

# How to Survive Out in the Wild

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Survival knowledge should be one of our highest priorities in today's precarious world. A disaster of the natural or man-made type could happen at any time, or you could become lost or stranded in an area that you're unfamiliar with.

No matter if you never have to face the panic of having to survive in the wild, it will set your mind at ease if you know how. You'll first need to find a source of clean water – or know how to clean dirty water to make it safe for consumption.

The elements of the wild can be harsh and unforgiving. If shelter isn't readily available by caves or other means, you need to know how to create your own. Eventually, you'll need food.

Knowing how to forage for food items that you can consume without worry of being poisoned is an important skill to have. Dealing with predators and hazards of the wild should also be part of your survival skills and knowing how to signal for help is imperative.

Many survivalists focus on the task of stocking up food for a SHTF situation, but many don't realize that they may need to leave their comfortable home and bug out into a safe place where they can hide – like the wilderness.

So then they're left with only the items they can carry on their back and many haven't taken the time and patience to arm themselves with the knowledge they need to handle the harsh living conditions of the wild.

You never want to be caught unaware, with no skills for survival. Learn how to protect yourself and your family by learning how to survive in the wild – just in case. These are skills that will help you in many situations, not just the wilderness.

In *How to Survive Out in the Wild*, you're about to learn all of the basic survival skills you need to find food, build a shelter, locate water, deal with predators and signal for help if and when you want to be found.

But this is only the beginning. Take time after reading this book to hone your skills. Practice with your family. Have everyone learn the same skills. And then dig in deep and learn more ways to do the same tasks just in case.

It's important that we prepare for a wide variety of survival situations, not just living in the wilderness. You need to know how to survive in the city, at home, and in all other potential situations so that you're never caught unprepared.





## **Chapter 1:**

### **How to Find Water**

Without water, there is no chance of survival. Therefore, it should be your first priority if you're ever faced with a situation of being in the wild. Food can be delayed for a while, but only a few days without water could mean certain death.

Even if you're not a survivalist, you should know how to find water. You might be a tourist in another country or exploring an area of your own country, a day hiker who has misread directions or even an inexperienced camper in the woods and find yourself lost.

If you're savvy about where to find water, you could be dropped just about anywhere on the face of the earth and be able to find it. Knowing how to find water is like knowing CPR. You hope you never have to use it, but it's good to know if you do.

One way that is as old as our ancient ancestors is to follow animals. Deer and other forest and desert animals leave tracks that you can follow to discover where they get their water. Even frogs can alert you to water sources by following their sounds.

Look at birds in the early morning light. They usually head for water first thing and following their flight paths may lead you to a viable source. Sometimes you can actually feel moisture in the air if you pay attention to your senses.

Heavy dew on grass and tree limbs can be gathered into a plastic bag such as a trash or grocery bag. An absorbent cloth dragged along the grass can also collect water for you. Be sure to collect it before the rising of the sun and it becomes contaminated.

Noticing the vegetation surrounding you might also help you find water sources. When the vegetation is lush and green, it usually gets that way from having a nearby source of water.

Rainwater and snow can be a source of life-saving water. Finding a mud puddle where you can gather the muddy water and then filter it for drinking might save your life as can gathering water from rock crevices and the branches of trees.

Some things you should know before your search for water is that water will likely flow downhill, so melting snow and rain may accumulate in areas where green growth is abundant or in rock riverbeds.

You may need to dig a bit beneath the surface to get to the accumulated water – or you can check the bottom of a hill or ravine or areas that are shady. You may notice water stored underground by walking in a river bed barefoot to feel the mud or wetness.

Some drastic methods of finding water can work in areas where water seems scarce. Walking through tall grass with a cotton shirt tied around the calf/ankle of your leg can catch the early morning dew.

When the shirt becomes drenched, squeeze out the water into a container. Water may also be available in fruits, some plants and fish. You can suck on the insides of a prickly pear (cactus) for moisture or get it from plant stalks or bamboo if available.

If it rains, use large leaves or any type of container you can find to get as much water as you can. You can also line a hole in the ground with plastic to gather rain water. Be sure you know the methods to sanitize any water you may find before drinking.

The human body needs at least two quarts of water per day to maintain optimum health. Being caught in the wilderness or in extreme hot or cold climates means you'll be exerting yourself even more and need an excess of water.

Never think that if you're lost in a colder environment that you need less water. Even though you're not sweating as much, the dry, cold air will cause you to lose water through the skin. Wind will also exacerbate your need for water.

You quickly see the importance of water when you realize that your body is approximately two-thirds water and that it helps your body function in a way that keeps you alive. After only six hours of being without water, your body begins the dehydration process.

Finding water in a survival situation isn't where the problem ends. You must also ensure that the water you're drinking is clean. Until water from ponds, rivers and lakes is boiled and purified, it contains parasites and any number of diseases.

If you're fortunate enough to find a fresh water spring, you don't actually have to purify, but you should just to be safe. There are a number of water filtration units that you can purchase to ensure the purity of your drinking water if you're stuck in the wilderness.

Survival knowledge may not seem important to those of us who live in urban and suburban areas where food and water are readily available, but natural disasters – or man-made ones – could happen and it's best to be prepared as much as you can.



## **Chapter 2:**

### **Assembling a Shelter**

When you're struggling to survive in the wilderness, water should be your main concern. After that, shelter becomes vitally important to shield you from storms and comfort until you're rescued.

First, look for a nearby space where it's safe to set up a shelter. You wouldn't want to have a shelter in the same proximity as an ant mound or next to snake holes or plants such as cactus that would make moving around hazardous.

Choosing a flat area is important – and having a tree with a split trunk is an extra advantage. If that type of tree isn't available, you can use a Y-shaped, sturdy branch and press it firmly into the ground.

Then, locate a long, straight limb that you're going to use as the spine to place other branches and limbs to create the frame of the lean-to shelter. Green pine boughs and other items such as twigs and leaves can then be used to insulate the shelter.

There are pictorial images and videos that you can access online to actually see how to build a practical, but serviceable shelter in the wild. Be sure to build fires outside the shelter.

Clear out some of the brush and rocks to make the shelter more comfortable. Elevation is also important to the safety of your shelter. Fashion a hammock or other elevated surface to sleep on and you'll be safer from the ground-dwelling

animals that could make nights miserable if you're on the ground.

After you've chosen a place to build your shelter, you can begin to gather necessary materials. Use anything that you might have with you – a poncho, parachute, discarded rope and other items you might find nearby – for shelter materials.

Several types of shelters can be created depending on what you have on hand. A shade shelter can be fashioned from any materials you might have. Simply spread out the material and tie them together between trees for a canopy.

Use your imagination and the materials you have, plus the elements around you, to build a shelter. Creating a cot to keep you off the ground is a good idea if you have enough material to support the idea.

Tying the cot to two to four trees is great, but if you don't have trees available, you can use a couple of strong branches to securely roll the material on and then stake the branches into the ground.

There are many how-to-build-a-shelter online sites that you may want to familiarize yourself with. They include pictures of exactly how it works to transform what you have into rough, but viable, shelter in the wilderness.

Natural objects can also be used to craft a shelter if you have no materials on hand. The U.S. military calls this procedure, field expedient – or FE. The difference is that with the FE method, you use only what you can find to build a shelter to protect you from the elements.

Tree branches such as pine boughs make good insulation and you can weave together natural materials such as leaves and twigs to fashion your shelter. Weaving the materials together give you better protection from rain and other elements.

But, what if you're stuck in deep snow in the wilderness? It's a bit more complicated, but you can build an adequate shelter. It helps to have evergreen trees with low-hanging branches that you can use.

First, dig down in the snow as far as you can – the deeper the better. Then, pack the interior of the snow pit tightly. Use the evergreen boughs to insulate the bottom of the pit and for your ceiling.

Another type of FE shelter that the military teaches how to build is called a

debris hut. With this type of shelter, you find a ridgepole (a sturdy, fallen tree branch will do) and place one end on the ground and the other on a strong element such as a rock.

Find two or more thick tree branches and lay them diagonally on top of the pole. Tie them together with vines or discarded rope. Then, use other branches to place across the ridgepole and create the frame of your shelter.

Smaller sticks, placed cross way can make a lattice that you can place softer debris such as leaves or pine needles. Make it as thick as you can so that it offers the most protection. Find a rock or something can place across the opening for more protection.

Having the means to build a fire is helpful, but remember to build it outside the shelter. You can always heat rocks in the fire and place them inside the shelter for warmth. Lanterns and other means of heat/light should be turned off inside the shelter.

Carbon monoxide gas that can be emitted from lanterns can cause death when you breathe the deadly fuel. Don't use metal for the roof of a shelter if you need warmth because the metal will deflect the sun.

When the weather is freezing, you can pour water over a debris shelter. The ice it forms will be a great protection and insulation. Snow is also a proven insulator. Use as much of it as possible for warmth and protection.

Survivalists should always know how to build a shelter in case of an emergency

in the wild. Knowledge of how to build a basic shelter may mean the difference between life and death.



## Chapter 3:

### Hunting Down Some Food

After finding life-sustaining water and fashioning a shelter, food becomes vitally important. Even if you have some food with you, such as in a bug-out bag, you'll only have about three days of food.

You can live thirty days or more without food, but your body must eventually have nourishment to survive. If you're lost and hungry, you have a few options – hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering edible plants and insects.

Few people today know how to recognize edible plants, so your best bet might be to hunt, fish and trap. But, the ultimate decision you have to make is which will work for you according to where you are.

You won't be able to catch many fish if you're stranded in a highly arid part of the world. It's difficult to find wild life in many areas of the world, so you need to know the basics about finding edible plants and catching bugs or small animals for food.

Some edible plants that you might find in the wild include the wild carrot (Queen Anne's Lace). It grows from one to two feet high and produces little white flowers and the edible root smells like a carrot. The stems are covered with fine hair.

It's important that you're able to distinguish the wild carrot from poison sumac. Although they're similar in looks, the poison sumac's root has a revolting smell

and the stems are hairless.

Sumacs and cattails are also in the family of edible plants, but make sure you are familiar with the plants in your area so you know for sure how to search for and prepare them.

Insects are delicacies in some countries and can be a great source of protein. Even though they're considered to be healthier for you than meat, many have an aversion to eating them.

When you're faced with survival and you either starve to death or eat insects, you begin to see them in a different light. Some insects that are edible – and nutritious -- to consume include grasshoppers and crickets. They're high in calcium and protein.

Actually, insects are full of nutrients such as omega 3, that you may take in a vitamin supplement. If you can, cook the edible insects before eating to rid them of germs and also to improve their flavor.

Grasshoppers and crickets are some of the best insects for protein and they're readily available in most places. Just beware that you need to cook them before indulging because they could carry nematodes.

They're fairly easy to catch too. Catch grasshoppers in the early morning hours and know that crickets like to hang out in damp places such as under logs and rocks. A blanket, flannel shirt or an empty water bottle make great catching tools – or simple use your hands.

Before you cook grasshoppers or crickets, pull off and discard the heads along with the entrails. Also, remove the legs and wings. Then, put them in a pan over a flame or skewer them and place the skewer over the flame to char the insects.

Although most grasshoppers are okay to eat, avoid any that sport bright colors. These can make you sick. Ants can be another source of food if you're caught in the wild. You can use your hands, but it's best to use a stick to keep from being stung.

Put the ants you've captured in the water right away and when you've caught enough, boil them for a few minutes. You can eat them raw, but be sure they're dead – otherwise, they may sting you.

Termites can be found buried in rotten wood and are less likely to have parasites than other types of insects. If you catch them in a stage of larvae and other stages before they can take flight, they're easy to catch.

Earthworms aren't insects, but they are edible. You can eat them raw, but cooking them will prevent contracting parasites which are common in most insects and worms. You can usually find them in damp soil.

Caterpillars and locusts, ants, June bugs and even termites can be readily found in the wild and eaten for survival. At some point, when you're starving, you may find that insects become appetizing. Be sure to know which insects you can eat in your area.

Catching fish is another survival method. Even if you don't have a fishing reel, you can fashion a spear from a knife or even catch them with your hands (called Noodling). Banks of rivers, hollow logs and under rocks in shallow water are places you can catch fish with your hands.

When you catch the fish with your hands, move your fingers along the side of the fish until you can grasp the gills or the mouth. Any materials you have might be made into a hook, lure or line. Paper clips, tabs from soda cans and nails are all possible fishing gear.

Hooks, lines and weights take up very little room in your gear, so if possible, include some in your packing. Although drift nets are illegal for fishing, you can use one in an emergency situation.

This method can net you quite a few fish in only one net, so if you need to feed quite a few people, it's a good method to use. A spear for fishing is often used in survival situations and you can make it from a rope, knife and long stick.

You can also use multiple fishing lines by tying a line with bait and hook and attaching the line to a branch over the water. You can set several lines on various tree branches to increase the odds of catching a fish.

Sometimes, the best places to look for fish are within weeds or lily pads that are growing along the shoreline. Walleye and other fish like to hang out where they have cover for safety.

Carry some bait and lures with you if possible. Live worms are great bait for most type of fish, but you can also use plastic worms. Night crawlers, grasshoppers, bees and caterpillars are natural bait that's good for fishing.

The coastline and tidal zones become wonderful areas to find food. You can feast on clams, crabs and kelp and as long as you have water, you can survive

for a very long time.

Depending on where you find yourself struggling for survival, you may be able to hunt and trap animals. Forget what you already know about hunting. Survival hunting is an entirely different ballgame.

Hunting for survival means that you'll be going back in time to the methods your ancestors may have used such as tracking the game and then waiting for them in a secluded place.

Large animal hunting may not be the best survival method. It takes time to track and then processing large game. Squirrels and rabbits are smaller and easier to find, catch and prepare.

If you're looking at long-term survival, think about preserving any meat you have by smoking or drying it. It becomes a jerky that won't face decay and

decomposition and can feed you through times when hunting and trapping game aren't options.

Jerky is an incredible source of protein and can be easily made if you expect to be in survival mode for a long time. Simply cut the meat as thin as possible and hang it over a fire to dry. Seasoning the meat before drying is good, but not necessary.

You can let the meat dry in the sun if you don't have a fire to depend on, but begin early in the morning and be sure it's a hot and sunny day to do the job properly. Jerky will last for a week or longer.

Trapping is a method that is useful if you don't have a gun or other method of hunting for game. It's also a more efficient method since you can create the traps and then leave them – coming back on a daily basis to see if you have a catch.

It's important to know how to build a trap or snare that would catch small game in case you're faced with a survival situation. One of the easiest snares is made using a pole and stiff, thin wire.

You can find many snare and trap methods that are readily available online that give you step-by-step pictorial instructions. You'll be able to plan ahead by being sure the necessary materials are within your survival gear.

Patience is key when attempting to find any type of food in a survival situation. If you're hunting for animals or fishing, it's especially important. You want to take

the time needed to be effective in finding food and not so impatient that you risk scaring it away.



## **Chapter 4:**

### **How to Tell if Something is Safe to Eat**

There are certain rules of thumb that apply to making sure something is safe to eat. In a survival situation, you may be faced with having to discern the difference. It's extremely dangerous to eat the unknown.

You could be poisoned, develop a serious illness or have an extreme allergic reaction – any one of these could cause death. If you're caught in a situation where there are familiar plants and insects around you, eat the ones you know are safe first.

Bananas, blackberries, coconuts, asparagus and mangoes grow wild in many parts of the world, so you can easily choose those types of fruits and veggies if they're available. But, what if you're in an unfamiliar part of the world and there's no selections of plants or insects you're familiar with.

Brightly colored bugs are often poisonous and should be avoided. Those that attempt to blend in with their environment are usually safe to eat. Plants considered dangerous often sport groups of three leaves.

Plants which produce white-colored berries and those which smell of almonds are commonly poisonous as are those with a milky sap. Thorns, spines and hairs are also signs of poison as are bulbs, beans and seeds inside the pods on a plant.

Finding yourself in the unfortunate position of being in a place where plants that

you know are edible can't be found, you'll need to know how to test it. Know that some plants may be poisonous in some areas, such as the stem, but have edible flowers.

The first step to test a plant for edibility should be to separate the plant into parts (stem, leaf and root). Be sure to check for parasites or worms inside the plant and discontinue testing if you find any. Choose another plant of that type to test.

Grub worms found inside a plant means that the plant is rotten, but you may eat the grubs. Grub worms contain lots of protein, but may taste sour and have grit inside. You can also test a plant for poison by touching it.

Rub a part of the plant on an area of skin such as the elbow or wrist or hold it there so the sap touches your skin for at least 15 minutes. It's best to wait for eight hours to see if you're going to have a reaction to the plant.

You can test each part of the plant for poison in the same way until you find a part that isn't poisonous. After you find a plant part that doesn't cause a reaction, cook that part of the plant before consuming.

If you're not able to cook the plant part, you can test it raw, but you have to go through the process very slowly before you determine it can be consumed. First, you should hold the plant part up to your lip for about three minutes without putting it in your mouth.

Any burning or tingling on your lip indicates the plant isn't for consumption and you should discontinue the test immediately. If no reaction occurs, you can chew a small bite of the plant. Chew well and refrain from swallowing for fifteen minutes.

Again, discontinue the test if any reaction occurs at this point. If no reaction occurs, swallow that small portion of the plant and wait about eight hours without drinking anything except purified water during this period of time.

During that time, if you begin to feel ill, induce vomiting immediately and drink lots of water. When you are sure you're not going to have an adverse reaction to the plant part, you can feel safer to consume another small portion of the plant part.

Again, consume slowly and wait eight hours until you consume any more of the plant's part. Any reaction at all dictates that you should discontinue testing and move on to another plant part – or another plant.

The plant you're testing should be plentiful so you can prepare more of it if the test indicates that it's safe to eat. You don't want to waste your time on the lengthy testing process unless there is an abundance of the plant.

Remember, if you're near a beach, look for seaweed such as kelp, Irish moss and green seaweed for a great source of vitamin C. Seaweed washes up from the ocean and can be a source of nutrition if needed.

Testing plants for poison is a very dangerous process, so you should only engage in it if you're in an emergency situation. Some plants may test non-poisonous and still make you sick.

If you can, carry a guidebook to plants and insects into the wilderness with you. Remember that you can go without food for several days – so, if you don't know if certain plants or insects are poisonous, it's best to wait rather than being poisoned.



## **Chapter 5:**

### **Dealing with Potential Predators**

Numerous movies have been made that feature terrifying scenes of a person(s) being lost in the wilderness and pursued and attacked by creatures looking for prey. Actually, most creatures in the wild aren't likely to bother with you.

Predators usually view a person as something large and potentially dangerous, so they're afraid to venture near. Still, you should know how to react if you are placed in a dangerous situation in the wild.

The likelihood of you being attacked while hiking or exploring in the wilderness is rare, but you should know how to protect yourself just in case. First, you should know the local animals.

There are various tactics for wild animals and the same tactics that work for brown bears might not work for mountain lions. Besides wild animals, you should also beware of poisonous snakes.

While snakes aren't classified as predators, they will strike if surprised or angered. If possible, you should have a first aid kit with you at all times that includes a snake bite kit and instructions about what to do if bitten.

Preventing a wild animal attack is the best method of dealing with predators and one of the best ways of prevention is to never surprise a wild animal. Animals in the wilderness will likely avoid you and even strive to put some distance between you.

But, if a wild animal is startled, an attack is likely – especially if you've come upon a situation where a mother is with a cub. The mother will attack you to protect her cub, so avoiding that scenario is imperative.

One of the best ways to avoid surprising a wild animal is to make noise. Online and brick and mortar hiking and backpacking sites carry various types of noisemakers such as whistles and bells that will warn animals of your impending approach.

Otherwise, you can make plenty of noise as you're hiking through the wilderness by whistling and talking loudly. If you do happen upon a wild animal, never tempt it to attack you.

Actions that might trigger an attack include running or jogging on wilderness trails. Unfortunately, that type of activity mimics a deer or other prey running through the woods and might cause a mountain lion to chase you down.

Never run if you confront a dangerous animal by accident. You will almost surely be attacked if you do. Some large animals, such as brown bears, might be scared off if you make yourself seem big and menacing.

Also, make plenty of noise and make yourself seem like something very large and very dangerous to the animal. Familiarize yourself with the different tactics that work to protect yourself from the wild animals in the area.

Another way to protect yourself from predators in the wild is to build a fire. Predators have learned to be afraid of fires, so it's good to have one burning while you're sleeping or relaxing.

Wild animals are almost always looking for food. Food sacks and supplies should always be kept in plastic bags that are completely sealable and stuffed in a back pack or sack.

Hang the sack from the branch of a tree that's at least six feet away from any tree trunk by using a rope pitched over a branch and tying the other end to a rock or other stable item. The food should be high enough in the tree that the bears can't reach it.

Never bring food into your tent. Even if you can't smell the food, a wild animal can. Their sense of smell is acute and necessary for their very survival. They

will enter a tent or area if they smell food and you could be injured or even worse.

Scraps of food and other trash should be removed from the campsite area and your dishes should be washed thoroughly before you go to sleep. If you have time to plan for your trek in the wilderness, take some moth balls to place around the site at night.

The odor of the moth balls will discourage wild animals to venture near – and, the smell will usually mask the smell of any food odors. A spray bottle of ammonia also works well. Simply squirt the liquid around the campsite at night.

You're never entirely safe from an animal attack even if you use tried and true methods. There's always the possibility of an attack – and you should be prepared. Pepper spray can be carried along when hiking, but not type that comes in small cans to protect yourself from human attacks.

Pepper spray designed for animal attacks can be purchased and can spray up to ten feet away. Use pepper spray only if an attack is imminent. If the animal continues to move toward you, be sure to aim at the eyes and nose to ensure effectiveness.

The purpose of the spray is to blind and render them disabled for a period of time that gives you a chance to get away. A firearm is the best protection against a wild animal attack and they save hundreds of lives per year – from both human and animal attacks.

Some people aren't comfortable with carrying a firearm and you must always make sure of the laws in various parks and wilderness sites and obey them. Carrying a firearm for protection is allowed in most national parks today – so, it's your choice.

If you do fire a gun at a wild animal, be sure it's completely necessary. A wounded animal is a very dangerous animal and you'll want to know how to use the gun effectively and properly before shooting.

Snakes are another hazard of survival in the wild. Rattlesnakes (pit vipers) and copperheads are common in parts of the United States, Mexico and Canada and South and Central America are particularly overrun with them.

Although snakes are not predators, they are still a risk when surviving in the wilderness. You should know what a poisonous snake looks like. They usually have a flat head that's triangular and a heavy-set body.

Rattlesnakes are usually colored with tan and brown patchwork with a rattle at the end of its tail. Depending on the age of the snake, the rattle may be short or long. Rattlesnakes love warm to hot days, but can venture out of its home to search for warmth.

Be sure to use a flashlight when walking around the campsite in the dark and wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Wear long, loose pants and thick hiking boots with good, thick socks. Never wear sandals when hiking in the wilderness.

Although snakes aren't likely to chase you down, they will protect themselves by biting you if they feel threatened. The poisonous venom injected through their fangs is their only defense method.

The best defense for you when wandering around in the wilderness is to know how to prevent an attack. That means researching the area if you can and taking the proper precautions to keep safe.



## **Chapter 6:**

### **Hazards You May Encounter in the Wild**

Animal attacks and snake bites aren't the only hazards you may encounter in the wild. Other threats might include a perilous terrain, poisonous plants and extreme fatigue and dehydration.

Before you venture in to any wilderness, you should know about possible hazards in the area and how to avoid falling into the traps. Some areas may have more hazards than others. Weather, rivers that flood, ice to navigate and slippery rocks are just a few.

During the summer months, severe weather may threaten your survival. Heavy rains can cause flooding, so if you're camped near a creek or river, you should be prepared to move to higher ground in an instant.

Rain can also cause mud slides and avalanches if you're in that type of area. Slippery rocks may also cause a problem if you're alone and break a foot or leg from a fall. Wear proper foot gear for that type of environment and try not to take chances that would put you in jeopardy.

Raging rivers may be dangerous to cross during a pouring rain or storm, so wait until the danger is past. Lightening has always been a dreaded hazard for those spending time in the wilderness. Learn how to read the clouds and predict threatening storms.

For example, high clouds usually indicate good weather, while mid-level

(altostratus) clouds that appear gray, thick and dark, along with an easterly wind, could be signs of an impending storm. Low-level clouds, appearing close together, mean that rain is likely.

Being struck by lightning is the worst fear of anyone forced to stay for long periods of time in the wild. The chances of being struck by lightning when out in the wild are fairly high, and you should know some skills to survive a strike.

Most all fatalities due to lightning strikes are caused by cardiac arrest. You and your companion survivalists should know CPR should you need to administer it and save a person's life.

Avoid being caught in a storm if at all possible, but if you do find yourself in the middle of a lightning storm, there are a few techniques you should know to keep safe. For example, never lay down, but instead crouch with your arms and feet tucked in.

Stay at least fifty feet away from others and get away from campsites since tents will not protect you from lightning. Move away from lakes and trees and don't stand in a meadow as lightning tends to strike the tallest object in low terrain.

Ditches and dips in the terrain are safer than level or high ground. Another problem out in the wilderness could come from flora and fauna. Plants such as poison ivy can cause your days outdoors to become miserable and even dangerous if infected.

Mosquitos are also hazardous – and some carry viruses and diseases that can haunt you long after you leave the wild. Ticks and other annoying and biting bugs can also make your life miserable.

Fortunately, there are ways to keep mosquitos and other bugs from attacking you. Sprays containing chemicals can keep the bugs away and camping gear such as tents can be purchased which contain chemicals that emit a bad smell to bugs and keep them out of the tent.

But, unless you want to stay in a tent the entire time, you can use other methods such as Bugs Away Spray and Witch Hazel (containing no chemicals at all). Other natural ways to keep bugs away include citronella, cedar wood, tea tree, eucalyptus, patchouli and more.

Oils like citronella are good for repelling bugs rather than killing them. Look for citronella candles and bands you can wear to protect you from mosquitos. Certain herbs are also good for repelling bugs.

Rosemary, basil, lemon balm, catnip and lavender can be used with water to make a simple spray for your skin. It will also work for your pets. Eucalyptus is another natural repellent and is used in many commercial sprays.

Always keep waste away from the campsite to help repel bugs. If you don't have any spray, oil or herbs you can use, you can burn cow patties if available to help your campfire repel mosquitoes.

You can also limit your contact with bugs by keeping away from perfumes and

other hygiene products. Buts are attracted to the sweet smells. Lotions and shampoos should be unscented if you plan on using them in the wild.

Most people know about poison ivy and even know what it looks like. You should also know about other plants such as stinging nettle which is found in wet and shady areas of the United States.

Poison Oak, the Poisonwood Tree -- or anything described with the word, poison -- should be avoided. Some of these poisonous plants are very pretty to look at and produce beautiful flowers, but can harm you or your pets if touched.

It's best if you can familiarize yourself with poisonous plants before time spent in the wilderness, but if you find yourself in a situation where you don't know if a plant is poisonous or not – play it safe.

Fatigue is another hazard to beware of when in the wilderness. It can come on suddenly and leave you too tired to make it back to camp unless you're able to recognize the signs.

Being stranded in the wild or even having a great time in the wilderness can bring on fatigue. It's unavoidable when you exert yourself and when you become fatigued, you're less able to think clearly or respond appropriately in an emergency situation.

Fatigue can be dangerous in the wild because it may diminish your ability to hunt for water and food. This can lead to dehydration or starvation. Drinking lots of water, if available, is imperative in a wilderness situation.

All of the tasks that you must take care of in the wilderness can also cause fatigue. Building a shelter, fire, ensuring the safety of the area and other chores can be very tiring, especially if you aren't used to it.

An emergency situation only makes the fatigue worsen. If you're worried or afraid, you'll need to make quick decisions, and you won't be able to think

clearly if you're tired. Pain also brings on fatigue as does hunger, cold and thirst.

Staying calm helps to decrease your chances of becoming so fatigued that you create an emergency by making a bad or life-threatening decision.



## **Chapter 7:**

### **Learning to Ration Properly**

When you're placed in a situation where rationing food and water is mandatory for survival, you should know certain details about which items to ration and how much to allow yourself and others.

Chances are, you won't ever be placed in a situation where food rationing is necessary for survival. But, if it does happen, you want to be prepared to take charge and do whatever it takes to keep you (and others) alive.

During a long-term survival situation, you can go without a shower, toothbrush or change of clothing for as long as needed, but you must have enough to eat and drink. Too little water means you won't survive long. Too little food zaps your energy.

Hopefully, you can hunt and scavenge for food in your area, but if food and water is scarce, rationing what you have becomes your only option. Symptoms of dehydration will begin to occur only a day after no water consumption.

In a survival situation, rationing water becomes mandatory. You'll also want to think about eating less because eating makes you want to drink more water. Lessening your physical activities will help decrease losing water in perspiration, but you may have to move around to find more water.

Try to drink only enough water so that you're urinating a very small amount, but do drink enough so that you don't risk mental confusion. A good way to know if

you're drinking too little water is if urination ceases altogether.

If possible, stay out of the sun or at least protect yourself with clothing and breathe through the nose rather than the mouth. Keep your body cool by drenching a piece of material in non-potable water and draping it around your neck.

You should drink enough water of the supply that you have, but don't give in to urges and fill up on it. To know how much water is enough, there is a simple formula you can use.

Drinking water rationing is calculated by a number of factors – your weight, the heat factor and how much you are sweating. A simple way to determine how much water you need is to divide your weight in half for the ounces of water you must drink each day.

There are 128 ounces of water in one gallon, so another simple formula for survival is to plan for a half of the gallon of water per day for each person. The drinking water doesn't have to be sanitized (potable) when you gather it, but should be filtered before you drink it.

Water can be taken from ponds, streams, rainwater, lakes or other sources except brackish or salt water. Then, you can boil the water to kill any bugs or parasites that may cause disease.

For food rationing, the rule of thumb is to eat only what you need. If you eat too much you're simply wasting a valuable resource. Not eating enough food can cause lack of energy and you risk becoming ill.

Being stuck in the wilderness without a good supply of food means that you need to find edible plants, animals, fish and even insects to provide nourishment. In survival mode, you don't merely need to eat.

You'll need the nutrients necessary to create energy and help your body function properly. Calories are important and you need to figure out how to survive on as little as possible so you can ration properly.

Your body converts the calories you consume into energy, which keeps you from tiring. Of course, the amount of calories you need depends upon several factors – just as water does.

Your age, weight, activities and climate you're in play a big part in how many calories you'll need on a daily basis. A good number of calories that will help

you survive in the wild range between 1200 and 1500 calories.

These are the calories you'll need to thrive, but you can actually get by and survive with many less calories. In a survival situation, it's important to stay slightly hungry rather than eat all your food at once.

Being stuck in the wilderness with no food at all means that you must learn how to hunt and gather. You should know something about the plants, animals and other types of inhabitants before you bug out in an area.

With that knowledge, you'll be able to find edibles almost immediately. Although you can go without food for weeks, your energy will wane without it and you may miss an opportunity to find a way out or to be rescued.

Fishing is a good option if you're near water – and it doesn't require as much energy as hunting. You only have to know a small amount about how to catch fish to fashion a hook, lure and bait. It's good knowledge to have – just in case.

Other bits of helpful knowledge include how to spot edible plants and insects. If you're fortunate enough to be able to hunt, know how to make jerky from the meat so you can consume it later.

If you eat all your food on the first day, you won't have anything to look forward to, and that can lead to despair. Eating only a couple of bites may leave you hungry, but you can survive on that small amount.

It may be necessary to think of ways to preserve food during an extreme

rationing situation. Dehydration is one of the best ways to preserve if you're caught in the wild. You can preserve almost anything when using a dehydration process.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are best dehydrated within six to ten hours of gathering. Some fruits and vegetables turn brown shortly after cutting, so they're not the best ones to dehydrate unless you can dip them in lemon juice or blanch/steam them first.

Fruits and vegetables dehydrate best when you use the solar method. Simply cut the fruits and veggies into thin pieces and lay them on a clean rock or other surface and let the sun dry them out for a few hours.

You can also preserve meat and fish using the solar method. It's an ideal way to stockpile food for later use if you're in a survival situation. Be sure you know how to dry foods before you venture into the wild.

Rationing was put into use in 1939, just before World War II, when some food products were scarce and prices were high. People used ration books to purchase various food items and began growing their own gardens (named Victory Gardens) to help the war effort.

Today, we don't have to ration our food, but during a national or natural disaster the time may come when we should know how. Anyone gearing up for a survival situation should know how to ration.

Having the knowledge of some basic survival skills can ensure you survive any

situation where you must rely on the environment around you for nourishment.



## **Chapter 8:**

### **Signaling for Help if Needed**

Being lost or stranded is a situation no one wants to find themselves in, but there are emergencies that may require us to know how to get help – and quickly. How to signal depends on the situation you're in.

For example, if you're stranded in the wild, methods such as sound using a whistle or horn might work very well. But, if you're stranded at sea, sound won't work as well and you need to know how to use visual methods such as mirrors or flares.

When you're bugging out in the wilderness, always plan ahead for methods of signaling for help. It's best to be safe – just in case – than to be caught in a dire situation with no way to let people know where you are.

Some quick tips that might help if you are caught without any means of signaling is to create a fire, use space around you to signal where you are (stones or whatever is available) or make a flag from a jacket or other piece of material.

Although finding water will be your number one issue for survival, fire is also extremely important. You can purify water, provide light and security for your area and keep warm. It may also help keep predators away.

But, mainly, fire can be the perfect signal that you need help. A few small fires around an area work even better than one large fire. Three small fires in a

triangular shape is a signal that you need help. Be sure to gather firewood you'll need before nightfall.

Besides fire, you could use a mirror you may have packed. When going into the wild, you should always have a whistle, so you can use that to scare away dangerous wildlife or to signal for help.

Before you even begin your time there, there are some things you should consider including in your packing that might save your life. For example, it's a good idea to pack a lighter (or ferro rod) and a good size bunch of tinder to start a fire.

Place the lighter and some tinder (such as cotton balls) in a sealed plastic bag so it will stay dry. Also, pack a small mirror such as a makeup mirror to use for a signaler. Bright orange works well as a signaling material.

Take an orange t-shirt or bandanna or anything orange that will work nicely to contrast with the greenery around you. Pack some Paracord (550), which is a lightweight, nylon cord used in parachutes.

You can find all of these items, including signaling whistles online or at your favorite camping store. And, don't forget a good and serviceable survival knife. That item should be a must any time you're entering the wild.

One way to signal for help – lighting a fire – can also keep predators (including insects) away and prevent hypothermia. You should try to create black smoke with your fire. It's much more visible and is a signal that you need to be rescued.

To create black smoke, first make a roaring fire. Then, gather the freshest, greenest vegetation you can find to place on the flames. Rubber tires also make great plumes of black smoke if you have one or more available.

Your brightly colored material (preferable orange) will be easy to spot. Wear the t-shirt and use another piece of orange material for a signaling flag. Hang it high and in an open area where it can be easily seen.

Use whatever materials you have available to make a ground-to-air signal. Vegetation such as tree limbs or piles of leaves or pine needles will work as long as it visually contrasts with the ground on which it's created.

Contrast is extremely important to your ground to air signaling. Your signal for help must be set apart from your surroundings. That's why the orange works so well against green – or the green vegetation against the brown of the earth.

Contrast can also help when trying to form letters on the ground or when sending a smoke signal, it works to create black smoke against the blue or white sky. Bright lights against the dark of night are also great to signal that you need rescuing.

Laser pointers and LED flashlights are particularly good for signaling at night and can be used to form Morse code signals for the S.O.S. sign. Know your signals for distress before you even venture into the wild.

And, you should know how to signal the universal S.O.S. with a mirror. It consists

of three flashes in a row – or whistle three times in a row with a loud whistle. When using a mirror, remember that you have to be facing the sun to reach a target.

If the sun isn't visible, you have another option – sound. Yelling for help is possible, but you can tire of that. A whistle especially made for the wild is the best for that situation, but beware that wind, peaks and valleys and other conditions may make the sounds more difficult to hear.

Having any type of vehicle on hand provides a great signaling device. You can honk the horns, flash the headlights or even burn some of the rubber parts of it for black smoke.

Don't be afraid of having to bug out in the wild, but always think ahead to any emergency that might happen. Don't venture out alone unless you have to, know the surroundings before you venture too far and carry a compass to know which direction you're traveling.



## **Chapter 9:**

### **What You Can Do with Ropes and Knots**

Ropes and knots are subjects that all wilderness enthusiasts should know about. Knowing about the special ways that ropes and knots can be useful is an important skill to have and may mean the difference in life or death.

Survival in the wild may depend upon you knowing some of the valuable things you can do with ropes and knots. For example, you can use knots to create snares that can catch animals without having to hunt for them.

Use the knowledge of ropes and knots to help create a shelter. They can hold sticks together that will serve as walls, roofs and other means of shelter. You may want to create a rope pulley to move heavy objects

There is so much you can do with ropes and knots, including fashioning a weapon such as a spear or makeshift axe. There may be an instance where you need to use rope to climb or even sew up a wound using the internal strands of a rope.

The military trains its soldiers in the uses for knots and ropes and stresses that using the wrong type of rope or knots for certain situations could lead to disaster. For that reason, you should know the quality of rope you're using and some of the knots you can create for your own survival.

Quality of rope can make a difference in how well it performs. You should know that the rope is in good condition and the weight it can withstand under

pressure. There are several types of rope available for your specific needs in the wild.

Sash cord (clothesline) is probably the most difficult type of rope for knot tying. It's made of woven cotton and should be left for hanging clothes. Another type of rope to avoid for knot tying is binder twine.

Binder twine is weak and can't be used successfully in any situation where it's important to have strength. Woven rope is made from synthetic fibers that are woven in small spans.

Woven rope doesn't usually wear out as quickly as some other types of rope, but you should know how to prevent it from unraveling by using a flame or iron to fuse the strands together if they fray.

Laid rope is a common type of rope for making knots, but dangerous for rappelling or dealing with heavy weights. It's a rope that is made from both

synthetic and natural fibers and twisted into yarn. It's then twisted into strands and finally, rope.

Fibers of laid rope can rub together wear out, and the flaws are hard to spot. It is an easy type of rope to learn knotting and you can use it to become familiar with the steps involved for each type of knot.

Paracord (550 cord) is used for parachutes and is so strong that it has been used in space missions to repair the Hubble Telescope. The nylon also gives it a good amount of elasticity, making it a great all-purpose utility cord.

The woven yards inside the Paracord can be separated and used as fishing line, repairing your camping gear or for sewing. You can melt or fuse the ends of the cord to prevent it from fraying.

Some versions of parachute cord you can purchase today are made with a core consisting of fire tinder, fishing line and snare wire. It's important to know the type of rope you're using so you understand how it can help you in the wild.

Another basic bit of knowledge that survivalists need to know is how to care for the ropes. If you don't take care of it, the rope can quickly deteriorate. You should take care to inspect the rope for whipped ends and unraveling. Never leave a rope in water, trailing behind a boat.

Don't take a rope into the wild if it's past its prime. Ropes become old and worn out, depending on how much you use them and how you use them. Inspect your rope for any pieces of small rocks or glass embedded within the rope can

weaken them.

You should also avoid letting your ropes come in contact with chemicals such as acids and bleach. Rodents sometimes like to chew on ropes, so be sure to inspect a rope thoroughly before you put it to use if it's been stored in a shed.

The best way to preserve a rope is to coil it properly. Coil a rope clockwise if you're right-handed and counter-clockwise if you're left-handed. Store the rope in a dry area so mildew doesn't set in and make the rope weaken.

After you've chosen the rope of choice, you can begin learning how to tie knots. It's easy to find pictorial images, videos and books online that can help you learn the basics of knot tying.

One classic knot that you may already know how to tie is the Square Knot. You can connect ropes or lines with the Square Knot or use it to secure a bundle of firewood to carry back to camp.

Another easy knot is the Clove Hitch. With the Clove Hitch you can attach a line to a post or tree, but you must use other types of knots to fully secure it if you're going to use it alone.

The Two Half Hitches knot can help the Clove Hitch to secure lines to a pole or tree. Use the Fisherman's Knot to use with a fishing line by passing the rope through the eye of a fishhook and then craft the Fisherman's Knot to secure it.

A Bowline knot is useful to create a loop on the end of the rope that will not get

smaller or larger with use. The Water Knot can be helpful in keeping items together such as straps and belts.

Sailors know what the Barrel Hitch knot is and so do construction workers. You can use the Barrel Hitch knot to lift something cylindrical such as a barrel or bucket. Learning to tie knots is fun and doesn't take a lot of effort to learn.

Slip knots are easy and extremely helpful as a quick fix to secure an item. It only consists of one or two turns and ends up becoming a noose that you can secure around various items.

Knowing how to tie an Alpine Butterfly knot is essential if you are going to be climbing in the wilderness. It forms a secure loop in the middle of the rope that can support a middle climber and two others.

Hitchers knots are used to attach a rope to another rope or an object. If you're a climber or sailor, you should know at least one or two Hitcher knots. One Hitcher's knot, the Blake Hitch, is used for going up or down when climbing.

The Blake Hitch can be tied successfully at the end of a rope rather than using a loop such as the Prusik Loop. After the knot is tied, you'll need to use a stopper knot like the Figure Eight knot to secure the knot on the object.

The Clove Hitch knot is a Hitcher knot that is considered usable for any purpose. It's easy to tie and comes untied easily too. It can be used as a binding knot, but beware that it can slip if you tie it to an object that rotates.

There are between 10 and 20 knots you should learn to survive in the wild. There are certain knots that are best for certain jobs – and you should know the difference. A good knot can save your life.



## **Chapter 10:**

### **What You Should Keep on You**

The first thing mentioned in this survival guide is water – how important it is to your survival, how to find it and how much you need to survive. When bugging out in the wilderness, you should always put water at the top of your checklist.

If your space is limited, carry a water bottle with purified water in it. You should calculate how much potable water you'll need for the days you're going to be gone (if you know) and take more if you can in case of an emergency where you're unable to go back to your homestead.

You can find survival kits online or in camping stores that contain many items necessary for survival such as a pocket knife, lighter and compass. But your list for survival should begin before you even leave your home or car.

Before you leave, write a detailed message and leave it for others to find if needed – in case you and your family get separated during a SHTF situation. You should write down where you intend to go and when you are expecting to return (if you know) and the number of people in your group.

Preparation is the key to surviving in the wild. In your packing list you should include a map and a compass. Add a brightly colored larger piece of plastic that you can use as a shelter if it rains.

A first aid kit that's especially designed for the wilderness can greatly improve your chances of survival. It should address the various injuries that you're likely to

encounter in the wild – such as supplies for internal, bleeding and bone injuries.

For internal problems such as nausea, headaches, bug bites (mosquitos) and rashes caused by plants or heat, you'll want to be sure to have on hand some special lotions and ointments – plus, medicine to relieve pain or itching.

Breaking a bone when frolicking in the wilderness can be a real problem unless you're prepared. This is true especially if you're by yourself. Splints and wraps should be available in the form of ace bandages and a bandana for a makeshift sling.

Another type of injury – blisters – can make your life in the wilderness miserable and should be treated with duct tape or mole-skin. Blisters can also become infected if not treated properly, so antibiotic ointment should be used to soothe and protect.

A bleeding injury can threaten your survival in the wilderness if you bleed too much or if the wound becomes infected. Be sure to include in your first aid kit some gauze to absorb the blood and some anti-bacterial wipes to clean the wound.

Including some butterfly bandages and regular band aids is a good idea to help close and protect it. Antibiotic ointment should be used to keep the wound from becoming infected. Ointment can also help treat any burns that may occur.

Another item that can save lives in case of an emergency is the Wilderness First Aid Manual. Latex-free gloves, a syringe that can be used to irrigate a wound and tweezers are also necessary items to include in the first aid kit.

There are other items such as ointment packets, hydrocortisone packets, wipes treated with povidone-iodine and sting relief wipes that you may also want to include. Ibuprofen for aches and pains and acetaminophen, also for pain relief are great additions to the first aid kit.

Antihistamines are useful in case of an allergy attack and loperamide caplets can help stop diarrhea if you come in contact with some contaminated water. Don't forget any medications that you normally take on a regular basis.

Remember that a first aid kit is helpful only if you know how to use it. First aid training can increase your chances of having a great experience in the wild as well as saving your (or someone you love) life.

You'll also want to include a signaling device such as a flashlight (extra batteries too). Extra clothing might come in handy. Long sleeved clothing for sun protection, rain gear, hat, gloves and sweater, plus an extra pair of sunglasses can prove very serviceable.

A knife is an essential item to carry in your survival gear. It has many uses and greatly increases your chances of survival in many situations. A pocketknife is useful, but a fixed blade knife is better.

Fixed blade knives are stronger because they have no mechanical movement to make them weaker. With a fixed blade knife you can cut larger items such as thick branches to build shelter, rope cutting and creating weapons such as slingshots or spears.

Rope is also useful for a survival situation. The 550 parachute cord is strong and lightweight and doesn't take up a lot of space. Use the cord to hang food in the air to keep it away from wild animals.

Also use rope to help build shelter, climb, using it for a splint if bones are broken, creating snares to trap animals or fishing line to catch fish if water is nearby. There are many more uses for cord, so be sure and include it in your gear.

Include signaling devices in your survival checklist. Don't think a cell phone will help you in a survival situation as there will likely be no service where you are. A signal mirror can be used to alert aircraft of your situation and if you flash S.O.S. signals, it's even better.

A whistle can be used to signal for help too. You can use a whistle to flag down a car as it passes or to let other people or rescuers know where you are. Always include matches or a lighter to light fires.

Waterproof matches are best to add to your gear and when you do make a fire, use green leaves to create smoke that can be seen from miles away and can also keep you warm or cook food.

If you have no waterproof matches or lighter, you'll need to know other ways to build a fire such as using natural objects to create friction and light some tinder. You should also know how to use the sun to create fire.

Carrying extra batteries should also be on your checklist. You can even use a battery to start a fire. A 9-volt battery can ignite quickly and easily. If you have some steel wool, rub it on the battery's terminals.

The friction created by rubbing the steel wool on the batteries will make it heat and ignite. If you don't have steel wool, you can use a piece of metal (such as

a paperclip) to rub on the battery's terminals at the same time.

A piece of flint carried in your survival pack can also prove useful for lighting a fire when you don't have matches or a lighter. You simply hold the flint between the thumb and forefinger and use the back of a steel knife to scrape back and forth on the flint.

This will cause sparks that can help to ignite the tinder you've gathered to start the fire. Fires may also be created by using the sun. A magnifying glass is a good tool to use – or, you can use binocular lenses or lenses from your eyeglasses.

Add some water to the lens to get a more intense light beam. Tilt the lens over the tinder until you get a focused beam of light and continue trying different angles until the sun through the glass ignites the tinder.

Carry a warm, knit hat that you can fold easily. Warmth exits from your body from the top of your head, so wearing a hat at night can help keep the warmth inside as it should be.

Finding your way back is easier if you pack a compass along with your gear. Just be sure you know how to use one. Carry along a tarp or large plastic (garbage) bag to use as a shelter.

You can use a rope, some tree branches and the tarp or plastic bag to build a lean-to that can keep you dry. Be sure to include a first aid kit in your checklist. It doesn't have to be a large one, but it should contain alcohol wipes, gauze and bandages.

A change of clothing is always nice to have in case you get wet from sweating or rain. When your clothing is wet or moist, it pulls heat away from your body and you have less energy which could cause you to tire and be unable to think clearly.

A good, sturdy backpack is a must for the wilderness. It can carry all your survival items in one place and you are also able to use it for bandages, slings or building a fire in case of a true emergency.

Also, carry pamphlets that provide guidance about edible plants in your area – plus information about wildlife and what to beware of. It may seem odd to suggest, but carry along a good buddy if you can.

That's important in case you get hurt and unable to move around and to help

you make decisions in difficult situations. No one should ever enter the wilderness alone for obvious reasons.

Being in the wilderness is fun on a camping trip, but it's a different story when you're forced to be out there in the SHTF situation. In these cases, you won't have the happy campfire and smores – you'll be fending off predators, fighting hunger and wishing you were back home.

It's best to always be prepared so that you can make it as comfortable as possible so that you're not operating from a place of sheer panic and hastily operating from a place where mistakes could cost you your life.



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