

A Prepping Essential: The Grab-n-Go Binder



In panic situations, which happen around my house quite often, actually, people lose their wits. The extra adrenaline produced by the human body during times of intense stress, causes confusion and can even cause some of the same symptoms as a heart attack.

Can you imagine the level of adrenaline in your body if you suddenly got news of a dangerous chemical spill in your area or that a wildfire had taken an abrupt turn toward your neighborhood? Officials tell you to evacuate now. Besides the kids, what do you pack up first?

A Grab-and-Go Binder is a vital part of any [family](#) preparedness plan, and is one of the first things you should put together. This binder will contain all of your most critical information in one place for any type emergency, even if it's just a quick trip to the ER.

For this project you'll need a 1" three-ring binder, a set of tabbed dividers, and a copy machine. A box of plastic page protectors will keep your documents clean and unwrinkled. The binder you create will be unique to your [family](#), but here are some suggestions to get you started.

Label a divider for each of the following sections, and then begin inserting copies of your documents.

Financial Documents

1. copies of the fronts and backs of debit/credit cards
2. copies of house and car titles
3. copy of your will or living trust
4. names, addresses and phone numbers of all banks
5. other important documents related to employment and/or a family business
6. copies of your insurance policies (life, health, auto, homeowners, etc.)

Personal Documents

1. names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses of relatives and close friends
2. copies of:
 - * marriage license
 - * birth certificates
 - * drivers licenses
 - * CCW permits
 - * pet vaccine records
 - * passports
 - * Social Security cards
3. a list of firearm serial numbers
4. legal documents pertaining to child custody or adoption
5. recent photos of each family member and each pet
6. color photos of your house and each room in the house
7. photos of anything of particular value
8. military documents
9. diplomas and transcripts
10. appraisals

Medical Documents

1. copy of health insurance cards
2. a list of blood types for each family member
3. names, addresses and phone numbers of all doctors
4. medical histories of each family member
5. immunization records
6. a list of current prescriptions, dosage, and pharmacy contact information

With your finished Grab-and-Go Binder, you'll have the peace of mind knowing that your family can focus on a quick evacuation without trying to retrieve scattered family records.

What to do with the originals? It's probably best to keep them in a fireproof safe or a safety deposit box. If that safety deposit box is a good 50 miles or more from your home, so much the better in the event of a tornado or other natural disaster. Also, be sure at least two other trusted people have access to that box in case you become incapacitated.

Unless you're extraordinarily organized, chances are these records and documents are scattered around your house. Set aside a block of time to track them down and organize your family's Grab-n-Go Binder. Emergencies arrive unexpectedly. A Grab-n-Go Binder is one way you can prepare for them ahead of time.

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