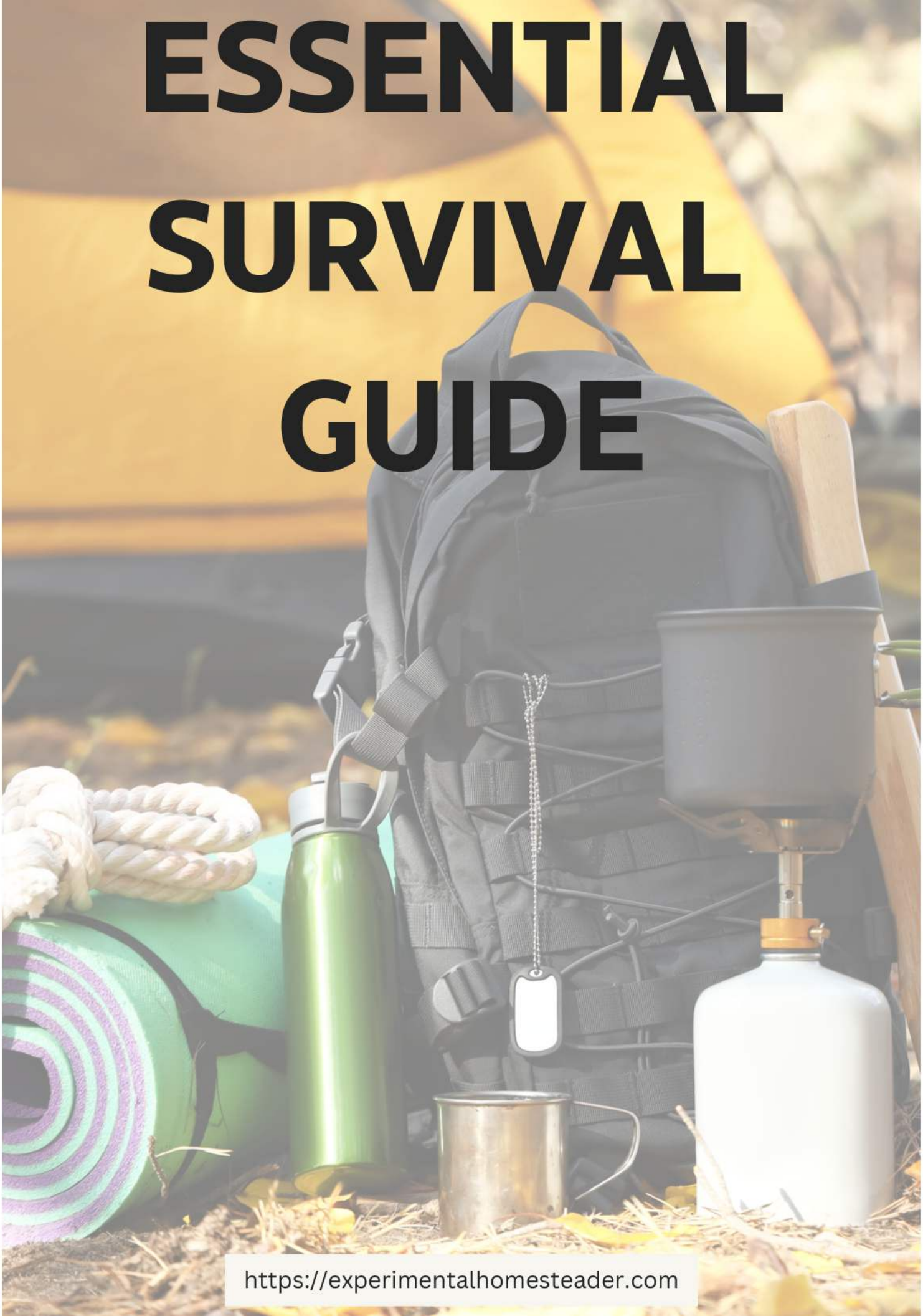
ESSENTIAL SURVIVAL GUIDE



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Why You Need To Know Survival

Natural calamities such as earthquakes, typhoons, flash floods, volcanic eruptions and hurricanes can strike your area with little or no warning. During any paid vacation or planned hiking trip, you can lose your luggage and supplies to factors beyond your control. Your backpack containing all your food and camping gear may fall into a ravine. Your matches could get wet in a sudden wind gust or torrential rain. You might get lost in the wilderness and get tracked by predators or see poisonous insects and snakes off the beaten path. You might trip or fall off a high edge and break your bones.

Outside the comfort of your own home, the world is an unpredictable and cutthroat environment. Even as human beings used to modernity, there is a need to reconnect to our animal sides and understand how our ancestors lived and survived since ancient and barbaric times. In essence, the world hasn't changed much, and that side of ourselves should stay intact for times like these.

A current theme in TV is the post-apocalyptic world where groups of people must survive. Popular series like Lost and The Walking Dead feature the social dynamics of human survival in contexts where the world has become a more hostile environment just recently stripped of basic necessities like food, shelter and clothing. The gravity of survival situations can be extremely stressful.

Before anything else, it is important to have the right mindset and mental preparedness to survive no matter what the odds are. True survivors are those who possess the will to live through life and death situations as opposed to those who crumble in the face of sheer adversity. Even trained experts and professionals can fail and put others at risk if they lack the endurance and perseverance, and many stories have been written about common people with little or no training and experience who made it through miles of jungle terrain and open water.

In survival training, you can learn the skills and know the right tools to ensure you'll live through a hiking trip gone wrong or any apocalyptic scenario. Build a survival kit that you can carry with you in your vehicle or back pocket that you can pop open quickly in case of emergency. It should contain handy items such as band aids, aspirin, flashlights, matches, compass, a Swiss army knife, sewing kit, water pouch, fishing hooks and possibly a map.

Learn to light a fire without using a lighter or matches since these can get wet during winter or in the rainy season. Build a shelter to protect yourself against the elements if your tent in ruined or destroyed and you are miles away from any proper lodgings. Know which plants are edible or poisonous when your food storage is close to depletion. Look at the clouds to understand the weather patterns and cover yourself in

case a snow or rain storm is approaching. Cure and dilute stream water to turn it into drinking water as you won't last very long in the wilderness if you don't hydrate yourself regularly. It may not be a usual experience to encounter a serious predator like a bear or lion, but you can increase your chances of staying alive by knowing how to act and even scare off your attacker.

Humanity has adapted and evolved in order to survive as it took ages before we moved from the forest to the urban jungles of the cityscape. This is no excuse for you to believe you don't have to go back to the woods to regain the primal side of your instincts. If you want to remind yourself of that fact, just look to the news and you'll realize that entire homes and cities are torn apart by disasters on a daily basis. You never know when you and your family could be the next to experience a survival scenario. On the other hand, it's the cool and manly thing to do for yourself.

Common Mistakes Of Wilderness Survival

It starts out with an innocently planned hiking trip: you've checked your gear twice, stuffed your backpack with as many necessities as you can think of and asked other travelers about the trail you wish to conquer. You're brimming with confidence and can't wait to put yourself on the line against the deep dark woods. However, unforeseen accidents do happen and your bravado won't be enough to pull you through with your limbs intact.

Before you set out, learn from others' mistakes to save you the trouble. Here are several common mistakes of wilderness survival:

1) Underestimating the risk and/or gravity of the situation.

You may be confident that you are in familiar territory you've hiked and camped in again and again. However, you will inevitably be caught off guard as a predator attacks, a poisonous snake suddenly bites your ankle, a snowstorm hits your area or you get trapped in a forest fire. Your lack of experience translates to an inability to react well to extreme situations, leading to disaster.

2) Choosing a poor route.

By not seeing and planning your route wisely, you are unknowingly bringing yourself and your companions into dangerous situations. You might choose a shorter route to your destination that involves a lot of risk such as rappelling through a sharp drop or crossing a fast moving stream even if a longer but safer route is available. While you may believe this is convenient, you're risking compromising yourself and slowing the movement of your group as a whole.

3) Not having the skills to build a fire.

Without the skills to build a fire, you cannot cook food, make a signal or keep yourself warm. Few other survival skills are less important, yet a lot of inexperienced travelers believe they can live through an outdoors trip without knowing how to make a fire.

4) Not having the skills to build a shelter.

If your tent is lost or torn in travel, how do you put a roof over your head to protect yourself from the elements and keep yourself warm? The wilderness is abundant with the means to make a shelter yet if you lack the ingenuity, you may find yourself at the mercy of various predators and a hostile environment.

5) Not knowing how to signal for help.

If you are in a survival situation for too long and hoping for help to find its way to you, you will run out of supplies and the environment may change for the worse. Signaling regularly for help will give you a sense of hope and security as you actually make ways for people to find you. A fire, radio transmitter, the ability to use Morse code among others will increase your chances of being discovered by patrols.

6) Not knowing how to purify water for drinking.

Without knowing how to purify water from sources in the wilderness, you risk severe dehydration as your energy saps out quickly. You can go for days without food, but not being able to drink is another story. As you sweat out and your body requires more fluid, replenishment is more crucial. You can purify water with tablets or by boiling it properly.

7) Setting out with the wrong clothing.

If you believe that a shirt and sandals is enough for you to walk through the woods, you are definitely dead wrong. You need the right clothing as insulation and to protect yourself from exposure in the woods. You won't be wounded as easily and you can resist subtle changes in temperature. Protect your feet from wounds and blisters by wearing hiking shoes, not rubber shoes.

8) Not choosing to stop and set camp when lost.

Some people press on for too long even when it's dark and the group is tired, hoping to reach civilization faster but risking too much. It is far more prudent to take stock and recollect yourself by settling in one carefully selected area for the night than to push yourself too hard.

It may take more experience to know the skills to the bone, but keeping these mistakes in mind can save you both life and limb. Don't set off without serious thought and serious skills.

10 Medicines That Are Important For Survival

Besides keeping your wits and gear about you in a survival situation, you need to stay healthy and able to function. As your stress levels increase and your physical strength is sapped to the limit your ability to move around and accomplish tasks may be compromised, decreasing your chances of living through the night. In addition to foraging for edible plants and hunting small game, you can stay alert, stable and nourished if you have the right medicine for sudden ailments and sicknesses you might contract in the wild.

Medications are an absolute necessity in your survival kit as you become exposed to illness and injury when you're on an outdoors trip, lost in the woods or caught within a natural disaster. If you or any of your companions has a medical condition such as diabetes or heart complications, it is crucial to store up his or her prescription medicines before going on a trip. For everyone else, here are ten medicines that are important for survival:

1) Burn Gel

You can get burned while handling firewood and cooking and find it harder to use tools, climb rock or tend to others. Burn wounds can cause severe discomfort and tingling pain which can be relieve with anti-inflammatory agents like burn gel. It also prevents the burned area from becoming infected.

2) Antihistamine

Dust particles, tree bark, vegetation and other elements that the body does not come into contact with on a daily basis can trigger allergic reactions within the skin. Insect bites and stings not only cause sharp pain but also throb and swell on the affected area. Antihistamine stops and prevents allergies from spreading throughout the body and suppresses physical triggers.

3) Loperamide

As you ingest and digest various bacteria and toxins when eating foraged food and lean meat from hunting small game, you may get fits of diarrhea and constipation. Loperamides stop dehydration and let your bowels regain water lost during survival activities.

4) Anti-itch Cream

Mosquitoes and insects almost invisible to the eye will eventually feast on your skin in the dark, causing you to itch all over. An anti-itch cream will relieve itchiness and inflammation caused by insect bites as well as keep them away.

5) Ibuprofen

As an anti-inflammatory pain reliever, ibuprofen can help you endure injuries sustained while going about survival activities. You will find it hard to move if you are aching physically and it helps to feel it less if you have more to do.

6) Antibiotic Ointment

You will inevitably get wounded while going around the woods or a survival scenario and the chances of infection will be greater in an uncontrolled environment. Applying antibiotic ointment on wounds kills bacteria and infectious organisms that can cause sickness and also speed up the process of closing the wound.

7) Quick-clot

If you've been attacked by a predator or suffered a long gash, you need to seal the wound immediately after cleaning. Quick-clot powder seals wounds shut and prevent blood loss then buys you enough time to get expert medical attention.

8) Rehydration Salts

As your energy gets sapped and you become dehydrated, you move slower and lose more body fluid. Rehydration salts can restore hydration in your body with potassium and other nutrients. It is all the more important to bring this along if you have children in your group.

9) Epinephrine

Some insect bites and stings contain poisons that work quickly within the human body and must be stopped immediately. When administered properly, epinephrine counteracts insect poisons and has saved the countless lives of both children and adults.

10) Laxative

Stressful situations can cause you to keep it all in your bowels as you go around too busy trying to survive. A laxative helps to expel stool quickly especially if you suspect that you may have eaten something bad to digest like infected meat.

You might not be a medical professional but your companions will be glad to have you around if you have the medicines necessary to keep them alive in emergency situations.

You never know the true value of medicine until it’s all that stands between you and a life or death situation. You’re better off being the lifesaver.

How To Find And Treat Water So It's Safe For Drinking

In the city we get used to believing that clean drinking water is an easy to find and even free resource. In the wilderness there are no faucets and water stations, yet you can stay alive for several days without food but you can last only three days without water. As you quickly lose body fluids through sweat and urine and end up dehydrated you impair your mobility and if you have companions, you slow their movement as well.

If you aren't able to find and treat water in the wilderness you won't be able to replenish yourself, cook food, wash clothes and clean your wounds. Securing an ample supply of safe and purified water is the foremost priority if you're on a camping trip or find yourself lost in the woods. One basic rule is to store 1 gallon of water per person. Double the amount if you are traveling in a hot and humid area.

Even if your water supply runs low, never ration water. Drink the amount you need for today and find more tomorrow. If you're camping out in the woods, look for rainwater streams and rivers that appear clear and transparent as much as possible. Do not procure water that has floating material, a dark color and foul odor. Look out for biologically contaminated water that contains microorganisms such as Giardia which causes intestinal disorders. If you've ever had diarrhea while on a hiking trip, you might have ingested this kind of water. Toxic water is chemically contaminated from direct garbage dumping, indirect leaching, mine tailings and pesticide runoffs. Boiling, filtering and chemical treatment of water can kill microorganisms but these methods will not remove chemical toxins.

Portable carbon and ceramic filters may be expensive, but if the water contains visible particles such as dirt, insect and leaves then it is necessary to filter it. If you are in a survival situation that requires you to improvise, you can also use a shirt, small sock or paper coffee filter to strain out gunky and gross matter.

After all the small matter has been strained from the found water, you should it in a metal pot or kettle as it is a quick and easy way to make water safe and purified for drinking if it is safe to assume that there are only bacteria and microorganisms present. Just put a full container of found water over a fire then wait for it to come to a 60 second rolling boil.

In tapping from rivers and other water sources that may have been leached into by factories, mines and other industrial entities it is imperative to treat the water chemically as it is also the safest, most convenient and even affordable method of purifying water. Use two drops of Tincture of Iodine 2% on your water bottle to clear it of impurities. Water purification tablets are also available in pharmacies and outdoor supply shops. If

you are in a group and you need to treat larger amounts of water, leave it in transparent bottles for a full day to kill bacteria and viruses that may reside in it.

If the water is cloudy and still retains sediment, another way to treat water chemically is to add about 8 drops of bleach for every gallon of water. Use only regular household bleach that has only sodium hypochlorite with no added soap, dyes and perfumes. Mix it thoroughly then leave it be for 30 minutes. The water should smell slightly chlorinated if this works and if it doesn't, add 8 more drops of bleach and stir. If you still cannot smell the chlorine, it means that the water is still contaminated and you will have to replace it. Remember not to eat when your mouth is dry and drink first. Be sure to store the water
in clear, non-corrosive containers and keep them in a cool and dark place as much as possible when you set camp. Food-grade plastic or glass is the ideal container material. Finding the right source to tap water and being able to treat it will insure you and your group against dehydration, fickle changes in weather, sickness and general health decline.

How To Find And Use Wood To Make A Fire

Cliché as it sounds, a fire is your guiding light in the wilderness (and a lot more). If you can't cook your food, keep yourself warm, illuminate your way in the darkness and put up a bright and visible distress beacon, you do not stand a chance against the unpredictable elements of the wild. Once you understand the basics of starting a fire even without the aid of a lighter or matches, you can go about your tasks more efficiently.

First-timers and casual hikers are often at a loss in sorting out good from bad fuels in making a fire as they waste valuable resources and time in desperation. First and foremost, choose a site or location that is sheltered from too much wind and is close to sources of tinder and firewood. Clear the area of other debris and anything else that can catch fire as you have to keep it proportional to your needs and far from getting out of control. You can put stones and large rocks to set the borders of your fire and keep it from spreading. Setting your fire on a flat share rock can keep it at a good temperature. If you do not want your trail to be spotted, setting your fire on a flat rock surface will leave little evidence if you sweep it afterwards, and this will help you avoid robbers in the night.

There are three types of fire material from small to large as you increase in size as the fire grows, and these are:

1) Tinder

You will need fire material that ignites easily to start with. Good tinder is composed of dry leaves, twigs, newspaper, bark and resin that can burn quickly with the smallest sparks. You can use a knife to scrape twigs and branches into powdery tinder for easier utilization. Collect tinder long before you need to use it as you go along your trail since you may not foresee that you will be in an area without sufficient tinder and store it in a dry and sealed container.

2) Kindling

Once the tinder is ignited, you can add slightly bigger material that can burn for longer. Kindling is composed of dry twigs and branches and you can easily find it along the undersides of trees. For larger branches, cut them into smaller pieces as big as your finger.

3) Fuel

When the fire is stable, you can add larger pieces of firewood that can help your fire grow bigger while lasting longer and needing only additional fuel for maintenance. Use

only the driest material you can find as wood from dead trees serve as the best fuel, yet you should be careful to check if it may be wet around the edges.

Pay attention to how you stack fuel to ensure efficient resource management and get the most out of your fire. There are stacking models available online if you care enough to look around, and it can heighten the aesthetic value of the experience of a campfire, if you have time to entertain yourselves in a survival situation. Some people set the tinder in the middle of a square pattern of fuel while others make a round of fuel with kindling and tinder inside. Go with what works for you. No matter what happens, put out your campfire when you leave your site as you may start a forest fire or leave the wrong signal for other people. Be sure to check it out twice before you leave, not allowing a single ember to stay alight before you create an incident for the evening news. A fire rekindles the spirits of your companions and sets hope for the days ahead. It provides both entertainment and security as you need to take a breather from the stress of having to take care of people and situations yet keep their minds at ease. It does not take too much guesswork to find the right wood for a fire, yet without this skill set, you might find yourself on wet ground and in the dark. The woods provide only this security: it allows for more than enough wood for you to live by.

How To Look At The Clouds To Detect The Weather

If you lose your compass and map in the wilderness and have no idea of exactly where you are, you will have to look at the natural environment for subtle changes in weather patterns. Taking a good assessment of the weather helps you to plan your next move as you see the possibility of rain or snow coming.

By knowing how the rain might induce flooding along a nearby river or how the rising sun can illuminate an area you need to reach quickly you gain clarity and can proceed safely, being well aware of the dangers and chances ahead. Primitive men understand this intuitively and have gone so far in being connected with nature that it requires a lot little guesswork for them to assess the weather. Farmers look into the possible amount of rainfall in the clouds to judge whether their crops will stay dry or gain nourishment, or be overrun with floods.

The Vikings are said to have mastered the art of looking at the clouds to ascertain weather patterns in a time when the compass was not available and sailed through both saltwater and freshwater to plunder and conquer and may be said to be best sea navigators in history. By possessing the skill of looking into the clouds to detect the weather, you gain a decisive edge over the forces in your environment and increase the chances of your survival.

While this is an imprecise method, it may be your only recourse if the sun and stars are not helping. Clouds can still be visible even on nights when the sky is too dark and the morning sun is wrapped in a foggy haze from where you're standing. If you know how hard it will rain, you can set up an improvised water collection system to collect water when you cannot trust the nearest water sources or when there is none available. If it seems that it will rain too hard, you can save yourself from further survival pressures by breaking camp and attempting to relocate or strengthening your shelter.

Cirrus clouds appear wispy like hair on a mare's head higher than most clouds. A few cirrus clouds indicate that fair weather is on the way. If you see them growing in number and almost covering the sky, expect rain within 24 hours.

Altocumulus clouds are seen mid-level and appear like large cotton puffs of white and grey. If seen on warm and humid mornings, it foreshadows rain in the afternoon.

Cumulus clouds look like puffy white cotton in against a fair and blue sky. These often bunch together vertically into a cauliflower head shape into what is called *cumulus congestus*. While these are fair weather clouds, they can cause a short rain shower.

Cumulonimbus clouds are huge and towering clouds with dark bottoms that can produce wind, rain, hail, lighting and tornadoes. As seen in dramatic openings in some

movies, these are the most dangerous of all the clouds. If seen, keep yourself and your camp on full alert and leave the area if you can. If the rain is already on its way and you start to hear thunder, fortify and secure your shelter and keep your gear inside, taking careful to hold it down to the ground and give it more weight. Evacuating while the rain hits hard will increase the chances of injury and if there is no shelter or cover to hide in, hold tightly unto the nearest tree until the storm is over.

Stratus clouds are low hanging clouds that appear almost greyish and bring misty rain or snow. In areas way above sea level, these can reach the ground and form fog. Mountaineers deal with these clouds directly not just for survival but also for enjoyment, as the mist can be cool enough to camp in.

While we cannot control the weather, we can control how the weather can possibly affect us. If we cannot overcome it, we can at least allow ourselves to not be overcome. Imagine what would happen if you could not tell the weather by the clouds and a storm hits. With this knowledge, you won't go down as easily.

How To Navigate In The Wilderness

Whether you're on a casual hiking trip or suddenly stranded in the middle of woods far away from civilization, you need to know where you're going or risk losing valuable time, effort and supplies going around in circles. Dense woodland, lush vegetation, fast moving streams and wet ground can present challenges that could prove fatal for the unprepared and you will have to move in and out of them quickly.

You might also need to avoid trails that are too risky and dangerous as you circumvent them by going around easier terrain as it takes more time, yet you also need navigation tools to determine how long a stream runs or how far a hill can slope downward or upward.

The most simple and powerful tool for navigation in the wilderness is the compass. As these are relatively small and inexpensive, there is no reason why you shouldn't have one in your gear. Remember that the red part of the needle always faces north and if you want to travel in a different direction, simply rotate it into your path.

While you may or may not have a map, you can take a guess at where your desired destination is: south, west or east and follow it rather than if you were moving about with no sense of where you could be headed. Do not put the compass close to metallic and magnetic objects as these may disorient it and align its pointer in the wrong way, effectively compromising your ability to accurately direct your path.

If you have no compass, or if you left it behind during an emergency situation, you will have to make do with the materials at hand. Remember the old saying that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west and look towards it at sunrise and sunset to reassess your travel path. In the Northern Hemisphere, the sun is due south when it is at its highest point in the sky.

If it casts no shadows on objects below, it is at its highest point. To ascertain your position in sunlight, you can use the shadow tip method. Find a straight stick or branch at least 3 feet long. Set it standing on the ground and clear any growth to get a better reading and mark the tip of its shadow with a stone or twig. This mark always represents west anywhere in the world.

Wait about 15 minutes for the shadow to move, and mark its tip as well. Draw a line between the two points, and you have the east-west line. Stand with the first mark on your left and the east mark on your right, then you will be certain that you are facing north. While this method is not 100% accurate, you can use it at any point in the world.

You can also use the moon if you need to figure out where you are as if it rises before the sun has completely set, the illuminated side will be the west.

If the night sky is bright and illuminated with stars, a little textbook knowledge will help you move around at night. It is simply a matter of locating Polaris, also called the North Star. Be sure you have seen pictures of the Big Dipper and Cassiopeia as these constellations never set and can be seen easily in a clear night. These two constellations are located opposite each other and rotate counterclockwise around the North Star.

Look for the two stars forming the outer lip of the Big Dipper and imagine an imaginary line between them. Extend the distance by 5 times its length and it will determine the position of the North Star. Cassiopeia's 5 stars form a "w" shape in which the center star is pointed by the middle, which is also the North Star. Uses these two constellations together to reduce the margin for error and determine true north. Staying lost will inevitably deplete your resources and expose you to dangerous situations like predator attacks and fickle weather patterns. Without any idea of where true north is, you would never find your way out. If you know how to look to the sky for guidance, you can truly see hope in the stars.

How To Start A Fire Without A Match Or Lighter

You might be a medical professional, a master chef or an experienced huntsman with enough confidence in your abilities to live through a hiking trip or survival situation. After all, if you have skills yond simple first aid, can make the best tasting meals out of minimal ingredients and you're good at catching and trapping small game, you can sustain yourself and the people around you. However, some people are so confident about their training that they forget certain primal skills which enable our ancestors to survive ages ago. They didn't have flashlights, first aid kits and stoves yet they made it through calamities that wiped out entire civilizations. Human ingenuity began when the early humans devised a way to make fire from simple tools.

Few other survival skills are just as crucial as starting a fire without the aid of pre-made tools yet you can find yourself unprepared (despite all your training and confidence) in the event of a natural calamity or get lost in the woods. A well-lit fire serves many functions as it acts as a beacon or signal, allows you to stay warm, cook food, ward off insects and predators, and boost your morale. Imagine trying to go through the night in the dark woods without a fire. Night-eyed predators can stalk you without you seeing them, insects would feast on your exposed skin, patrols would never see you as they pass by and you may not have a chance to eat properly. In the battle against sickness, illness and certain death in emergency scenarios, your ingenuity to build a fire may dictate your outcome.

Here are several ways to start a fire without a match or lighter:

1) Hand drill

- Place a board of wood flat on the ground and make sure it is dry. Cut a v-shaped incision in the middle and hammer in a small impression adjacent to it. Add bark into the incision and a 2 foot spindle in the impression. Build a nest of tinder (dried twigs, leaves, nettles, grass, bark) aside. Rub the spindle across your palm until the bark in the fire board turns into ember. Once it starts to glow, roll the bark into the tinder to start a fire. Add small firewood at first then keep adding larger pieces until you have a well-lit fire.

2) Magnifying Lens

- Use this method to make a fire when the sun is out in the morning or afternoon. Build a tinder nest then angle the magnifying lens one foot or a bit more above it in the direction of the sun, holding it in place with tree branches or stones. Adjust

until you see a small and intensified spot of yellow on the tinder and wait for it to burn, then add firewood.

3) Condom Lens

- Open the condom and unwrap it only halfway. Fill it partially with water until it has a small spherical shape. Build a tinder nest then angle the condom lens to catch enough light to throw a small and focused spot. Increase or decrease the water inside until the spot appears bright yellow and your tinder nest catches fire. Add small firewood and then larger pieces until your fire is big enough.

4) Steel Wool and Batteries

- Build a tinder nest. Stretch your steel wool until it is thin then take a 9-volt battery and rub the side with the positive and negative terminals onto the wool until it burns and glows. Be quick to transfer the burning wool into the tinder nest until it catches a small fire and then add firewood.

A well-built fire also serves as your sanctuary and lifts the spirits of your group as you all go through unpredictable times ahead. If you are able to show them that you can build a beacon from simple tools, they will begin to understand the need to work together until help arrives and bide their time with hope in their hearts. If they are separated from your group, their chances of survival are greater if you've imparted a very valuable piece of survival knowledge that can keep them alive.

How To Survive In Cold Weather

Chilly and wintry weather makes survival in the wilderness far more challenging than warm and sunny weather. Much of the edible and medicinal plants that you could have foraged have shed their leaves, you will have a harder time trying to stay warmer and you might get afflicted with hypothermia in extreme conditions.

Knowledge, planning and tools are your mainstays in dealing with cold weather. You will have to concentrate on protecting yourself on wet ground from freezing rain and snow. Windchill is often stated in weather reports as cold weather and gushy winds combined can sap heat from your body faster.

Keep your head covered as you stand to lose 40% of your body heat by simply exposing it to the elements. Your head acts as a radiator as it has a lot of blood flow yet very little fat for insulation. Along your head and neck, insulation is critical to stop the cold from spreading to the rest of your body. Your clothes should stay clean as dirt and oil reduce their insulating value. However, be careful not to overheat yourself under all your clothes as sweating can deplete your body fluids and evaporation works by taking the hottest molecules away and leaving the colder ones behind. This increases the risk of hypothermia as you sweat out from physical exertion yet subject yourself to cold weather. Choose loose and layered clothing that does not restrict your blood flow, even up to your feet. If your clothing is water-repellant, it prevents moisture from reducing insulation.

If you do get wet, hang your clothes on ropes and poles near the top in a well-insulated shelter as heat rises in its direction. Your sleeping bag should be as heavy as you need it to be as more layers go against increases in cold temperature. It is harder to go to sleep in survival situations when you are anxious about minimal equipment yet a heavy sleeping bag will allow you to sleep much longer in cold weather. Never lay your sleeping bag directly on the floor as it may transfer the cold temperature onto your body. Place a bedding of leaves, bark, twigs and other material that can serve as a protective layer to absorb temperature on the ground before your sleeping bag.

Don’t forget to take care of your hygiene even if you are uncomfortable taking a bath in a cold environment as rashes can turn into serious complications when you are in a survival situation. Inevitably, you may sustain injury or sickness in these harsh conditions and prevention of further damage becomes paramount. Hypothermia sets in when your body temperature goes below its maximum threshold for cold and you will start to shiver as your body starts trying to produce heat to warm itself. Warming induces more pain yet you have to sustain the will to make it. Frostbite occurs when parts of your body begin to freeze. Mild frostbite induces a dull white in your skin while

deep frostbite goes deeper into the layers. Hands, feet and the facial area are the first areas to be affected by frostbite and there is no cure available, so the only recourse left is to prevent it from happening or control its effects by warming affected parts of the body. Dehydration can set in as your body does not replace the fluids it loses as you sweat out from under layers of clothing. You can check for dehydration through your urine, as if it darker, your dehydration is worse. Stave off dehydration by drinking purified water regularly.

Build a shelter without cold contracting materials such as metal. Keep it ventilated especially if you intend to build a fire in it, yet do not allow too much cold air to pass inside. Do not make it too large as it may have a hard time trying to keep heat within, and determine its size depending on your gear and number of companions.

It is thrice as hard to go through cold weather terrain as compared to warmer survival scenarios, yet the will to survive makes it less impossible. We've lived through the Ice Age and we will definitely make it through the winter.

The Best Types Of Food To Pack For Survival

It goes without saying that you need to carry enough food on your hiking or camping trip for as long as it lasts without being too cumbersome in your backpack or luggage. You might be confident that you can hunt and forage in the wilderness, yet having packed food saves you time and energy you can use for other activities. By assessing the right amount of nutrients and calories you might expend on the trip with your body type and metabolism, you can determine how you will live through the pressures of the particular environment you will encounter.

Canned foods are already cooked and no longer need to be heated, saving you the trouble of building a fire in unfavorable situations like cold weather and rain. Choose canned food that offers lots of protein and calories as these do not come from plants and you may not have the option of hunting. While a bit heavy in your traveling gear, canned food does not take up a lot of space and is quick and easy to open.

Protein and energy bars can give you a quick boost while you're walking along a trail and may not have the time to prepare a proper meal. These also provide rich amounts of calories and protein but you may need to check the product label to be sure that what you get will be as calorie-dense as you need it to be.

MREs (Meal, Ready-To-Eat) are pre-packaged, pre-cooked foods used as rations by the army. These are lightweight, highly nutritious and easy to carry around. Remember to bring MRE heaters in your survival kit.

Peanut butter is full of calories and nutrients as the nuts keep you sharp and alert enough. You can bring bread and crackers to add flavor and wheat to your survival diet.

Beans are your best source of calcium and iron to keep your bones strong during the trip and help you recover from injury. Soy, pinto, black and red beans are prime considerations in choosing which types of beans to bring along, but go with what works for you. Even when dried, beans are still good to eat for a long time and will last longer than many other fruit and vegetable choices.

Berries contain antioxidants to help you fight cough, colds and airborne viruses. These are indispensable in cold weather. They also taste great and add to the allure of being in the forest. When foraging, be sure to avoid poisonous berries that will cause stomach complications.

Fish can come in the form of canned sardines of may be caught at a stream or river then carefully packed in sealed containers, but will not last long and may need to be cooked the next day. Healthy fats and proteins come from fish and it may be your only source of Vitamin B12.

Barley lowers bad cholesterol levels and assures good bowel movement. Barley oats can be mixed in water or milk and you have an instant breakfast. It has nutrients such as Niacin and Vitamin B as well as minerals like manganese and selenium that are no very abundant in fruits.

Kale can be your staple green and leafy vegetable for your trip as it is loaded with fiber, vitamins and minerals and you can easily boil the stems from a simple vegetable broth. As a close relative of wild cabbage, it can last longer than most other vegetables yet you should not wait too long.

Nuts are high in dietary fiber and easily stored in rounded or plastic containers. Like beans, they can also stay good for long periods of time and its nutritional value does not decrease too quickly if not fresh.

Be sure to take your metabolism and physical complications into consideration before you set out as the wilderness has a way of heightening allergic responses to food. Your food containers should be durable, properly sealed and airtight as freshness retains nutritional value in food. You cannot go wrong by choosing the right food to pack for survival since you don’t always have a full grasp of what’s out there, and it helps to have food on hand for quick sustenance.

The Reasons Why You Should Get A Survival Knife

A lot of people are uncomfortable with the idea of bringing a survival knife around, even in the wilderness. It appears big, rough and intimidating as the serrated teeth imply violence, and just might bite you if you don't carry it around properly. In an environment that can turn hostile such as the woods or in the event of a natural calamity, you need to be at peace with the idea or carrying a weapon around.

Besides an attack and defense tool, survival knives are also used for basic activities such as sawing wood, cutting through lush vegetation and leaving markings of your trail. If it is all you have left in the wilderness, you can accomplish all the simple and complex tasks needed to survive if you have the skills.

Here are several reasons why you should get a survival knife:

1) To build a shelter.

If you need to build a shelter from scratch, a survival knife can help you gather the materials from your local environment. You can make a debris nest to lie in by collecting pine nettles, leaves, moss and other soft bedding materials. Build cover against the rain by making a ridgepole across tree branches and shaping these, then adding leaves and stronger material.

2) To light a fire.

A survival knife can help you gather tinder and firewood as you chop down branches and twigs to gather. It can also help you design a bow drill or other tools needed in starting a fire.

3) To produce food.

You cannot sustain the needed energy for survival without food. A survival knife can help in taking down animals and cutting up their parts for meat. It is also indispensable in making snares and traps to catch small game. If you can attach it to the end of a long and sturdy branch, you have a spear that can reach tall places for fruit and branches as well as spearfishing.

4) To protect yourself against predators.

In the event of an attack, you can defend yourself with enough determination and a survival knife. You might even be able to wound and scare off your attacker. A knife may be the only thing that stands between certain death and a small chance of survival.

Imagine the possible scenarios you will be in once you're deep in the woods and match these with your requirements for a survival knife. Some considerations are:

1) Blade shape.

How large or durable does it have to be if you are going to cut through tough bark or strike down a predator? Some blades are thin enough to slice through grasses and leaves while others are thick enough to cut through tree trunks.

2) Blade steel.

With ceramic and carbon-treated steel available, your choice will depend on its utility. A harder knife can hold an edge better but if it is too hard it will not be as tough and may break if it falls.

3) Serrated edge.

You will have to cut through various objects in the wilderness and your survival knife better have teeth that don't turn brittle. A sharply serrated edge can cut through wood, cord and even bone efficiently and do more damage to a predator, increasing your chances of surviving an attack.

4) Tang.

You will need a knife that extends as one piece of steel from hilt to tip, and this is also known as a full tang. This assures that the material of the knife is solid enough to not break if it hits the ground from a fall. Pocket knives and switchblades can break easily, while knives with a full tang offer enough durability to last longer.

It takes more than bravado to handle a survival knife, even if you feel more manly and rugged keeping it around in your holster. Go beyond waving it around and learn the ins and outs of your particular knife and you will begin to understand it has far more uses and benefits than those listed above. If all you have out there is a knife, it can get you everything else that you need to live for the unpredictable days ahead.

The Top 10 Tools And Equipment For Successful Survival In The Wilderness

It is said that you should never bring a knife to a gun fight. In the same sense, without the proper knowledge and foresight you might end up bringing the wrong equipment to your camping or hiking trip. If you believe your cellphone is an important accessory and survival item and help is just a call away when you go deeper into the woods, you are obviously in the wrong frame of mind.

Without survival essentials, you increase the probability of putting yourself in dangerous situations you probably won't live through. Survival tools and equipment allow you to forage for beneficial plants, blaze a trail through dense grass and vines, pinpoint your movements in the right direction, help you heal the sick and injured and allow you to secure your shelter. Here are the top ten tools and equipment for successful survival in the wilderness:

1) First Aid Kit

- Wounds, burns, insect bites and sickness are inevitable occurrences that can strike you at the worst possible times in the woods. If you can avoid them, you can at least treat and prevent them. Carry band air, prescription medicine, burn and sting ointment and antiseptics around with you at all times in a first aid kit.

2) Flashlight

- Sometimes it is not wise to build a fire when all goes dark as you risk exposure to predators, yet you should be able to see what is around you and move around safely. A flashlight illuminates paths and reveals the presence of animals around.

3) Survival Knife

- You never know when you will be attack by a bear, wolves or a tiger. If there is a threat to your life, you should increase the probability, however small, of living through it. A survival knife can be a handy weapon to ward or defend against attackers and cut through rough bark or vegetation.

4) Snare Traps

- You will need to catch small game like rabbits and squirrels for meat as you need meat and protein for energy. If you do not have a rifle and they run as you approach, you can set snare traps where they are active and come back

later. Put bait such as nuts and fruits in the middle of the snare to attract them to assure yourself and your group of a meaty next meal.

5) Swiss Army Knife

- With all kinds of small knives and small tools in one set, you can cut through skin, leaf and bark, fix rents in your shelter and even remove cork from a wine bottle out in the woods.

6) Binoculars

- You will save valuable time and effort if you can see where you're going in detail. Binoculars can help to detect small game, beneficial plants, sources of water and the scope of the trail ahead.

7) Tent

- Without a structurally sound shelter, you will never be able to sleep safely and comfortable at night and keep yourself warm. A heavy-duty (not recreational tent) that you can carry around on your back may be harder to set up, but provides security and sanctuary against a hostile environment.

8) Sleeping Bag

- The ground may be a bit too rough for your skin and you also need proper insulation. A sleeping bag can help you sleep snug and warm and is easily rolled into a ball to carry around.

9) Rifle with Silencer

- You will need to hunt efficiently in order to sustain yourself, and some targets appear too far. A rifle with silencer allows you to shoot down small and large game while a silencer assures you do not give away your position to hostile elements.

10) Portable Water Filter

- Without potable drinking water, you may die of thirst. A portable water filter will turn any natural water source into a haven of nourishment, keeping you hydrated for the days ahead.

By keeping the right tools and equipment aside you, your chances you successful survival in the wilderness increases tenfold. However, you also need common sense and survival skills to make it through. With an indomitable will to make it through alive, your tools will see you through.

Top Tips For Survival First Aid

In the woods, you become prone to all kinds of infectious diseases, insect bites, poisonous snakes and spiders as well as injuries like wounds, burns, blunt force trauma and broken bones. Without the proper skills, training and tools for survival first aid you may find yourself unsuccessfully holding on to dear life. The lives of your companions may also be at stake not only if you are compromised but if they also suffer injuries and illnesses no one in your group knows how to handle.

Arm yourself with enough prudence and diligence before venturing into the wilderness, as it is important that you keep yourself in the peak of health beforehand. Appropriate clothing, cleanliness and a good diet lower the risk of harmful situations, yet you still need basic medical skills. Do not forget to wash your hands before handling food and to take a bath regularly, as you can make improvised soap with animal fat and ashes or boiling the inner bark of a pine tree. Pack extra clothing and footwear before setting out. If an accident does occur, you can look to the following guidelines and tips for survival first aid:

1) Remain calm and encourage calmness in others and your patient.

- Accidents can turn fatal if you or your companions start to panic. If you appear calm enough to provide efficient first aid, your patient will regain the will to push through even if his injuries are life-threatening.

2) Keep the patient lying down flat and warm.

- Take his temperature and assure proper blood flow with him lying down comfortably. However, be sure not to move him around until you have discovered the extent of his injuries as broken bones can get worse if mishandled.

3) If the person is not breathing, apply mouth-to-mouth respiration.

- You could be the lifeline to a person deprived of breath if you have CPR training. Make sure you have practiced the proper procedure as others may depend on you with and for their lives.

4) Stop any bleeding.

- Wounds and cuts are prone to infection and blood loss. Close open wounds by cleaning then clotting them with clean cloth then wrap with gauze. Quick-clot efficiently stops large cuts from leaking out too quickly.

5) Watch carefully for signs of shock and keep reassuring the patient.

- Panic attacks can set in as a patient fights for dear life, and may go into shock. Be stable enough to assure him that everything will be alright, no matter what his condition is.

6) Check for breaks, fractures and cuts along the head, neck or spine.

- Injuries along these areas can impair the nervous system and render your patient immobile if not treated promptly. Assess the source of the injury and apply appropriate treatment like casts and painkillers.

7) Create space between crowds and the patient.

- Onlookers may crowd around and deprive your patient of oxygen and you may not have space to move around and do first aid. Keep a distance of three feet or so between the crowd and your patient.

8) Never remove clothing unless you really need to .

- Clothing can provide warmth and protection to an injured person. It should be removed only when it affects the injury with dirt, difficulty breathing and other contaminants.

9) Make the right judgment call to move your patient to a medical facility or makeshift shelter.

- You may be pressed for time to give your patient expert medical care as his wounds may be fatal, but then again you could be a mile away from civilization. A shelter can still provide for warmth and protection for as long as your skills can keep the patient alive. If you do decide to move him around, have a makeshift movable bed that can be carried securely at each end.

Wits and common sense are crucial to dealing with random first aid scenarios. Beyond skill and knowledge, the right mindset is appropriate as you struggle through stress and anxiety to assist your companions in matters of life and death. If you can manage it, you become the indispensable lifesaver and you can go to sleep at night better, even if the wilderness is dark and hostile.

What To Put In Your Survival Kit

Whether you recently decided to go on a trip to the woods to test your survival skills or you suddenly find yourself in the middle of a national disaster, you will save yourself a lot of trouble and trepidation by having the right tools around. Unfortunately, you will have to get mobile and you don't have the benefits of appliances and gadgets at your disposal. What you will carry around will have to be lightweight and durable enough to start the wear and tear of moving from one unpredictable scenario unto the next. A survival kit contains enough tools and necessities for you to get by will you use what is in your environment for shelter and provisions.

Choose a carrying case that is waterproof and possibly shockproof to keep your tools intact and uncompromised. A 4" x 6" pouch with an arm sling from outdoor gear shops may be the best choice, but you can use improvised carriers around depending on your circumstances for as long as it won't break easily and water won't find its way inside. Your survival kit should contain the following items:

1) Compass

- Can you find the North Star or ascertain your location by looking at the clouds? If not, a compass takes away all the guesswork for you to help you find your trail back to civilization. It is small enough to fit into your smallest pocket, waterproof and highly durable.

2) Whistle

- How would you make enough noise when you need to call for help or signal your position to roving patrols? A whistle requires very little energy to use and acts a distress signal loud enough to call anybody within sight. Just remember that you should weight the risk in using a whistle as it may also attract unwanted attention from predators and thieves.

3) Matches and Lighter

- Without a fire, how can you keep warm and cook your food. Bringing matches and a lighter along helps to light your tinder nest easily and keeps you assured so long as you have firewood on hand. Be sure to know how to light a fire without these tools as your matches and lighter can get wet with rain or river water.

4) First Aid Kit

- It is safe to assume to you may get sick or injured in survival situations. Band aid, gauze, prescription drugs, antiseptic, alcohol, adrenalin shots and burn ointment are basic medical necessities that some people often forget and only decreases the chances of survival. These can also help a critically injured or sick person to survive until professional help is at hand.

5) Swiss Army Knife

- As the handiest accessory for the outdoorsman, this Knife allows you to cut through bark, wood, skin and contains other functions such as a cork opener, screwdriver, toothpick and the like. This may be the closest thing you have to comfort in a survival situation.

6) Survival Knife

- Predators abound, wood and vines are harder to move through and snakes lie in the grass. No matter how good and soft-hearted you are, you need a weapon to feel safer in emergency situations, especially in the wilderness. A survival knife gives you a chance to live through a predatory attack and helps to blaze a trail while walking through the lush wood.

7) Water Purification Tablets

- Access to drinkable water is vital to keeping yourself hydrated and sustaining your energy. You can come across stream water or water trapped in mud as your water reserves run low and this may be your only source. Water purification tablets clear toxins and living matter from stream water quickly, ensuring you can drink your fill.

8) Small Flashlight

- If you decide to move around at night, you can only do so with a flashlight as it provides illumination and helps you detect insects, snakes and the movement of predators.

Add other items you believe you will need for the circumstances you foresee. A survival kit lessens your anxiety as you can feel safer with the tools necessary to make the most of the unique environment you may find yourself in. Just don't forget that you will need skills before tools, so learn the ins and outs of each before you set out.

Why Shelter Is Important For Survival

If you're reading this, you're probably fortunate enough to have a roof over your head for most of your life. It's hard to grasp how much trouble it saved you as you grew up as it protects you from the elements, fickle changes in temperature, gives you space to organize your life and activities and kept your loved ones away from harm as the world is a dangerous place to live in. Imagine living a life without proper shelter. Where would you go if it rains? Where would you store your necessities? How could you possibly cook and eat your meals? How would you shield your family from thieves and murderers?

If you're lucky, your house probably won't be blown away by a typhoon as strong as Haiyan, a hurricane as strong as Katrina or an earthquake of intense magnitude. However, life does not always operate on luck, and you should seek out the training, skills, knowledge and tools to build a temporary and durable shelter. It can be said that the need for shelter precedes the need for food and water as leaving yourself open to sickness and the elements far reduces your chances of survival than enduring not feeding yourself on time.

As you camp in the woods for fun, you also learn basic survival skills. It is crucial to protect yourself from exposure when you're out there – from predators, the weather and insects. A well-made shelter can give you the morale boost needed to survive and help you prepared mentally for the days ahead. First and foremost, shelter can be your sanctuary and refuge, giving you a sense of accomplishment and hope in contrast to the grimmest of circumstances.

You cannot rest properly on open ground as you will be left exposed and vulnerable. Shelter allows you to rest. You can mend your injuries, align your breathing patterns, hydrate yourself and make sure that you are healthy both physically and mentally before you set out. In cold weather and winter, your clothing can be wet and moistened, loosening the insulating properties needed to keep your body at a stable temperature. A proper shelter can help you stay warm enough to regain equilibrium, reducing the risk of colds and hypothermia. You can go about your activities better if you are warm and not freezing from the cold, as you can do less to survive if you are immobilized.

Build a shelter that is proportionate to your needs. If it is too large, the energy you expend in building it may not be worth all the effort as you value every ounce of your strength for survival tasks. It should be big enough to protect you and store your goods yet small enough to contain your body heat.

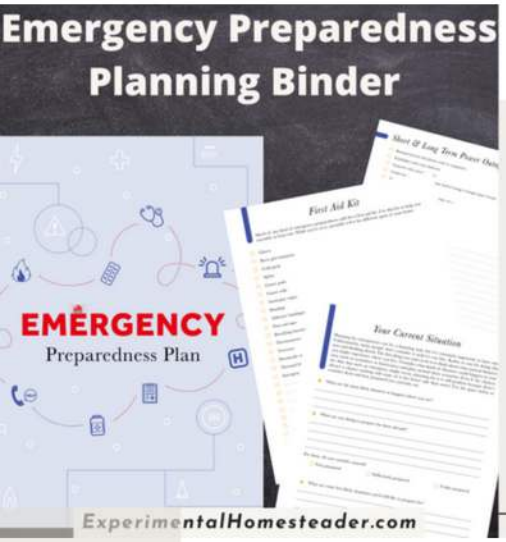
When outdoors, look at your current environment to size up your surroundings and see which materials you can use to build a shelter. Choose a location that is possibly near a

water source, gets enough sunlight and does not attract unwanted attention from predators and pests. Good structure begins with planning and durable materials that can withstand the elements.

Vegetation can be used as insulating materials that can keep the inside warm as grasses and leaves can be thatched as insulation for the walls. You can make windbreaks with ice, snow, wood and rocks to keep cold gusts out and even build a fire from the inside if you have enough space. Natural shelters such as rocks, caves and tree formations take out most of the guesswork yet you still have to patch up and build towards the open ends. Tarp shelters can be built by putting two sides of a used tarpaulin over a rope and pegging each end to the ground. Debris shelters are made using available recyclable materials and a little handiwork.

You cannot expect to survive in the woods for very long without the adequate means and knowledge for building a shelter. It serves as your home in the dark heart of the woods, enabling you to withstand the odds and not get swallowed up by the forest, or so it would seem. Every man worth his salt should be able to build a home for those he loves and wishes to protect, even if the home does not have a postal address.

Items You Will Love



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANNING BINDER

Once you fill out this emergency preparedness binder you will find that the next time an emergency situation occurs, regardless if it is a manmade situation such as a riot or a natural disaster, you will have an emergency readiness plan in place.....in addition to the information that is filled in already, there is plenty of room for you to add other items, makes notes, etc.

There is too much to list here, so be sure to check this emergency preparedness binder out!

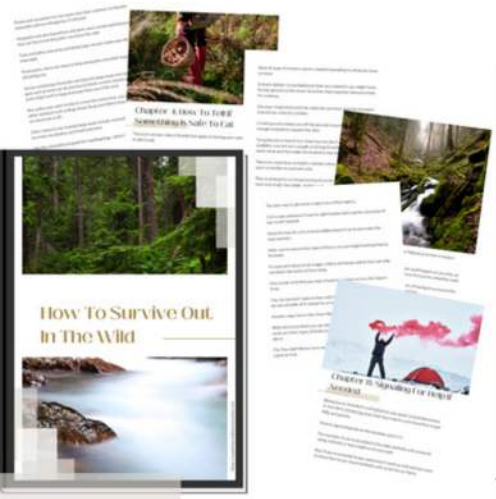
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