



FINANCIAL PREPAREDNESS

"One of life's most painful moments comes when we must admit that we didn't do our homework, that we are not prepared." ~ Merlin Olsen

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How to Organize and Store Batteries

Soon after you lose power, the batteries in your flashlight go dead. What do you do? If you're like most people, you open your junk drawer and feel around with your hand in the dark, hoping to find enough batteries of the right size (any kind—alkaline, rechargeable or lithium—will do) and hoping that they have enough charge to last as long as you need them. If you're a serious prepper, you know that's not an acceptable plan.

[I wrote about batteries back in June 2023](#) but didn't say much about how to organize or store them. I recently devised a good solution for both that I'd like to share with you. I felt like I had to come up with a well thought out solution because (1) every time batteries came up on my monthly Amazon Subscribe & Save list, I didn't know how many of which type I had or needed, (2) they were stored in two different locations, just kind of all grouped together in places that weren't *designed* for battery storage, and (3) I didn't know whether I had enough (including the right size) of plastic battery storage cases (to conserve storage space and prevent them from discharging during storage). This situation eventually prompted me to get squared away.

Increasingly, I use spreadsheets (or databases) to organize my life, and this area is no exception. After searching around for some time, I found [this apothecary cabinet](#), which is handsome, well made and affordable. It's also (apparently) made in China, so it took a few

weeks to arrive and the packaging wasn't great, though mine arrived undamaged. I used a spreadsheet (I just added a new tab to my master prepping spreadsheet) to plan where I wanted batteries by type and size. Once I had stored all of my batteries in the cabinet, I used the spreadsheet to keep a running inventory of how many of each battery I had so that in the future, I would know if I needed to order any more.

I use the first "row" of the cabinet for rechargeable batteries, the second row for alkaline, and the third row for lithium (see [my first newsletter about batteries](#) for when you should use each type). I use the first "column" for AA batteries, the second column for AAAs, and most of the third and fourth columns for other types of batteries (C and D, CR123, A23 and buttons). The drawers of the cabinet are wide enough to store AA and AAA batteries width-wise. When stored this way in plastic storage cases, you don't have to count each battery, you can just multiply two numbers to get the total number in the drawer.

Organizing your batteries like this also allows you to see whether you need any more plastic storage cases, and if so which size. I try to buy batteries that come in a good storage case, but otherwise I like [these storage cases](#), which are versatile and attachable to each other.

I put the cabinet on a chest-high shelf where I store most of my prepping gear so I can easily see into each drawer, and I store extra battery storage cases on top of the cabinet. You should visually check your batteries at least once a year to ensure that none have leaked.

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