



8 Essentials For Living Off The Grid Indefinitely

Imagine being able to pull up at your favourite spot and stay there indefinitely. This is what full-time travel on the road is all about!



But what about the practicalities? What are the things you need to consider... what do you need to achieve your dream of being self-sufficient in the bush?

We'll go through the 8 essentials you need for comfortably living off-grid indefinitely.

1. Power

Unless you're planning to live off the land and sleep on the ground (unlikely!), you'll need some type of power to keep your fridge running and the batteries charged on all your devices.

A dual battery system will do this for you. You'll need:

1. A source of power. The best options for living off the grid are a generator or solar panels.
2. The dual battery system. This will have a black box to manage the power going into your battery (a Battery Management System) and a battery or batteries.
3. Some outlets to charge your devices. You might have a few USB charging ports and an inverter to give you a 240VAC power supply.

2. Lighting

Unless you enjoy stumbling around in the dark tripping over tent ropes, you'll need lighting.

You don't need much, just enough to see what you're doing. The best lighting for camping is LED strip lighting. This uses very little power and just a small strip light will give you plenty of light for cooking and generally moving around the campsite.

3. Toilet

In some places, a shovel and a box of matches (for burning the toilet paper) might suffice. However, with so many people travelling you really need to contain your waste and take it with you.

A much better option is a portable toilet.

You have two options, a porta-potty or a composting toilet. Either one is a good choice. And remember, you'll likely need a small canvas cubicle (shower tent) if the toilet is outside.

4. Fresh Water

As a rough guide, a couple will use about 15 litres per day. This includes drinking water, washing up water, hand washing... everything except showering.

When we shower we do a quick rinse, wash with body wash and a loofa, then rinse off the suds. This way, we use less than 5 litres of water each.

Also consider water quality. Some water has nasty bugs which will disagree with your stomach. Use a water sanitiser to kill the bugs.

5. Grey Water

Grey water is washing up water, shower water and so on. We simply use a (well-labelled) 20 litre jerry can to store our grey water.

Take it out with you and empty into a dump point.

Be careful. After a couple of days, grey water can become black water... full of nasties. Sanitise the jerry can after use.

The other option is to have a dedicated grey water tank mounted under your vehicle or camper. Again, empty it into a dump point as you pass through a town.

6. Fresh Food

We're talking about meat, veggies and fruit.

Meat

Some camping fridges are fridge/freezer combinations. You blank off a portion and turn it into a freezer. Or you can buy a small camping fridge and run it as a freezer.

Another option is buying meat from a butcher who can vacuum pack it for you. Or you can buy your own vacuum packer. Then store it in the bottom of your fridge. The meat will last for a couple of weeks, depending on the type of meat.

Or cut down on meat consumption. Make lots of stir fries and pasta dishes filled with veggies instead of meat.

Veggies

Buy a stack of veggies and use as many as you can while they're fresh. Then when they start to look a bit sad, cook them up and store them in the fridge. This way they'll last much longer and can be used for stir fries, soups and casseroles.

Fruit

The same goes for fruit. Just be aware, softer fruits like bananas and peaches will bruise easily. So be a bit selective in what you buy.

The other option is bottled or canned fruit. This is easy to carry and will give you a vital fruit injection when the fresh fruit has run out.

The other thing to consider. You might want to avoid camping in towns and that's fine. But every time you go through a town, stock up on meat, veggies and fruit. This is what we do and it works well.

Speaking of food...

7. Cooking

The simplest way to cook is with a gas burner. While you can't beat the taste of a juicy steak cooked over an open fire, in many places wood fires aren't allowed or there'll be fire bans.

A portable gas burner on a stand or one built into your camper will do the job. In most cases, a two-burner will be ample.

8. Washing Clothes

You can go the old-fashioned, by simply washing in a bucket. The novelty wears off pretty quickly though, especially when all your clothes are full of soap suds!

There's a few hand tumble-washers, although they take up a lot of space because they're inevitably spherical-shaped.

We use a small twin tub washing machine. It uses little water and runs off our 350W power inverter. When we're near a water source, we can easily do a couple of loads, enough to keep us going for a while.

One thing. Make sure you don't wash near a creek or river. You don't want to contaminate the water with soap. And use eco-friendly washing powder. This way you can water a nearby tree without contaminating the soil.

Summing Up

Once you've sorted out these 8 essentials, then you're pretty well set up to travel anywhere.

It's a great feeling to know you can confidently go wherever you like and be self-sufficient. Want to spend a few more days beside this incredible riverside camp site you just discovered?

Well, now you can do this with confidence and relax... knowing you have everything you need.

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