

Family Home Storage Basics

Home and food storage do not equate directly to preparing for disaster. One will benefit most from the counsel when applying it to personal and individual circumstances. This is more about immediate blessings of obedience than about planning for pandemics and cataclysmic disaster.

It's not one more thing for you to do. It's the map that will grant you the greatest success and satisfaction in what you're already doing. Every one of us, every day, have successfully learned to cook, care and organize for our families within the walls of our own homes. It is a personal matter that requires personal attention. The beauty of family home storage is how it helps us perform all these same tasks more efficiently, while providing us emotional security, immediate blessings and the ability to help and lift others in time of need.

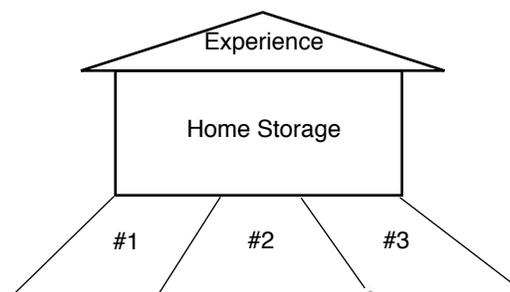
The most important element of family home storage is to **get started**. Remember, you are already doing all this every day! The resources are clear and easy to follow. (Church pamphlet visual) Because you can't reach your goals if you haven't identified them, the first step is defining your target. Let's start with item #1: Three Month Storage. Here are some easy ways you could get started right now:

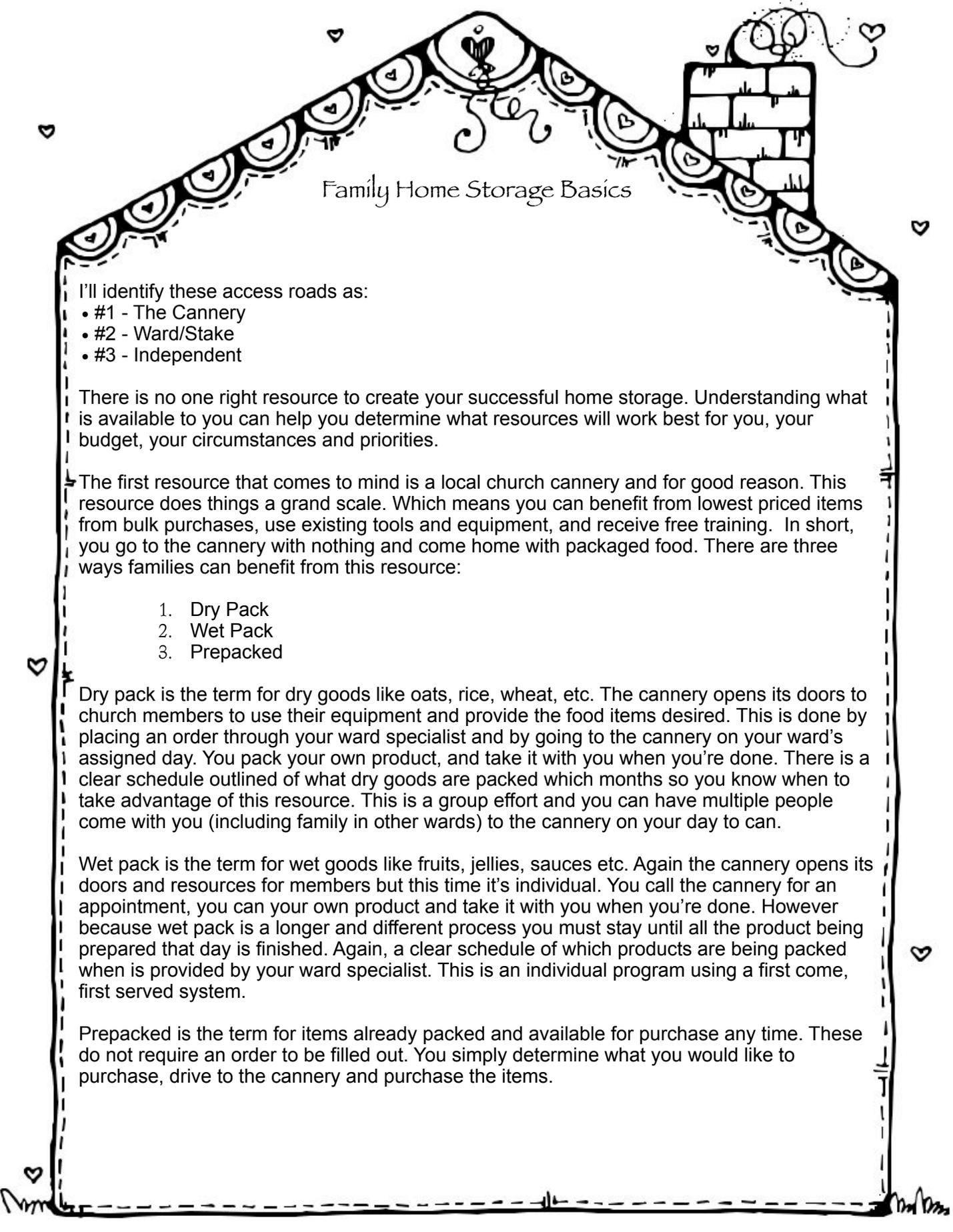
- Make a thorough review of what you have on hand in your pantry.
- Transfer this information from you head to a paper, system or file.
- Ask questions: How will it be used? How long will it last? What's not being used? What do we run out of the most/quickest? What are some staple products we use and could store more of?
- Move this information into action.

Begin baby steps today. Start putting pennies away in a jar for a small cash savings - it will add up. Start adding an extra can of what you usually buy - it will add up. Start storing drinking water - it will add up. With visual success, you will find yourself expanding into a great capacity to reach your ultimate goals with your family home storage.

Understand the resources available to you in helping you reach your goals. I think of this visually as a home structure. The basic structure of the home houses our family home storage goals, the roof is added with our personal experience, and multiple access roads to our house are available.

In my mind it looks something like this:





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I'll identify these access roads as:

- #1 - The Cannery
- #2 - Ward/Stake
- #3 - Independent

There is no one right resource to create your successful home storage. Understanding what is available to you can help you determine what resources will work best for you, your budget, your circumstances and priorities.

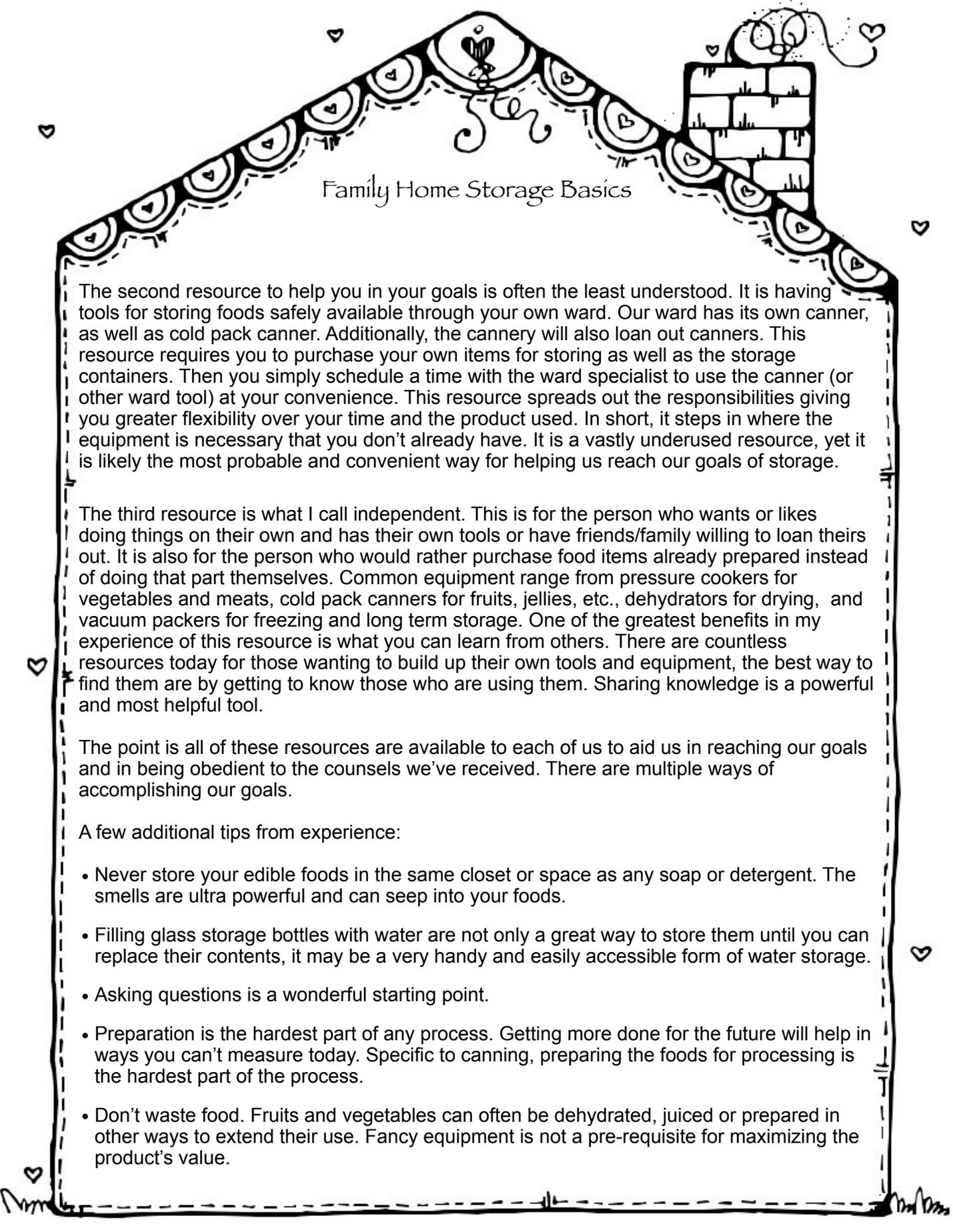
The first resource that comes to mind is a local church cannery and for good reason. This resource does things a grand scale. Which means you can benefit from lowest priced items from bulk purchases, use existing tools and equipment, and receive free training. In short, you go to the cannery with nothing and come home with packaged food. There are three ways families can benefit from this resource:

1. Dry Pack
2. Wet Pack
3. Prepacked

Dry pack is the term for dry goods like oats, rice, wheat, etc. The cannery opens its doors to church members to use their equipment and provide the food items desired. This is done by placing an order through your ward specialist and by going to the cannery on your ward's assigned day. You pack your own product, and take it with you when you're done. There is a clear schedule outlined of what dry goods are packed which months so you know when to take advantage of this resource. This is a group effort and you can have multiple people come with you (including family in other wards) to the cannery on your day to can.

Wet pack is the term for wet goods like fruits, jellies, sauces etc. Again the cannery opens its doors and resources for members but this time it's individual. You call the cannery for an appointment, you can your own product and take it with you when you're done. However because wet pack is a longer and different process you must stay until all the product being prepared that day is finished. Again, a clear schedule of which products are being packed when is provided by your ward specialist. This is an individual program using a first come, first served system.

Prepacked is the term for items already packed and available for purchase any time. These do not require an order to be filled out. You simply determine what you would like to purchase, drive to the cannery and purchase the items.



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The second resource to help you in your goals is often the least understood. It is having tools for storing foods safely available through your own ward. Our ward has its own canner, as well as cold pack canner. Additionally, the cannery will also loan out canners. This resource requires you to purchase your own items for storing as well as the storage containers. Then you simply schedule a time with the ward specialist to use the canner (or other ward tool) at your convenience. This resource spreads out the responsibilities giving you greater flexibility over your time and the product used. In short, it steps in where the equipment is necessary that you don't already have. It is a vastly underused resource, yet it is likely the most probable and convenient way for helping us reach our goals of storage.

The third resource is what I call independent. This is for the person who wants or likes doing things on their own and has their own tools or have friends/family willing to loan theirs out. It is also for the person who would rather purchase food items already prepared instead of doing that part themselves. Common equipment range from pressure cookers for vegetables and meats, cold pack canners for fruits, jellies, etc., dehydrators for drying, and vacuum packers for freezing and long term storage. One of the greatest benefits in my experience of this resource is what you can learn from others. There are countless resources today for those wanting to build up their own tools and equipment, the best way to find them are by getting to know those who are using them. Sharing knowledge is a powerful and most helpful tool.

The point is all of these resources are available to each of us to aid us in reaching our goals and in being obedient to the counsels we've received. There are multiple ways of accomplishing our goals.

A few additional tips from experience:

- Never store your edible foods in the same closet or space as any soap or detergent. The smells are ultra powerful and can seep into your foods.
- Filling glass storage bottles with water are not only a great way to store them until you can replace their contents, it may be a very handy and easily accessible form of water storage.
- Asking questions is a wonderful starting point.
- Preparation is the hardest part of any process. Getting more done for the future will help in ways you can't measure today. Specific to canning, preparing the foods for processing is the hardest part of the process.
- Don't waste food. Fruits and vegetables can often be dehydrated, juiced or prepared in other ways to extend their use. Fancy equipment is not a pre-requisite for maximizing the product's value.