

THE DOWNLOADABLE OFF-GRID PLANNING CHECKLIST

- *Created by Offgridmaker.com*

The following is an outline formatted checklist of the things you need to think about when you're planning to make the move to an off-grid lifestyle. This checklist isn't a guide. It's meant to simply stimulate thought and help you avoid forgetting important considerations.

Finances

Many of the decisions you make will be heavily influenced by your finances so it's important to have a realistic picture of what they are.

How much money do you have to start your journey?

The length of your journey to move off-grid can be shortened with money. This money can be used for land purchase, equipment purchases, supplies, books for learning new skills, courses you can take to learn skills, the purchase of a temporary structure to live in while you build your off-grid home and much more.

Set a monthly savings goal to build up an Off-Grid Fund

A nice little cushion of cash will be nice to have when you finally make the move to your off-grid property. No matter how much effort you put into planning your move it is inevitable that you will forget something. This little stash of cash will give you a little security when you need to make a quick purchase. Just twenty dollars every week will be over a thousand dollars in a year.

How much debt do you have?

Ideally, you want to be debt-free when you go off the grid. Get an accurate accounting of all your debt so you can start eliminating it.

How much debt can you eliminate before you go off-grid?

This is the area to get really serious about your planning. Debt is an anchor and it will make your progress to living off-grid harder and harder. Unpredictable hurdles will feel impossible to get over with the weight of debt on your shoulders. Attack your debt with ferocity.

How much income will you have when you move off-grid?

When you have finally made the move, will your income be the same? Will you keep the same job or will you have to find a new one. Now is a good time to consider different types of income that fit well with an off-grid lifestyle.

Self-employment

Being self-employed is far more conducive to living off-grid than being an employee. Time freedom makes off-grid homesteading more enjoyable.

Online income

I would argue that online income is by far the most suitable for people living off-grid. There are so many different ways to earn a living online nowadays that there is something out there for anyone. As an example, this simple blog earns an income for my wife and me.

Make a budget for finances you will have when you move off-grid.

Try to have an idea of what our income will look like when you make the move to your new off-grid lifestyle. Most people won't be able to get it exactly right but at this stage close is good enough.

Decide what expenses you have which are unnecessary that you can eliminate when you go off the grid.

Living off-grid and becoming self-sufficient requires an honest assessment of the things in your life that aren't necessary. We've all had things in our lives that we argued were things we needed, but we knew inside where just things we didn't want to do without.

Where will you live off the grid?

Do you already own the land you're going to move onto?

What type of climate do you prefer?

Thinking about this now will help eliminate unnecessary work later. There's no reason to look for land in North Dakota if you want to live in a warm climate. You won't have to waste time looking up laws regarding off-grid living in areas that you don't even want to live in because of climate.

How remote do you want to live?

Do you want to start with raw land and build your off-grid homestead or do you want to find land that has already been improved to some degree or another?

Choose 3 areas you would like to live and rank by preference.

This needs to be done in case there ends up being some reason why you can't move there. Maybe the land prices are outside your budget or the area has restrictions that make living off-grid in the way you want to live unattainable.

Research local laws for compatibility with off-grid living.

There are no outright prohibitions on living off-grid by state, but there many local governments, especially city ordinances, that make living off-grid either difficult or impossible. Unincorporated county areas are usually the most off-grid friendly.

Check land prices to determine the affordability of the area for your budget.

Choose an area to focus on.

Now that you've prioritized 3 areas, researched local laws in those areas and research land costs in those areas it's time to choose one and start looking for a piece of property.

Begin to visualize, dream about and research what kind of off-grid lifestyle you want.

How far do you want to go off-grid?

It's important to define what living off-grid means to you. Living off the grid can mean different things to different people, but what it means to you is the only definition that matters.

Do you just want to live without public utilities?

for most off-gridders living off the grid just means that your home isn't connected to any public utilities.

What about Financial institutions?

Some people say Financial institutions are part of "the grid" This could include banking accounts, the use of credit cards, and even using checks.

What about the Government

There are even some that remove themselves from the system of government. This would mean getting rid of government identification. refusing to pay certain taxes and refusing government benefits like SSI checks and any sort of government handout.

Is your goal to grow or raise all your food or just a portion?

Answering this question will influence how deep you'll have to go in your self-education and how much land you'll have to buy. It will also affect the level of income you'll need.

Will you produce your own electricity or live without it?

My wife and I started our off-grid journey living completely without electricity. We added solar as we could. It isn't that hard to live without electricity, in fact, we made some unforgettable memories in our tiny little wooden tent with no electricity.

How will you have water?

This is a very important question and it will influence many other decisions. **I highly recommend reading this article specifically about the many different off-grid water options.** <https://offgridmaker.com/2019/05/10/water-options-for-an-off-grid-homestead/>

- Live stream
- Hand-dug well
- Drilled well
- Artisan well
- Rainwater harvesting
- Water hauling

How will you deal with human waste?

Without a public sewage system, you will be responsible for human waste treatment/disposal.

There are a number of solutions and some will influence land purchase decisions.

How will you heat and/or cool your house?

Some climates won't need household heat, some climates won't need household cooling and some will need both.

Is there cell/internet service available where you plan to live?

Most people won't want to give up cell service or internet service so this will need to be considered when you're looking for land. It is possible to get internet service with a satellite internet service provider in some of the most remote areas, but this will alter the monthly budget because it is quite expensive.

Check out this article about 8 things you can do right now to prepare to move off-grid. <https://offgridmaker.com/2019/05/10/8-things-you-can-do-now-to-prepare-to-live-off-grid/>

Start researching the things you need to actualize your vision of the off-grid life you want.

What type of structure are you going to live in?

- Log cabin
- Camper/RV
- Shed to cabin conversion
- Earthship
- Sandbag structure
- Rammed Earth
- Yurt
- School bus conversion
- Cordwood

What skills do you possess, what skills do you need to learn and what skills will you pay for?

Building skills

- Carpentry
- Plumbing
- Electrical

Alternative energy skills

- Solar
- Wind
- Hydro

Gardening

- Traditional gardening
- Permaculture
- Straw bale gardening
- Greenhouses
- Cold frames
- Raised beds
- Food forests

Food preservation

- Canning
- Pickling
- Dehydrating
- Smoking meat
- Root cellars

Hunting/fishing

Here's an article I wrote about hunting with a

slingshot. <https://offgridmaker.com/2020/02/04/the-beginners-guide-to-hunting-with-a-slingshot/>

- Tracking
- Trapping
- Stalking

Animal husbandry

- Animal health
- Animal breeding

- Dispatching, Processing, and Butchering

First aid

Survival skills

Bushcraft

Foraging

Household

- Soap making
- Home remedies
- Candle making
- Homemade detergent
- Homemade whiskey
- Medicinal herb skills

Now that you've researched and learned about new skills it's time to start practicing them.

There is a big difference between learning a skill and being proficient at it. Practice makes perfect and many of these homestead skills can be practiced where you are now. **Check out this article about 4 of the most important skills to learn if you want to live off-**

grid. <https://offgridmaker.com/2019/05/16/4-skills-for-off-grid-life/>