

# 1000 DEADLY SKILLS

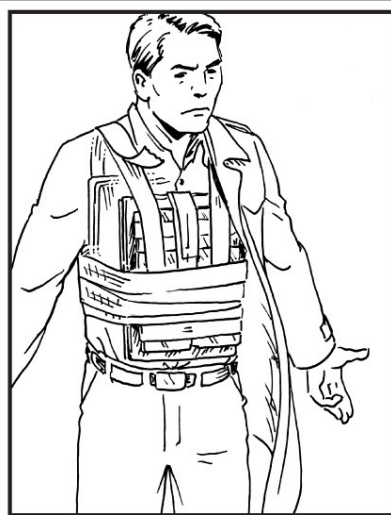
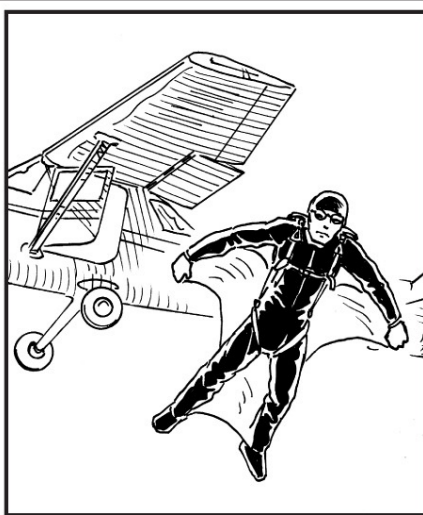
The SEAL Operative's Guide  
to Eluding Pursuers,  
Evading Capture, and Surviving  
Any Dangerous Situation



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# 100 DEADLY SKILLS

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to Eluding Pursuers, Evading Capture,  
and Surviving Any Dangerous Situation

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The Final BLUF

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# A Note to Readers

The skills described in the following pages are called “deadly” for a reason—and not just because of the danger they pose to others. Developed by highly trained operatives who regularly face life-threatening conditions, these skills push the limits of human endurance, precision, and ingenuity.

And often, the boundaries of the law.

The book you are holding in your hands (or reading on your device) contains actionable information adapted from the world of special operations. Much of that information, shared here with civilians in the spirit of self-defense, is to be used in only the direst emergencies.

When confronted with unexpected danger, in many cases the safest course of action is escape. In the face of an active shooter (see [page 178](#)), the first option (if conditions allow) is to run—and the last is to fight. If a thief wants your valuables, hand them over. If the end of the world truly does come to pass . . . well, then all bets are off.

The author and publisher disclaim any liability from any injury that may result from the use, proper or improper, of the information contained in this book. The stated goal of this book is not to enable a deadly class of citizens but to entertain while simultaneously imparting a body of knowledge that may come in handy in the absolute direst of emergencies.

Be deadly in spirit, but not in action. Respect the rights of others and the laws of the land.

Our fate is determined by how far we are prepared to push ourselves to stay alive—the decisions we make to survive. We must do whatever it takes to endure and make it through alive.

—BEAR GRYLLS



# INTRODUCTION

Potential dangers lurk everywhere these days. Disasters strike in war-torn regions and far-flung locations—but with alarming regularity, they also seem to inch closer and closer to home. Spanning acts of terror, mass shootings, and the unseen (and sometimes virtual) matrix of everyday crime, danger refuses to be confined to dark alleys, unstable nations, or distant zip codes.

People tend to imagine worst-case scenarios in highly colorful terms, but chaos and crime are the real apocalyptic scenarios. We picture aliens, frozen tundra, and intergalactic warfare, when in fact the catastrophic event we've been waiting for is more likely to look like a mundane report of vandalism on last night's news—or the massive Internet shutdown in tomorrow's headlines. Or, indeed, the violent criminal hiding in the shadows of a desolate parking garage. In the face of true catastrophe, a basement full of canned peas and distilled water isn't likely to be much help.

In a future where every stranger poses a potential threat, knowing the predator mindset is the only safe haven. What are the tricks used by the stealthiest, most dangerous human beings in our midst? How can you spot and avoid the dangers that surround us? You could turn to the criminal class to find out. Or you could go one better by taking a page from some of the most highly trained specialists on the planet.

The one hundred deadly skills you are about to encounter are adapted from the world of special operations, a complex web of associations dominated by operatives with a shared predilection for intrigue and danger. These elite, highly skilled warriors are charged with risking their lives under the most challenging and dire conditions on earth. As operatives who routinely infiltrate the world's most dangerous and volatile regions, they must be equal parts spies, soldiers, and lawless rule-breakers.

They are action heroes for modern times, one-part James Bond, the other Rambo. Some call these highly skilled operatives “Violent Nomads,” as a nod to their disregard for international borders and their bias for swift, brutal action.

Many of the techniques that make up the Violent Nomad body of knowledge cannot be divulged without severe risk to public safety, but a great deal of potentially lifesaving information can still be shared. Each skill is broken down into its most critical parts, or Courses of Action (COAs), and summed up by a BLUF (Bottom Line Up Front), which spells out the key takeaway from the operative's perspective; Civilian BLUFs flip the skills around and outline preventive measures civilians can take to arm themselves against predators using these particular techniques.

As a retired Navy SEAL who spent several years inside the NSA (National Security Agency), in writing this book I drew on an unusual breadth of experience that spans twenty years spent running special ops all over the world, both in teams and alone, and merges lessons learned from both combat and surveillance. The skills in this book represent a potential path to survival in the face of any number of dangerous situations, from eluding pursuers and escaping abduction to self-defense. And they may even provide a blueprint for getting through doomsday.

The world isn't getting any safer, but you can be prepared. Whether you're faced with an alien invasion or an assailant wielding a seemingly innocuous item such as a water bottle<sup>I</sup> or an umbrella, learning how to think like a Violent Nomad will radically improve your chances of coming out on top.

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I. Turn to [page 70](#) if you're interested in developing an irrational fear of water bottles.

# PART I

## MISSION PREP

Beyond the defensive potential common to many of the skills in this book, there is much the average civilian can learn from an operative's mindset. First and foremost, that mindset is defined by preparedness and awareness. Whether in home territory or under deepest cover, operatives are continually scanning the general landscape for threats even when they're not on the clock. Civilians, too, can train their minds toward habits such as scouting exit routes in crowded restaurants or building spur-of-the-moment escape plans. This kind of vigilance allows an operative confronted with sudden danger to take immediate action.

Whether he is crossing borders, executing surveillance, or eliminating dangerous targets and disappearing without a trace, the clandestine operative frequently works alone. Given that he so often finds himself behind enemy lines without reinforcements, an operative's combat and counterintelligence skills are met by an equally sophisticated aptitude for risk assessment and analysis. In an increasingly dangerous world, civilians who are attuned to potential risk (particularly but not exclusively when traveling) will be many steps ahead of the general populace.

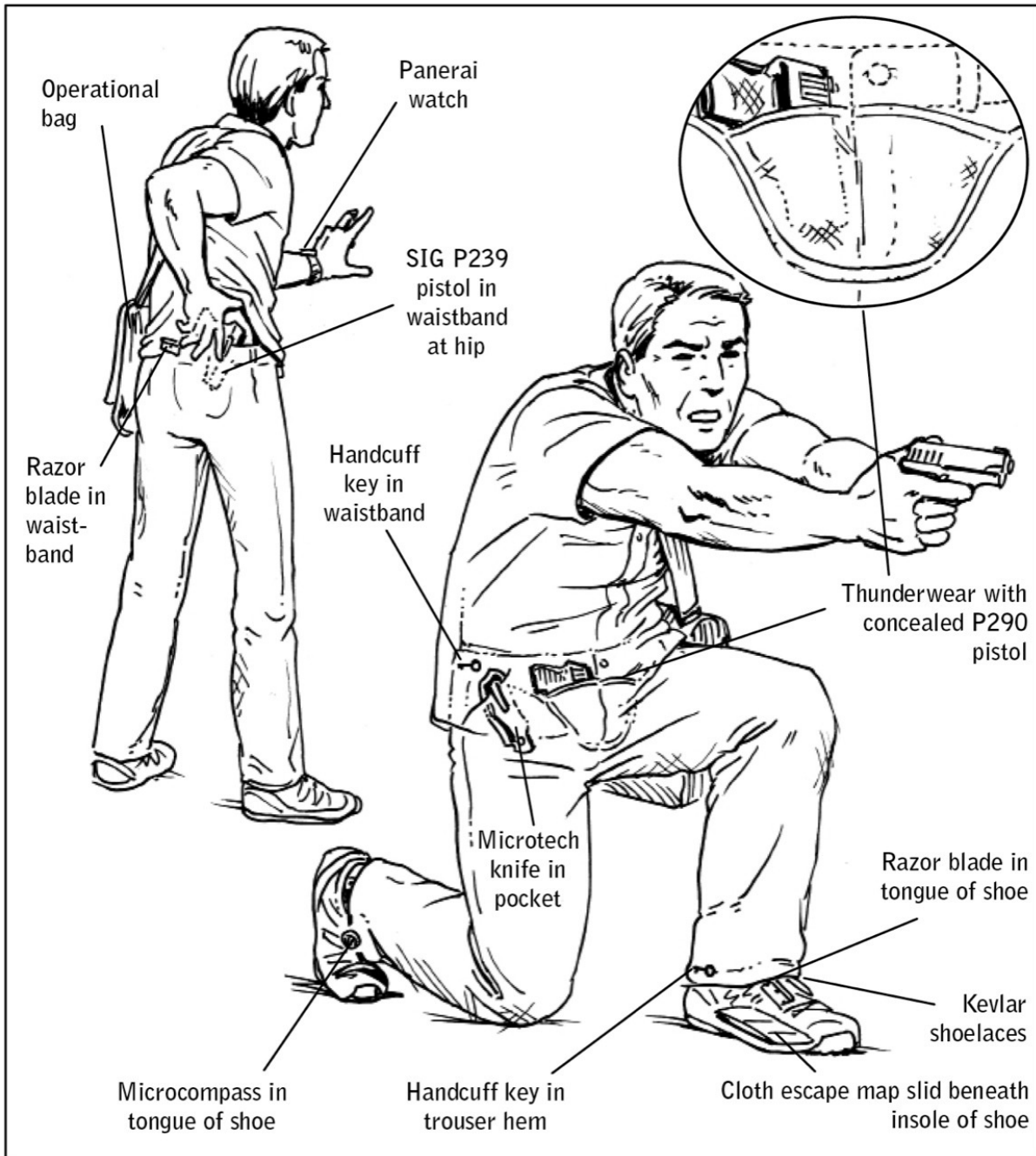
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The operative also demonstrates a baseline predisposition toward anonymity. Each clandestine operative is trained to "go black," operating for extended periods of time with limited communication to associates. While operating under the radar, he may assume the outward appearance of a student, a businessperson, or a traveler, as he understands that terrorist groups or host-nation governments may be targeting him during his travels—and that if perceived as a spy and arrested, he will be subject to detention and harsh interrogations. Additionally, as a traveler, he is vulnerable to the risks of petty crime and kidnapping that apply to any civilian traveling abroad. To counter such risks, the operative adopts as neutral an appearance as possible. The general rule is the less conspicuous the Nomad, the safer.



# No. 001: Anatomy of a Violent Nomad

CONOP (Concept of Operation): Conceal tools of survival and escape in order to decrease exposure to threats.



**BLUF:** Blend in, but always carry a gun and cash. What can't be purchased with one can be procured with the other.

Due to the highly covert nature of their missions, operatives go to great lengths to ensure that they blend into their surroundings. A carefully managed appearance allows them to operate undetected by potential witnesses as well as host-country police and security services. But beyond their unremarkability, clothing and gear must have the capability to conceal the equipment required for an operation or an escape. (The waistband and cuffs of pants and the tongues of shoes, for example, are ideal hiding places for handcuff keys and razor blades.)

Operatives favor brands such as Panerai, which are durable and well made but still have a civilian-friendly look. Always ready to run or fight, they wear closed-toed shoes with Kevlar laces and conceal weapons and spread escape equipment throughout their clothing. Lighters and cigarettes are always carried, even by nonsmokers, as they may be used as a tool of escape or to create a distraction or diversion. (See pages 86, 166, and 168.) LED flashlights are essential for seeing in the dark or signaling for help.

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When it comes to gear, preparedness doesn't look quite the way moviegoers have come to expect. Because clandestine operatives cannot board commercial flights with concealed weapons or high-tech spy gear tucked away in their luggage, they favor a "no-tech" or "low-tech" approach that is highly dependent on improvisation. Though fictional spies employ all manner of shiny, complex contraptions, in the real world, every high-tech toy increases an operative's risk of detention or arrest. Hence, operatives learn to adapt, improvise, and overcome technical obstacles using tools and technology that are readily available in the country of operation. One example: Every hotel room has a Bible or a Koran stashed in a bedside drawer—and taping a couple of those together yields a set of improvised body armor that provides significant protection against projectiles.

Though low-tech doesn't usually extend to an operative's communications, he takes a highly cautious approach to cybersecurity. The operative avoids leaving behind trails of digital breadcrumbs at all costs, understanding that any cybercommunication is fundamentally insecure. In an age where savings accounts and the locations of friends and family are vulnerable to any third party with access to a Wi-Fi connection and the will to do harm, there is no such thing as a surfeit of precaution.

**Civilian BLUF:** Particularly when traveling, civilians are well served by adopting the operative's predilection for anonymity. Choose clothing and accessories for usefulness and general neutrality. In a volatile urban crisis, bright colors and eye-catching logos can become convenient aiming points for a pair of rifle sights.

## 002 Create an Every Day Carry Kit

While the average civilian approaches emergency preparedness from a life-support perspective that prioritizes food and water supplies (stashed deep in a home basement) to the exclusion of weapons and escape tools, true preparedness acknowledges and confronts the violence of the modern world. To ensure a state of constant preparedness, the Violent Nomad carries up to three types of Every Day Carry (EDC) kits, each designed to support his mission and help him evade crisis. Whether the call comes or not, the EDC kits also provide an edge against unexpected threats of all sorts, from environmental disasters to terrorist strikes and lone-wolf attacks.

When traveling through potentially hostile territory or during turbulent times, a Nomad will distribute several layers of life-support and personal-safety items throughout his clothing and outerwear; in the event that he is stripped of his primary weapon, this practice may leave him with several undetected options of last resort. Escape gear in particular should be spread out in such a way that some of it remains available if the Nomad is restrained.

The most basic kit, the “pocket kit,” should be comprised of essential weapons, escape and evasion equipment, and one “black” (covert) mobile phone. Rather than being consolidated into a single container or concealment, these items should be distributed throughout clothing. A handgun should be concealed in a waistband holster, for the most accessible draw. (See [page 152](#) for tips on drawing a holstered weapon.) An emergency communication device is essential, but other contents will vary depending on the terrain. A stainless steel Zebra pen can be used to leave notes for potential rescuers—or to strike an assailant. In the case of abduction or detention, a handcuff key and LED light camouflaged alongside car or hotel keys are potential lifesavers; as backup in the event that clothes pockets are searched, a concealable handcuff key can be hidden in a shirt cuff or on a zipper pull. Some operatives carry mouthpieces, which can be vital during hand-to-hand combat.

The “container kit”—generally tucked into a jacket or an operational bag (see below)—functions as backup in the event that an operative is stripped of his primary weapon and/or operational bag. This highly condensed kit contains small improvised weapons (loose coins tied up in a handkerchief) and navigational aids (a headlamp and a handheld GPS device) that change depending on the environment, as well as lock-picking tools that could provide access to information, food, or shelter. Purchased within the area of operation, a set of “recci” (reconnaissance) key blanks provides an advantage in breaking-and-entering scenarios. Durable and reliably discreet, a rigid sunglass case is the optimal container for this kit.

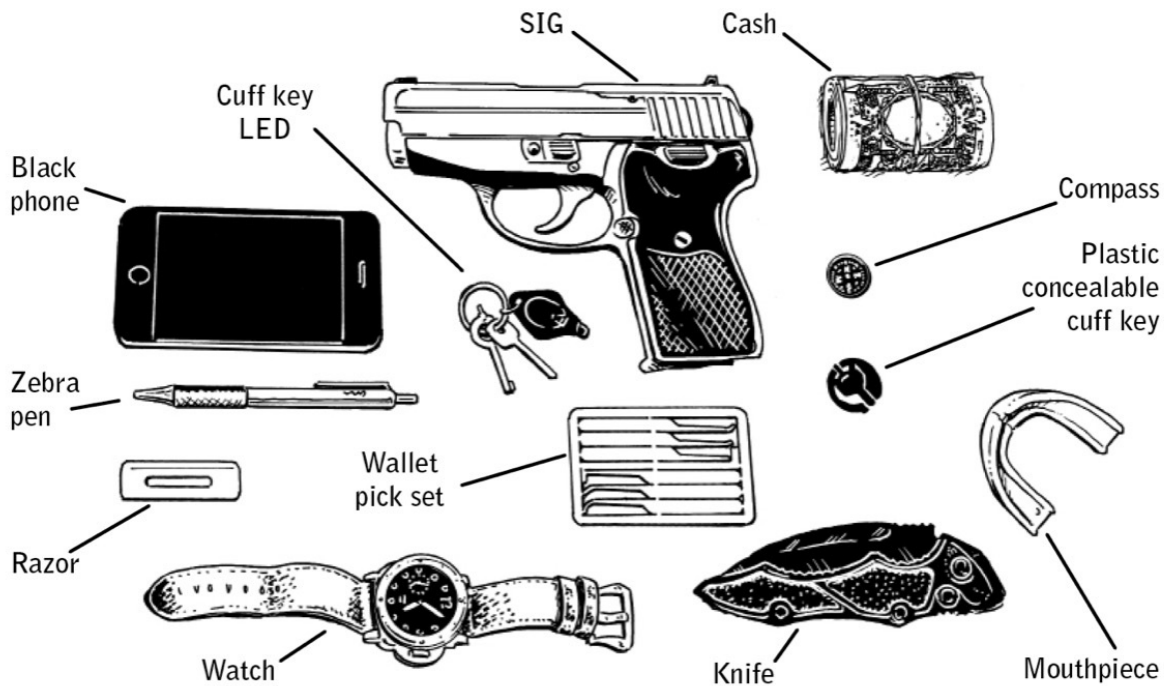
The final piece of the puzzle is the operational bag. To prepare for the possibility of escape in the face of surveillance or attack, its contents should include an empty collapsible backpack and a change of clothes in colors opposite from the ones the operative is wearing. Even shoes should be taken into consideration—if wearing sneakers, pack a pair of rubber sandals. A concealed pocket holds highly sensitive data on memory devices such as thumb drives or SD cards, a Kevlar clipboard acts as an innocuous-looking form of improvised ballistic armor, and a wad of cash allows the Nomad to subsist in deep cover for as long as the situation demands.

**Related Skills:** Build a Vehicle Bolt Bag, [page 10](#); Create a Hasty Disguise, [page 200](#); Use Improvised Body Armor, [page 20](#); Identify Emergency Ballistic Shields, [page 22](#).

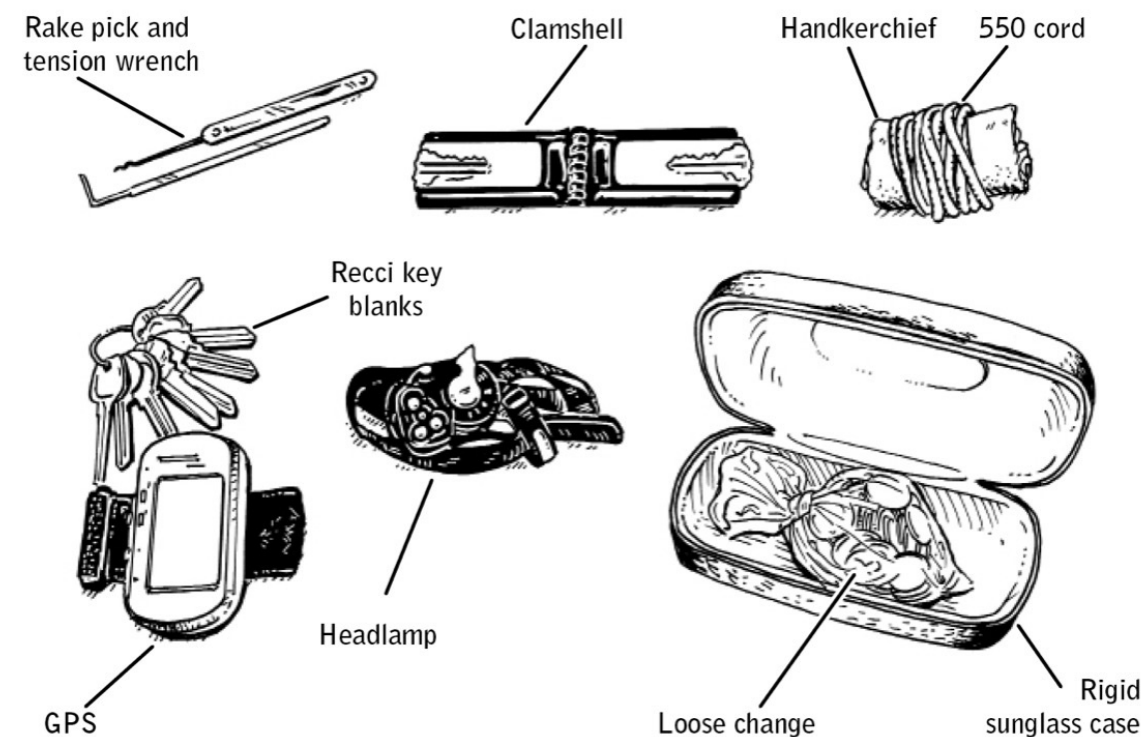
# No. 002: Create an Every Day Carry Kit

CONOP: Acquire and consolidate specific items in order to equip Every Day Carry (EDC) kits.

## COA 1: Pocket Kit



## COA 2: Container Kit



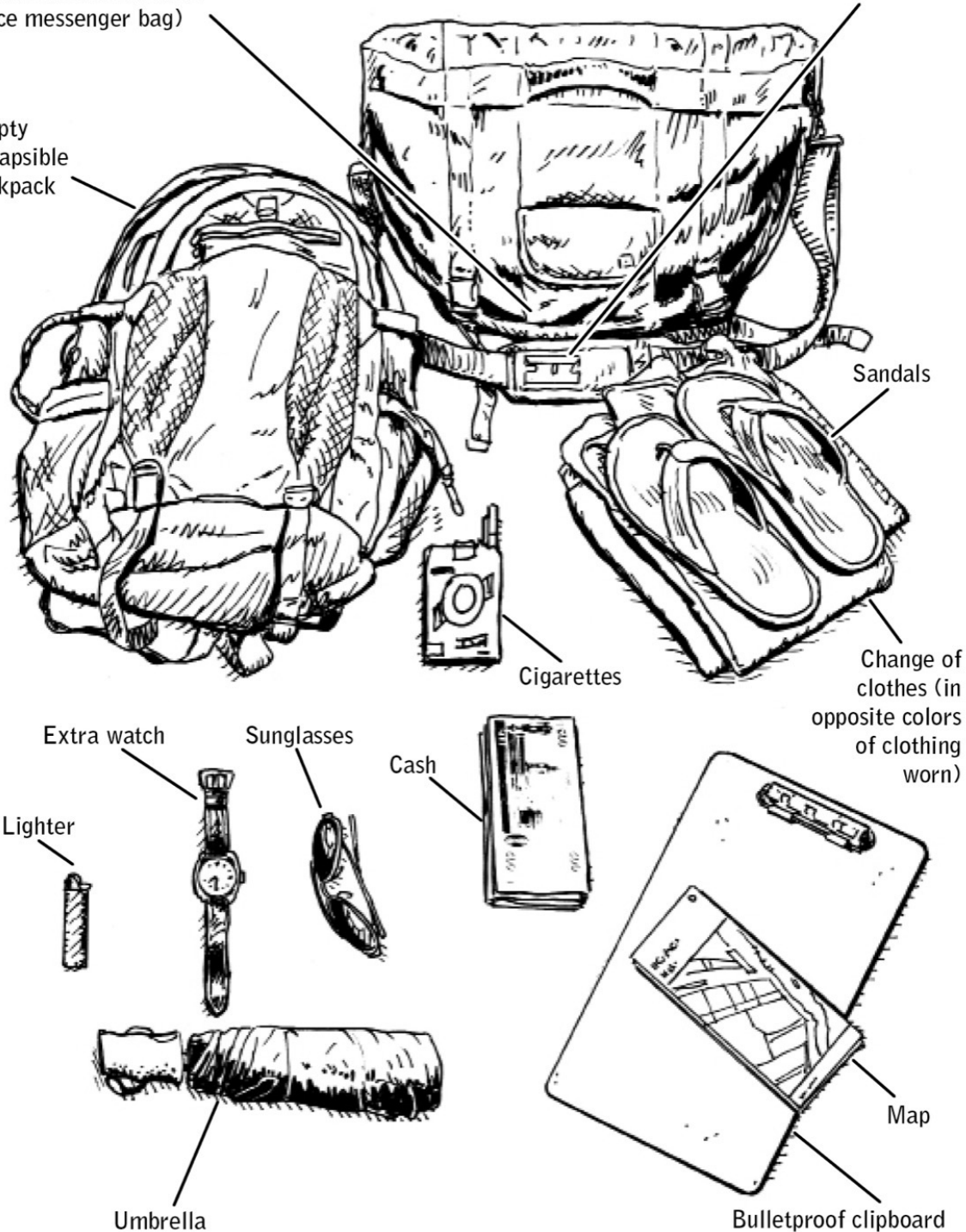


### C0A 3: Operational Bag (Man Purse)-Zero Trace Messenger Bag

Concealed pocket for data (concealed in Zero Trace messenger bag)

Concealed razor blade

Empty collapsible backpack



**BLUF:** Life is unpredictable. EDC kits provide the upper hand against the unknown.

## 003 Build a Vehicle Bolt Bag

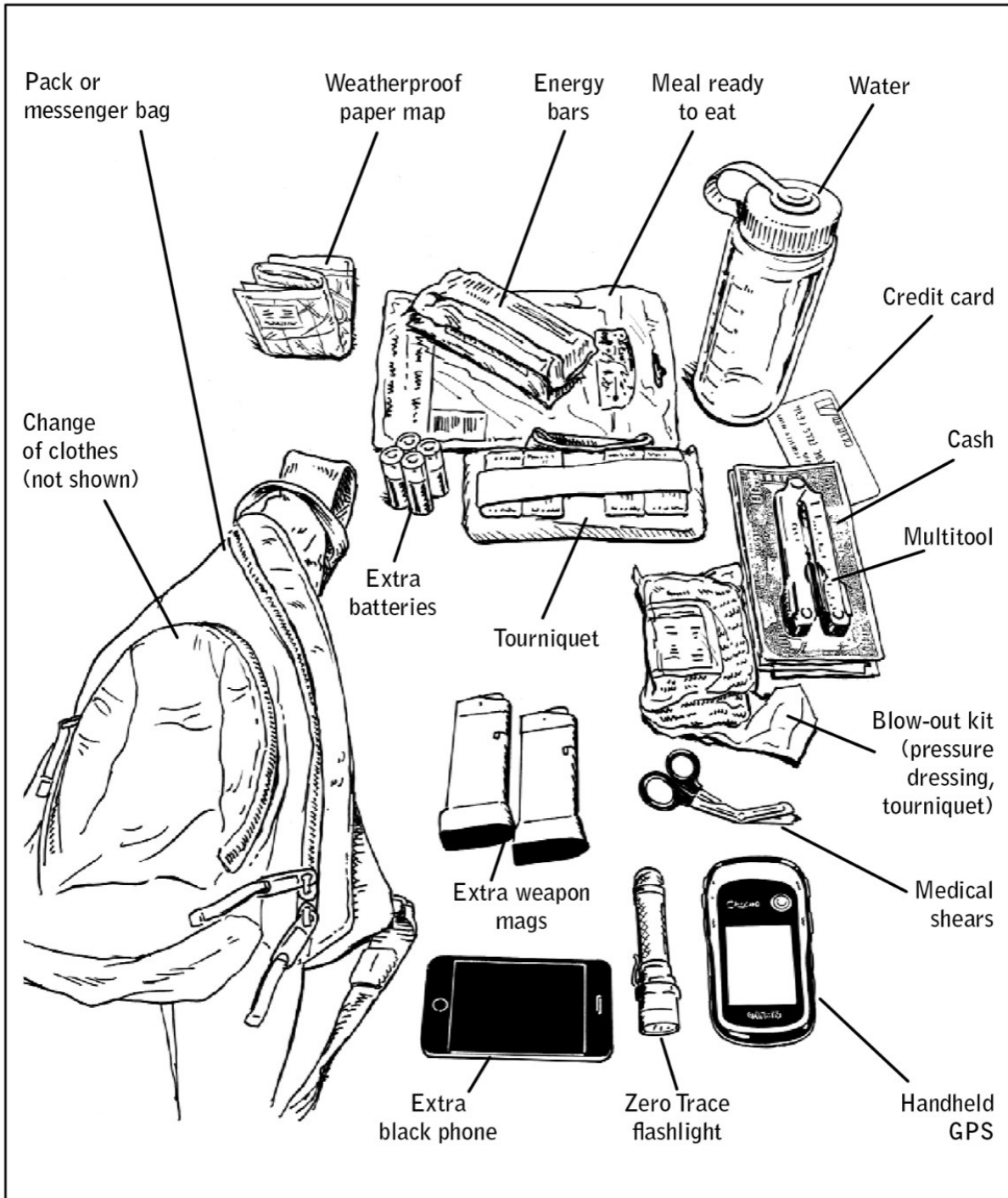
Operatives don't have the luxury of being able to return to base to stock up on food or ammunition, so their effectiveness as free-range agents is built around preparation—and preparation means always being prepared for the worst. When an operative is conducting a mission abroad, one of the first orders of business upon being called into action is building a bolt bag. In the case of emergency, this bag (also known as a “bug-out kit”) becomes an essential life-support system. It contains everything needed to keep the operative alive, should he have to “go black,” hiding out of sight until he can either resume his mission or make arrangements to safely exit the area of operation.

A bolt bag typically consists of a day or two of life support—water, food, cash, emergency medical supplies, navigation aids, and a “black” or covert phone similar to the type known in the criminal world as a “burner.” The bag should be stashed in the operational vehicle, concealed in a spot that is easily accessible from the driver's seat, such as the center console compartment (between the seats) or under the seat. (Should the operative find himself upside down as the result of a collision with aggressors, the kit should be within arm's reach.) As its name implies, the bolt bag needs to be light enough to be carried—canned foods and other heavy supplies do not lend themselves to ease of transport.

**Civilian BLUF:** In day-to-day life, bolt bags can be used as precautionary disaster measures—not only by civilians living in regions at high risk for natural disasters, but by anyone alert to the threat of urban disasters or terrorism.

# No. 003: Build a Vehicle Bolt Bag

CONOP: Be ready to move when crisis strikes.



**BLUF:** A solid bolt bag should contain one day of life support.

## 004 Make a Concealable Compass

Covert situations often call for easily concealable, dependable low-fi alternatives—and in the case of a compass, a simple pair of magnets fits the bill. An operative may have been stripped of his GPS device upon capture or may be working in a context in which the use of a handheld GPS system would attract too much notice. A concealable compass ensures that the Nomad is always able to effectively navigate through unknown territory, no matter how remote.

Though microcompasses may be found at any adventure store in the developed world, they may not be available elsewhere. Improvised compasses, on the other hand, are easy to make using resources readily available in most countries. The tool works by harnessing the power of rare-earth magnets, the baseline mechanism used to power compasses. Tuned to the dial of the earth's magnetic field, when connected and allowed to dangle from a length of thread, the rods become a natural compass; one points south, the other north.

Because the purchase of rare-earth magnets can arouse suspicion, it is advisable to seek out less alerting products such as refrigerator magnets, whiteboard magnets, or magnetic handbag closures, always in pairs. Any improvisations must be tested thoroughly, lest the Nomad be confronted with an inaccurate improvised tool mid-escape.

**Civilian BLUF:** The standard instructions for building a compass (see illustration) involve a pair of rare-earth rod magnets and a length of Kevlar thread (chosen for its durability), but a similar effect may be achieved by piercing a magnetized needle through a cork and floating the device in water.