

# SURVIVAL PREPPING

ESSENTIAL GUIDE FOR PREPPERS  
OFF-THE-GRID AND  
WILDERNESS PREPAREDNESS



R O N H U N T

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**Survival Prepping**  
**Essential Guide for Preppers**  
**Off-the-grid and Wilderness**  
**Preparedness**

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## Introduction

This book will show many of the basic and some technical issues about prepping. The sort of thing you have better to know when... SHTF. After reading it all, or a part of it, you will easily remember some hacks that could make the difference!

No one is fully aware of how many preppers exist in the world; however, it is safe to assume that there are three to four million in the USA alone. Even though at the first impression, this seems like a large amount of the population, in estimate it is only slightly more than 1% of the overall US population. When you consider that, it is quite surprising.

First is the hopeful prepper. This is a person who wants to embrace preparedness but does not know where to begin. He or she might also feel they do not have enough money to prep.



Second is the amateur prepper. This prepper has begun to prep however, needs help in sorting through an overwhelming amount of advice and preparedness strategies both online and in person. Whether it is for handholding or training, inexperienced preppers have started their

adventure but keep trying to find information and helpful advice to make sure they are on the right path.

Third is the committed prepper, someone who has embraced the preparedness lifestyle with gusto. That prepper has equipment, expertise, and abilities but is searching to fine-tune their preps with superior strategies for survival healthcare, living off-grid, and coping with civil unrest. They actively compare their personal knowledge with others and provide pointers to help other preppers learn and grow. I consider myself to be a committed prepper.

Fourth and final is the diehard prepper. This prepper is making plans for a real apocalypse and devotes enormous amounts of time and effort to make sure that he or she can survive. The diehard prepper may also have a nicely-stocked bug-out retreat where they are able to live out their days if the end of the world has come.

Being a diehard prepper has been somewhat glamorized by the entertainment industry. This serves to disillusion and discourages individuals who are not able to create this sort of alternative life for themselves.

I do not mean to suggest that any stage of prepping is a bad. Instead, it's our job to figure out our own ability to make preparedness decisions that fit our specific conditions. There is no such thing as the one-size-fits-all prepper.



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# Chapter 1-- What You Need

Before you pick a camp and start navigating through the wilderness, it is important to plan the right backpack full of the stuff you will want to survive, but roughing it does not mean struggling. In this chapter, we will assist you in identifying the essential gear, tools, and clothing items that are handy when living outdoors.

## 1. Survivalist's Tool Kit: Necessities for covering any contingency.

Contingencies in the wilderness abound, so it is essential to plan for as many as possible. A compass will help you in finding your way; even better is a handheld GPS device. Flashlights and glow sticks help you in finding your way in the dark, and a flare gun will help others find you in an emergency. For setting up camp, Paracord or rope, a tarp, duct tape, and cable ties are essential. Also essential is a great multi-tool, folding shovel, and gloves. Include water-proof matches, a lighter, and fire starter kit; redundancy is a good thing in this instance. In a small tin, store fishhooks and line, razor blades, stitching needles and thread, safety pins, nails, a small magnet, and a little cash.

## 2. How to Pack: Simple hints for packing your backpack.

A well-packed backpack is considered necessary for your comfort and safety. Poor weight distribution results in muscle aches and needless pressure on your backbone. Place heavy gadgets – water, meals, and cooking tools – in the middle of your pack, close to your body. Use medium weight items – clothes, tarps, and rain gear – to cushion the heavier items, securing them so the load does not shift while you are hiking. Store your sleeping bag on the back of your backpack or tie it to the bottom. Purchase items that you are likely to need regularly in the side and outer pockets – compass and map, sunglasses, toilet paper, and trowel, sunscreen, bug repellent, pocketknife, flashlight, snacks, and a small towel.

## 3. What to Wear: Prepare for layering

Depending upon the geographic area of the wilderness region you are journeying in, and the time of year, temperatures can range dramatically

over the duration of 24 hours. Layer your apparel to save heat and keep your weight light. A fleece jacket, windbreaker, and waterproof outer jacket should be sufficient to address worst-case scenarios. A pair of sandals and water shoes round out your wardrobe with gloves, a hat, and a headband.

#### 4. Useful multi-tools: Must-have survival equipment

For flexibility, a terrific multi-tool is a camper's best friend, and there are many types on the market. When comparing the want for best capabilities and the device's weight, it will become apparent that less complicated is better. Search for a multi-tool that has an ordinary and serrated blade, pliers with a twine cutter, carbide knife sharpener, bottle, and can opener, and a lanyard loop. Pay close attention to the materials and quality; look for titanium handles, 154CM metallic blades, and 420 stainless steel construction. If you plan on carrying a small hatchet for cutting firewood, consider a multi-tool hatchet and select that instead.

#### 5. Food: What to pack

Plan a menu of quick and light foods that are easy to prepare. The type and amount of meals you carry will vary, depending on if you are journeying in a vehicle or trekking deep into the wilderness on foot. If you are carrying everything in your backpack, take dry and dehydrated ingredients that you can cook with hot water. A variety of pre-packaged meals are available at most camping stores, or you could make them at home.

#### 6. Prepackaged meals: just add water

Prepackaged meals are the perfect camping food – light-weight, handy, and easy to prepare. Many prepackaged meals are available for purchase, you may buy bulk, choose the varieties of food you want, and have fun by making your own. For lunch, try 1/3 cup of dry couscous, 1/2 cup freeze-dried vegetables and let's not forget about dessert; how does a blended fruit cobbler sound?

#### 7. Bandanas: many uses for a humble piece of cloth

Bandanas take up very little space, have many uses, and might even be worn as jewelry. As a medical device, use it as a tourniquet, wound dressing, smoke masks, or sling. Protect your head from the sun, make a

sweatband, or tie back your hair. If you end up lost or disoriented, a brightly colored bandana makes an easy-to-spot signal; tear strips to mark your trail.

## **Best Survival Foods to Stockpile**

What are the best survival meals to stockpile for an emergency at this level? What do you want to get now before than it is too late and before chaos erupts — and while you still have access to cash.

### **What makes the best survival foods for an emergency?**

A wide variety of catastrophic disasters may occur. It could be a terrorist attack with a WMD or the feared EMP attack that shuts down power throughout a country, interrupting transportation and shipping for many weeks, resulting in massive food shortages.

It is clear in recent years that a huge disaster can strike any time and any place. Whether it is a man-made disaster or an unprecedented natural disaster, you should start preparing by stocking up on the best survival supplies, so you are prepared for anything.

### **Non-perishable foods make the best survival food**

In the heat of the moment, or several weeks in advance, you are going to want foods that help you in meeting dietary needs, that have a high calorie content, and easy meals likely to vanish first from pantries.

### **There are survival food kits**

If you need to get a head-start on building up your stockpile, there are a few outstanding survival meal kits available that will let you do that. No one knows when catastrophe will strike, and you will be kicking yourself if you had plans to build a stockpile but started too late. That's where these food kits come in. Most of them have 25-30 years of shelf-life and include a wide variety of flavors. Granted, with these emergency meals kits, you will be paying more per calorie/per meal than if you build your stockpile. But if you are trying to get a head-start because you know something catastrophic could take place at any time, it is probably a good idea to stock up on a meal kit ASAP so you at least have the beginnings of a long-term stockpile of survival meals.

## **Weight and Packaging May Be a Factor**

Which foods can you get the most of and get the most out of? It is crucial to remember calorie needs, ease of use/preparation, shelf life, and even “weight” factored in. Why is weight a factor? What if you and your family must evacuate an area on foot and have nothing but survival backpacks and or suitcases? You will regret having stocked up on a lot of canned foods when you realize just how much they weigh. The best survival food balances the weight in opposition to nutritional and caloric value. This is something you must pay particular attention to in case you also plan on having survival equipment with you.

Canned food is heavy and not portable – because of this, if push comes to shove, it will be hard to travel with a large quantity of it. Canned food must be a part of your survival diet though — it may be the food that allows you to get through the first few weeks, as long as you do not have to evacuate or travel (especially on foot). When you have canned food, you should have a survival multi-tool with you (instead of a can opener). A can opener is a single-use tool – and generally, you need to avoid those.

With that said, the top recommended survival meals are...

### **Some Best Survival Foods**

#### **1.) Canned Alaskan wild Salmon**

Canned Alaskan wild salmon is rich in protein and wholesome fat like omega 3s. Search for “Alaskan wild salmon,” and you are likely to find salmon with little to no environmental contaminants, which can sometimes show up in other canned fish from other parts of the world. Salmon may not be your preference now but know the Inuit people (local people of Alaska and northern Canada) on a conventional diet are known for low counts of heart attack and stroke, which is attributed to their long term, non-stop diet of fish.

Like tuna fish, you can eat canned Alaskan wild salmon right out of the can, without cooking — though, if you have leftovers, it is going to have to be refrigerated where it will be good for the next three to four days. If refrigeration is not an option, plan to share the salmon with two to three

other people at a time, so nothing is going to waste. Down to its lengthy shelf life and exceptional protein content, and it is on the top of our list when it comes to the best survival foods. It tastes excellent too!

## 2.) Brown rice

Brown rice is high in calories and protein, in addition to essential vitamins and minerals such as iron. As a dry, non-perishable meal, brown rice has a long shelf-life making it a great survival food. Brown rice has one problem though: generally, it needs to be boiled for several minutes. Sometimes, in a long-term emergency where no electricity is available, the last thing you need to do is use precious gasoline for cooking food for this duration of time; whether or not that's on propane, butane, or wood-burning stove. So, for an extended survival emergency, in which you are stocking up your pantry, "brown rice warm cereal" is likely better because it cooks in just five to eight minutes and remains filled with vitamins and calories (one cup of brown rice warm cereal contains 600 calories, 12 grams of protein, and 16% of the daily recommended amount of iron and is easily rationed out into smaller quantities).

### *Stock up on brown rice*

Prepare proper grain storage: storing brown rice and other grains in a nice, dry area in large plastic containers is essential to preserve freshness. The store-bought varieties of brown rice and brown rice cereal may only have a shelf life of three – six months. So, you will want a plan to rotate your brown rice cereal every three months so that it is eaten in your own home (makes an easy, wholesome breakfast and is an alternative to sugar-packed cereals).

Long-term storage: due to its three-month shelf-life, if you will decide not to rotate your brown rice cereal, a better value for your money's worth of brown rice for long-term storage is to go with a freeze-dried version from Wise Company or Mountain House (with these companies you are not limited to only brown rice).

### *Techniques to make the best survival foods*

With that said, you can use the same techniques to preserve other nonperishable ingredients that large food producers sell such as Wise

Company and Mountain House. You can do it affordably (saving yourself a lot of money on long-term survival food), which means that you could find the money to buy extra food in bulk.

You will need special food storage materials (foil pouches and oxygen absorption packets) and five-gallon plastic buckets, which may be used as containers for storing many foil pouches of meals at a time. We go into more detail in our article, “The Best Emergency Meal Methods” – these techniques will help you obtain remarkable shelf-life for a wide variety of foods (such as 10 – 25 years of shelf-life). If you want to be prepared for a real, long-term disaster, it might make sense to research those techniques. A few of the best survival ingredients on this list may be preserved by using the techniques mentioned in the article about emergency food strategies.

### **3.) Dried beans**

Kidney beans, black beans, garbanzo beans, lima beans, pinto beans, and others are all high in calories, have a lot of protein per serving and also contain several essential vitamins and minerals. Dried beans are available in larger quantities than canned beans and they weigh less. The key difference is that you need to add water and let most beans to soak for many hours before eating. Split peas, for instance, have a shorter soak time. Split peas are a part of the dried bean family with some of the same nutrients and minerals. Ultimately, dried beans have long shelf lifestyles. Dried beans will last in the trunk of your car, your office survival kit, and in your pantry of survival meals at your property or cabin.

#### *Stock up on dried beans*

Will you need to feed a few other mouths during a disaster? A huge supply of dried beans is significantly cheaper for the amount of people you could feed, can go a long way, and are a great meal to carry in a backpack, compared to canned beans, which you are better off leaving behind.

### **4.) Bulk nuts**

Look for the bulk seed/nut section of your grocery store, and specifically for unsalted and unshelled (if possible). You want to choose survival ingredients with a low salt content. Peanuts, almonds, sunflower seeds, and



several other nuts/seeds typically sold in grocery store bulk food section are high in essential vitamins and minerals, essential fatty acids, and have a large amount of protein. They are also quite light-weight.

At the same time, invest money into air-tight food storage bins, including plastic packing containers or glass jars. You can expand shelf life by storing those in the fridge, although most bulk dry foods will keep up to a few months (make sure to check expiration dates), if kept in a nice, dark, area.

### **5.) Peanut butter**

It is filled with protein and essential fatty acids, in addition to includes many essential nutrients and minerals (including copper and iron). For the healthiest option, choose “natural” brands such as Skippy Natural Peanut Butter. Just a couple tablespoons a day of peanut butter can help a person continue to survive during a time of food scarcity (throughout a disaster, one of your strategies to live to tell the tale is to acknowledge that it is time to cut calories — most people consume more calories a day than they need to survive. Cutting calories means your food will last longer, at the same time helping you lose extra weight, making evacuation on foot sooner or later easier than if you are carrying around extra pounds).

### **6.) Trail mix**

A favorite of hikers, trail mix has a variety of components, such as raisins, peanuts, other nuts, and often portions of chocolate. The simple sugars in the raisins, chocolate, and dried fruit may be a quick morale booster and supply of short-term energy. Trail mix is a way to include dried fruit in your survival diet.

### **7.) Energy bars and chocolate bars**

There are energy bars available in every flavor. Look for brands with a high calorie count in addition to lots of protein and a wide range of nutrients.

Chocolate bars – chocolate can be a brief source of energy and an exceptional morale booster, while also being high in calories. (Chocolate is also likely to end up a commodity in demand in the weeks and months following a catastrophe.)

### **8.) Beef jerky**

Look for “natural” brands of beef, turkey, and other meats, which does not contain any or as much of the unhealthy ingredients in other jerky brands. What is jerky? Jerky is a tasty piece of dried meat. Dried meat is a time-tested survival food used by Native Americans and American pioneers alike and as well as by primitive cultures around the world. While primitive methods use smoking and sun drying methods to create “jerky,” nowadays, commercial techniques of drying meat do that on a far large scale. You have options: One is to buy the smaller serving packages at the store or to buy your dried meat in bulk and have it shipped to you directly.

### **9.) Coffee / instant coffee**

Even if you do not, a person in your group is likely to consider the coffee (or in reality caffeine) crucial and may be tired, lethargic, and get headaches without it. Coffee does not need to be a top priority, but being able to get it will be something many people in your party are likely to be happy about. It is a short-term mood booster and good for morale. And it is another thing that might be traded like a commodity in a crisis situation.

### **10.) Sea vegetables / powdered super vegetables**

A popular item advertised in health foods stores these days are the sea vegetables that are available in powdered form or tablet. In a time of disaster, most places are going to be short on fresh produce. Sea vegetables are first-rate meals, full of vitamins, nutrients and health benefits that help raise immunity, provide tissue repair, and wound recuperation. They may have anti-fungal and anti-bacterial properties. They can be dried and turned into a powder (hence ‘powdered super vegetables’). What this means is that sea vegetables, such as kelp and chlorella are great meals. Although I was listing sea vegetables as number ten, they should possibly be the number one survival food in this top ten list. The purpose once more is that fresh produce is likely to be in short supply or disappear completely in several regions during an extensive emergency.

### **Even the best survival foods can go bad**

Remember, many non-perishable meals including several indexed here do not have a long shelf life, often just months. You will want to have a system in place to “rotate” your non-perishable meals before than they expire: when non-perishable food nears its expiration date, either eat it or perhaps

donate it to a local food bank (food banks generally serve food shortly after donation). Then, buy new non-perishable food and put it in your emergency meals storage. With a tool like this in place, if a catastrophe strikes, you will have a supply of non-perishable ingredients for at least the first few months after the catastrophe, and you or your family should not have to rely solely on freeze-dried food, like many people are stocking up on nowadays.

### **Just because you have stocked up does not mean you are prepared**

If you have a good stockpile of meals going and you are rotating as needed to keep your emergency stores ready to be eat, that does not mean you are ready for a true disaster. Having everything stocked up and ready at home is fantastic, but what if you are away from home when a real survival situation takes place? All your research and stockpiling means nothing if you cannot get to it. That's why you need to even have a get-home bag. A get-home bag is exactly what it looks like – it is a backpack with a few emergency supplies that must be sufficient to get you home safe in the event of a catastrophic or dangerous event.

Your get-home bag needs to (as much as possible) go where you go. This means keeping it in the trunk of your vehicle when you go to work, taking it with you if you go on vacation, and other situations. The get-home bag is the bridge to get you from wherever you are when disaster strikes to the safety of your house, where you have already organized emergency supplies and survival equipment. If you do not have an appropriate survival backpack to prepare your get-home bag, make sure you read our guide about the best survival backpacks and pick one of the top options.

### **Caution about “food fatigue”**

When getting ready for an emergency, you must remember bulk freeze-dried emergency foods that have a shelf life of several years. Please note that it isn't always the best idea to purchase freeze-dried meals, though. The reason is food fatigue.

Are you able to imagine what it would be like to eat freeze-dried meals every day, month after month, in a time of prolonged catastrophe? Not only can packaged, processed foods be harder on someone's health (due to meals

additives and preservatives, high cholesterol, sodium, and more). However, it may also get very boring after a while.

In a time of the prolonged disaster, having a bag of M&Ms, smoked pork jerky, or maybe a soda can sometimes make a huge improvement on morale, especially if you have children. With that said, do not discount the value in having bulk freeze-dried meals stocked up for your pantry, particularly if you would like to help friends and other family members who have supplies. Leading manufacturers such as the Wise Company (with its wide variety) and Mountain House (with its classic bucket) factor in food fatigue and include of variety intentionally, and as such, they arrive with many flavorful options for you and your family.

### **Fresh cuts of meat aren't the best survival food, but**

One last issue to touch upon: people stocking up on the best survival meals would possibly skip the beef aisle altogether, believing that cuts of meat will expire quickly in an emergency.

### **What do you have in your freezer at home right now?**

Build yourself an outside smoker. That is how early civilizations prepared meat for long-term storage. So, take into account as a “Plan B” for your frozen meat in the event of a power outage, where the power is down for good.

## **Ways to Purify Water in the Wilderness**

Straw-type filters are one of the most common styles of water filters used to purify water in a wilderness survival scenario. There are a number of those in the marketplace, which include the LifeStraw. These filters work by blocking anything that is larger than 0.2 microns. Since most bacteria are larger than 2 microns, that's a pretty good protection margin. The LifeStraw will filter out up to 1,000 liters of water.

Straw-type filters are used by putting one end directly in the stream or lake and drinking with the straw. This is very handy; however, it does not help you in purifying water to take with you in a canteen or water bottle.

When you research straw-type filters, there are important things to look for, the filtration size (the 0.2 microns above) and the number of gallons of

water that the filter is good for. Some straws do not filter out as finely or as many gallons that the LifeStraw will.

### **Purify water in the wasteland with bag-type water filters**

Many people carry a bag-type filter in their bug-out bag as well. The main advantage of a bag-type filter over a straw-types that the water you run through the bag-type can then be placed into a canteen or water bottle to take with you and drink later. That is important because it allows you to move away from the water as you are traveling.

LifeStraw also makes a bag-kind filter, even though it does not actually use a bag. In this case, the bag is a hard plastic cup; however, the idea is the same. Because it uses the same filter out as the other LifeStraw, it offers you an equal level of safety. Another first-rate filter is the Sawyer Mini Water Filtration System, which uses a hollow fiber design. Their design filters less finely at 0.1 microns, but may last longer, since the filter can be used for a 100,000 gallons of water.

### **Using water purification tablets**

Iodine is a bit inconvenient to carry with you. Instead, people use iodine pills, which include those by Potable Aqua. These are easy to work with and offer a convenient way to purify water in the wilderness. The biggest problem with depending on tablets of this kind is that, eventually, you run out, leaving you without a way of purifying water.

To use the pills, a canteen or water bottle is filled with water and the tablets inserted. These are amazing for an emergency situation, keeping them in a survival kit, but you could not use them for long-term water purification.

You could accomplish a similar effect using ordinary household bleach. Bleach is chlorine, the same substance that is used in municipal water towers and for keeping pathogens from growing in swimming pools. The trick is finding a container to carry the bleach in, so that it won't leak out all over your food and other supplies. You will need an eye dropper as well, as you need to add eight drops of bleach to each gallon of water to purify it. Like the iodine tablets, give the bleach a half-hour to kill off any pathogens.

### **Purify water in the wilderness through boiling**

You may also kill the pathogens in water by boiling it. This requires having some sort of container, such as a canteen cup, which won't melt or burn in a fireplace. In a pinch, you could make a cup out of birch-bark and boil the water in it. So long as the flames are kept below the bottom of the cup, the cup won't burn.

### **Purify water in the wild through solar power**

A water pasteurization indicator, or WAPI, can be used for purifying water by using solar power. Put the WAPI in the water. Lay the bottle somewhere that it is in direct sunlight, ideally somewhere where it is on a black or dark-colored surface.

The sun will heat the water in the bottle sufficiently to reach the pasteurization temperature. You will know that it is warm enough because the wax pellet in the WAPI will soften.

You should be cautious while drinking the water though, ensuring that your lips do not touch any part of the outside of the bottle, other than what is covered by the bottle cap.

Yes, over-hydration could cause issues, but you need enough water in your body for your organs to function. The trouble is, you do not always have the option to carry potable water with you (or you can run out).

### *1. Boiling*

The easiest way to purify water is to boil it, provided you have the system to do so, plus a campfire or camp range. Place water in a pot over high heat until you have rolling bubbles, and let them roll for at least five minutes. Then, allow it cool before drinking, or you will burn your lips and tongue.

### *2. Filtration or purification pumps*

If you visit a camping and outdoors supply store, you will surely find many great styles of pumps with filters and purifiers to make sure non-potable water goes in, but drinkable water comes out - right into your water bottle. This is executed by way of pushing water through a ceramic or charcoal filter and treating it with chemical compounds.

Some high-tech water bottles have this system built into them so that you do not need to pump water into a separate container; the purification process takes place as you squeeze or suck water directly into your mouth.

### *3. Purification drops and drugs*

A simple and less expensive - however, not necessarily the best tasting - approach of purifying water is by using purification drops. The most common chemical used is iodine, but chlorine or potassium permanganate are also effective. Allow the chemicals to sit the water for at least 20 minutes before drinking, and blend it with powdered mixes to mask any of its flavors.

### *4. Get water from the ground*

All the previous strategies require you to carry water or have a water supply close by - however, what if you don't have any? You can pull moisture out of the earth by digging a hole in the ground and placing a container on the bottom. Cover the hole with plastic so that no moisture escapes, and put a small weight (like a rock) in the middle of the cover so there is a dip in the middle. When the water evaporates from the ground upwards, it condenses on the cover and drips down into the bucket.

Of course, this approach is not the quickest way to get potable water, so just try to do not remember to carry some. However, in case of an emergency, remember this technique - on the side of a box and a few types of a plastic cover.

## **The Mind of Survival**

The work of surviving outdoors does not begin with lighting a fire or constructing a shelter. Before any of those, you need to develop first the mindset of a true survivor. Attempt to find a real life survival story, and you will find that these survivors have similar mental tendencies which allow them to endure the tough conditions they have been in.

Growing a survivor's mindset is extremely crucial, and below are the top five traits that you will need:

### **1. Positive attitude**

Just because nearly all survival guides are preaching about the importance of having a great mindset does not mean that you need to think about it as another cliché. A great mindset is an actual necessity. This is also one of the most difficult abilities to master, but it is going to be worth the trouble.

Practice this mindset each day and you will be ready if you ever find yourself lost in the wilderness.

## **2. Motivation**

What's the only thing that motivates someone to stay alive even when things have gone wrong? A variety of survival memoirs discuss the survivor's devotion to their non-secular beliefs or a higher power for supplying hope and motivation. Other survivors have also discussed their important choice to return to their loved ones, friends, and family. What do you believe will inspire you to stay alive during a survival emergency? That is for you to decide as it differs for every person.

## **3. Mental strength**

This is not about bodily prowess, stamina, pain tolerance, or the number of calluses you have. Mental strength is your willpower as well as your mind's endurance. With the goal to be mentally strong, you need to suffer through the unbearable, tolerate the insupportable, and overpower your choice to surrender and all your weaknesses.

## **4. Adaptability**

Survival and adaptability go hand-in-hand. Consider the survival of animals and plants. Those who failed to adapt to the changing environment did not survive. Those that changed and evolved managed to live on. You want to adapt to all the changing environments, situations, and events. You should know which things you should keep and those that should be abandoned.

## **5. Work Ethic**

Your work ethic is another major element of your survival mindset. Being in a hard situation often teaches people to work harder and better the future, assuming that there will be future. A true survivor is one that has a strong work ethic, a person who doesn't give up. Your strong work ethic could actually go a long way to make up for things that you weren't able to be lucky enough to have.



## Chapter 2—How to Live off the Land

### Where Do You Go?

After you are sure that it is no longer safe to live in your community, you must have an escape plan in mind — one which you have already scouted and mapped out, preferably months in advance.

Be prepared for an emergency. Be prepared for the awful event that in the future, you could abandon your preps and hit the road or trail abruptly.

You could do something as simple as using Google Earth to give you a good idea of various wilderness areas that you – if you are close – can flee to in your area after a disaster has struck.

When you have two or three locations in mind, visit an outdoors store that sells topographical maps (such as “green trails” maps), and you can easily find hiking trails, creeks, rivers, and small lakes, elevation factors, and even become aware of distinctive varieties of terrain, in order to give you a better idea of exactly what you are up against.

You also should have a compass that you have practiced using so that when the time comes to escape into the wilderness, you will know how to find your way without getting lost.

Select a destination many miles away from any roads, but that is close to rivers, wooded areas, meadows, or even one or more small lakes.

This can put distance between you and the catastrophe (or other threats) as well as offer suitable hunting, fishing, trapping, and freshwater sources.

First challenge: preparing to run

Keep a “Get-home bag” in your car filled with important survival equipment.

Months before than you even hit the trail, you need to have a large backpack at your own home (normally used for multi-day hikes) and an excellent survival backpack in the trunk of your vehicle— generally referred to as a Get-Home Bag. Be prepared. If you are stuck in the city

when disaster hits — and need to abandon your car — the small backpack in the trunk of your automobile will let you live to tell the tale for a short time — even if you have to hike fifty miles to get home.

You see, if there is any civil unrest, or you are crossing through a city, another person might want your car or even shoot you for it. It depends upon how bad the civil unrest is and how scared people are.

### **Waterproof Your Gear for Disaster**

Your backpack should be a dark color, not shiny, no fancy label (so you do not look like someone with cash or assets). If your bag is water-resistant, that is a plus. If you do not have the money for a water-resistant backpack, use garbage bags to protect your backpack's contents — or just add water-repellant properties to your bag with a product like Scotch Gard.

If you have a water-resistant backpack, that is especially helpful if you live an area that has a lot of rain or snow, or you need to go through floodwaters. Floodwaters may be polluted with both sewage and chemicals; a toxic smelly brew you likely do not want contaminating your supplies. Or, wading in a creek or river can leave your equipment soaked, and your clothes wet, and you hypothermic.

### **Items to Keep in the Trunk of Your Car for Your Get-home Bag**

1. Bottled water.
2. Portable water filters: LifeStraw makes a top-rated (and Time Magazine Invention of the Year) water filter priced around \$20. Remember to purchase two or three so that you have extra to hand out in an emergency (In a time of catastrophe, you are likely to run into many thirsty people in the hours and days after).
3. High-frequency emergency radio with a couple of ways to keep it powered such as this Kaito emergency radio (it has multiple tools included such as a miniature solar panel which can be beneficial in an SHTF). You would also likely benefit from having a two-way radio in your get-home bag.

4. A flashlight/lantern combination and a headlamp.
5. Rolled-up sleeping bag protected in a sealed garbage bag or sack (waterproof), as well as army grade Para cord. A convenient way to carry around a lot of Para cord is to choose survival bracelets. You could have plenty of incredibly sturdy, durable Para cord, fishing line, and wiring on your wrist at all times with a good survival bracelet.
6. Extra clothing — I recommend pairs of pants (jeans and/or athletic wear) and two hooded sweatshirts that can be worn in layers, or even slept in. Further, I recommend light-weight water-resistant “rain pants” which includes the ones worn by using runners outdoors, that can be pulled over top of your pants/jeans, as well as a waterproof jacket. Or, to avoid spending cash on waterproof supplies, use a product like Scotch Gard Water Repellant to help waterproof essential equipment, footwear, and so forth.

A canvas tarp for emergency shelter (carry wrapped tight, and it will take very little space in your bag).

Cotton cloth (consisting of sweats, sweatshirts, and jeans) are dangerous in wet, cold situations —as soon as it’s wet, cotton will lower your body temperature, which puts you at risk for hypothermia in cold (or even just cool) conditions. Having some rain gear reachable that you may throw over your clothing can go a long way to keeping you warm and dry.

If the rain is just coming down, you may need to find or build shelter until the brunt of the storm passes.

### **Layering your clothing**

There is a good chance in you are going to be in cold, wet situations at some point. Bodily exertion in the cold may be dangerous; bodily exertion may heat you, your clothes will collect the sweat off your body, and the cold air around you may cool that sweat down so much that when you finally stop moving, you may quickly face hypothermia... and freeze to death.

If you layer your clothes efficiently and select a “base layer” (the layer closest to your skin) made from non-cotton cloth that wicks away moisture, you can stay warm and avoid hypothermia.

You should have several complete outfits (a top and bottoms) so that each pair of pants and top can be worn in layers to staying warm. Homeless people are known to wear five or six layers (sometimes more, depending on weather) to stay warm. Study the homeless in this regard.

### **Wool / synthetics for cold weather**

Similarly, remember wool socks (warmer than cotton and even when wet, wool can still hold heat), and a wool stocking cap — even if it is not fall or winter.

If you find yourself in an emergency scenario and must sleep outside, a stocking cap will help you in getting through the night with comfortably.

Of course, in the spring, fall, or winter months, you need to have a coat with you at all times. A ski mask is a nice bonus. Search for one which just has one large hole where your eyes and nose go. This is the easiest to put on it if you need to maintain warmth but you may freak people out if you pull out the kind of ski mask that bank robbers wear; the last thing you want to do is call attention to yourself in a scenario where there is already panic and chaos.)

7. Multi-tool— In a get-home bag, you do not need to weigh yourself down with too much equipment that will slow you down. That is why you should have a survival multi-tool with you instead. The best survival multi-tools will help you in a pinch through many situations. It is the jack-of-all-trades tool that gives you a large amount of utility and allows you to keep your get-home bag as lightweight as possible.

8. A small bag of instant coffee or bottled caffeine pills (you may need to keep moving with restricted time for relaxation, hence the caffeine being advised). Absolutely everyone with an everyday reliance on coffee or energy drinks need to remember a supply of caffeine pills in a time of emergency. Very accessible easier to carry than coffee. You can barter with it. A small bottle has 240 capsules, 200 milligrams each, that can be cut in 1/2 for people looking a lighter dose. There is a good chance something as “insignificant” as caffeine might be appreciated by every person you are

traveling with. Pass it out in your group for a morale boost: keep the spirit up and people will keep going!

9. Dry meals that have a long shelf life (peanut butter, dried beans, shelled and unsalted sunflower seeds, granola bars, electricity bars, and so on).

10. A great knife. A machete is a bonus. However, wearing a machete through a town can make you a target for law enforcement looking to quell any civil unrest in the area.

11. A lighter (in truth, multiple lighters; guard them against moisture in a Ziploc freezer bag — you can hand out extra lighters to people in need).

12. Candles and fire-starters (cotton balls, for example, and a flammable accelerant such as Vaseline or even charcoal lighter or gas that has been previously put on each cotton ball). Keep your fire-starter in a small, sealed box, so that if your supplies ever get wet, your fire-starter will stay dry. If you live in an area of the USA known for heavy rain or snow, consider carrying a micro-torch and gas, which at 2500 levels can set just about anything on fire in seconds. If only used for fire-starting, you will get several uses out of just one bottle of gas. One of the most frustrating experiences in a survival situation is trying to get a fire going while the whole thing is wet. A micro-torch may not be touted by top survivalists who think a bow-drill is the best solution. However, it will save the day in wet conditions when that bow-drill fails even the best survivalist.

13. A top-rated compass (a cheap compass can break easily and have polarity issues) and knowledge of how to shield the polarity so that the polarity does not change on you, making the compass useless or misleading.

14. Extra-large heavy weight garbage bags (look for “contractor” garbage bags at your neighborhood hardware store). One you may use as a raincoat in an emergency, if you do not have a poncho. Poke holes in the sides for your hands and poke another hole for your head at the bottom of the bag. Now put the bag on the other way up. You now have a raincoat.

15. Weapon for self-protection, depending on how you feel about that and what the law in your area is to carry in your vehicle. You can do enough damage to permit time to get away with a can of pepper spray, for example.

A bowie knife is also an excellent defense. A handgun and training in self-defense with a firearm can go a long way.

16. Proper shoes, such the ones used for “cross-training” or “path-running” (it is very important that your footwear laces up nicely so they do not come untied if you have to make a run for it). At the same time, ankle support can help keep you from twisting an ankle. A twisted ankle amid a long hike can spell disaster for some.

17. State map. Keep this map in your backpack stored in a Ziploc freezer bag to guard against moisture.

18. 2-D, more detailed map of any wilderness area you could want to go by. This map has to have forest service roads marked down, to learn paths, as well as hiking/biking/horseback trails.

19. If you are traveling in a party (with family or possibly friends, and so on.), then ideally, you will have watches so you can synchronize rendezvous times and make plans as a group. We have an editorial on the best survival watches – a number of these watches have other nifty survival features that could also be useful.

Depending upon the problem you are most likely to face (which I think is being stranded in a large town when you are miles from home and your wilderness supplies are all at your home), you should decide what want / do not need for the backpack you keep in the trunk of your vehicle.

### **Your Bug-out bag**

You should have multiple survival backpacks. One in the trunk of your vehicle (your get-home bag) and another (very large, normally used for multi-day trekking and referred to in survival circles as a “bugout bag”) at your home already filled with gear so that you are ready to flee your community on a short notice. Your bug -out bag must have enough food and water available to get you by for the next seven to ten days, or even longer (depending on how well you can pack, how light and compact you make your food stores, and how many calories you can restrict yourself to without compromising your health).

### **Second Challenge: crossing a river**

### *Slow, wide river*

A huge, slow moving river is exceptionally easy to cross — it may come down to building a simple flotation device upstream 100 – 200 yards from where you want to land. Remember; rivers circulate, carried by a current. Some are fast and dangerous to cross. Others are slow. However, they might also have a dangerous undertow that could pull you toward the bottom of the river, drowning you. So, a large, slow moving river won't be safe to swim across. Constructing a simple flotation device can be the best way to get across.

1) When deciding where to go, compare the width of the river to the velocity of the current, in addition to the bank that you hope to land at the far side of the river. Many large rivers accumulate driftwood along the banks and in coves, some that are floating alongside the shore. You are in luck because you could quickly build a raft out of those fallen branches, which may already be in the water and floating. First, of course, you need rope — enough to tie those logs together to be able to support your weight. If there are multiple people in your group, you may need to build multiple makeshift rafts, instead of one large raft, which could call for a lot more cordage and many logs to work thoroughly. The last thing you want is the raft falling apart on your way across.

Here's a thing or two to know about the outdoors: Rope (cordage), lighters, fire-starter, and a makeshift pot or even just an empty can go a long way in helping you survive in an emergency. You should already have these tools with you. If you do not, then you need to actively gather those items as you traverse the wilderness. If you can't find rope to use as cordage, pulling electric and/or phone wiring out of the walls of an old house or vehicle can work instead. Of course, there are primitive strategies for making rope. However, in the modern world, you need to be able to find a source for string or rope somewhere in your surroundings. Making cordage with primitive techniques is not a simple task and should be a last resort (more information on primitive techniques of survival later).

### *Fast, cold river*

The further you are in the mountains or the deeper you are in the wilderness; you have a greater chance of coming across a quick moving river that is too dangerous to wade across because of the current. Study

your maps and even recon the place in advance if possible to find any and all bridges available.

Sometimes, a bridge won't be a choice. Time to give you a way to swim across safely:

Now, most people are not likely to carry a life vest into the wilderness, but a life vest may be just the ticket to swimming across. Study the route you believe the current is likely to carry you, but select a safe area to enter the river. Do not enter near any spots which could deliver you right into a threat region, such as big rocks, a log jam, or maybe bushes and branches along the shore.

Every one of the containers you carry (with screw-top lids) will have an air pocket, helping your bag float.

Or you may use water-resistant “dry baggage” (which costs a couple of bucks, just to warn you) or use Scotch Gard Water Repellant to create a strong layer of water-repelling compounds on your supplies, clothes, sleeping bag, or anything else for that matter. It is a very common tool also used by kayakers, boaters, and fishermen. (I've capsized in a canoe while fishing a remote lake in difficult waters in the Pacific Northwest. I have crossed many streams and rivers in my time. I have mountain camped in the snow only to awaken with rain coming down unexpectedly, on now the tent, supplies, and so on).

### **Third challenge: You have escaped from the city and made it to your house**

Once you have gotten to your property, it is possible that you may live there for some weeks before than you need to head out into the wilderness.

However, if an enormous disaster takes place, society collapses, and towns and neighborhoods in your area are no longer safe to live in — perhaps because of riots or roving road gangs — you could need to leave for the wilderness on short notice; heck, if all hell breaks loose and it is every person, family, or neighborhood for themselves — you may have some terrible characters in your area who are suddenly dangerous because they think that the area has gone mad. Theft, homicide, and rape are likely to turn some areas into dangerous places, and human threats may quickly spill over into the suburbs outside major cities. You have been warned.



Remember the riots that took place in Los Angeles following the Rodney King court verdict? That was just one city. Now, what if riots have been widespread in a several U.S. Cities? There are dangerous people alive and armed in every community. They are a danger in any civil emergency. Rape or even group rape has become common in Haiti, which has tent cities where tens of thousands still live, following the disastrous earthquake that killed over 200,000 people in 2010.

#### **Fourth challenge: Finding food along the way: foraging for wild edibles**

When you have studied a map and recognized the best route to get to the region you have selected as an area to set up camp, your next step is to plan your route, knowing that you need to stay off the roads along with the way.

The majority have never “lived off the land.” Because of this, as you journey through the wilderness, you may need to find wild edibles to stay alive. Staying close to a mountain range or river ensures that you will have clean water and could possibly provide areas to fish (by using primitive and illegal techniques, which can raise your success rate; more on this later).

If you have a guide on wild edibles and you pay close attention to what plants are safe to eat and which ones will kill you, you could find berries, roots, mosses, etc. Along the way, that is a valuable food source, as they had been for native people at one time.

But, one mistake with the wrong plant can result in a painful and depressing death. If you or a person in your household is likely to be “left behind” for this wilderness journey, they should buy a book on wild edibles now and begin studying it. Make an effort to become aware of all poisonous plants. It warns you ahead so that you have a good idea of what they are before you or someone else in your household finds themselves cold and hungry in the middle of a forest.

Avoid all mushrooms. Many can kill while others will make people seriously ill, and identification is sometimes confusing. All this considered, I think it is better to just consider all mushrooms as off-limits.

Finally, right here’s a real test for you, if you are equipped to hit the wilds with just a book on wild edibles: some poisonous plants look like safe to eat

flora.

Here are some top-notch survival books that cover wild edibles and other subjects.

Your best bet is to take a few classes in your area on foraging and then get out and practice foraging. If you have a real need to foraging during in an emergency, your best bet is to know what you are doing beforehand.

Your area may have a variety of plants (leaves, stems), seeds, roots, berries, and so on, that can be suitable for eating and possibly even helped guide local American tribes that lived off the land centuries in the past.

### **Fifth challenge: Keeping out of sight and setting up a permanent camp**

Once you have traveled many miles and you are a few days into your trek, pick out an area for your camp that is near a water source — such as a river, creek, or lake — and is discreet. Others may see your campfire from miles away however they may think it a waste of time to send someone searching out you (by the way, it may be smart to make a rule restricting campfires in daytime, so that the smoke does not travel away from your area —not until you are many miles away from any cities or towns).

Burn your campfires at night and burn them in such manner that those in the towns and cities can't see the light the fire gives off. For example, build your fire behind dense brush. Do not build your fire on a barren hill. Not unless you are seeking to signal a person. However, be careful — anyone can see that signal.

### *Drones can detect heat signatures*

When I, in the beginning, wrote this text some years ago, who would have known that only a few years later a plan for surviving a U.S. collapse would need to include fending off drones that may be scanning the nation from the sky, in a search for what can be deemed by means of any new powers-that-be as a “resistance.” Just like *Red Dawn*, those may be Communist-powered, in cold war fears of a Russia, China, South American, North Korea, etc., alliance ever play out. (fast forward 30 years and add Iran, Syria, and Pakistan to this batch of unsavory allies.)

So, sooner or later, fires might not be a good idea. There are methods recommended for hiding a heat signature from the sky, though. However, that is too much to get into here. Here's another article to study when you are done with this one: "The Way to Avoid and Survive a Drone Strike".

*With a "permanent" camp in the area, what is your objective?*

Really, what is your objective? If you are by yourself, you can consider "sneaking" down into the lowlands (and staying out of the sight of any bad company) and looking for out others whom you could get along with, hopefully good-hearted people, and bring them to your camp. Possibly you have joined up with folks from your old community, or perhaps people of a similar religion.

Regarding religion, or shared belief, it is possible that you could come to be with a "secret agent" in your group, a person who's loyal to another camp only a few miles away; their survival strategy is to infiltrate other camps, and steal goods and likely kill or kidnap women or children as slaves (that sort of thing can happen in a time of the collapse, whether you like it or not).

Be aware of the risks that other people carry in a time of mass chaos and civil unrest. The city is a dangerous location, and without regulation and order, it is 100 times more dangerous. Think about that.

I will recommend the best amount for establishing a camp. However, it does appear that the more people you have in your camp, the more possibilities there may be for quarrels and in-fighting. You will want a system in place to deal with social problems and this must be discussed early on. Get each person on the same page from the get-go. (If you use the Bible as your rule book, your camp will likely get along first-rate. Of course, meaning a true dedication to sticking to it — think you are prepared for that? Jesus is knocking, my friend.)

## **Sixth danger: Shelter**

### *Solo Tent*

Months before than you need to head out into the wilderness, it would be smart to get rid of items that will weigh you down, such as a full-size tent, and instead construct a makeshift tent yourself out of heavy-duty canvas tarp and duct tape — or, what I name a "Solo Tent."

It is also very cheap to make.

Cut a heavy-duty canvas tarp into a 7 x 8 piece. Then run multiple layers of duct tape alongside the outside edges and in side, so there is a great seal on end to withstand heavy use, leaving one side open so you can enter and exit. You may take an extra step of sewing the edges of the canvas/tarp with a thick needle and wire or very heavy-duty thread.

So that is one D-I-Y way of getting a makeshift refuge for cheap. The opposite way to go is to put money into a first-rate bivy sack, the army's version of a "solo tent," and actually the better way to go ultimately if you can spend the money.

### *Canvas tipi*

If you have a large canvas tarp or three or four small canvas tarps in your party, you could quickly make a tipi like the Native Americans of the Great Plains. If it is large enough, you could actually have a small campfire inside. Cut down a small branch of thin wood, trim off all branches, then lean them up toward each other. Then, wrap the canvas around the frame, leaving a small hole at the top (so smoke from your campfire can escape).

### **Seventh challenge : Avoiding the cold and staying warm by creating fire**

If the temperature drops under freezing and your sleeping bag isn't enough to keep you warm, heat up large rocks by the fire, and wrap them in a towel to take to bed with you to keep your toes, legs, and torso warm. Be careful, though — if those rocks contain moisture, like river rocks, they could explode from the heat of the fire.

If it is very cold, build a fire in a circle of rocks around where you plan to sleep. Before going to bed, rake warm coals over the ground you intend on sleep on, and then place evergreen boughs (branches with pine needles) over the coals, until all coals are covered.

Keep lots of firewood stacked up on the other side of where you sleep, in easy reach. If you awaken from the cold, throw more sticks and large pieces of wood on the fire and go back to sleep.

### *Stocking cap and ski mask (Balaclava)*

If you are crossing over the mountains or find yourself deep in winter, a ski mask is an easily obtainable item as it will help keep your head and face warm at night while you sleep.

You could also have a stocking cap, which you could pull on over the top of the ski mask, and keep yourself even warmer thanks to the added layer.

### *Mittens / snow gloves*

Mittens will keep your hands warmer than gloves, but gloves make using tools like an awl or rope easier. Gloves worn by mountain climbers and cold-climate people (which include people living in the northern reaches of Alaska) are specially made for heavy-duty use. Also, gloves are worn by mountain climbers who are often high above the tree line, sometimes in sub-zero temperatures. Search for gloves which are finely-stitched and have rubber gripping along the insides. (Remember to pack both mittens and ski/snow gloves).

## **Eighth challenge: Survival supplies and maintenance**

### *Light weight axe and machete*

These are tools that you need to spend more cash on. The best survival hatchets and axes will help you in cutting down larger branches and small bushes much more successfully than subpar tools.

For any long-term or extended use, you are going to need a good polishing stone to help keep your ax and machete blades sharp.

## **Ninth challenge: 7-10 days of food**

### *Shopping for meals*

Before than you even start your journey, you must have enough food for your hiking bag to last a minimum of seven– to ten days. These are the meals you will live off until you get a far enough into the wilderness and can set up camp.

You want to live off the land, don't you? You can't live off freeze-dried survival meals kits and energy bars all the time, especially if all you have is a bug-out bag.

Call your local forest rangers and game wardens and determine legalities first of the path. After, study the articles we have on hunting and trapping. We have studied expert hunters and their techniques and we've had them write articles for our website.

Learning to hunt and trap can take years to learn the specifics of wild animals — however, by doing all of your homework and studying what skilled courses have to say, you can save yourself several years of learning by means of trial and error. So learn what works from the professionals and follow it from the start.

### *Do your home work*

At the bottom of this text are links to web sites with diagrams and instructions for making a hunting bow, making/using snares to lure small animals and strategies using rocks and sticks for “funneling” fish into many traps. Print those articles out and keep them in a Ziploc freezer bag, and pack them in your backpack. If you are forced quickly into a survival situation, you will have the information you need to live on handy, so that you can make it easier than not having this information. You could absolutely survive.

### **Tenth challenge: distance between you and them**

If the worst-case situation hits, a huge U.S. crumble that follows with an invasion by overseas armies (if cold war fears ever emerge as a reality), you will likely need to hike as a minimum of three days into the wilderness, and put about twenty to thirty miles among you and any invaders as quickly as possible. Do not stick around to find out if they have good intentions. They likely do not. Better safe than sorry.

When you are two or three days into the wilderness, you can setup a transient camp where you may relax for an afternoon or two and try to get your bearings. Study your map and the surrounding geography, and figure out where exactly you are heading and how you are going to get there. If it is winter and your intention is to cross over the mountains, you could have to wait in the lowlands until late spring, especially if you spot snow in the mountains and forest.

When in the woods, collect the moss (lichen) hanging from the branches of fir and pine trees. This moss is found throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Another approach is the use of cotton balls with Vaseline worked into them. It can be ignited with a spark and burns hot. While this second technique sincerely does not represent genuine wilderness skills, it is far easier for a survival situation. When putting your survival backpack together, pack a number of cotton balls into a Ziploc bag that has already been rubbed with Vaseline. Cotton balls by themselves also burn well and help start fires. Lighter/matches – pack a number of lighters and wood matches, and keep them in a Ziploc freezer bag to protect from moisture.

### **Primitive fire starter**

Research and learn primitive techniques for starting a fire, the use of a bow-drill, and other primitive tools. Those simple tools use friction to create a smoldering, burning ember; this burning ember is then carefully used together with dried tinder or another flammable cloth to provide a flame.

Here's what you need to know about the use of a bow-drill or other primitive tools: often getting an ember to start burning depends on technique and perseverance.

Consider having a dependable fire starter as a critical to survival, if you are going to be anywhere close to the wilderness.

Continually have a plan in mind for buying fire starter before than you are anywhere in a place that could call for a fire.

On the subject of researching and studying primitive strategies for starting a fire— including a bow-drill — methods like these can be practiced in your own home as you watch television each night, or listen to the radio. You don't need to be in the forest to find ways to use a bow-drill.

Once you have gotten the method down, the next step might be to learn how to find natural materials in the forest or mountains so you can create a bow-drill from scratch. For now, build this first bow-drill using timber and string from local hardware store. *Primitive Wilderness Living & Survival Skills: Naked into the Wilderness* by John and Geri McPherson gives specific information, together with photos, on a number of primitive survival skills, such as bow-drill creation (I do not link it here because this is a physical book, not an e-book — and so I refer to books that go into greater detail on

a number of topics you — and everyone interested in survival — should know more about).

### **Water procurement**

There are a lot of facts about water procurement. To keep this article as brief as possible, I think the best thing I should do is publish links to articles on other websites that detail water procurement and purification. If you are making a survival binder, I propose copying those articles into a word processing document on your laptop, and then printing every one off, and putting them in a big Ziploc freezer bag to carry with you into the wilderness.

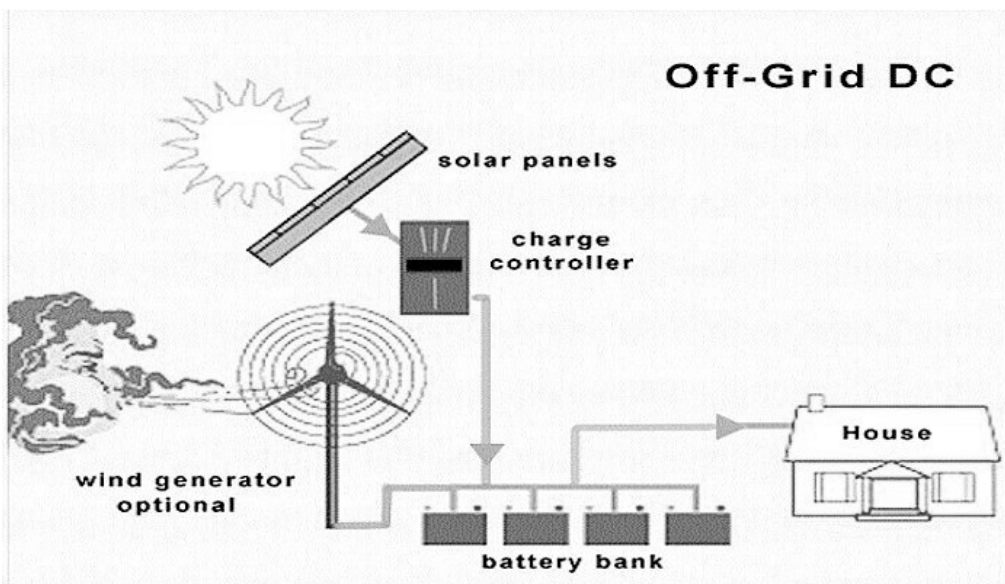
You should remember to practice these techniques in your spare time:

- Water filtration tools
- Wilderness survival – water purification
- Survival skills – water
- Primitive fishing, hunting, and trapping



## Chapter 3-- How to Live Off-the-Grid

Do you spend your days at your nine to five, dreaming about moving to a beautiful, remote area and building an appropriate off-grid house? Do you imagine what it would be like to leave the hustle and bustle of city life and be free from bumper-to-bumper traffic and escalating utility bills? Off-the-grid living is hard work. However, it is actually possible. For many who choose to leave the daily grind and choose off-the-grid living, it more than can pay off in the long run.



### The Top 10 Ways to Live off-the-Grid

Your family (in particular children) each need a thoroughly packed get-home bag. Disasters, rioting, and looting can happen anytime — what to do and what to carry in your get-home bag when the goal of the day is to survive.

Primitive power is all about the fast and easy (or not so easy) approaches of creating small amounts of power at home.

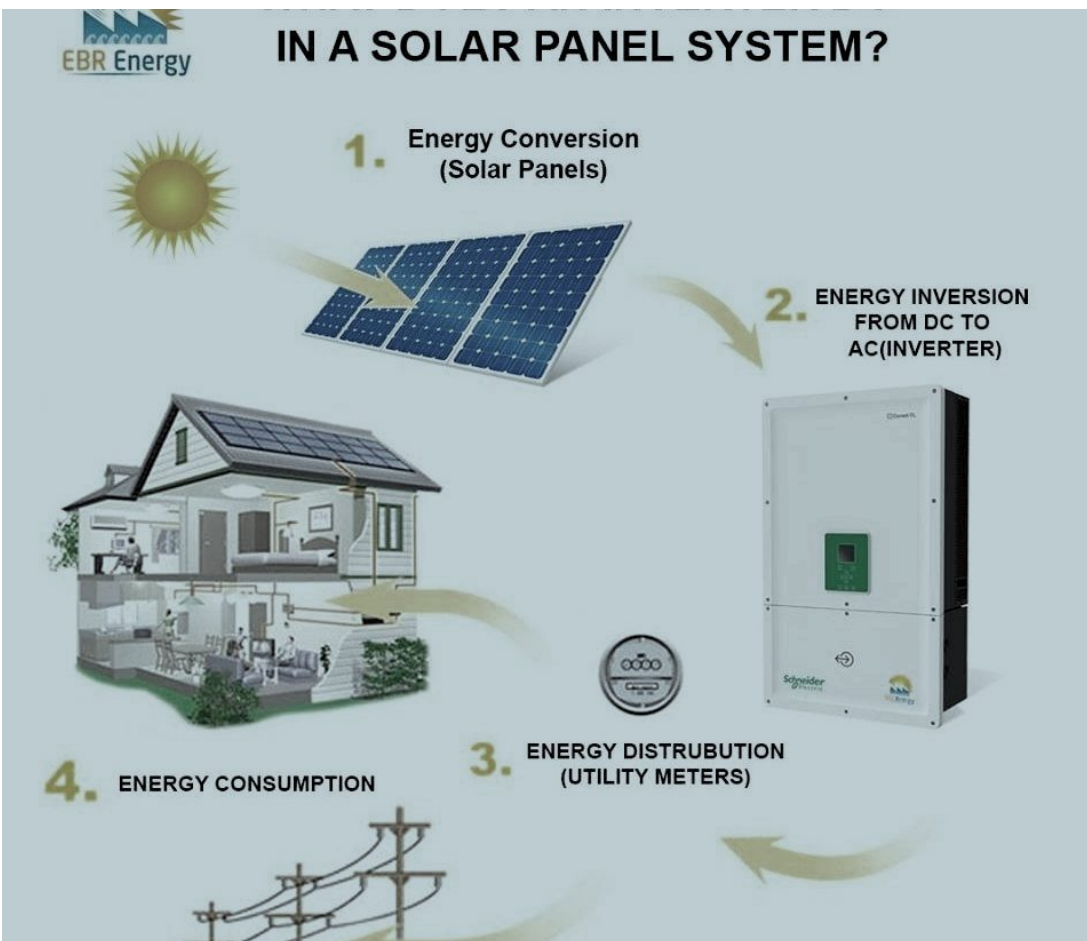
DIY tasks are fun and can save money in the long run, however, do not count on ditching your power company easily — not unless you are extreme about going off-the-grid completely or are pressured to following a collapse of infrastructure and the power grid.

The ways you are about to read below are best used in the U.S. or if of overall blackouts when even the smallest amount of electricity will be

plenty.

## 1. Living off-the-grid by producing power at home

The methods I'm about to explain aren't truly primitive because you still need alternators, inverters, batteries, and so forth to seize and then save the electrical current; in comparison to power companies, though, these techniques are primitive. They are well worth looking at because you can use them to power small tools including:



- lights
- TV
- DVD player/camcorder
- computer systems
- stereo /AM-FM radio
- HAM/CB radio communications
- recharge batteries for GPS and cell phones

- recharge batteries for electronics (flashlights, lanterns, and so on) that can run off rechargeable batteries (you can try this for your annual or bi-annual inspection of all your equipment)
- home security system (neighborhood siren only; the real alarm organization might be offline)
- cordless power tools with battery packs
- grain/coffee grinders

These are all low wattage devices that you can power following a blackout or loss of the power grid. At the same time, specialized low wattage electronics exist depending on your needs that you could also keep to power, whether those are medical devices, satellite TV for news channels, or low-wattage heaters.

## **2. Learn to save energy**

Going off-grid in the truest sense of the word means to live self-sustaining - without municipal water service, sewer, natural gas, and electricity. Going without public utilities means you will have to generate on-site electricity with renewable power sources, including solar power.

## **3. Control your spending**

After a lifetime of having the world at our fingertips, giving up modern conveniences is not without its hardships. But reducing frivolous purchases will help you save for home necessities and prepare you for a minimalist lifestyle. While going off-grid will save lots of money ultimately, making the change may be expensive. Start moving in the direction of eliminating credit card debt and another debt. Consider signing up for money saving programs, such as Learn Vest or Mint, or setting up a savings account specifically for your off-grid plans.

## **4. Attend a workshop**

Many towns host community workshops that teach folks important survival skills for off-grid living.

Consider living small - tiny houses.

Perhaps you have always dreamed of getting a large off-grid compound. However, in the hobby of minimalist living, many off-gridders think small. Tiny houses make for smaller utility bills and less complicated upkeep.

Companies such as Colorado's Tumbleweed Tiny Houses help you design the tiny home of your dreams.

### **5. Do some traveling**

No matter how good of a job planning you do, you cannot build a livable off-grid home without finding land that works for your needs and wants. Hit the street to scope out a number of nice places to live off-the-grid. North Carolina, Maine, Florida, and California provide some of the best places to live off-the-grid in the U.S.

### **6. Do a “trial run”**

Consider renting a cabin in the woods for a week or even a month to check out off-grid living before than taking the leap. Companies such as Free House provide off-the-grid remote and rugged cabin rentals. You can also look for off-grid options on Airbnb.

### **7. Learn how to supply your own food**

Living off-the-grid means supplying your personal food. Research what grows best in the area you are making plans to go to and begin planning a sustainable garden. If feasible, plant a garden in your current backyard to practice growing sustainable food.

Consider taking a hunter education and protection course through your nearby parks branch or local conservation department.

### **8. Find a community**

Going off-the-grid doesn't mean you have to do it all on your own. Finding a community of like-minded off-gridders may be an invaluable source in your quest to unplug from modern society.

### **9. Television following a blackout**

Following a blackout or lack of the power grid, television may also still work in many nearby regions when TV stations flip to back-up power generators to continue to broadcast news. But, if you best have cable or satellite TV for television, and your cable or satellite TV organization is knocked offline, you will not know about those local news programs that are broadcasting.

Luckily, there is a brand new generation of television antennae available on the market which can broadcast local news in high definition (if your TV is high definition). I tried a new era antenna after shopping at a local Radio Shack and became shocked at how clear the image became (even though I paid a lot more at Radio Shack than what's presently charged on Amazon for the same antennae). I used to be told that the best might be better than cable, and that proved to be the case (although bad weather can sometimes cause interference). I chose smaller indoor antennae that are placed on a window, and it has worked great on most days.

For the purpose of having news following a blackout (or to truly cut ties along with your cable provider and get free local channels), I recommend a few types of external antennae.

#### **10. Rechargeable batteries for your lights-out box**

When you have a “lights-out box,” you then have quite a few flashlights and lanterns that use rechargeable batteries. Let’s start by talking about what power is and the way it works.

##### *How Electricity Is Created*

Power, in the most effective form, may be created through spinning a magnet(s) with a coil of copper cord. A magnet’s electromagnetism pushes electrons through the copper wire and you now have electricity. Check out on this WikiHow article on developing an electric generator (with photographs) that will power a small light bulb.

##### *Next, we build an electrical circuit*

If you are going to do any of this completely from scratch, you will want to build an electrical circuit. Circuits are nothing more than electronic parts (such as resistors, batteries, voltmeters, transistors, diodes, and so forth.), which might be interconnected using wire. You can read more about this here. There are kits for putting together easy circuits and books that make it simple.

A great analogy is to think about circuits as the blood vessels and organs for your body. Your body is electrically charged, by the way, that is why you could get electrocuted from an accident with high voltage. The vessels are the wire, the electric circuit is the blood, and the diverse organs are the diverse, interconnected parts.

How is electricity harnessed to power gadgets? In short, it happens when electrons begin moving through the circuit. The supply (such as a battery) is the one that starts off charged to push the electrons through the circuit when you switch on the switch (on your flashlight, for example). The best news about low wattage power experiments are that it is not enough voltage to harm you.

Speaking of which, the electric wiring, the blood vessels, if you will, need to be made from enormously conductive metals such as copper or aluminum and you will need to understand what a resistor is in an electrical circuit (among other things) — most devices require a certain voltage and electrical circuits help modify how tons of power can transfer to a tool. If that looks like to study, properly it is, it just depends on how complex you want to make things.

If you want to make it easy, the best information is that many devices (solar panels, wind generators, and so forth) have been created to do all the work for you, so there is no generator or electrical circuits to build. For example, we've got a listing of the best portable solar turbines – all for you to use right off the bat without an instruction guide required.

### 1&2. How to create primitive electricity from wind and water

Now, to create power, you have to have a supply such as wind, flowing river water (rapids), or maybe ocean current that in turn will crank a small turbine or spin the blades on an easy wind turbine. That motion then spins a tool that spins the magnet(s) within that coil of copper wire; quicker speeds, larger coils, and larger magnets produce higher amounts of power. Before you know it, someday you have built a small electricity plant or small hydroelectric dam!

This DC Motor saves us a number of steps. With a DC Motor, all we need is a propeller or fan blade, and the motor works as a generator; connected to a massive battery or terminal of car batteries, we are able to now save power capable of powering many gadgets regularly.

So long as we have wind or rapids, our power trouble is solved.

### #3. Steam can also create electricity

Burning gasoline including coal, natural gas, and so on, is used to boil water (in boilers), creating steam (like a teapot, however on a much larger

scale), which in turn spins the mills that produce power, just like those rapids referred to above.

#### 4. Using coal to produce electricity

Coal works like this: It is heated in production units that make up the power plant. They first grind it right into a fine powder in pulverizers; then, it reaches a boiler wherein it is heated to very high temperatures. The water that is also in the boiler turns to steam, creating thermal power. Thermal electricity is then turned into mechanical electricity by sending it to a sequence of mills that start transferring. The remaining step is to convert mechanical power to electricity with the aid of a generator.

#### 5. How solar power works

Solar power is also very exciting. In short, the photons of light coming from the sun hit the solar panels made of silicon, freeing electrons. These electrons are then harvested to create energy.

If you could find the money for it, you could always spend money on a bigger unit, although in a loss of the power grid your large unit could attract attention from unsavory folks in the area (unless you can figure out a way to keep it out of sight from passersby).

Each solar power unit you add to your collection means more gadgets may be powered. With some backup battery units, it also means extra power that can be stored for later use. Even though you could may not be able to power high-wattage devices such as a freezer, clothes washing machine or dryer, kitchen oven, or microwave, you should have most other devices covered with an investment in solar panel units.

#### Ready-to-go solar power system

If fumbling with wires, inverters, battery packs, and operations manuals is not your thing, a complete solar power device is ready-to-go out of the box, but does come at a higher price tag. If you spend money on this kind of higher-priced device and start the use of it now to power part of your own home (not all of your own home, just a part of it), the investment can help pay for itself over many months of saving on your power bill. Then, in the lack of the power grid, you will have lots of energy, 480 watts for example, that is enough to power most low-to-moderate wattage devices for a long

time. You will have lights, television, radio, communications, home alarm, and many other electronic gadgets protected.

Can magnets create electricity from perpetual motion?

Another (yet quite debatable way) is by using magnets. Magnets have two poles, as you may know from high-school, and that is enough to create electricity. The problem is, they lose potency in time and, despite the fact that you can replace them with new ones, there hasn't been any business that developed such a tool.

What Is Perpetual Motion?

Perpetual movement is what occurs when river rapids spin a turbine at a hydroelectric dam; as long as there is flowing water, the blades on a turbine will spin, and power is generated.

Wind Turbine Vs. Windmill

Windmills also capture the electricity of the wind but it's used for other actions. Wind generators, then again, completely create power.

How Can You Generate Free Electricity?

Alright, let's see some actual approaches to create power off-grid.

5. With a bike and an alternator

There are many ways to do it, some related to a generator, others concerning an alternator. The first one I'd like to discuss is the usage of a bicycle (any bicycle will do), an alternator, and an inverter to generate loose power.

This method is my favorite because of its most important benefits. The primary one is that you can do it inside in your own home. You just mount the bike on a wood structure and hook it up. Your kids may be willing to work as well!

The other big benefit is that you get to lose weight, get in shape, and give your legs a workout. Fitness is an essential part of prepping whether you are bugging in or out.

Here's what you are going to need:

- A bike (an exercise bike may also work)
- A 12V battery pack



- A 350-watt electricity inverter
- A car alternator

A few portions of wood and some screws to mount the motorbike (an exercise bike is already set up, therefore has a bonus on this regard).

#### A digital multi-meter to see the power output

Essentially, a transfer installed on the bike that is used to bring power to the alternator when you begin pedaling but needs to be stopped after a few seconds to avoid the batteries from overheating (yes, power will continue to be generated).

#### Producing electricity with an exercise bike

Why would you want to put current back into the grid? One, because you will be paying much less for power and, because in some countries and states, it is actually illegal to use your own electricity right away (proof 1, evidence 2).

Ultimately, your goals have to be to lower your electric invoice; so although you can't break free from this apparent monopoly, you can get genuinely close to doing it.

Products such as K-TOR's power box with pedal generator can provide up to twenty watts of energy that you could save in a 12-volt battery, but if you have the time to do it yourself with a real exercising bike, 12v battery pack., 350-watt power inverter and a car alternator, you could crank out higher watts and save it for later use.

## 6. Water Wheels

The cool thing about water wheels is they can work 24 hours a day, and you do not have to do a single thing. The biggest problem is; you won't be capable of generating enough to fit most people's needs. Still, this may be something to play with if you have a creek or river on your land (many preppers looking for a bug-out location want to have one).

Now, you can still use a water wheel for things that do not require that much power, such as light-up perimeter defenses, charging your smartphone or rechargeable batteries, or heating up your bathwater (which, in our situation, it could come from the river).

## Making a wind turbine

Although we mentioned the wind and river rapids above already (#1 and #2 on this top ten list), let us take a second to talk about windmills as these work on the same concept as water wheels: motion from an outside force is used to create electricity.

Now, there are many ways you can do that, depending on how much work you want to do yourself. Of course, the more power you want, the bigger and taller the structure needs to be. Take into account that the voltage created by a small turbine is going to be significantly less than what you'd get using a bike and alternator. The more output you want, the larger the blades and the final structure need to be.

Now, if you do not want to spend 70 to 100 dollars on blades, you can make your very own out of wood. This video shows you the way: *How to Make Wind Turbine Blades*.

Must you be making them? Possibly not. Remember that carving them is not an easy undertaking. Even if you are an ace at woodworking, you can't get them quite as nice as those from the store, and 80 bucks is not a fortune. For that amount, you are also going to get a hub and all of the nuts and bolts to put in it on a turbine which you purchase separately, or you can make on your own. Plus, remember that rain and snow will damage the wood, so sooner or later down the road, you will have to make new ones.

## Off-grid living preparations

This intellectual shift is one of the most important arrangements you can make. You never know when you need to live off-the-grid.

### 1. *Truck and cargo trailer*

Hook your things up on the back of your truck, hit the road, and go wherever your heart desires. Plus, if you make a decision to settle someplace off-the-grid, you could convert it into a tiny house or an extension on your log cabin.

### 2. *Large tent*

When you are living off-the-grid, you want a tent. This can serve as your private home for many months to come.

It is small and easy to pack — a simple, collapsible shelter that protects you from the heat and cold. If you take good care of your tent, it can last a long

time.

### *3. Sleeping bags*

You should have a sleeping bag or a hammock. Yes, it is not as nice as a real bed, but you can't be picky when you are living off-grid.

Take note, there are more options for outdoor sleeping bags these days. You can find a hammock that is a sleeping bag and a tent at the same time.

### *4. Containers*

Bring large water storage containers with you. So that they don't take an excessive amount of space, choose collapsible water bottles as an alternative.

You need these to have enough supplies of water, of course. But you may also use them to store gas.

Apart from water containers, you want food containers as well. An icebox keeps fresh ingredients longer, so make sure to have this. Bags, wood crates, and boxes are good options for off-grid storage, too.

### *5. Generator*

Houses should have an extra power generator for off-grid power structures. It comes in handy when other resources of power run out or get damaged for some reason.

Mills may run on natural gas, propane, and even human electricity. It also enables us to have a sufficient power bank. With an inverter, you may use a vehicle battery, for example, to power some simple house appliances.

### *6. Renewable energy source*

Having a renewable power source is very handy whilst you are living off-grid. The thing about non-renewable power sources is they are not sustainable.

As soon as coal or oil runs out, you need to replace them, and that is inconvenient. Opt for solar power or wind power alternatively.

By securing a renewable electricity source, you can ensure you have a constant supply of energy to power the things you want for comfort. You may put solar panels and off-grid inverter on your cargo trailer.

This way, you can optimize solar electricity while journeying through the U. S. Or, you can set up wind generators in the area of your off-grid living cabin.

What's a wind turbine? It is an electricity-producing structure that has two to three blades that revolve like a propeller. A wind turbine converts wind power to electric power.

### *7. Composting toilet*

Whilst you are just getting settled in an off-grid cabin, one of the issues you may encounter is hygiene. You, without a doubt, can't run off into the woods whenever you need to use the restroom.

It is unhygienic if you keep doing this. Plus, there is the danger of contaminating your area, affecting your food and water resources.

Address this by building a composting toilet. It essentially composts and treats human waste with organic matter. When used properly, the composted material may even be reused as fertilizers and soil conditioners.

### *8. Hunting and farming equipment*

Always have a system to feed yourself. Storing a lot of meals is the easiest option to go for, honestly.

If you are living off-grid, particularly in dire times, you could hunt, raise farm animals, or grow your very own plants. In this example, you need to search for equipment and farming equipment.

### *9. First aid kit*

Always keep a supply of medications and first aid supplies. If you are living off-the-grid, you can't really rely on doctors and 911.

You need to be self-sufficient. This said, your knowledge of using first aid is as important as having a first aid kit.

Increase what you already know about natural plants and old-school survival skills. Make sure you do this before you even think about living off-grid.

Watch this video about *Living Huge in a Tiny House* and see how off-the-grid living works on a permaculture farm:

When you live this way, you don't think about living commercially-dependent city lifestyles anymore. That is likely the greatest thing that off-the-grid living can provide. You go back to basics, get in touch with your natural self, and enjoy the liberty of nature around you.

# Chapter 4-- A Wilderness Survival Guide

## Wilderness Survival Guide

Here is the thing: with fancy gear and renewed interest in the outdoors, it is easy to overlook that the wilderness is a place fraught with peril. It is not like what you see on TV; the wilderness is no funny story. Instead, I think it is essential for outdoors fans to understand what they are embarking upon. Do you understand how to build a shelter? Can you build a fire without any matches? Do you know the way to survive? For the general public, the answer is no. However, in place of stressing about what you don't already know, take action to teach yourself. Below is a fundamental wilderness survival manual. Learn the basics so that you are always prepared in an emergency situation. Trust me; this will make your backcountry adventures a lot more fun!

### Essential skills

To survive a night in the wilderness, you will need to have some skills in your tool kit. These essential survival skills are the fundamental necessities of a safe and secure night in the wild.

### How to build a shelter

Learning the way to build a safe shelter is extremely crucial for your survival. Not only can this makeshift refuge serve as your home away from home, it will also guard you against wind, rain, snow, or maybe sun. If you build it properly, your emergency refuge could keep you warm, since you can build your fire inside it. In some conditions, your need for shelter may take priority over your body's need for food and likely even water. If your unplanned trip takes place in extraordinarily cold temperatures, you will want to prioritize shelter to protect yourself from hypothermic conditions. In harsh situations (like a snowstorm), the general rule is that you have three hours to survive without a safe haven.

First, remember the location of your shelter. Your site selection has to contain enough of the material needed to build a safe haven. It is also a great idea if the site is positioned near a water supply. Of course, your shelter has to also protect you from the wind. I would recommend

considering the safety problems that could occur due to the surrounding environment. Avoid setting up camp underneath rocky hillsides vulnerable to rockslides. It should be big enough to lay down inside so you can rest and recover. That stated, you do not want to build an overly-large shelter. The bigger the refuge, the more body heat and fire it takes to warm the interior. In cold situations, it is far easier to heat up the interior of a smaller refuge. There are some varieties of shelters that make for proper alternatives.

*Lean-to* : A lean-to shelter is one of the most popular options because of its simplistic design; you can build a lean-to out of almost anything. Tree branches or rope construct the body while a tarp, poncho, bark, or tree boughs offer protection from the elements.

*Snow cave* : In wintry conditions, a snow cave is an effective shelter. Find huge snow drifts (at least five feet deep if possible) and burrow a tunnel. In the middle of the tunnel, create a huge chamber huge enough to fit your party. Not only will this cave defend you from the elements, the snow's insulating qualities will maintain your warmth. Remember to poke some holes in the roof for ventilation.

### **How to find water & food**

Food and, especially, water are essential issues when surviving in the wild. Even though uncomfortable, people can go up to a few weeks without food; however, the rule of thumb is that we will only survive three days without water. As such, finding water is your first priority. Ideally, you are looking for two or three cups of water per day to keep your systems functioning smoothly. In the summertime, this could be difficult. Finding water sources, such as streams or waterfalls, make for wonderful assets. In some areas, the water may be safe to drink on its own. However, stagnant bodies of water, like ponds or lakes, possibly contain diseases that can make you sick. When uncertain, purify the water. You can do this by boiling it for three minutes, treating it with Iodine tablets, or pumping it through a water filter. If you can't find any water sources, get innovative. If you find a damp or muddy region, dig into the ground and create a hole. There is a great chance the hole will start to fill with water. Of course, you will need to treat this water, but it will serve its purpose in hydrating you. Collecting rainwater is

another option, as is the collection of dewdrops that gather on plants. In the wintry months, finding water can be simpler.

When possible, melt ice instead of snow as this is more efficient. It is a good idea to avoid consuming snow. While that might seem counterintuitive, your body puts a lot of effort into heating and melting the snow. When you consider that there may be minimal hydration in return, consuming snow just dehydrates your body even more. Finding food can be trickier. As a common rule, you will be searching out meals in the form of wildlife or plant life. Snares, traps, and nets will help you in snagging an animal for meals.

Study your surroundings and locate the most trafficked game trails. These are good locations for a trap. Also, they often lead to watering holes used by the animals. Foraging may sound easier than catching an animal; however, be aware: many florae are toxic, so it is important that you are assured in your plant choice before cooking an unknown leafy stew. While there may be no single rule that applies to the entire forest, here are a few pointers to help you make your selections:

- Avoid red or white berries
- Boiling removes some poisons (but not all)
- Watch what the animals eat. There is a good chance that you can eat the same things.
- Keep away from mushrooms. Many mushrooms are edible, but you should be careful to avoid eating poisonous types.

I'd recommend obtaining a copy of *Identifying and Harvesting Edible and Medicinal Plants in Wild (and Not So Wild) Places* by Steve Brill and Evelyn Dean. This guidebook teaches readers the way to find and harvest over 500 different plants for consumption and medicinal purposes. Using a guidebook like this, you are sure to learn about some native florae for your area that are safe to eat.

### **How to start a fire**

I'd argue that building a fire is the most crucial mission in wilderness survival. Not only will this fire keep you warm in cold environments, it will also allow you to boil water for purification and help stave off wildlife.



First, find a safe area for your fire. If possible, opt for a sandy or rocky area to avoid causing any sort of forest fire. After choosing your site, compare your options. Water-resistant matches are your best bet, and with any luck, you are carrying some with you. Many brands promote water-resistant types now, and I'd advise you to always carry some.

However, water-proof matches do cost more than ordinary matches, so it is possible to waterproof your normal matches. There are ways to do this: wax or nail polish. Once you choose, dip the head of the match into that liquid. Make sure it thoroughly covers the top of the match, however, try to keep the wax from getting too thick. A thick layer could be harder to strike-off once you want to use the match. Nail polish is a common choice, largely because it is easier to use. Choose any bottle of polish (you can even pick the color!) and dip the match in the bottle so the paint covers the match head and a little bit of the wood below it. Once more, make sure there are not any gaps in coverage. Similar to water-resistant matches, it is also a good idea to have a backup lighter. They take up minimal space and offer you a selection of alternatives for creating a fire. Similar to matches and a lighter, flint and steel is a classic technique used to start a fire. This method can be very reliable and may be used in all conditions, even when wet.

Strike the metal (or a pocket knife, for example) against the flint and direct the sparks into your bed of tinder. Once you have selected the way you are creating the fire, you need to build a dry bed of tinder that is easily flammable. In many cases, this can be as easy as collecting dry bark, grass, or kindling. Dryer lint and a Vaseline-soaked cotton ball are popular options. Just make sure to save them in a film canister or someplace else safe from outside moisture. If you are building a fire in or close to your shelter, don't forget about adequate ventilation. You want that fire to maintain your heat, but you do not want to suffocate yourself!

## **Dealing with wildlife**

Do not panic. Stay calm so that the animal does not interpret your panic attack as an offensive maneuver. Animals typically only attack after they feel threatened.

Slowly and carefully back away. Keep your cool and back far from the animal, while keeping your eyes on it at all times. The more distance

between you and the creature, the safer it is probably going to feel, which minimizes its danger to you.

### **Gear checklist**

Before heading out into the wilderness, use this checklist to make sure you have everything you need. Not only will you be calmer, you might be confident in knowing you have the essentials to ensure your safety should the worst happen.

- layers. Make sure to carry a base layer, an insulating layer, and an exterior shell to protect you from the elements.
- backpack
- topographic map
- compass
- a flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries
- a pocket knife or multi-tool
- water-proof matches, a lighter and/or flint
- a vibrant tarp or poncho that may be used to build your shelter as well as to signal in an emergency
- emergency tinder
- first aid kit
- sun protection: sun shades, a hat, sunscreen, and so forth.
- extra meals and water
- extra clothing
- cordage

Wilderness survival looks easy thanks to popular TV shows. However, surviving in the wild isn't always so easy. Learning survival skills and being prepared with the right materials lets you make it through an unplanned night in the woods.

### **Surviving in the Outdoors: An Emergency Guide**

Imagine a fun afternoon hike around Mt. Baker. You are enjoying the quiet of the forest, the dappled light shining through the trees, and the intoxicating odor of the leaves when a thick fog rolls in abruptly at 4:00 p.m. In a panic, you follow the wrong trail for hours alongside an increasing incline until you have run out of daylight.

Imagine being on a snowmobile in the woods with friends, zipping through the powder, and chasing each other between the tree trunks while snow falls and the final snowmobile does not show up at the rendezvous point.

Or imagine the mountain biking journey you have been daydreaming about for months, bombing down the mountain with the wind on your face. You get separated from your group on a difficult portion of trail and you come to an unknown fork in the path.

Lost, hurt, stranded – scenarios like those play out over 300,000 times per year in the USA. Those in search of adventure do not plan on getting lost or hurt in the wilderness. However, it can happen to anyone. And when it does, people underestimate the challenges of the wilderness and overestimate their own abilities.

To help you avoid turning into a statistic, this wilderness survival guide explains the risks of the wilderness and ensures you are physically and mentally prepared for surviving in the wild.

### **Stay found**

The intention is to not be on the six o'clock news, to never experience the escalating confusion that turns into panic as you realize you are lost – to never need your survival training.

In the wilderness, feeling lost releases adrenaline and provokes the classic fight-or-flight response. This can be symptoms of a panic attack:

- shortness of breath or hyperventilation
- heart palpitations or a racing heart
- chest pain or discomfort
- trembling or shaking
- the sensation of choking
- feeling unreal or detached from your environment
- sweating
- nausea or upset stomach

But unlike a panic attack, the danger is real and large if you are lost in the wilderness. Bad decisions can lead to harm, hypothermia, heatstroke,

dehydration, and death. Prevent this staying alert – know where you are at all times.

- Keep a topographic map of your region easily accessible.
- Talk about it constantly.
- Take note of when you are able pinpoint your location exactly – going in circles, going back, etc.
- Study and learn a good idea of your trail speed.
- Look forward on your path and set expectations for arriving at selected landmarks.
- If the landmark is not reached in a reasonable time, stop and think again.
- The best survival situation is the one that never happens. Keep track of your party at all times during your wilderness journey.

A GPS unit is most useful if you know how to use it. Verify your place on the map, plot waypoints, observe bearings and display your distance traveled. If you only switch on the device when you feel lost, you don't know wherein you are, where you have been, or where you should go. Do not get emboldened with the illusion of safety that a GPS unit can provide, as this may result in an even greater risk.

### **Fear the weather**

Unexpected bad weather in the mountains can turn a pleasant day hike into a life-or-death situation for the unprepared. Luckily, being organized for the climate is often as simple as bringing the right clothing. Suitable clothing will keep you cool in the heat, warm in the cold, and dry in a storm.

You likely do not need to be prepared for both sub-zero and triple-digit temperatures at the same time, so check the weather forecast before heading out for your adventures (never count on it to be the same as your current location) and plan accordingly.

Start at the top:

- The right headgear: A wide-brimmed hat for sunny weather, or a stocking cap for cold weather.
- Sunglasses: To ease eye stress.

- The right top: Long-sleeved polyester is a great base-layer for cool and cold; bring another jacket or wool blouse in case the temperature drops.
- The right bottom: avoid cotton and denim if there is any chance of rain – cotton does not insulate when wet and might quickly decrease your body temperature, risking hypothermia.
- Rain gear: Don't leave home without it – even a trash bag will work in a pinch.
- The right footwear: Protect your feet from the unique hazards you will face, and bring a second pair of wool socks.
- 

The bare minimum extra clothes could make a huge difference on your comfort if the weather turns ugly. Take a moment to select the gear for your backpack. – you will be happy you did if you need it.

### **Communicate**

The less time you spend lost, the less time you have to spend surviving. However, just in case, the best way to reduce the amount of time between getting lost in the wilderness and getting help is to communicate your plans to family or friends before you go (and to let them know when you have returned).

### **Buddy up**

Robert Koester is the writer of the International Search and Rescue Database and author of the book *Lost Person Behavior* . According to the information he has collected and processed, solo hikers account for 58% of all lost hikers – yet they make up only a small percent of all hikers, making the statistic all the more surprising.

### **Survival Kit Essentials**

As Benjamin Franklin once stated, “An ounce of prevention is well worth a pound of treatment.” This is why we have taken the time to provide an explanation for how to avoid a survival situation. However, if regardless of your best efforts at prevention, you find yourself injured or lost, you may be glad these necessities are in your backpack.

*The Boy Scouts Handbook* includes a list known as the “Ten Essentials.” We’ve borrowed this list, added to it, and reordered it. Those items are organized by priority, primarily based on how quickly they will need to be used if a survival scenario develops.

- Map and compass: You should always know where you are. Practice staying aware.
- Mobile cellphone: Because you do not want your experience made into a film.
- Whistle: Louder and more effective than yelling, whistles may be used if separated from your party, to attract the eye of nearby adventurers, or to hail the Search and Rescue organization as they go. Remember: three blasts mean, “Emergency!”
- First-aid kit: Use a quart-sized self-sealing plastic bag for at least:
  - Six adhesive bandages (two large and four small)
  - Two sterile gauze pads, three-by-three inches
  - One gauze roll, three inches by four yards
  - One roll adhesive tape
  - One triangular bandage
  - One tube antiseptic ointment
  - Bonus: moleskin to protect your blisters; ibuprofen or acetaminophen for pain relief
- Rain gear: A nice rain shower with the wind may be enough to develop hypothermia.
- More clothing: You may need an extra layer or replacement for wet garments.
- Suits and fire-starters: Two is one, one is none.” Carry water-resistant matches, a lighter, and a magnesium fire-starter. Dryer lint or toilet paper work as tinder and a candle can maintain a flame.
- Water bottle: Do your best to limit sweating in a survival situation, however, refill as needed.
- Multi-tool: Wear it on in your hip. Cut your bandages, scrape your magnesium fire-starter, build a shelter, carve a spear, fend

off wild attackers.

- Extras: The following gadgets are important, but are listed as extras because they only serve to help the when having developed and stopping blood loss, hypothermia or dehydration.
  - Toilet paper: You will want it in 24 hours. Keep it in a self-sealing plastic bag.
  - Signal duplicator: Another technique for attracting attention that could reach farther than your whistle and works when your cellular telephone does not.
  - Sun protection: Sunburn is an injury and preventing it is going to prevent unnecessary stress on your body.
  - Para cord: build shelter, set up a snare, make a nice bracelet.
  - Flashlight: Do not use it to journey at night time. A headlamp would give you hands-free light if you waited too long to build your shelter or start your fire.
  - Duct tape: Uses are limited by your imagination.
  - Garbage bag: Doubles as a poncho or ground cover.
  - Trail food: You could live for three weeks without food. Carry enough to keep the hunger away.

Survival kit lists may be, and frequently are, customized for the person. Some kits are separated into their personal bag that can stand alone for a short journey or be tacked onto a larger gear pile for a prolonged excursion. The intention is to have a set of gear best for use in an emergency.

## Survival priorities

Remember the Rule of:

- You will die in 3 minutes without air.
- You will die in three hours without a heat or shelter.
- You may die in 3 days without water.
- You may die in three weeks without food.

### 1. Stay calm

Your mind is your best tool and your most important aid in a survival scenario. All of the expertise and gear in the world can't save you if you are

panicking.

It is natural to experience emotions that transition from confusion to fear when you know that you are lost or stranded. Take charge of the situation and prevent those natural emotions from taking your ability to think and make choices.

## 2. S.T.O.P.

This memorable acronym helps you remember the primary steps of how to respond, should you ever become lost, stranded or injured:

**S** is variously interpreted to mean Stop, Sit, or Survive. Whichever one you remember could be useful. As soon as you realize you are lost, stop moving. Do not go “only a little bit farther” in the hopes of finding a clue about your whereabouts.

**T** is for Think. Make an effort to study your map and search for landmarks that provide clues to your location. Look back alongside the trail you have been taking – are there any signs or obvious clues? Try and recall the last time when you had been 100% certain of your location. Which route have you ever been taking since then? Make note of the time, how many hours until dark, and whether the sun is in the predicted route.

**O** is for Observe. Assess the current situation. Are there extra issues that need to be addressed: blisters, first aid, thirst, overheating or sunburn, cold temperatures? Are the weather conditions changing? Is there a good place for shelter close by? Are you close to a water source? What resources and information do you have that can help? Stay put even as you observe and study.

**P** is for Plan. Stopping to think and observe enables us to stay calm and planning a route of action. Are there sufficient sunlight hours to get moving again, or should you build a shelter for the night? Will you go back in the morning, or search for help? Do not feel rushed to get out of the woods – the stress will not help you make a good choice.

## 3. *First aid*

To prevent the situation from worsening, treat life-threatening accidents immediately. Stop any bleeding, splint any damaged bones, and make a plan to get more advanced care if necessary.



You should be prepared to administer first aid for the following conditions:

- Hypothermia: When the body loses more heat than it can generate. Heat the victim internally with warm liquids, and exchange wet clothes for dry clothes. Body heat from another person can help with rewarming.
- Frostbite: Localized tissue freezing, i.e., feet, hands, nose, cheeks, or ears. Frozen parts have to be rewarmed slowly with body heat or lukewarm water. Never rub or use friction.
- Dehydration: When the body disposes of more water than is taken in. Drink sufficient water to ensure urine is lightly colored, even on cold days.
- Heat exhaustion: While the body is barely able to keep cool on a hot day, at the expense of different body features. The sufferer should find a cooler place out of the sun, avoid exertion, and drink cool water.
- Heatstroke: When the body has been not able to offer sufficient cooling for a prolonged period – the core temperature can be above 105 degrees Fahrenheit. Body temperature must be decreased quickly and hydration restored.
- Sunburn: When the UV-protecting capacity of the pores and skin has been surpassed. There may be pain and swelling, possibly blisters. Prevention is the best method to protect against sunburn. Use sunscreen, a sun hat, and loose clothes that cover arms and legs.
- Minor injuries: Cuts and scrapes can get infected and must be cleaned. They will heal in the open or be protected by bandages. The best treatment for severe bleeding is direct pressure.
- Blisters: When the skin has been subjected to excessive friction, it bubbles up. Blisters require caution and must be covered right away with moleskin. As soon as a blister has formed, shield it with a bandage.
- Bites and stings: Insect bites and stings cause quite a number and symptoms, from mild inflammation to anaphylactic shock. Know the local varieties and best methods for prevention and treatment. The same is true for snake bites.

#### *4. Shelter*

Since the human body can only adapt to a narrow range of temperatures; the severe climate can kill in as little as three hours. Extend the survival range first with clothes, which protect from cold temperatures best while it is dry. Protect your clothes from getting wet by using rain gear, taking shelter for the duration of a storm, or even using a plastic trash bag if necessary. Put on clothing in layers so you can adapt to changing weather with extra precision.

Increase your range of temperatures even farther with a shelter. A great refuge will block the wind, protect from precipitation, and add some insulation to conserve heat. The guidance from S.T.O.P. applies in shelter construction. Stop, think, observe, and plan. Take stock of the available materials and develop a plan to build a shelter with minimum exertion and most efficiency.

#### Finding the right site:

- Take advantage of natural shelters – caves, overhangs, fallen logs, big rocks, and so on.
- Try to build where the natural materials are ample and limit your exertion.
- Build your shelter
- Build the smallest refuge that is adequate for your needs.
- A lean-to configuration is straightforward and strong.
- Shield your body from heat loss through the ground by insulating the ground of your shelter.

#### Snow shelters:

Snow can insulate you from the cold and block the wind.

**Snow pit** : In sufficiently deep snow, dig a long thin hole. Make sure to insulate the bottom.

**Snow cave** : best protection, but hardest to build.

Be sure to mark your shelter location so it is able to be easily seen by Search and Rescue.

#### 5. Fire

In cold weather, a fire can be essential for retaining body heat, melting snow for water, drying out clothes, signaling for help, and raising your spirits. It is so essential; you need to practice starting fires in non-emergency conditions – do not try to learn when it is essential for survival. Of course, matches and lighters are the easiest and most cost-effective, but you need to know a way to start a fire using other methods as well.

All fires need fuel, heat, and oxygen to help continue the chemical reaction of combustion. You couldn't start a fire by using a lighter underneath a log because the ratio of heat to fuel surface area is too small. Instead of using a blowtorch, reduce the amount of the fuel.

You will need fuel in three sizes to start a fire in the woods:

1. **Tinder:** Nice, dry fabric will burst into flame at the contact of a match. Pine needles, dryer lint, and timber shavings are desirable examples. You will need a double handful.
2. **Kindling:** Material with an ability to burn with light encouragement, like twigs the size of a pencil. You will want a small armload.
3. **Gas:** Good-sized wood is the way to keep the fire going as soon as it's started. This wood is smaller than you think – it should be no larger than your forearm and as dry as possible. Gather four times as much as you think you need.

Only after your fuel is gathered should you start the fire. As in so many things, more spent learning will make all of the difference in the end.

Making the fire site:

1. Arrange your tinder in the center of your fire site.
2. Place the kindling around the tinder in the shape of a tipi. Allow for airflow.
3. Place the smaller wood around the kindling in same equal tipi formation. Leave an opening on the side where the wind is blowing so that the air will push the flames toward more fuel.

When the fire site is complete and you have a large stock of additional kindling and wood handy, you can ignite the tinder using:

- **Lighter:** Kept warm and dry in your pocket. A lighter is small and powerful. The flame persists, allowing you to keep adding heat to stubborn tinder, if needed. Do not leave home without it!
- **Matches:** Conventional and effective, matches can be waterproof and kept in a waterproof box. Their flames can be short-lived, so maximize burn time by moving the flame to a candle.
- **Magnifying glass:** This approach is harder than you may think and calls for very favorable conditions. Do not overestimate your abilities.
- **Flint and steel:** There is a reason we start fires with matches and lighters nowadays – they are powerful and reliable. Flint and steel can be that as well, but it takes practice. Magnesium fire-starters, a type of flint and metal, may be beneficial for damp fuels due to the high burn temperature of magnesium shavings.
- **Fire by using friction:** This is the classic technique of using a bow and spindle to start a fire and could be very pleasing if you can do it. Practice at home before you head out, and you will probably be glad you did.
- **Chocolate and soda:** Polish the bottom of a soda can with the most abrasive of chocolate (or toothpaste) until it is as shiny as a coin. The parabolic form will catch and concentrate the sun's rays enough to ignite dry tinder. Do not eat the chocolate, though, because it could be full of aluminum dust – a known health hazard.

## 6. Water

Three days is the longest you will survive without water, and it may be even less with extra exertion or higher temperatures. Dehydration is a serious problem and can also happen on cold days. In your journey into the wilderness, you should constantly carry lots of water. It is a good idea to have a plan to fill up your supply – a technique for treating the water you find in nature so it's safe to drink.

### Methods for treating water:

- **Boiling:** This is the best way to make your water safe. Just bring the water to a complete boil.

- **Chemical compounds:** Capsules containing iodine or chlorine kill bacteria and protozoa, and neutralize viruses. They have an effect on the taste and take an hour to work. However, they are light, small, and powerful.
- **Filtering:** Most filters designed for backcountry use are hand-operated pumps that pressure water through a filter screen with pores so small that micro-organisms and protozoa cannot get through. They do not weigh a lot or take up much space, but they may be high-priced. They are intended to be used on extended journeys, instead of for single emergencies.

If you have no ability to treat water and are confronted with dehydration, it is better to drink than die. Allow muddy water to stand until the silt settles to the bottom. Then use your t-shirt to strain out any other particles. Be aware of places where water may have accumulated, and prepare for outside adventures by mastering different techniques to acquire water.

A note regarding meals: Being hungry is unpleasant, but is also low on the list of survival priorities. It is more essential to regulate your body temperature, find shelter, drink enough water, and signal your location to Search and Rescue.

## *7. Signal*

Signaling for assistance is low at the list of priorities for survival, but needs to be addressed immediately and often during an emergency scenario.

Consider these strategies for attracting attention and getting help:

- **Mobile phone:** Call 911 for emergency help if you are in range of a cellular tower. If signal strength is too weak for that, even the process of trying to call or send a text message could leave an electronic “breadcrumb” which can help Search and Rescue triangulate your location.
- **Whistle:** Blow three sharp blasts when you can't find yourself on your map. Blow three sharp blasts while you build your shelter. Blow three sharp blasts as you gather wood for your fire and three more as you start it. The repeating pattern of three is a distress signal and can attract the attention of passersby you did not even know were near.

- Color and motion: Draw attention in your area with bright-colored clothes or camping equipment. Hang them where a breeze can move them, possibly by waving it like a flag.
- Smoke and fire: Having already started a fire for heat, the light at night and smoke in the course of the day might also broadcast your location. Experiment with ways to make the fire smoky without putting it out. Add damp leaves or green vegetation. Begin second and third fires about a hundred yards away from each other in a large triangle (a group of three is a distress signal).

# Chapter 5-- Skills That Will Save Your Life

## Steps for Survival in the Wilderness

If you ever find yourself trapped in the wild, it is a must that you know your top priorities to ensure which you won't be dealing with the worst-case situation:

### Day 1

Build your shelter on the first morning and make its heat sufficient, depending on the climate for the area you are in. Your shelter has to be heated, dry, and have sufficient space for storing things. Make sure that your shelter is also moderately close to a water source. Even while trying to find shelter supplies, use the opportunity to acquire firewood to make fire at night time. You can make fire with using a primitive bow-drill or even a hand drill that has thumbhole strings to lessen the effort and make it easier to get coal. Before day one ends, make several traps close to high frequency areas for small animals and pack animals.

### Day 2

Start the morning by re-stoking the previous' night's fire and take a look at your traps in case they have trapped something you could have for breakfast. Return to camp and begin both enhancing the shelter while the weather continues to be cool or processing the trapped sport. Building your shelter is some of the hardest work components of survival and you have to do that while you will be using the least calories. Continue to create many simple traps and some complicated ones for larger game. If you are near a water supply such as a stream or river, make some fish traps because they are perfect for catching. Your second day has to focus on food gathering and shelter improvement. Make sure you stay hydrated as well.

### Day 3

On the third day, you should have many traps set out that produce meals. It is your number one focus until you have sufficient resources of food to give you adequate fresh meat you may eat nearby, as well as enough extra to start storing more edibles, dried meats, and others. You can start setting

those in your next trip. While you are out, see to it you gather materials as you find them. Do not wait and return as this may just waste more energy.

#### **Day 4**

Once the fourth day comes, you will be more used to the situation, and you should already reduce your calories without dropping loads of weight. Keep enhancing your situation by adding new methods of food gathering and using the sources in the area to be prepared for something that could come. You may also start making things such as gear and drying racks to make your tasks less difficult.

Being lost in the wild shouldn't mean that you will just give up. By being wise and alert, you could absolutely make it out successfully and adequately.

#### **Essential skills and techniques to master**

There are five top outdoor survival skills that someone venturing into the great outdoors needs to know and must be aware of their abilities and needs. Take into account that this is a quick definition and not a complete explanation of all of the items and necessities needed in each category. Some of the most essential elements of survival are found right between your ears: your brain. But out of all survival techniques, not panicking is the essential one. Make sure you use your wits then exercise each detail of the following primary survival skills before the need to depend upon them arrives.

#### *Fire*

A fire is, without a doubt, the king of all survival techniques. A fire can cook food, purify water, provide heat, comfort, and calm, signal rescuers, help keep the predators away, and is also the most welcomed friend you can ever have. Of the survival methods, that is the one that is most crucial. All outdoor expeditions must have multiple ways of starting a fire, one of that is with the person all the time and another one with the equipment. Many small fires offer more heat than to a large single fire. You can gather firewood to use at night and gather a similar amount again. Keep fuel through producing a fire where only the ends of huge logs touch the fire, pushing inward when you think that more fuel is needed. Create a reflector



from the space blanket on the shelter's back wall to reflect the heat of the fire on your back. You should sit against the back shelter wall and the fire (learn how to start fire without lighter).

### *Shelter*

Something which raises or lowers your body temperature could be your biggest enemy. Your front line of shelter protection is your clothing, make sure you are carrying the right clothes that match the environment you are in. See to it which you have a hat with you at all times. Try and keep the layers against your body as dry as possible. The layers can block air and can be warmer than a single thick garment. Never burn up your energy building a shelter if nature already gives one. You could practice building a quick lean-to shelter in the event that you can't to find your campsite. Never wait until you have to make one. You can use your space blanket for preventing dampness, insulating your refuge, or wrapping around yourself in a squat or sitting position to increase the core heat of your body.

### *Signaling*

Different survival strategies are similar in that signaling gives you the ability and method to alert any local rescuers that you are in need of help. Flashing light, fire, flags, vibrant color markers, and whistles will help you be located. Fires in a triangular pattern are a known distress signal. Bank your signal fires carefully to prevent igniting the surrounding area. Use common signal mirrors when you can see people or an aircraft in the distance. Use the emergency strobe light all night to help attract attention from people that might be near your location. Create a smoky fire with natural materials over the fire for the duration of the day to attract some attention. Make ground and air signals in the open area, SOS from logs, rocks, or colored clothes, whatever you have within the area. The majority of the search and rescue teams use a plane as a search method.

### *First aid*

This survival technique isn't just a basic medical need; it is a number one way to survive. Keep calm, don't panic, and do what you need to do to attend to yourself. Keep S.T.O.P. in mind. It means sit down, think, observe, and plan. It is thought to be the smartest thing you could do after you know you are stranded or lost. The most critical detail is retaining your mental capacity, which is a basic survival resource. Analyze your needs before

every trip, buy the small first aid kit, and make a medical checklist. Almost all survival conditions call for only dressing for bruises, small cuts, and personal medication requirements; make sure you know the ways to use it and what you have with you. Prevent hypothermia by insulating yourself in the space blanket.

### *Food or Water*

These are critical to your survival. Try drinking most often in the cool of nighttime. You may live up to three days without water. Never eat plant life you don't recognize and do not drink urine. Expect that you will need more water and meals after you use your packaged meals and energy bars in your bag. If necessary, boil water for ten minutes plus a minute for each 1000ft above sea level. Strain the water through a handkerchief to remove the large particles. Do not wait until you are without water to gather more. Carry many Ziploc bags to store and collect water.

### **Outdoor survival gear**

Having the right survival equipment is crucial for anyone wanting to live in the wilderness. Whether you are a regular in the wilderness, first-time explorer, or weekend warrior, if you do not have the proper outdoor survival gear, you're asking for trouble. So, make sure to have these survival supplies necessities:

#### *Survival knife*

It has quite a few uses that make it an absolute essential for any outdoor adventure. It is your critical piece of survival gear to clear paths, cut rope, build shelters, and may come in handy while using first aid kits and starting fires.

#### *Survival backpack*

It is vital that you get a great survival backpack for when you are on your journey. Yet, what exactly do you mean by a survival backpack? It should fit enough supplies, must be water-proof, and should bring comfort at some stage in your journey.

#### *First aid kit*

Having a first aid kit could turn a severe survival emergency into a minor setback. If you do not have a first aid kit with you, you aren't respecting

your surroundings. The first aid kit is an essential thing to turn survival situations into an inconvenience, and it could make a difference to help you save your life.

### *Rope or cord*

Rope won't be important gear for camping, yet it is without a doubt beneficial, and when you find yourself in situation where you have to assemble a shelter, it might be the survival gear that could save your life.

Fun fact: things you probably didn't know about Para cord Bracelets.

### *Survival blanket or bag*

If you are stranded in isolation or ready to give up after the situations and injuries are affecting you, it's the piece of a survival kit able to give you refuge from elements and help you save your heat and energy.

### *Whistles and Some Signaling Devices*

Do you think whistles are only for children to annoy their friends or parents? Actually, many outdoor survivalists have used whistles before and they helped them survive after a tragic scenario, like the one that was used by Rose in *Titanic* after Jack died. The upside of small whistles is that they may be very light-weight and they are easy to pack.

Consequently, it is essential for a survival scenario. If you can't walk on a broken bone, if you are in need of some type of immediate help, or if you have a bad wound and your cellphone does not have signal, a sharp blow on your whistle will be the easiest and best way to survive and attract attention of other people around you. Aside from whistles, you could find a survival flashlight that projects a signal. It is easy to use, has a few capabilities like flash SOS that is useful when you are in a remote place without other people to come upon your location.

### *Compass*

Most wanderlust-driven people have tattooed compass on their bodies, and yes, you want to carry a compass in the course of your outdoor journey. It could be a beneficial piece of your survival equipment if you know how way to use it correctly. Note that you want a real compass rather than just a tattoo. There are several manufacturers of compass and maps you may find on the market these days. Just choose the one that is reasonably-priced and made with quality in mind to make sure that it is working and will provide you with the right directions you need when you head out on your

adventure outdoors. When you have a compass among your survival supplies, you will be confident that you will be capable of navigating your way, and you won't get lost if you know how to use it well.

## **Wilderness Survival vs. Primitive Living**

Even though the two terms –primitive living and wilderness survival- may be difficult to differentiate at times, they have different meanings.

According to The American History Dictionary, to “continue to exist,” is to stay in existence or alive, to persist or live through.

This definition is clear, and the situation might be that you have become lost on a week-long backpacking trip in Southern Utah's Escalante Canyons. The situation is that when crossing the river, your maps and bag had been swept away, and you are deposited at the mouth of a canyon downstream with two sprained ankles. It is an unlikely situation, but in this example, the goal is to survive until you are rescued. Assuming you have planned ahead, have left an itinerary with someone, and have a permit, you'd sit tight in the canyon, confident that you have a supply of water, preserving energy until searchers rescue you. It is a great survival situation. On the contrary, if you are on your own without giving an itinerary, you'd have to survive the situation and get yourself out. This is where your primitive living skills come into play.

The main definition of primitive is at an earliest state or level, characterized through simplicity. Therefore, you could define primitive living as assisting yourself by using early skills and methods.

It should be made clear that surviving as provided in the scenario above takes much less skill and strength than venturing into the wilderness for several days with nothing more than the clothes on your back and maybe a canteen and knife. The latter is largely an example of a primitive living exercise, and the important skills to do this can't be learned by reading about them. They should be practiced once you are skilled enough to use your skills to stay alive.

## Chapter 6--Wilderness Survival: Become an All-terrain Expert

Being capable of surviving in the wild is what separates well-intentioned survival hobbyists from proper survivalists. Anyone is capable of stockpiling items and equipment, and of sheltering in place in the face of a disaster. Not everyone is able to survive in the wild with minimal gear and a limited supply of food or water.

If your goal is to be well-prepared for a disaster situation, then your first priority has to be stocking up on survival equipment and resources, as we've discussed time and again, that nothing beats the right instruction. However, what happens when your supplies run out? What if you are stuck in a situation where, despite your best efforts, you do not have access to all the assets which you had carefully prepared? This form of scenario is when you will want to depend on your wilderness survival skills. Being able to find or navigate yourself with few resources, being capable of navigating the terrain and shielding yourself from the elements – those are competencies that our ancestors had that most people have unfortunately lost through the years. Modern-day society just does not call for being able to start a fire and not using a lighter, or being able to find water or hunt for meals. For that reason, these abilities have atrophied.

However, just because surviving in the modern world does not call for those skills does not mean that they won't, in the future, become the difference between life or death. The world may be turned on its head in an instant. So, if you want to be completely prepared for whatever the future holds, you'd do well to start mastering how to truly survive in the wilderness with minimal access to modern conveniences.

To start with, you need to be aware of the basic fundamentals of surviving in the wilderness. These fundamentals are the kind of things that even casual outdoors enthusiasts should know – central ideas such as how to navigate without a compass or a way to find shelter. Alas, many people go hiking or camping without a vague concept of even these most basic of ideas – this is often what leads to people being stranded in the wild without supplies or any idea of what to do. Don't be a dummy – even if you do not care that much about being capable of surviving in the wild for prolonged

intervals of time, if you enjoy hiking or camping or any other type of outdoor activity that involves being far away from civilization, you want to have a good sense of these primary survival fundamentals.

The biggest killer in the wild isn't lack of water or food – it is the surroundings itself. Most of the people who die in the wild fall to their deaths. The second most common reason for death is drowning. This tells you that if you know the terrain and can traverse your environment, your probabilities improve significantly.

The first thing you need to learn to overcome your environment is knowing where you are and where you are going. If you know which way safety lies in, then you aren't lost... just stranded. If you have a rest area and you know how to get there, you then have a means of escape. You just need to continue to exist until you attain safety. On the other hand, wandering aimlessly in the wild is a recipe for catastrophe. That is why any wilderness survivalist must understand how to navigate. Ideally, you are properly prepared, and you have a compass and a map with you. If a simple navigation gadget is unavailable to you, you will want to learn how to navigate without a compass.

As soon as you know which direction you need to be heading in, the next step is the ability to actually reach your rest area. In the wilderness, there often won't be roads or paths that you may observe – if there is a route to observe, then probably you aren't truly lost or stranded in the first place. Just because you know protection lies a way away doesn't mean that you will be able to travel a direct line in that direction. There can be obstructions – heavy overgrowth, cliffs, rivers, and so on. While some forms of terrain are impassable without the right equipment, some bodies of water like rivers can be crossed if you know what you are doing – and if your intention is to go in a straight line to reach safety, you don't want to be in a situation where you need to take a two-day detour to pass a river. That is why it is critical that you learn how to cross rivers, streams, and rapids – in most cases, your best chance of survival is to stick as close as possible to a direct line in the path that ends in safety.

Surviving what your surroundings have to throw at you isn't just a matter of finding your way – it is also about surviving the elements. Heat and cold can both kill right away. As we referred to earlier, falls are one of the most

common killers in the wild. Knowledge of the weather and terrain is critical to survival. For example, surviving in intense wintry weather includes completely unique considerations than surviving intense heat. Preferably, you need to be a survivalist who at the least has a passing understanding of the way to survive the unique terrains and climates that you are likely to encounter. That means having a running knowledge of surviving in the mountains (e.g., the Rocky Mountains) as well as surviving in the desert. You should understand the difference between cold weather survival gear and what you'd need in warmer weather. Gadgets such as snowshoes and skis might possibly prove life-saving in an extended, frigid wintry climate, but would serve no purpose in other conditions. In the end, if you know what you are doing, then you definitely will be capable of living to tell the tale, even in the most severe conditions.

If you have a good grasp on elements such as weather, terrain, and weather, your subsequent attention must be the core skills that help you in surviving. That means being capable of meeting your simple needs as consistent with the rule of three. The primary needs are, in order of priority: shelter, water, then food.

In terms of shelter, the best way to protect yourself from the elements when in the wild is being capable of starting a fire without tools. Being capable of regulating the temperature of your environment (especially in the cold) is critical to survival. Once you have learned basic fire-starting, you need to learn how to start a fire in other situations – that is trickier, but also very crucial. In the wild, even if it hasn't rained, things tend to be damp when you are in wilderness-like conditions (because of morning dew). Moreover, if you want a portable supply of light to navigate in when it is darkish out, you should also study how to make a primitive torch – having this skill in your back pocket will allow you maneuverability even if the sun has set.

The next thing you are going to want to survive in the wilderness is water. It is sad how terrible people have come to be at finding water, because basically every other life-form on the planet does it without trouble. The problem is, the comfort of modern life (having drinkable water available any time we want) has to lead to us forgetting what is quite a simple survival instinct.

So, the ability to find water is something we need to relearn. If you are someone who feels like they wouldn't know where to begin, make sure you understand how to find water in the wilderness. If you doubt whether or not the water supply you have found is potable, you should play it safe and find a way to distill the water for drinking. That allows you to manage with the least tools available, and you are going to want to know how to build an emergency distiller.

So, we've covered shelter/heat and water. Next is food. People can, in reality, survive for a long time without food – roughly three weeks. But, a loss of meals will cause weakness, increased risk of infection, and loss of energy. Being weak and worn-out will not help your chances of making it through the survival scenario you are in.

There are primary ways to find food in the wild. You can find, kill, and eat animals, or you can forage and eat plants. In most situations, the best thing to do is a mixture of the two. Consuming animals is usually more safe than eating plants – so long as you have access to fire, a great many animals are perfectly safe to eat, whereas toxic vegetation isn't all that uncommon. Then again, truly getting your palms on an animal tends to take extra power and know-how. With regards to foraging, you are looking for a target that you could pluck or remove from the plant. So, how do you avoid eating a toxic plant? There are hard and fast steps that any extreme survivalist need to be aware of – those steps are used to check whether or not a plant is safe to consume. You can learn those steps and about foraging for food and edible flora here. Of course, in a survival scenario, you cannot take the time to check plants for safety. In this situation, you will need to quickly be able to identify what is safe to be eaten in the wild with one look. If that is your goal, you need to make sure you already know a number of common wild edibles – this knowledge may determine your chances of survival.

When most untrained people imagine survival in the wild, they imagine hunters taking down elk or deer and roasting it over a large fire. In fact, that is a false impression. In a true wilderness survival situation, your intention is to get hold of enough sustenance (meals) for minimum effort. Hunting big game takes a large amount of power, has a decrease in fulfillment price, and calls for equipment and devices. If the focus is survival, then the small game is your best bet – animals such as squirrels, rabbits, small birds, and



other critters are more common, require less energy, and need less gadgets/tools. Learn more about trapping and hunting small game to raise your chances of surviving in the wild.

Often, fish are available in a relatively large body of water in the wild, and a wide variety of fish are safe to eat, with dangerous or toxic species being the exception instead of the rule. There are some different methods to catch fish, many of which can be rather reliable and possible to perform with minimal effort. Find out about some emergency strategies of survival fishing to ensure that you have a couple of methods to get hold of meats/proteins in the wild.

In a life or death situation, you eat anything you could get your hands on. If you come up short with small game hunting and fishing, what do you turn to as a protein source? At the same time, while it could disgust the average person, many common bugs are clearly a wonderfully healthy and safe supply of protein. Maybe not everyone can hunt, lure or fish, but most of the people can catch a worm. In a real emergency, you will be compelled to look to bugs and bugs for protein –therefore, you'd do well to know the top bugs you can eat for survival.

If you have been given basic knowledge of everything we've mentioned thus far, then you are on the way to being able to live off the land and in the wilderness. If you can stay safe, provide yourself with the basic requirements, and learn the method to find your way out of the wild, then your possibilities of survival could be better than most. If you want to stay safe, you will need to avoid a number of the common ways that people get injured in the wild. Specifically, you need to be very aware of the most common ways that people die in the wild so you can avoid meeting the same fate. On the subject of survival, knowledge is power.

We have an older article by James Roberts, which we've reproduced here in this guide that we will share with you here as well:

Fact is, sometimes, people lost in the wilderness never make it out. Even if matters do go well, and those people are located – 'located' will become the key-word. In other words, the ones lost in the wilderness do not often find a way out on their very own. This reality may be important later on.

## **Making plans for your journey into the forest or wilderness**

Before you are taking a journey into the wilderness, woods, or hills, it would be smart to think of all of the worst-case scenarios. In other words, what kinds of problems could you encounter? Similarly, what might you do in those conditions? For you to know this, of course, you will need to know something about the place in which you are visiting. Consequently, here are a two things you could do to accomplish this:

- Get an accurate map
- Talk to a safety council member, park ranger, or professional on the wilderness area in the query. Do not be afraid to contact these people as they are generally more than glad to help.

By doing this in advance of your journey into the wilderness, you might learn about the weather, animal life, suitable food resources, and possible issues you can stumble upon ahead. This, of course, may help you to avoid problems.

After those conversations, you will be better prepared to determine the types of equipment/clothes that might be necessary in a worst-case situation.

Regardless, there are things you should bring with you to make up what's known as your survival kit.

## **How to Survive in the Wilderness**

### **Survival kit**

A survival kit is a must have for any wilderness exploration. The contents needed in a survival kit may also work for trading, depending on the type of region you are going to. Regardless, you must know how to use every part to your survival kit. Beyond that, here are a few things that need to be in each kit.

1. A fire-starter (such as a butane lighter).
2. An immediate body shelter. In other words, you want something which could protect you quickly. Some examples of instant body shelters are tarps, sleeping bags, tube tents, and trash bags. You need an immediate body-

shelter that can shield you from the type of weather you might stumble upon on your trip (heat, cold, rain, and many others.).

3. First aid kit

4. Signaling tools such as flares, whistles, strobe lighting, dye markers, signal mirrors, rescue flags, and smoke signal makers.

5. A metal water container. Depending on the situation, you would possibly need something to boil water in.

6. A water filter.

7. Something to hold cash in.

8. Something to keep your extra supplies of pills in. For example, when you have high blood pressure and take the medicinal drug for it, you will want something to keep tablets in if you are living in the wilderness is prolonged.

9. A common water container.

10. Knife

11. Insect repellent

12. A cellphone (this will may or may not be able to help you).

13. Flashlight

14. That map you had used to study the region. If you know how to use a compass that might also be useful.

15. Extra garments that are suitable for the surroundings you will be staying in. Remember that in cold environments, suitable boots and gloves should be used to guard the extremities.

16. Rope and a hammock to stay off the ground in case of wet situation.

17. Compass

18. Food and water.

Of course, there are always more things that would apply to you depending on your situation and the type of wilderness you are about to go into. But, in

terms of enhanced plans, there is one thing that is just as important as anything.

### **Before you embark into the wild... learn essential wilderness survival skills**

- A way to find water in the wilderness
- A way to survive in the wilderness
- A way to find true North without a Compass
- Top 10 edible insects in the United States
- Elk hunting – final large game hunting
- Surviving in the cold: starting a fire in wet conditions
- 15 Steps to starting a fire without a match — even in the rain
- Wild meals – Foraging for food and edible plants
- Survival food: baiting reptiles, birds, small mammals, big game, and predators
- “The way back” – the way to survive in excessive conditions — Siberia

### **What to do if You Become Lost in the wilderness**

This one is easy. S.T.O.P.! Certainly, that is an acronym that serves multiple purposes. Nonetheless, the first thing to do is stop what you are doing and calm down. Your gut reaction could be to panic. Do not. Rather, do the following.’ S’- that is for the stop. At some point in time, you should truly acknowledge, without going over the issues that triggered you to wander off again and again, that you are lost. Hence, it is time to do something positive about it.

‘T’- this is for think. Do not do something at all until you assess your scenario. It is in the course of this time which you can consider whether or

not or not all of us will go over you if you do not return when you are supposed to. This is why it is important to tell a couple of people if you make a decision to go out into the wilderness. Let them know when to anticipate your return.

Also, begin to consider the possible pros and cons of every idea. Remember, when you think about the worst case scenarios before leaving, this will help you at some point in the thinking phase.

‘O’- this is for observe. This has to be done together with the thinking phase. What do you see around you that could help? What’s the terrain like? How about the weather?

‘P’- this is for a plan — survival plan. Once you have found the terrain, thought about all the possible situations, and accepted your situation, and it is time for the plan. First deal with immediate problems such as accidents, a storm on the horizon, and others. From there, be aware of what you will do depending on which scenario- which you thought about in advance.

### **A survival plan is usually to stay put**

Here’s the thing. If people know that you are out in the wilderness and are lost, someone will ultimately come looking for you. So long as others realize that you are lost and know where to look for you, usually the best thing to do is stay still (until doing so puts yourself in harm’s way). If you keep moving around, you will just make it harder for the rescue team.

So, if deciding to stay and wait it out, here are a few things to consider in your list:

*Shelter* – Remember that immediate body shelter you got. Next, go searching for caves and or tree cover that could serve to protect you from the factors. If you are in a warm area, search for something cool.

In a cold area, look for something that might serve to heat you up. Also, strive not to take a seat on a wet or snow covered ground. Instead, use a hammock, shrubbery, or another tool to keep you off the most stuff. One of the purposes of shelter, is to maintain your body temperature at a comfortable level.

Allow people to know where you are – here's where you use those signaling devices that you, with any luck, got for your survival kit. If not, find another way to attract attention. Ultimately, you need to survive.

*Hydration* – On one hand, do not just drink all the water you have on you as soon as you realize you are lost. On the other, do not wait too long to drink your water (do not wait until you are panting). Beyond what you have on you, look for other water resources.

### **What to do if There is No One Coming for You**

The best thing is that if you are reading this newsletter, then this should not happen to you. Why? Because you are smart enough to think ahead and map your experience out before you leave for wilderness areas. There is an obvious problem with being lost in the wilderness. If you are lost, then that likely means you are not the kind of person that has experience in navigating such regions. Consequently, that puts you in a bad spot. Nonetheless, here are some things that would help you with the path if you do not have a compass, and also you are sure that no one will be coming to search for you.

1. Moss typically grows most plentifully at the northern side of rocks.
2. Spider webs have a tendency to be on the south side of trees.
3. Know that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. Similarly, you could attempt putting a stick in the ground and noting wherein the shadow ends. Then wait some time before you note where it ends a second time. The path between the two points is going east to west. From there, the sun should tell you where north is.
4. Know how to find true north by finding the north star.
5. The best case situation, of course, is that the map you brought with you helps you out.

If you have been lost in the woods and did not know where you were going in any respect, you would possibly need to travel in only one direction (north, south, east, or west) or risk going in circles. Also, each time you stopped, you'd want to pay attention to where you were.

## **Avoid being lost – maps, compasses, and planning**

Getting lost in the wilderness is something that may be avoided. That said, as long as you told people where you had been going and when you were coming back, rescuers will sooner or later come for you. In those situations, it is generally best to stay put and look for someone to find you. Regardless, do not just go out into the wilderness without any forethought — such as forgetting to pack a map, compass, knife, and lighters. Plenty of people who have done this would let you know — if they could — that it is a horrible idea to go into the wilderness unprepared.

If you are driving through the mountains, pack some important survival equipment, food, and water — what happens if you are knocked off the road by another automobile that has lost control, or hit a patch of ice and gone down a ravine? That is how you can come to be in a survival situation in the wilderness.

In addition, speak to those informed about the area before stepping into it (those people can come up with more specific and unique data than any article), create the best survival kit, and have a map. This and the aforementioned should help you survive.

## **Best Wilderness Survival Tips**

We don't know an awful lot about survival skills in our modern society. The whole thing takes place on the surface of a screen, and we generally have our basic needs met with ease.

However, what happens when you are lost, stranded, or injured, and you want to keep yourself safe from harm?

Do you know the simple skills necessary to stay alive long enough to get to safety?

The general public can't say with any truth that they would know the way to survive in a wilderness scenario.

Many people even believe survival myths that could hurt or kill them.

That is why we've created this list of 50 of the best wilderness survival tips that might mean the difference between life and death.

### **1. Stay calm**

Controlling your mind-set is fundamental. Stay calm and take stock of your assets and instant survival needs. It is okay to be a little afraid, but do not allow yourself to succumb to it.

## **2. Make shelter**

If you have brought a tarp or similar item, that can be used as a shelter. If not, you will need to build something out of your available resources. A lean-to is inadequate on its own, so add sides and insulation by filling gaps among logs.

## **3. Collect water**

Finding water is your second highest survival priority. Be wary of standing water such as lakes or puddles as these may be full of pathogens and bacteria. A running stream or river is best. However, even this water must be purified before drinking. Boil the water over a fire, or make a water filter (see below).

## **4. Start a fire**

Start your fire with a small tinder package fabricated from leaves, grass, small twigs, or pine needles. With luck, you have brought along a flint and steel or a lighter. If not, improvise a magnifying glass with water and a clear plastic bag to focus the sun's rays and start a fire.

## **5. Keep the fire burning**

As soon as your fire starts, make sure the smoke can blow around. To this end, stack your fuel in a cone shape around your burning tinder. Add smaller branches and logs first and get them burning well before you add thicker longer-burning logs.

## **6. Navigate**

Learning to navigate is important. A compass is essential. However, there are other tricks you can use to find your way. Remember that the sun rises



in the east and sets in the west. Find the big north star using the Big Dipper constellation — the North Star is at the bottom of the Dipper's handle.

### **7. Carry two signal mirrors**

If rescuers are flying to find you, use mirrors to capture their attention. One signal duplicator isn't always reliable due to the changing angles of the sun. Use the second mirror to reflect light off the first to make sure you can be seen from above.

### **8. Catch small game**

It takes an excessive amount of energy to hunt large animals, so focus on rabbits, squirrels, and fish for meat. Learn to make a snare to capture them, or make a spear out of sharpened sticks. Bonus tip: use the bones and be sure to discard the entrails far away from your place to avoid attracting predator animals.

### **9. Create a smoke signal**

The smoke from your campfire is not enough to attract rescuers' attention. Make a smoke signal with the brush, which includes pine and spruce leaves, to create thick, heavy smoke.

### **10. Make a water filter**

Most of the water in the wild has to be filtered to get rid of the dust, debris, and other contaminants. Use a container and poke small holes into it with your knife or a sharpened stick. Then, fill the bottle up to two inches with a layer of coarse gravel, a layer of coarse sand, some charcoals from your fire, and a layer of top sand. Pour the water in, and as it travels through each layer, impurities will be filtered out.

### **11. Make char cloth**

Take a small piece of fabric and place it inside a steel container with a cover. Then place the container in a fire for a couple of minutes. When the material is dark from having been burned but continues to be intact, you

have successfully made a char cloth. Char cloth is a great fire starter as it catches with a small spark, saving you time and energy gathering tinder.

### **12. Keep aluminum foil**

The uses aluminum foil is endless in a survival scenario. Use it to make dishes and cooking utensils, or to protect your shelter from heat. Use it as a dry surface to start a fire. To save space, do not carry an entire roll. Instead, fold up some large sheets and tuck them into your bag.

### **13. Bring extra socks**

In addition to keeping your toes warm and dry, socks can be used for a number of other purposes. A sock could make a water filter in a pinch, or you could put them on your hands for extra warmth.

### **14. Treat blisters**

Blisters can be painful and can slow you down as you travel. Avoid blisters by covering your toes in duct tape, decreasing friction as you walk. If you already have a blister, puncture it with a sanitized pin or needle on either side to empty the fluid and then cover it.

### **15. How to waterproof**

Waterproofing spray is great to have; however, if you do not have any, make sure your sleeping area and fire are protected. You can use a hammock or logs to raise your body off the ground. Cover your shelter with pine branches to allow rain to run off the shelter.

### **16. Protection from animals**

If you come across a wolf or coyote, do not run or play dead. Look the animal in the eye and slowly back away.

### **17. Find edible plants**

Know what plants are edible and which could make you sick or kill you. This requires studying a guide to make yourself familiar with fit edible flora. Even when you learn about this vegetation, don't consume a plant if you are uncertain. Common edible plants consist of cattail, wild grass, dandelion, and acorns.

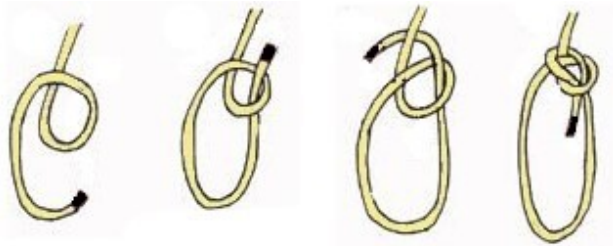
### **18. Deal with small cuts**

Any time your skin is broken, you are at risk for infection. An infection can worsen and become a serious problem, so it is important to deal with cuts as soon as possible. Do not wash a wound with dirty water. Use only filtered and purified water to wash the wound thoroughly, and bind it with a bandage from your first aid kit.

### 19. Take care of hygiene

Some hygiene practices can be largely omitted in a long-term survival scenario, but others need to be followed. Keeping your teeth clean will prevent painful tooth infections. Fashion a toothbrush from birch bark, or just scrub your enamel smooth with a fabric. Try to also keep areas where skin touches skin (such as armpits, groin, and between toes) clean and dry to prevent micro-organism and fungus buildup.

### 20. Learn knots



A bowline is the kind of knot that gets tighter the harder you pull — a real multi-purpose knot. When you make a loop, remember this: the rabbit comes out of the hole, in front of the tree, behind the tree, and back through its original hole.

### 21. Prepare meals away from your shelter

When you catch a small animal for food, make sure to skin and gut the animal far away from your fire and shelter and discard the leftovers. This can prevent any predatory animals from catching the heady scent of the kill and paying your campsite a visit for some meals of their own.

### 22. Other ways to find water

Rain is the most obvious way to collect water; however, what if it doesn't rain? You may also gather water from the trees, which “sweat” water at

some point of the day.

### **23. Do not travel at night time**

Traveling through the wilderness in the dark is dangerous. Most predatory animals are nocturnal, which means they'll see you long before you see them. There are dangers in the terrain that you may not see at night, too. You could fall off a cliff or right into a pit if you may cannot see where you are going.

### **24. Sleep raised**

Make a hammock out of a tarp or strong poncho, or raise your sleeping area off the ground with logs.

### **25. Carry extras**

You never know when a supply item could fail, so always have several options for emergency use. Have two or three options for fire-starting and waterproofing, a backup knife, several ponchos or garbage bags, and additional water pouches available at all times.

### **26. Carry hand sanitizer**

Hand sanitizer has a variety of uses in a survival scenario. It could be used to treat small wounds, and because it is so high in alcohol content, it is very flammable. Put some drops to your tinder bundle or a small material and light it, and your fire may be burning right away.

### **27. Carry duct tape**

You have heard that “duct tape fixes everything,” and it is in never more true than in an emergency. You can use duct tape to enhance your waterproofing efforts, give a boost to your supply bag, prevent blisters, deal with injuries, fix items, and help you make equipment.

### **28. Use charcoal to purify water**

As you learned in the tip about how to make a water filter, charcoal is beneficial to purify water. It has absorptive properties that could eliminate contaminants from lake or river water. Always save some chunks from your fire, and you will always have some charcoals on hand.

### **29. Keep rope on hand**

The rope is useful for making shelter, hunting, and many other things. If you do not have rope in your bag, you can make rope by braiding together the soft ribbon like fibers observed underneath willow bark.

### **30. Learn survival fishing**

If you are near a water source, fishing is the most convenient way of finding food. Because fish swim with the current, you will trap more fish if you cast your bait into the current while fishing. This can ensure the bait lands in front of the fish as opposed to behind.

### **31. Invest in a good backpack**

Tactical packs are made from a long-lasting, weather-resistant material, a good way to guard your supplies and keep them properly prepared. Organizing your bag is essential so that you will be able to find what you need fast. True tactical backpacks are lightweight, so one can preserve energy.

### **32. Use your watch to navigate**

If you don't have a compass, you can use a watch to navigate. Point the hour hand at the sun and draw two imaginary lines between it and the 12 o'clock point. This should create an angle, after which draw an imaginary line bisecting the center. Because of the solar movements from east to west, the road pointing away from the sun is the north.

### **33. Keep your cellphone**

In a pinch, you could start a fire with your cellphone battery. Look for survival apps you may use offline.

### **34. Use a poncho**

Keep many extra ponchos in your bag. Use them not only to cover yourself in the rain, but to collect rainwater, to shield your shelter from the rain, or as a barrier between the ground and your bed. Stuff them with leaves for added insulation, like a makeshift bed.

### **35. The universal wave**

In addition to light or smoke indicators, you have to utilize the customary wave to communicate with rescuers. Stand upright and hold your arms in the form of a "Y" to get their attention as they fly overhead.

### **36. Collect fat wood**

“Fat wood” is always made from pine trees. It is effective both as a fire-starter and as an insect repellent, so it is a good idea to gather and keep within reach.

### **37. Keep good tools**

You can waste quite a lot of energy trying to make tools out of sticks and animal bones. It is advisable to always have tools accessible. A good knife, a multi-tool, a saw, and a shovel can go a long way towards your survival.

### **38. Surround your fire with rocks**

Rocks around a fire will keep the fire’s heat long after the fire is out. You could even use small warm stones from a fire to boil water. To do this, drop the stone right into a metal container of water and the stone will bring the water to a boil.

### **39. Do not eat snow**

It sounds like a good way to stay hydrated, but snow is made of more air than water. It takes your body more energy to consume the snow than to drink water. Instead, melt snow and drink it as water.

### **40. Pack a Mylar blanket**

These space-age blankets don’t look like much. However, they are made from reflective cloth that traps your body’s heat. In the cold, they may be life savers. In the heat, they may be used to reflect the sun’s rays away from your shelter.

### **41. Invest in waterproof matches**

When regular matches get wet, their chemical composition changes, and they don’t work anymore. If you are packing matches, make sure they are water-resistant.

### **42. Learn to predict the weather**

By searching at the sun or moon, you can determine if there could be rain. A halo across the sun or moon indicates oncoming rain in 36 hours.

### **43. Wear a survival bracelet**

Survival bracelets made of Para cord have grown to be popular amongst outdoors fanatics. These can be used as a rope to help make shelter or bind objects.

#### **44. Make your tools visible**

Paint the handles of your tools with vibrant orange paint to make them visible. You do not need to spend valuable time and energy looking for your tools if you drop them on the ground.

#### **45. Do not cross river rapids**

Even if you are a strong swimmer, do not risk crossing a rapid river. You may get sucked right into a powerful current and drown. Even if you live to tell the tale, you will expend an excessive amount of energy in the attempt.

#### **46. Carry glow sticks**

Glow sticks can help rescuers find you at night. The unnatural light from a glow stick easily catches attention. Tie them on your backpack or your shelter to help others in find your location.

#### **47. Chop wood without an axe**

Be cautious with this tip, so you do not hurt your leg. Just place the wood pieces diagonally against the ground and a tree. Kick the wood using an equal amount of force and energy.

#### **48. Organize your pack**

As noted above, keep your pack and supplies nicely organized so you can find what you need easily. Take special care with your fire-starters so that they are always on hand.

#### **49. Know about medicinal plants**

Knowing what plants will help treat medical issues will help. Willow bark tea, charcoal, dock leaves, and pine are easily available and can help deal with these issues.

#### **50. Stay cool in the heat**

When you make a shaded shelter, it is a good idea to dig a few inches into the ground to make a cooler floor. Cover your shelter with aluminum foil, shiny side out, to deflect heat away from your refuge. In extremely hot conditions, soak a cloth in urine and tie it around your head to stay cool.

### **51. Stay warm in the cold**

Build a heat reflector around your fire to keep the wind from blowing most of the heat away. Research layering clothes to maintain heat, and be sure your base layer is a wicking material to keep moisture away from your body.

### **52. Practice, practice, practice**

Certainly, reading survival skill guides will help you in the wild. Practice those tips as often as possible to prepare yourself for any emergency situation. The more prepared you are, the better your chances for survival.



## Chapter 7--Basic First Aid

The vast majority of injuries outdoors are minor and easily treatable. When gathering resources in the wilderness, most of the time your purpose is to keep a circumstance from getting worse so you can continue on with your journey. That said, it is important to be prepared for any scenario.

The primary thing you need in a wilderness first aid training course is how to evaluate an affected person, which includes the following steps:

1. Evaluate the scene
2. Become aware of hazards
3. Take a good look: head-to-toe check, vital signs, and patient history
4. Make an injury and care plan, which involves an evacuation decision
5. Treat the affected person, providing each clinical and emotional help
6. Review how the patient is doing

We recommend you take a wilderness first aid class to learn each primary patient evaluation and ways to deal with a variety of medical situations. REI has partnered with NOLS Wilderness Medicine to offer that training at many REI stores.

Remember: protection is your duty. No article or video can replace the recommendation of either physician or professional instruction. Make sure you are practiced in the right techniques and safety necessities before you administer the first aid.

### Wilderness First Aid Vs. “City” First Aid

If you have already had some modern first aid training, it is really worth noting that wilderness first aid may be different. There are four important factors:

- Time: It is a long way to the doctor’s office, and wilderness search and rescue employees can’t respond as fast as 9-1-1 in the city. In the backcountry, it could be hours or days until your patient gets expert care so you want to be equipped to use

emergency resources and to take care of that person for a long time period.

- **Surroundings:** You can face extremes of weather and unique types of physical hazards than you will face in the city.
- **Resources:** When you are administering aid in the wilderness, you are limited to what's in your bag and what you could use from your surroundings. Good wilderness medical training has to cover what to keep in your first aid kit.
- **Communication:** Even with improved cellphone reliability, your ability to call for help from the wilderness is limited; that means your care might be the patient's only option.

## **Preparing to Give Wilderness First Aid**

Say you are out hiking and come upon someone who is bleeding and unconscious. Your first instinct is likely to run to them to help. However, you want to make sure you do not become a casualty yourself, and that you know the situation before hurrying to begin treatment. That is why you want to follow these steps before doing anything:

1. **Determine whether the area is safe:** make sure no further danger is near—for both patient and responders. If a rockslide caused the damage, for instance, you would possibly want to move the patient out of the way of further rock fall.
2. **Determine the Mechanism of Harm (MOI).** Look around to determine what may have brought on the twist of fate or incident. That gives you clues to the type of injuries that are likely present.
3. **Determine the number of patients.** Do not assume that the most obviously injured individual is the only one in need of evaluation and care.

## **Wilderness first aid: initial patient assessment**

After you have decided that it is safe, you can begin treating your patient. Your next steps need to be to discovering any immediate threats to the patient's life. Before you begin a preliminary life-risk exam, begin with these steps:

- **Attain consent to treat** (if the person is awake). Ask the individual if you can help. If the answer is "yes," then ask their

name, symptoms, and what happened.

- Check for responsiveness. Attempt to wake the patient if they aren't responding. (If there is a chance of a spine injury, you want to carefully place your palms on both sides of the person's head and keep the patient still.)

next, you will begin your life-risk exam. NOLS calls this "ABCDE" tests, using a mnemonic tool that will help you remember the steps:

1. Airway test: look in the mouth and take a look in the airway for obstructions.
- 1.
2. Breathing test: look carefully at the chest; listen and feel for signs of breathing.
3. Circulatory test: check for a pulse and for wounds that are bleeding.
4. Disability test: If you can't rule out a spine injury, continue to protect it.
5. Discover injuries: without moving the patient, remove clothing covering serious injuries so that you can fully evaluate and treat them.

Whether you take a look at for predominant bleeding (C) first or for respiration troubles (A and B) first depends on your preliminary judgment on the scene. If you suspect a major wound, take a look at and stabilize it first.

Deal with any immediately life-threatening conditions found at any stage in the ABCDE exam. Those might include getting rid of airway obstructions, doing CPR, or making use of direct pressure to stop bleeding. As soon as the patient is out of immediate danger, you may start an extra-thorough exam.

### **Wilderness first aid: Secondary patient assessment**

When you have executed your preliminary patient evaluation, you will accumulate statistics to make your treatment plan, make your evacuation choice, and to move on to medical specialists who later care for the patient.

You may also decide to relocate the patient to a more stable, sheltered site at this time.

The techniques below highlight key parts of the secondary exam. A wilderness first aid course will take you through the technique detailed in each section:

### **First aid responder doing a head-to-toe exam of their patient**

Do a head-to-toe examination: start by making sure your palms are clean, warm, and gloved. Then explain to the patient what you are doing: methodically going over all areas of the body seeking out clues about injuries or infection.

Your evaluation consists of several techniques for detection:

- Look: for blood and other bodily fluids, discoloration or unusual shapes
- Listen: for airway noises or uncommon sounds when joints are moved
- Feel: for wounds, deformities and surprising hardness, softness or tenderness
- Smell: for uncommon odors
- Ask: if anything hurts or feels atypical or numb

### **First aid responder checking for patient's wrist pulse**

Check vital signs and symptoms: record the time and write all of the essential symptoms down. One helpful tip is to write them down on a chunk of tape and place it on the patient's leg, so the data travels with them when extra help arrives.

Here's what you will take notes on:

- Degree of responsiveness: Is the patient awake and alert? Wide awake and disoriented? Or is your patient subconscious or unresponsive?
- Heart beat: using the wrist pulse, take a look at the wide variety of beats according to the minute and note whether or not the pulse is strong or weak; regular or irregular.

- Respiration rate: test the patient's number of breaths by counting for a minute and note if the respiration is simple or labored.
- Skin signs and symptoms: take a look at skin color, temperature, and moisture. The eye or lip are accurate places to check for color. Is it red or faded? Is the feeling of their skin warm and dry vs. cool and clammy? If possible, also record the patient's temperature with a thermometer.

### **First aid responder and patient discussing patient records**

Do patient records: Ask questions to find information that will help you with your assessment and treatment. For instance, you could possibly find that your patient missed taking important medicines or did not drink enough water on a warm day.

To cover the critical topics, ask them about the following:

Primary complaint: What's your most extensive problem? When did it begin? What makes it worse or better? Where is it located? How bad is it?

#### **What is their medical history?**

Signs: Ask if the patient can offer additional information about the primary grievance, or if they have other situations or issues.

Allergic reactions: Are there severe ones? (Food and medications are common ones; also ask about bees.) What are the patient's reactions to their allergies?

Medicines: Get as many details as possible for both prescription and over-the-counter drugs.

Pertinent medical records: find if they have any clinical conditions that require them to see medical doctor for treatment.

Last fluid/food intake, last urine/bowel output: How long ago and what kind?

Situation: Ask if they know what caused the event and for information leading up to it.

### **Wilderness First Aid: Creating a Treatment Plan**

Go over all the facts you have accumulated and made a treatment plan together with anticipated issues. Then comply with your plan while

monitoring the patient's health closely and making sure that they are as comfortable as possible.

Taking wilderness first aid courses will help you learn about a ramification of medical troubles, and what you need to do for them, which include:

- spine and head injuries
- shock
- wounds and infections, burns and blisters
- bone and soft-tissue injuries
- heat exhaustion and heat stroke
- hypothermia and frostbite
- altitude sickness
- lightning-related injuries
- Hypersensitive reactions (which include snakes, scorpions, and bugs)
- Chest pain, shortness of breath, altered mental state

Making an evacuation decision: every time a situation is extreme, you have to determine whether or not to evacuate and by what approach: helicopter, carried by rescuers, or with you and the patient walking by your own accord. This is a complicated choice based on specific signs, how the patient is doing, the supply of rescue sources, and the remoteness of your location, among other things.

### **Wilderness first aid pointers**

If feasible, have a person of the same gender carry out the top-to-toe examination.

Have someone help the examiner by using writing down observations and vital signs and symptoms.

Assign different tasks, such as boiling water for drinking or setting up place camp, so that the patient knows care is orderly and all rescuers have a role.

Try to keep the patient clean, warm, and calm. If you are waiting for assistance to arrive, things such as shelter, sustenance, and general nursing care might be key to keeping the patient well.

Fluids are more important than food; avoid caffeinated and sugary liquids.

### **Provide emotional support and empathy**

Inform the patient about all aspects of care and involve them in evacuation choices.

Restock and/or supplement your first aid kit before every trip (do not remember a larger tube of antibiotic ointment and extra dressing materials, amongst other things).

## **10 Survival first aid suggestions for the outdoorsman**

Venturing into the great outdoors is a favorite pastime for plenty of people. Each year, people spend their time hiking, rafting, and exploring the outside. But, there are dangers you should look out for when having fun outdoors.

There is a variety of troubles you can run into, which include insect bites, infections, sunburn, snake bites, heat stroke, and dehydration.

Cold weather poses a whole additional set of demanding situations for campers, especially in those used to hot weather. People who have pre-existing medical conditions may also run out of medicine or have problems like hypersensitive reactions. While there are many situations to bear in mind, it is possible to have a great time in the wilderness and live safely. You just need to understand the fundamentals. Here are ten survival first aid tips to keep in mind if you want to help.

### **1. Learn CPR**

One of the most precious skills you can have in the wilderness is CPR. This stands for cardiopulmonary resuscitation, a method that uses a chain of rescue respiration and chest compression. The goal of this technique is to keep a person alive until help can arrive.

CPR is essential to preventing brain death. Rapid action can save a life. For CPR to be effective, the patient's body temperature has to be above ninety degrees Fahrenheit. Chest compression must be rapid and hard, on the lower part of the sternum.

The idea behind compression is to maintain blood circulating in the body, so it reaches the brain.

*CCR*

Another technique used in the discipline is CCR, which stands for cardio-cerebral resuscitation. This is just like CPR, but it involves only using chest compression, no rescue respiration.

Each strategy has the ability to save lives while in the wilderness. Before you leave on your next expedition, remember to take a CPR class given through the American Heart Association. This can ensure you have the right training to help those in need.

Know how to clean and treat a wound

Whenever you are in the wilderness, you have the possibility of being wounded. While as most wounds are not extreme and do not require a lot more than cleansing, others can be extreme.

An irrigation syringe is a critical tool for wounds. It may be used to run clean water over a wound once you wash it with clean soap. This facilitates disbursements of particles and contamination-causing materials.

**Know what's in your first aid kit and what the whole thing is used for**

A properly stocked first aid kit is an essential part of being outside. You could either buy a pre-made package or make one yourself.

Acetaminophen, ibuprofen, and antibiotic lotions are only some items you may want. Other essential items include sunscreen, a whistle, cellphone charger, and a water-resistant flashlight.

More information regarding first aid kits can be found at the American Red Cross.

*Treat sprains*

If you are often in the wilderness, you may end up with sprains sooner or later. This is a risk that plagues hikers and rock climbers but can happen to anybody.

Knees, ankles, and elbows are the most commonly sprained joints. Minor sprains are usually soothed using the RICE technique, which stands for relaxation, ice, compression, and raise. Use cold packs for the first 24 hours after injury. After that, heat packs can also lessen pain well.

You must have compression bandages for your first aid kit and OTC pain medications to ease the pain. Knowing the way to treat sprains before you are in the situation is key to getting the pain underneath control fast.



## **Recognize dehydration early**

Dehydration can happen very rapidly when you are outside in the sun and heat, especially when you are moving. This condition can be sneaky, and symptoms can arise unexpectedly. Dehydration occurs when you lose more body fluids than you are taking in. When you are busy outside, it may be easy to forget to drink enough water or sports drinks. This means your body is in need of fluid, especially after urinating and sweating.

Dehydration can happen to all of us; however, toddlers and elderly people are at the greatest risk.

There are some early warning signs and symptoms that could suggest someone is dehydrated.

Those consist of not generating tears, dry mouth, skin that sags when you pinch it, and dry eyes.

When you have babies or small kids, it is always crucial to make sure they have adequate fluid consumption even when you are outdoors. The best way of treating dehydration is to prevent it from happening in the first place.

Dehydration may be serious. If you see the early warning signs and symptoms of dehydration, you should get medical attention fast to avoid extreme complications.

## **Treat burns efficiently**

Burns are one of the most painful accidents you could have. Alas, burns frequently arise when camping in the wilderness.

If this happens to you, it is important to know the way to deal with burns successfully.

You will want to know the difference in treating chemical burns and burns from heat sources like the fire. Further, everyone in your party needs to know the way to stop, drop, and roll to prevent a fire from spreading. The short motion reduces the amount of area burned at the body. Moderate burns are more easily dealt with in the wilderness than extreme burns. However, if anyone suffers a severe and painful burn, medical treatment must be sought.

## **Understand hypothermia**

Hypothermia is the second main cause of death in the wilderness. When the temperature of the body drops underneath ninety-five degrees Fahrenheit, hypothermia can set in.

That is a life-threatening condition and requires emergency treatment as quickly as possible. Before heading out into the wilderness, you want to understand hypothermia and how to avoid it.

Hypothermia can occur when you are exposed to cold weather or wet conditions.

Being in cold water also can cause this condition to occur. Experts say that if you fall into cold water and can't get out in 5 to 15 minutes, you may not be able to get out without help. Depending on the temperature of the water, you have 90 to 180 minutes before suffering a cardiac arrest from hypothermia.

If you are prone to getting hypothermia outside, avoid ingesting alcohol. In addition to inflicting impaired judgment, alcohol dilates your blood vessels. This slows the blood from being distributed to the rest of your body, and also you lose treasured body heat at a quicker rate.

There are some signs of hypothermia that make it easy to recognize.

In most people, shivering is the first sign your body is too cold. That is the way the body attempts to heat itself.

If you begin having trouble talking or walking, get assistance immediately.

More information is available about hypothermia and the way to avoid it at the Wilderness Skills Institute.

### **Be prepared**

In addition to taking along a first aid kit, consider taking a wilderness survival book with you. While you likely will not need it, these books contain information that could save your life if an emergency arises. It is easy to panic during outdoor situations. Panic is the leading cause of death in the outdoors.

On your adventures, make sure to pack lots of food and water, in case you stay longer than you intend.

There are also many small items that every hiker, camper, hunter, outdoorsman, and so forth, need to have on them at all times.

Taking the time to be prepared is the best way to keep from having an emergency when you are outdoors. If you have lots of equipment handy and feel assured in your capability to handle any situation, you will have more fun.

### **Live healthily**

Being in top bodily condition is another way to survive while you are outside. The better shape your body is in, the much more likely you are to swim or walk lengthy distances for help if needed.

Consuming a diet rich in lean protein, whole grains, vegetables, and fruit on a regular basis is the best way to ensure health and energy.

### **Top 10 Tools for First Aid Kits**

A first aid kit that is accessible in times of crisis should be mandatory for every house and vehicle. First aid kits can be purchased pre-assembled, or each item can be purchased individually, depending on personal preferences. Nonetheless, any first aid kit will include simple products.

### **First aid guide**

A first aid handbook should be included with any first aid kit. This guide will help you in the treatment of fractures, sprains, bites, and other health problems. Before a disaster happens, the guide should be reviewed, so those who use the kit will know the fundamentals of first aid.

### **Tweezers**

Tweezers are an effective resource in any first aid kit, regardless of the specific design of the kit. Tweezers can be used for extracting debris from a wound, for example, glass, gravel, or splinter. These could be used to remove bees' stingers.

### **Swabs in alcohol**

Alcohol wipes are used before antibiotic ointment or bandages are applied in the area to clean up the contaminated or wounded region. Alcohol swabs can be used with anesthetic swabs and, if necessary, can be used to sterilize tweezers.

### **Antibiotic ointment**

The antibiotic ointment can be used to treat many forms of infections and helps to properly heal the wound. The antibiotic ointment also helps to prevent the infection from being infected and should be given after thorough cleaning of the area.

### **Bandages**

Multi-size adhesive bandages can form part of a first aid kit. Try buying a package of various types of bandages and adding some of them to the kit. Standard bandages are more necessary than the smallest and largest sizes, and it is also a good idea to add some additional bandages if necessary.

### **Pads of gauze**

Adhesives are not often wide to cover a wound; therefore, it is necessary to have a first aid kit with gauze pads. Gauze pads may be used or added to a bloody bandage. Gauze pads are available in several sizes and should be supplied in each kit.

### **Medical tape**

Surgical tape is used as it is used with bandages to protect gauze pads or wraps. This tape is designed to remove residues and is generally in a long roll.

### **Flexible bandages**

Flexible bandages allow a sprained joint to stay motionless and decrease swelling. The Flexible bandages are fitted with hook and loop or metal fixtures. You should tie these lightweight bandages around the feet, knees, wrists, and elbows before you see a doctor. Such bandages range between one and six inches in width.

### **Pain Relievers**

A variety of pain relievers are needed for any first aid kit. Pain relievers such as aspirin and non-aspirin should always be included in the pack. If the house has babies, make sure that pain relievers intended for them are included. These may also be used for mild discomforts and pains when treating a deep scratch or wound.

### **Instant cold pack**

Many medical professionals recommend that an injury be iced to avoid swelling. The cold pack is not cold until the seal is broken on the box, and

the material is triggered. This form of cold pack is suitable for simple first aid kits, as it requires no freezing.

## TOP 11 ITEMS

Here are the top 11 absolute must-have medical supplies for kits:

1. First Aid Manual
2. Gloves/eye protection
3. CPR mask for Pocket
4. Tweezers
5. Magnifying glass
6. Four r gauze pads
7. Surgical tape
8. Two triangular bandages
9. Splint
10. Flexible bandage
11. Medical scissors

Also, consider adding

- 20 mL syringe and irrigation cap
- benzoic tincture
- biodegradable soap
- Opposite Flexi-Grip Film

Also, for remote environments and situations, all other items necessary for the management of wounds should be included starting from anesthetics , medical staples and a surgical scalpel.

## Conclusion

Through deciding on versatile supplies such as multi-tools and bandanas, securing an array of easy-to-make meals, and arranging an excellent distribution of weight in your bag, you can prepare yourself for a worry-free outdoor adventure.

You will remember the things you need to live safely in regular life and then adapt them to fit outdoor life. Once your bag is packed, you will be geared up to dive into the next adventure: using a blend of tech and nature's navigation equipment to find your way in the wilderness.

Stay calm and determine actions, not based on your emotions, but on logical plans for survival. Focus on the right survival priorities and preserve your strength. 95% of all rescues are successful in less than two days, so your unexpected trip should be quickly resolved.