

# SURVIVAL BASICS

The advances in the development of outdoor clothing, equipment, emergency food and techniques have been growing rapidly in recent years. For those beginners interested in using the outdoors there is unlimited information available. However, experience is the best teacher in any outdoor situation and your reaction in a survival situation depends on your education. Always keep in mind that it can happen to you. Those who are mentally and physically prepared to survive are more likely to do so. To deal with an emergency situation one must be able to make decisions, improvise and remain calm.

**Fear** - For anyone faced with an emergency situation, fear is a normal reaction. Unless an emergency situation has been anticipated, fear is generally followed by panic then pain, cold, thirst, hunger, fatigue, boredom and loneliness. It is extremely important to calmly assess the situation and not allow these seven enemies to interfere with your survival.

**Pain** - Pain may often be ignored in a panic situation. Remember to deal with injuries immediately before they become even more serious.

**Cold** - Cold lowers your ability to think, numbing the body and reducing the will to survive. Never allow yourself to stop moving or to fall asleep unless adequately sheltered.

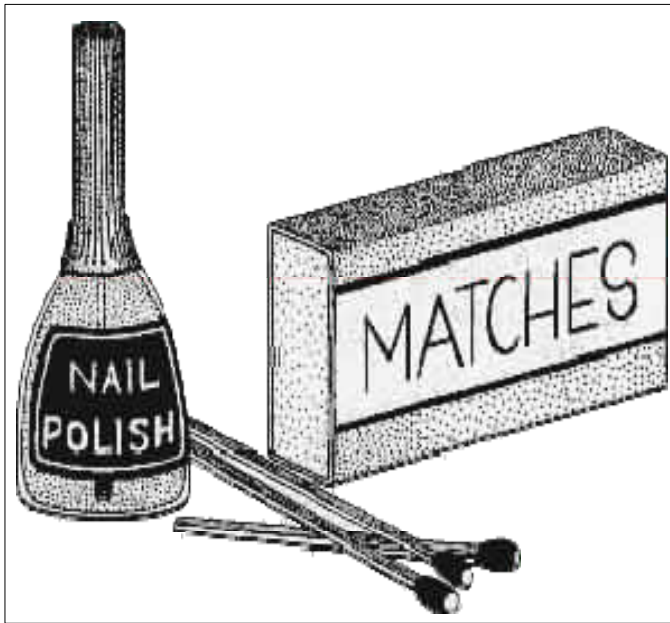
**Thirst** - Dehydration is a common enemy in an emergency situation and must not be ignored. It can dull your mind, causing you to overlook important survival information. You can become dehydrated in any type of weather including icy-cold.

**Hunger** - Hunger is dangerous but seldom deadly. It may reduce your ability to think logically and increase your susceptibility to the effects of cold, pain, and fear.

**Fatigue** - Fatigue is unavoidable in any situation so it is best to keep in mind that it can and will lower your mental ability. Remember that in an emergency situation this is often the body's way of escaping a difficult situation. In a survival situation planning for fatigue will save your life. You need adequate shelter in a safe location and you want to make your shelter before it becomes too dark to see.

**Boredom & Loneliness** - These enemies are quite often unanticipated and may lower the mind's ability to deal with the situation. You can help with these enemies by singing songs to yourself, talking to yourself as you go about the tasks needed for survival, or repeating the Scout Law, Oath, Slogan, or Motto. Staying busy will help avoid boredom, loneliness, fear, and cold. Building or finding shelter from the weather in a safe place will keep your mind occupied as well as provide you with a place to sleep when you become tired.

**Before venturing into the wilderness check weather forecasts and hazards.**

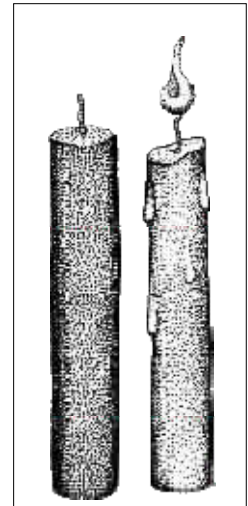


## HOW TO:

Build a Fire - Building a fire is the most important task when dealing with survival in the wilderness. Be sure to build yours in a sandy or rocky area or near a supply of sand and water as to avoid forest fires. The most common mistakes made by those attempting to build a fire are: choosing poor tinder, failing to shield precious matches from the wind, and smothering the flames with too large pieces of fuel. The four most important factors when starting a fire are: spark - tinder - fuel - oxygen.

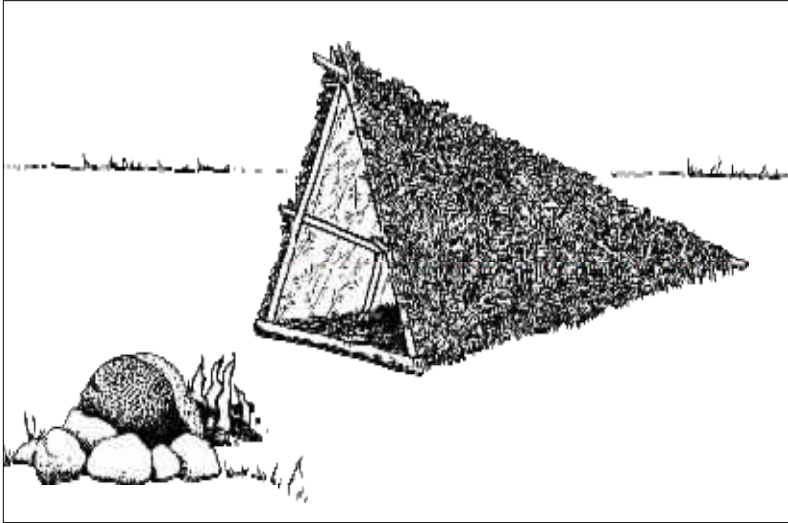
The most common ways to create spark are:

1. Waterproof, strike-anywhere matches are your best bet. Matches may be waterproofed by dipping them in nail polish. Store your matches in a waterproof container.
2. A cigarette lighter is also a good way to produce a spark, with or without fuel.
3. The flint and steel method is one of the oldest and most reliable methods in fire starting. Aim the sparks at a pile of dry tinder to produce a fire.
4. The electric spark produced from a battery will ignite a rag dampened with gasoline, insect repellent, or other flammable liquids.
5. Remove half of the powder from a bullet and pour it into the tinder. Next place a rag in the cartridge case of the gun and fire. The rag should ignite and then may be placed into the tinder.
6. Allow the sun's rays to pass through a magnifying glass onto the tinder.



Dry grass, paper, cloth, lint, gasoline-soaked rags, and dry bark are all forms of tinder. Place your tinder in a small pile resembling a tepee with the driest pieces at the bottom. Use a fire starter or strip of pitch if it is available.

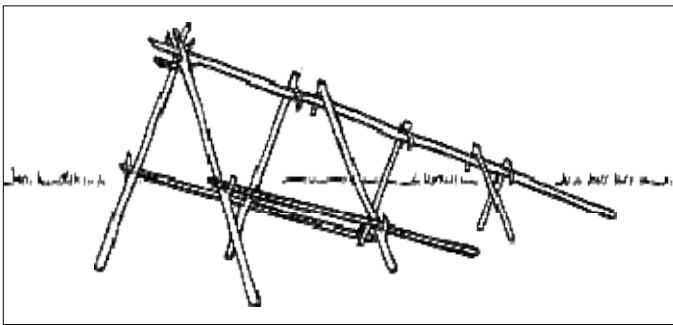
It is important to keep in mind that smaller pieces of kindling such as, twigs, bark, shavings, and gasoline, are necessary when trying to ignite larger pieces of fuel. Gather fuel before attempting to start your fire. Obviously dry wood burns better and wet or pitchy wood will create more smoke. Dense, dry wood will burn slow and hot. A well ventilated fire will burn best.



## HOW TO:

Build a Shelter - A small shelter which is insulated from the bottom, protected from wind and snow and contains a fire is extremely important in survival. Before building your shelter, make sure that the surrounding area provides the materials needed to build a good fire, a good water source, and shelter from the wind.

Wilderness shelters may include:

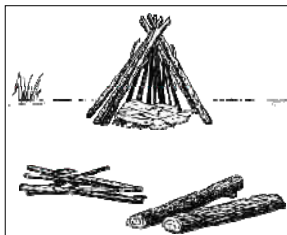


1. Natural shelters such as caves and overhanging cliffs. When exploring a possible shelter tie a piece of string to the outer mouth of the cave to ensure you will be able to find your way out again. Keep in mind that these caves may already be occupied. If you do use a cave for shelter, build your fire near its mouth to prevent animals from entering.

2. Enlarge the natural pit under a fallen tree and line it with bark or tree boughs.

3. Near a rocky coastal area, build a rock shelter in the shape of a U, covering the roof with driftwood and a tarp or even seaweed for protection. Look for clues that define the high-water mark for that area.

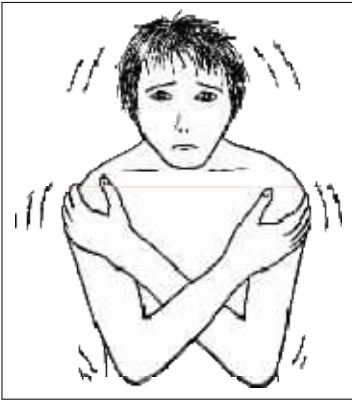
4. A lean-to made with poles or fallen trees and a covering of plastic, boughs, thick grasses, or bark is effective to shelter you from wind, rain, and snow.



5. A wigwam may be constructed using three long poles. Tie the tops of the poles together and upright them in an appropriate spot. Cover the sides with a tarp, boughs, raingear, or other suitable materials. Build a fire in the center of the wigwam, making a draft channel in the wall and a small hole in the top to allow smoke to escape.

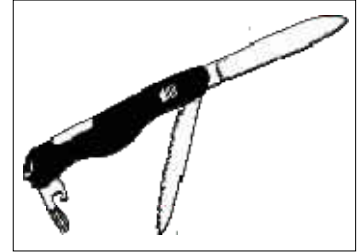
6. If you find yourself in open terrain, a snow cave will provide good shelter. Find a drift and burrow a tunnel into the side for about 60 cm (24 in) then build your chamber. The entrance of the tunnel should lead to the lowest level of your chamber where the cooking and storage of equipment will be. A minimum of two ventilating holes are necessary, preferably one in the roof and one in the door.

## CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT



Clothing - Clothing must provide warmth and offer protection from the elements. Layers of light, natural fibers are best. Hats are a must, as they offer protection from both the heat and cold. Water proof outer layers are necessary.

Equipment - Equipment must be easily manageable and promote survival in any situation. Items to carry in your pockets may



include a fire starter, waterproof matches and/or lighter, a pocket knife, goggles, compass, small first-aid kit, and some sort of trail food.



Survival kit - Items should be packed in a waterproof container that can double as a cooking pot and water receptacle and be attached to your belt.

Backpack - A good, comfortable backpack is mandatory. Loads of about 40 lbs. are average. Items to include are: flashlight, extra jacket, socks, mittens, a pocket saw, gas camp stove, first-aid kit, emergency food, and a tent with a fly.



## CHECK LIST

Useful items you may include:

1. A map and compass.
2. A large, bright plastic bag will be useful as a shelter, signaling device or in lieu of raingear.
3. A flashlight with extra batteries.
4. Extra water and food.
5. Extra clothing such as raingear, a toque and gloves, a sweater and pants.
6. Sun protection such as sunglasses, sunscreen, a hat and long sleeved clothing.
7. A sharp pocketknife.
8. Waterproof matches, a lighter and/or a flint.
9. Candles and fire starter.
10. A first aid kit.
11. A whistle, some flares, a small tarp.

