

Every time I page through this section, I think how lucky I am that I haven't had to do these things. Whatever I've been through, it could have been worse. I have

to keep telling myself that, because if I don't it's easy to start feeling sorry for myself. Self-pity isn't going to help me find what happened to Bill.

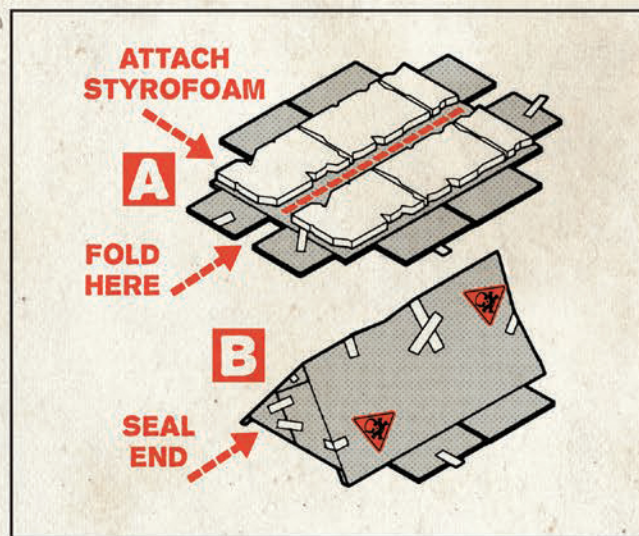
IMPROVISING SOLUTIONS

Food, water, shelter. Those are the three fundamental necessities. We've already gone over how water won't be too much of a problem in New York, but food will be an ongoing issue, and so will shelter. In this section, we'll take a look at improvising solutions to problems that will emerge during and after a collapse.

PROBLEM: It's cold and you can't or don't want to go inside.

SOLUTION: Build or find temporary shelter.

It's hard to imagine that with all of Manhattan's empty buildings, you won't be able to get in out of the cold, but it's also impossible to predict every individual experience. So if you find yourself in need of a **TEMPORARY SHELTER**, here are some basic tips. The simplest shelter can be made from a big cardboard box, some Styrofoam, and glue or tape. Flatten out the box,



REMEMBER:
To cut styrofoam,
Score it, then
Snap it.



Every cardboard box you see could have someone inside it. Maybe that was always true in NYC, but it's definitely true now.

and tape or glue sheets of Styrofoam to the inside of the box, covering as much of the surface as possible (A). Then fold it into a triangular shape, leaving flaps on either end of the triangle so you can close it up. Make sure you put any extra materials on the floor. Seal one end and leave the other as a flap for entry and exit (B). If you do this right, you can create a shelter that's a good thirty degrees warmer than the ambient temperature. In a cold winter, that's the difference between dying of exposure and surviving with a tolerable level of discomfort.

Another method of creating temporary shelter is the **LEAN-TO**. The simplest is a tarp stretched at an angle from the ground up against a wall. You can elaborate on it in various ways. Another lean-to design involves a long beam with one end on the ground and the other supported a few feet off the ground—usually by two other beams crossing below it. Then a tarp can be draped over this, creating a tent. For extra protection, warmth, and sturdiness, you can lean branches, lumber, plywood, or other materials up against the main beam before laying the tarp over the top.

If you don't have materials to create either a lean-to or a cardboard shelter—and if trash pickup has halted—you can hunker down in a **DUMPSTER**. The problem with this (other than the smell, of course) is that you're trapped inside if someone with bad intentions finds you there.

Another option, of course, is to **SQUAT**. If you can't get home, a lot of other people also won't be able to. That means there will be many empty apartments. If breaking into one of them and hiding out isn't your style, you can try a hotel. Manhattan is full of them, and if there's no power and no travel, they will be empty. Tourists and business travelers will be either dead or gone. It's also possible they will be requisitioned by federal authorities, but since there are about 90,000 hotel rooms in

I have done this in 3 different spots. Kicked out of one, ran out on another. Now I won't be able to stay in the third because of you, Merch.

PUBLIC ART



Cardboard tombstone in Chelsea

Lean-tos in groups wherever there are open spaces. People banding together for protection. Glad I never felt like I had to do that... but who knows, maybe I should have.

The gangs are starting to drag Dumpsters out and build them into forts + walls. I walked by a building under construction where a group of men were welding Dumpsters together under a scaffolding. Like they were building fortifications for war.

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