

# Water Storage Containers

QUICK LOOK	
Containers Needed to Provide 30 Gallons of Water (Enough for Two People for Two Weeks)	
<b>Size:</b>	<b>Number:</b>
2.5 Gallon	12 Containers
3.5 Gallon	8+ Containers
4 Gallon	7.5 Containers
5 Gallon	6 Containers
6 Gallon	5 Containers
7 Gallon	4+ Containers

Water can be stored in either portable or stationary containers, but be sure they are FDA approved as safe for human use. Many containers are made from durable, high-density, moderately opaque polyethylene (HDPE) and come in a variety of shapes and sizes. However, if they have previously been used to store food products, they will slowly leech the chemical residues of those products into the water. Containers can also be made of glass, fiberglass, or enamel-lined metal.

As you decide which size containers work best for you, keep in mind that a gallon of water weighs eight pounds. A 3½-gallon container filled with water will weigh about 28 pounds, a 5-gallon container about 40.

## Storing Water in Small, Portable Containers

There are many options for storing smaller quantities of water. Look for containers that stack easily and feature comfortable handles, tight-fitting gasket-type lids, and pouring spouts. In table 7.1 you will find several good options for small, portable water-storage containers. Other containers for storing water include canning jars, glass jugs, and soda-pop bottles. Clearly label and date all containers.

Store water in both small and large containers for more flexibility.

## Containers to Avoid

Never use a container that has previously held fuel, poisons, or other toxic materials. Bleach containers are not safe to store water meant for human consumption. Plastic milk jugs aren't a good option either because the seams are not durable and there can be milk residue and bacteria left in the container. Also, the water in waterbeds should not be used. The material waterbeds are made of is not FDA approved for use as a safe water container. Plus, the treatment chemicals are not safe, nor can the residues be entirely removed with filters.

QUICK LOOK
<b>Avoid These Containers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plastic milk jugs</li><li>• Bleach containers</li><li>• Chemical containers</li><li>• Waterbeds</li><li>• Non-food grade containers</li></ul>

## PERSONALLY SPEAKING

 About ten years ago, we purchased several five-gallon containers to add more water to our emergency supply. We thoroughly rinsed them out, filled them with tap water, tightly closed the lids, and put them in the storage area under our front steps. Recently, we were curious about the quality of the water and decided to try it. I'll admit I was slightly skeptical. After all, the water had been stored for almost ten years. I let my husband try it first. He opened the spigot and poured the water into a transparent glass. The water was clear—no cloudiness, nothing floating in it, no impurities of any kind. Next, he sniffed it—no odor. Then he tasted it.