

## Combo Survival Tools

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### Combo Survival Tools

There's an old saying that "2 is 1 and 1 is none" in survivalist and prepper circles. The idea is that you need backups for tools and gear that fail, get lost, run out of consumable fuel, etc. But there's another aspect of survival tools that we should consider, too:

Combination survival tools.

- The appeal of a combination tool, like a phone charger flashlight, a multitool, or a knife with other tools built in (such as the 5-in-1 knife we profiled not long ago on our email list) is that it does multiple things but doesn't take up more space or have more weight.
- The potential problem of combo survival tools is that a tool that does everything tends to do very few things WELL, based on the design compromises involved.
- For example, the Chinese multitool shovel that was all over the Internet a while ago, does everything from dig to pick to cutting wires. But it's an extremely awkward wire cutter because it's a wire cutter *shaped like a shovel*.
- Consider the following when looking at a combination survival tool:

### 1. Does It Still Do Its Primary Function?

A combination tool is usually built on one primary tool, like a knife. To evaluate it, ask yourself: Does it still do what the primary tool was meant to do?

- Using our combination 5-in-1 knife as an example, it's still a great one-hand opening knife. The bottle opener built into the blade doesn't stop the blade from working, etc.

### 2. Is The Handle Awkward?

Handles tend to suffer when it comes to combination survival tools.

- One of the worst machetes I ever handled was a combination survival tool that suffered from poor balance (and had "hot spots" on the handle).
- You'll see some multitools that are absolutely awkward by the time the tools are all stuffed in there.
- A survival tool must be comfortable for use or you won't use it, and if you tear up your hands trying to "survive" with it, it isn't doing you much good.

### 3. Is it Fragile?

Combination tools often suffer from inexpensive execution. Our 5-in-1 survival knife isn't a 300-dollar custom blade, no, but it's still sturdy and useful. Other combo tools, not as much. The more it does, the more fragile the components tend to be. Watch out for that!

### 4. Is Maintenance Impossible?

Remember combo TV-VCRs? One of the big problems with combo tools is that they're often hard to maintain. Always evaluate your combo tool with an eye towards periodic maintenance.

### 5. Mind The Sheath/Scabbard/Etc.

For whatever reason, a lot of combo tools come with terrible Nylon covers/pouches. Always consider these when shopping.

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