

Free Homestead Skills Checklist

A simple, no-pressure guide for building practical homestead skills one step at a time.

You do not have to master every skill on this list to be a real homesteader. Pick a few that fit your season of life, check them off as you go, and come back when you are ready for the next thing. Small steps count.

How to use this checklist

Circle 3 skills to try this month. Check them off as you learn. Add notes in the blank space at the end so you remember what worked, what flopped, and what you want to try next.

Garden & Growing

- [] Start seeds indoors or direct-sow simple crops
- [] Build or fill a raised bed/container garden
- [] Read a seed packet and follow spacing/depth directions
- [] Water deeply without drowning plants
- [] Identify common weeds vs. seedlings
- [] Harvest herbs, greens, tomatoes, squash, or beans
- [] Save seeds from one easy crop
- [] Compost kitchen scraps and yard waste

Kitchen From Scratch

- [] Bake a simple loaf, biscuits, or muffins
- [] Roast a whole chicken or use a whole cut of meat
- [] Make homemade broth or stock
- [] Cook dried beans, rice, potatoes, or pantry staples
- [] Make a simple salad dressing, sauce, or seasoning mix
- [] Use leftovers for a second meal
- [] Meal plan for one week before grocery shopping
- [] Make one cleaner swap for a store-bought convenience food

Food Preservation

- [] Freeze produce, meat, broth, or prepared meals safely
- [] Dehydrate herbs, fruit, or vegetables
- [] Water-bath can a high-acid food like jam or pickles
- [] Pressure can a low-acid food with approved instructions
- [] Label preserved food with date and contents
- [] Rotate pantry/freezer items so old food gets used first
- [] Make a simple fermented food like sauerkraut or kombucha
- [] Know when food should be thrown out instead of risked

Laundry, Cleaning & Home Rhythm

- [] Line-dry laundry or hang items indoors to save energy
- [] Make a simple daily reset routine
- [] Create a weekly cleaning rhythm that actually fits your life
- [] Use basic supplies like vinegar, baking soda, and castile soap wisely
- [] Mend a button, hem, or small tear
- [] Declutter one small space without making a bigger mess
- [] Create a household command center or checklist
- [] Build a realistic chore/job system for kids

Animals & Livestock Basics

- [] Provide clean water daily and check troughs/buckets
- [] Understand basic feed needs for each animal you own
- [] Spot signs that an animal is off, injured, bloated, lame, or sick
- [] Keep bedding or living areas clean and dry
- [] Handle animals calmly and safely
- [] Create a simple health record for each animal
- [] Learn basic biosecurity before bringing animals on/off property
- [] Know when to call the vet instead of guessing

Eggs, Dairy & Pantry Skills

- [] Collect and store eggs properly
- [] Clean eggs according to your household needs and local rules
- [] Make yogurt, soft cheese, butter, or ice cream
- [] Use extra milk in cooking, baking, or freezer meals
- [] Create a basic pantry inventory
- [] Stock simple staples for no-town-run dinners
- [] Keep an emergency meal shelf
- [] Use what you already have before buying more

Homestead Planning & Money

- [] Track feed, seed, supplies, and farm expenses
- [] Write down what you planted and what actually grew
- [] Plan projects by season instead of all at once
- [] Set one realistic homestead goal for the month
- [] Price eggs, milk, meat, or farm products with real costs in mind
- [] Keep receipts and simple records for your farm/homestead
- [] Create a town-run list to avoid extra trips
- [] Know what is a hobby, household expense, or business expense

Emergency & Practical Life Skills

- [] Build a basic first-aid kit for house, car, and barn
- [] Keep flashlights, batteries, water, and backup heat plans ready
- [] Learn to shut off water, gas/propane, and power safely
- [] Store extra feed, hay, or animal supplies before storms
- [] Make a winter storm or power outage plan
- [] Keep important phone numbers printed somewhere obvious
- [] Teach kids basic safety around animals, tools, fire, and water
- [] Create a simple evacuation/grab-and-go list

My Next 3 Homestead Skills

1. _____

What I need / notes: _____

2. _____

What I need / notes: _____

3. _____

What I need / notes: _____

Notes & Wins

Remember: simple still counts. A jar of broth, a line of laundry, a planted seed, a fixed fence, a meal from scratch - it all adds up.