How to Stay Alive during a Zombie Apocalypse

1. **Don’t Panic.**
   
   Douglas Adams said it best. If you’re going to keep your head (and brains) about you, it is essential that you stay calm. Otherwise, the zombies win. Put it in perspective. There are many obstacles in life, whether it be that obnoxious bank teller, a boss who just doesn’t appreciate the hard work that you put in every day (and overtime), or a zombified child attempting to bite your fingers off. Staying calm will do wonders for your mental health, and stress has been shown to increase chances of suffering a heart attack or stroke. How are you going to outrun a zombie while paralyzed from the neck down? Speaking of which...

2. **Stay in Shape.**
   
   This one may seem like a no-brainer (like all of those fatties who didn’t heed this advice), but getting trim should be number one on your to-do list, no matter how much your wife says she needs that milk from the convenience store. Not only do man-handles or beer bellies work as great handholds for any particularly persistent zombies, but they just look unsightly. What beautiful blonde wants Fatboy Slim waddling to the rescue as zombies break down her door? Plus, cardiovascular exercise will always come in handy when you find yourself being chased, either by some Romero walkers or the *28 Days Later* variety of fast-running brain-eaters. Want some advice for surviving a zombie apocalypse? Join the track team.

3. **Beggars can’t be choosers.**
   
   Anyone going into the zombie apocalypse thinking that, with less competition, Vanilla Coke and Yodels will always be on the menu is in for a shock (though, to be honest, anyone who subsists on those two junk food options is probably at fault with Rule #2 and either dead or on the menu). More likely than not, you’re going to be raiding apartments, hitting up 7-Elevens left and right and picking from whatever the hoarders have left in stock. In other words, get ready for a lot of Spam and chicken liver. It could be worse, remember. At least you aren’t hungry enough that you’re coasting for brains.

4. **Know your Second Amendment rights.**
   
   You can bet that one of Wayne Lapierre’s main issues with any gun control legislation is shuffling towards you with an insatiable craving for your brains. So if you’re reading this, the bad news is that, though they are crazy, heartless bastards, you should probably be thanking the NRA for keeping your guns readily available (though, in a perfect world, they would have been the first ones to go). In this zombie-ridden world, you’d be wise to arm yourself. That includes you, pacifists. Call it self-defense, because if any of those walkers get too close, you’ll probably lose a large portion of yourself.
5. **Use your tools as the situation demands.**

There are lots of tools you can use to fight off the undead, but not every tool is right for every situation. Say you’ve stopped to fill up on gas and that zombified gas attendant comes at you, sad little name-tag askew and jaws open. You go for your shotgun and fire at the guy. Too bad you didn’t notice that row of bright-red gas cans by the entrance. Nice to meet you too, Crispy. Rewind a bit: acne-spotted, teenage, flesh-craving gas attendant, coming at you, arms outstretched. This is a guy you wouldn’t want anywhere near you on a normal day, but he wants more than your hard-earned cash this time around. Good thing you came prepared. Pull out that machete and have at the poor sap. It sounds pretty grim, and it is, but when it comes down to it, would you rather buy a new shirt or get an undead makeover? That’s what I thought. The machete is always a pretty handy weapon to have, but you only get one swipe so be quick about it. Crossbows, revolvers, shotguns (if you can get one), or even little Johnny’s Little League Slugger are also safe bets, so why choose? Stock up!

6. **Don’t be stupid.**

This one’s pretty self-explanatory. If I had to give some examples: if you’re in a group, don’t wander off. If you’re in a shopping mall, stay out of Abercrombie, because it’s just not worth the risk. Bring multiple matches with you if you plan to use them, not just one. Colonial muskets are never good weapons to use, and there’s never an excuse for bad parking. Got it?

7. **Cultivate some friendships.**

With the exception of some ex-military schmoes, very few people will be able to stay alert all the time on their own. Your parents were always telling you to call some friends once in a while, so why not? It’s the end of the world, so you shouldn’t be too worried that you’re not quite popular enough to be seen with them. The zombies are the popular kids now. If possible, get a large group of friends to help you ride out the apocalypse. Don’t get too attached though, especially to those slower than you.

8. **Be photogenic.**

Hate to be the one to burst your bubble, but pretty people *always* have it better.

9. **Call your parents once in a while.**

You know how they worry, and when you have a spare minute, hiding out in a tree or locked closet, remember that it’s only a few minutes out of your day. It won’t kill you, unless you pick your moments in a city pay-phone or phone box (see Rule #6).

10. **Have fun.**

Otherwise, why are you working so hard?