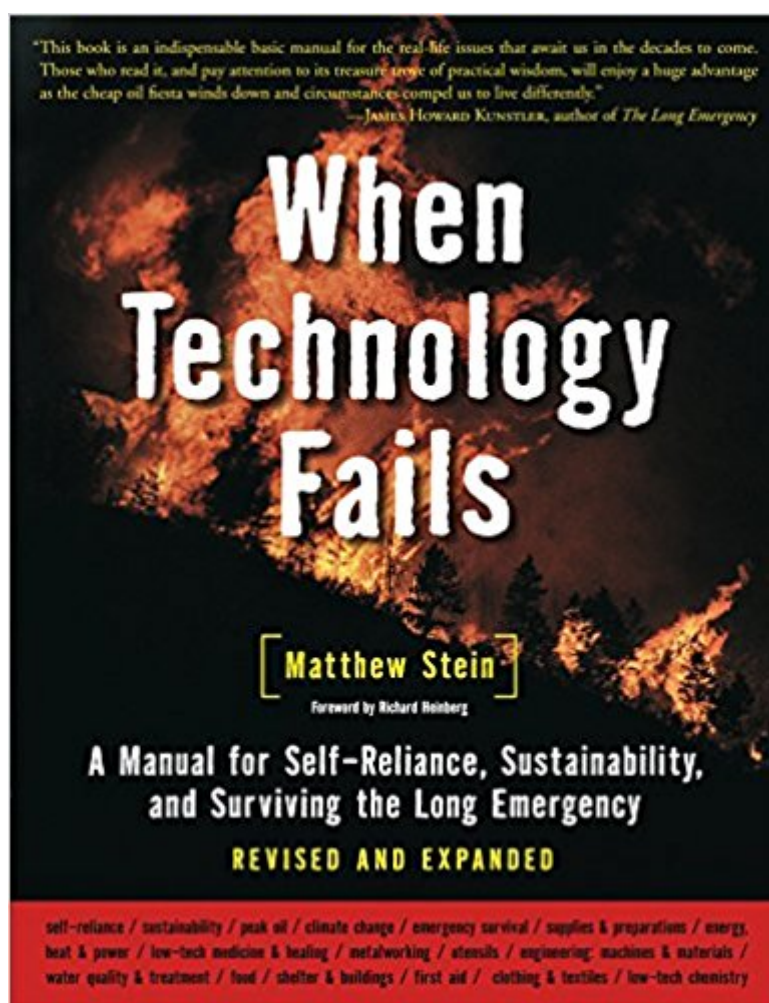


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# When Technology Fails: A Manual For Self-Reliance, Sustainability, And Surviving The Long Emergency, 2nd Edition



## Synopsis

There's never been a better time to "be prepared." Matthew Stein's comprehensive primer on sustainable living skills—from food and water to shelter and energy to first-aid and crisis-management skills—prepares you to embark on the path toward sustainability. But unlike any other book, Stein not only shows you how to live "green" in seemingly stable times, but to live in the face of potential disasters, lasting days or years, coming in the form of social upheaval, economic meltdown, or environmental catastrophe. When Technology Fails covers the gamut. You'll learn how to start a fire and keep warm if you've been left temporarily homeless, as well as the basics of installing a renewable energy system for your home or business. You'll learn how to find and sterilize water in the face of utility failure, as well as practical information for dealing with water-quality issues even when the public tap water is still flowing. You'll learn alternative techniques for healing equally suited to an era of profit-driven malpractice as to situations of social calamity. Each chapter (a survey of the risks to the status quo; supplies and preparation for short- and long-term emergencies; emergency measures for survival; water; food; shelter; clothing; first aid, low-tech medicine, and healing; energy, heat, and power; metalworking; utensils and storage; low-tech chemistry; and engineering, machines, and materials) offers the same approach, describing skills for self-reliance in good times and bad. Fully revised and expanded—the first edition was written pre-9/11 and pre-Katrina, when few Americans took the risk of social disruption seriously—When Technology Fails ends on a positive, proactive note with a new chapter on "Making the Shift to Sustainability," which offers practical suggestions for changing our world on personal, community and global levels.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Review From John Egan, proprietor of the website [SurvivalistBooks.com](#)-Matthew Stein has written a clear, concise book on the subject of survival that, while educating, also does what few others have managed to do - entertain and engage the reader. Throughout the book you'll find personal stories accompanying the text to further illustrate or drive home a point. The use of these asides brings you into Matthew Stein's life, as he recounts personal stories of survival and tells the stories of others who have managed to overcome the odds to survive. Not just a survival book, Matthew also covers topics like alternative therapies; how to create a survival mindset; survival strategies; renewable energy; companion gardening; prophecies etc. as well as all the regular topics found in such books - edible plants; first aid; making a survival kit; growing, hunting and foraging; making tools; creating shelters; spinning/weaving/tanning etc. The book has some great illustrations that make plant identification and first aid that much easier to understand and each chapter finishes with a reference section listing books (along with a short review) and resources (with web addresses where available). "This book is an indispensable basic manual for the real-life issues that await us in the decades to come. Those who read it, and pay attention to its treasure trove of practical wisdom, will enjoy a huge advantage as the cheap oil fiesta winds down and circumstances compel us to live differently."--James Howard Kunstler, author of *The Long Emergency* "You don't need to be a survivalist to appreciate this book. If you are thoughtful. If you seek a simpler, more sustainable life or if you feel as though technology has already failed us in the ways that matter, this is a book you want in your personal library."--Kathy Harrison, author of *Just In Case: How to Be Self-Sufficient When the Unexpected Happens* "We imagine that we live in the age of information, but this engrossing book reminds us of how comparatively little we know. Most human communities used to know how to provide water and food and energy for themselves, but most of the tips in this comprehensive account will come as news to most Americans. You may never need to put them into practice (or you may need them this winter when home heating prices soar) but at the very least they illuminate the state of our comparative ignorance."--Bill McKibben, author of *Deep Economy* "If you've been wondering about how to respond to the twin dangers of peak oil and global warming, one of your best choices would be to read this book."--Greg Pahl, author of *The Citizen-Powered Energy Handbook: Community Solutions to a Global Crisis* "A fascinating collection of concepts and skills that will satisfy everyone from the casual do-it-yourself enthusiast to someone who wants to

attempt self-reliance and the ultimate emergency preparedness."--Howard Backer, MD, author of *Wilderness First Aid: Emergency Care for Wilderness Locations* and past president of the Wilderness Medical Society "I have no children because I read M. King Hubbert's analyses on the future of oil and other fossil fuels in 1969, and *Limits to Growth* shortly thereafter. It was clear to me then and in every year since that our whole economy, and all of our economic principles, were based on cheap oil that would not last. The reason that economists could get away with criticizing Hubbert and LTG as well promoting their basically absurd theories that often disregarded and even belittled natural resources was that, in fact, more oil could be pulled out of the ground to make ANY economic theory or policy work, no matter how stupid. Now that the oil spigot is sputtering the economists' theories and policies are increasingly shown to be failures. We need a whole new way to think about how we do our economies. In the spirit of the old *Whole Earth Catalogues* Matt Stein does a marvelous and diverse job of helping us to think about how we might go about generating an approach to our economies that can make sense. This is a great book to have on your bookshelf as we enter the post-peak second half of the age of oil."--Professor Charles A.S. Hall, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry "When Technology Fails is the roadmap that you want and need to navigate whatever may lie ahead."--John L. Chunta, PeakOilResources.com "We may all need a survival reference when technology fails. Matthew provides one--fact-filled, with useful tips on all aspects of survival, clothing, food, shelter, water, etc., including such vital subjects as grazing and the green pharmacy."--James A. Duke, economic botanist, USDA (ret.), and author of *The Green Pharmacy* "A marvelous guidebook for helping us through the worst of times, and even improving on the best of times."--Thom Hartmann, syndicated radio host and author of *The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight*"When the grid goes down, having this book with you could be the difference between life and death."--Matt Savinar, author of *Life After the Oil Crash*"Stein's excellent guide to simplifying your life, reducing your environmental impact, and pulling yourself out of a jam is sure to gather no dust on your bookshelf... This book is a personal and planetary empowerment tool."--Richard Heede, Ph.D., author, *Homemade Money: How to Save Energy and Dollars in Your Home* "I liked this book. It's carefully researched, comprehensive, well illustrated, and readable. It presents much needed alternate information, for, in my opinion, technology has already 'failed' ...So replacement of polluting 'high' technologies with non-polluting 'low' ones is urgent, and Matthew Stein's handbook systematically and accurately surveys a wide array of possible low-tech options. Much hard work, time, and talent went into the building of this basic reference survey of low-tech options."--Carla Emery, author, *The Encyclopedia of Country Living: An Old-Fashioned Recipe Book* "When Technology Fails is a massive project done well. First the book gives a superb

presentation of WHY one should be more aware and prepared--and then HOW one should go about this. The scope of this book... is thorough. Not only is the information presented well, but a solid bibliography can carry the student as far as he desires in any particular area of interest."--John McPherson, author, *Primitive Wilderness Living and Survival Skills* "Matthew Stein has done us all a tremendous favor by searching far and wide for useful knowledge. In this era of specialization, personal and social viability depend on expansive thinking. *When Technology Fails* is itself a powerful expression of the technology of sustainable living. It teaches more skills than I thought possible in just one book and rightly combines the immediacy of an emergency escape plan with the urgency for long-term thinking."--Mathis Wackernagel, Executive Director of the Global Footprint Network "When Technology Fails is a comprehensive guide and compendium of the tools society will require as it reaches the convergence of hyper-inflation, oil depletion, and environmental limitations; in other words, at the point where technology fails."--William Kemp, author of *The Renewable Energy Handbook*"When Technology Fails. . . Like that's some sort of unlikely future possibility! Technology is always failing while people stand around befuddled about what to do. With Mat Stein's book, when push comes to shove, you can be your own veritable MacGyver. Not only does it provide us with the information we need to plan for, and deal with, potential emergencies and disasters, it also shows us how we can live more sustainably and self-reliantly in today's world of climate change and gas prices that are going through the ceiling. This is the sort of ingenuity for which Americans have been famous. *When Technology Fails* is to the mechanical world what *Joy of Cooking* is to the world of cooking. In other words, the encyclopedia every home should have on hand. Keep it right next to the emergency flashlight and your Swiss Army knife."--David Blume, permaculturist and author of *Alcohol Can Be A Gas!*"Whether you are seeking self-reliance and a simpler life or fear the collapse of social services, this compendium of practical information for sustainable living belongs on your bookshelf..."--Fred C. Walters, editor, *Acres U.S.A.* magazine "The depth of this book, covering everything from building materials to spiritual healing, is astounding. It is a one-stop source... to create a self-sufficient, earth-friendly lifestyle. I highly recommend it for anyone interested in preserving the health of themselves and the planet--and moving toward a sustainable, sane way of living."--Robyn Griggs Lawrence, editor-in-chief, *Natural Home* magazine "Matthew Stein gives us a readable, updated wake-up call for sustainability practices in the best tradition of Paul Ehrlich, Lester Brown, and Jared Diamond."--Stephen Schneider, Ph.D., Melvin and Joan Lane Professor for Interdisciplinary Environmental Studies at Stanford University and coordinating lead author in IPCC summary papers on climate change "In this age of over-consumption, truth is lost in a myriad of commercialized details. Matthew Stein

picks up and assembles these shattered shards, and by examining each in the meticulous manner of a crime scene investigator, offers valuable insight and practical tools to survive in a world at the brink of chaos. In doing so, he helps maintain sanity in a time of hardening denial about the state of the world--and helps throw open the door to Plato's Cave where so many of us remain uncomfortably shackled."--Peter Droege, author of *The Renewable City and Urban Energy Transition*

Dear Editor: We are pleased to submit *WHEN TECHNOLOGY FAILS: A Manual for Self Reliance & Planetary Survival*, by Matthew Stein, for your review. No home is complete without this essential resource. M.I.T. graduate Matthew Stein spent 15 years compiling the information for *When Technology Fails*. This easy-to-use manual is designed for self-reliant living in today's changing world. As we begin the 21st Century, the rapidly expanding world population is quickly depleting the available natural resources and fossil fuel supply while increasing the demand for basic human needs--food, shelter, clothing and energy. This combined with the current worldwide infrastructure dependent on instant global communication and next-day distribution grids means that any disruption of the norm due to technology breakdowns, weather patterns, solar spots, techno-terrorism or natural upheavals can create massive disruptions to daily life. *When Technology Fails* is the first book to offer basic instructions and recommended resources for the wide range of skills and technologies necessary for self-reliant living, achieving mastery of all kinds of emergency conditions, and treading lighter on Mother Earth. *When Technology Fails* is a user-friendly manual for the 21st Century in the tradition of the *Whole Earth Catalog*. We hope you enjoy reading this important book and can recommend it to your readers. Thank you Harmon Houghton Publisher

--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Very thorough in every aspect. I purchased the Kindle version first and decided I wanted the hard copy in hand. If the power is out, what good is my Kindle? This book covers many different scenarios along with what types of foods to store and how much you may need, what you may need to bug-out, how to build shelters, first aid supplies, and so forth. Matthew also includes many resources at the end of each chapter. A lot of time and thought went into this book. I would highly recommend this book to everyone!

Well, I love it because it can help if things/civilization completely collapses, not because I love what it represents. I read it through but as the book says you need to be prepared with the tips and items

within BEFORE the grid goes down. Afterwards it would be pretty much too late. But at least you can have some knowledge. Includes tips on handling game--doesn't assume a vegan lifestyle as is politically correct nowadays. I think it gives a pretty good overall survivalist preparation (if you live in the country--things may be worse in the cities, but there are tips for that too) but I included edible/medicinal plants books to my collection. Mostly I need to have solar power put on the pump house!

This was a gift from my wife ... and I am quite pleased so far. Good damn book. I grew up spending a significant amount of time hunting and hiking, learning (Eagle Scout/Vigil Honor) how to survive with little and how to prepare for longer term survival. Nearly 30 years as a State Trooper has put me in enough situations, that I know the value of preparedness. This book has refreshed things I've learned decades ago and forgotten .... and given me bunch of new information. Good Job.

This is a very thorough book. If you believe in being prepared for any disaster, this is a must have. It will walk you through the needed supplies and preparations for every conceivable disaster - from earthquakes and volcanoes to terrorism and bio-threats - from short term glitches to long-term emergencies. It's a little overwhelming because of the amount of information it contains, but breaking it down by section should make it a little more manageable. It has a great section on growing, foraging, hunting, and storing food. The illustrations of wild edible plants are a great addition, as is the first aid section and the energy, heat, and power section. Some sections made me roll my eyes a little, such as the sections on the author's spirituality and his prophetic notions, but those are small sections, and other than that, I highly recommend the book.

This is a valuable reference work for doing and making many essential things. A wide range of issues and approaches are included, the book works well to pick and choose different areas of interest without having to read cover-to cover.

I enjoy reading this book over and over.

I bought this book based on the comprehensive table of contents and excellent reviews. I was impressed when I received it but figured it would be more of a reference than something I'd read from cover to cover. That changed after reading the first couple chapters - I was hooked and am almost through the entire book. The material is presented in a very clear and concise format with

enough detail to be informative without overloading the reader. Each topic is then followed by a comprehensive list of references for further education. The author is an engineer by education and has experience in many of the areas covered. This is evident in his approach to the topics. If there is a single theme that is most prevalent - it's sustainability - the need for both industry and individuals to prosper without depleting resources. This is not based on extreme environmentalism but rather the logic of limited natural resources being strained by (1) population growth, (2) the emergence of China, India and other countries as industrial / consumer nations and (3) the damage already done to our water / ecosystems. I highly recommend it whether you're just interested in the topics or are a full blown "prepper".

I found this book to be amazing. A lot of the information is basic knowledge for anyone that knows anything about survival. This is going to be the case with every survival book though. This book is chock full of information that the average person wouldn't know or even think about if ever caught in an emergency situation. This should be in every household even if never read and just skimmed through for reference. BUY THE HARD COPY!!!! Kindle will do you no good when the power goes out and your battery dies.

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Batteries for Sustainability: Selected Entries from the Encyclopedia of Sustainability  
Science and Technology  
When There Is No Doctor: Preventive and Emergency Healthcare in Uncertain Times (Process Self-reliance Series)  
When There Is No Doctor: Preventive and Emergency Healthcare in Challenging Times (Process Self-reliance Series)  
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