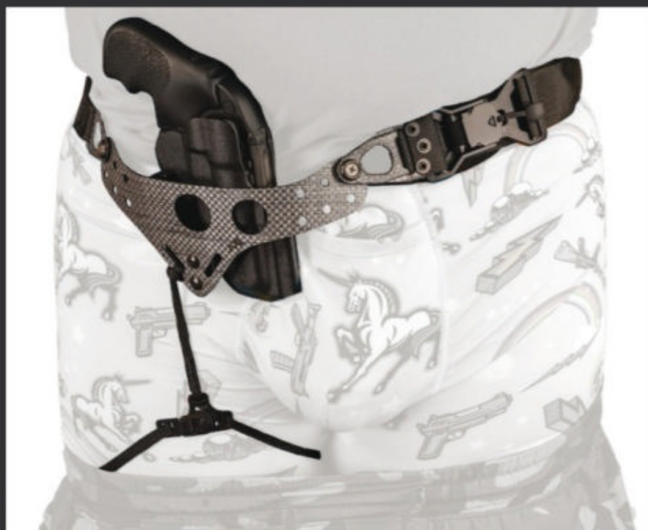
It isn't the end-all-be-all solution for concealing a pistol, but it does allow you to carry in clothing that previously would've made packing a pistol a challenge. All you need is the Enigma and a compatible holster, and you're all set to get it adjusted to your body type.

The waist belt uses a magnetic buckle that makes putting the Enigma on as easy as taking it off, while doing a great job of supporting the weight of the gun. There's no perceptible wiggle or uncomfortable movement like you might find on other makeshift solutions. When drawing, the leg leash ensures that the holster won't follow the gun or flop out of your pants.

Adding something like the PHLster Enigma to your EDC gear is something I happily recommend, more tools in the toolbox means it's easier to find the right hammer.



Blending in by wearing gym shorts is always preferable to tactical clothing that stands out in a crowd.



The PHLster Enigma doesn't rely on a traditional belt to support the gun and allows concealment of guns large to small.