



Italy • Poland • Romania

Survival Skills



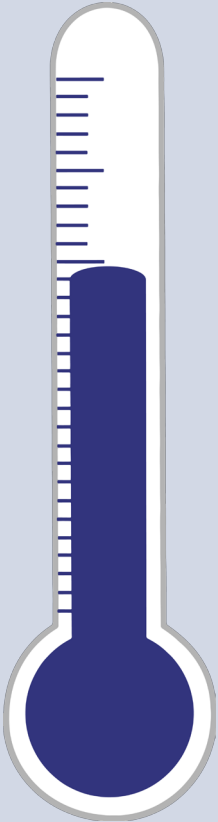
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Câmpulung Moldovenesc



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Clothing



Clothing is your first line of defense against the climate. So wear or improvise appropriate clothing. In the cold, layers of clothing trapping air are warmer than just one thick garment. Keep your body's core warm. Headwear is important. And a golden rule of cold? Act before you get too cold. Avoid sweating and keep your clothing dry. Wet clothing can lose up to 90% of its insulating properties. Water conducts heat (away from your body) approximately 25 times faster than air of the same temperature, so keeping your clothes dry, be it from sweat or other elements, is vital.

In a hot climate, clothing and headwear may be your main protection from the sun. Keep skin covered to prevent burning. An improvised hat or head scarf can provide shade and keep the body cool.

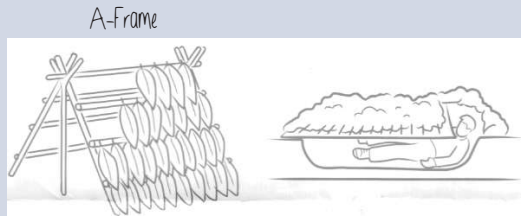
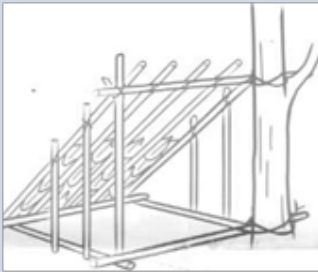
Shelter

Providing shelter is one of the top priorities in any environment. As with every element of survival, you must think carefully before wasting precious energy. Don't waste time constructing a shelter if nature has already provided one.

Take advantage of caves, overhangs, hollows and trees. In many situations, a man-made shelter may exist: a life raft, abandoned structures, etc. Man-made materials can be used in construction. Location is everything.

The shelter needs to be stable and away from natural hazards like wind, rain, flooding, rock falls, animals and insect swarms.

Study the terrain before choosing your shelter location.

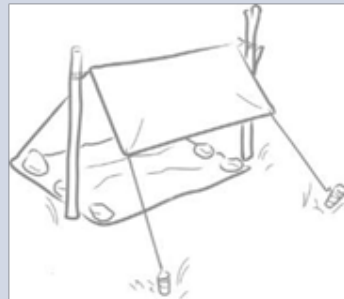


Tree pit*



*Don't forget to add ventilation

Sheet shelter



Fire

Fire will provide you with heat, light, comfort and protection. There are many ways to light your tinder: a lighter, matches, fire starter or car batteries being the easiest options, even in the rain or cold. Choose the location for your fire wisely, relative proximity to your shelter and wind direction being the most important aspects to consider. Build a base of green branches if the ground is wet, or dig a pit to protect in the event of windy weather. Fire requires three ingredients: Oxygen, Fuel and Heat. Gather your fuel before you attempt to start your fire. Look for wood that is off the ground to ensure your best chances of it being dry. Look for dead branches and twigs that crack when you break them. You will need tinder to get your spark going.

Fluffy fibrous materials like dry moss or grasses all make good tinder, as do cotton balls, tampons or petrol soaked rags. Be very cautious when starting fire with petrol. Use a very small amount and start the fire well away from the petrol source. Once you have overcome the effort of getting a flame, it is vital to be able to keep it going, so be sure that you have gathered plenty of fuel beforehand. You can keep a fire smouldering through the night by covering it with ash or dry soil.



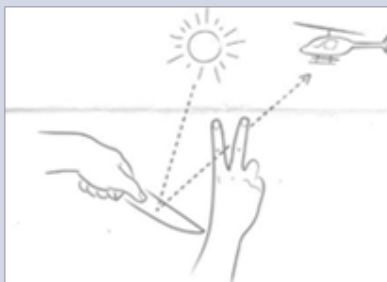
Location

Try to put yourself in the shoes of the rescuers. What way will they be coming from? How will they spot you? If it is safe to do so, **STAY PUT**.

If you have a vehicle, stay nearby. Too many people die by heading off into the unknown. Be smart and make yourself safe and visible.

Signaling

Lay out stones and objects to create an SOS near your location. If you have light or pyrotechnics, have them near at hand and ready to use. Any shiny surface can reflect sunlight for many miles to rescuers. Use this to signal them directly, or sweep the horizon if none is in sight. Smoky signal fires can also alert rescuers. Have them built and ready for quick ignition. Keep the fire dry by covering it with vegetation and have damp or living wood or leaves nearby to create smoke. You can also use oil, diesel or tires for smoke.



Signaling using blade and hand



Signal fire



Navigation

Knowing cardinal directions is an invaluable tool if you decide to move.

Shadow stick

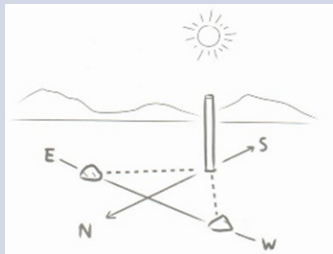
Place a stick in the ground. Mark where the tip of the shadow falls, then wait 15 minutes and mark again. The line between those two marks denotes a general East-West axis.

(Not recommended in Polar regions above/below 60° latitude. In the Southern Hemisphere, the South line in this drawing becomes North)

There are many ways of finding directions.

Wrist watch

To use your watch as a compass in the Northern Hemisphere, point the hour hand at the sun. The imaginary line bisecting the hour hand shows that 12 o'clock is your north-south line. (Not accurate in lower Latitudes below 20°)



Water

To be rescued or to self-rescue, you need WATER. Without water, your survival time is numbered in days, at best.

Collection

Never wait until you are without water to begin collecting it. Act while you are still fresh and have some supplies. Use any materials you have to aid in the collection of water. Large leaves or a sheet like this guide can be used.

Rain/Dew Trap is used to gather rain or dew. Condensation from damp ground or vegetation can be captured with a solar still. Be inventive—it is one of the keys to good survival. Improvise. Adapt. Overcome.



Purification

Water from arctic ice (caution: it may be sea ice), a rain/dew trap or still will not need purifying, but other sources may. Always purify water when possible. Drinking water that makes you sick can be worse than no water at all, as it can make you weak and dehydrated. Boil water for five minutes if you are at higher altitudes. At sea level it is sufficient to boil the water for just a minute, and then you avoid wasting limited fuel through excessive boiling. Basic filtration can be achieved through a shirt or a sock.

Sources

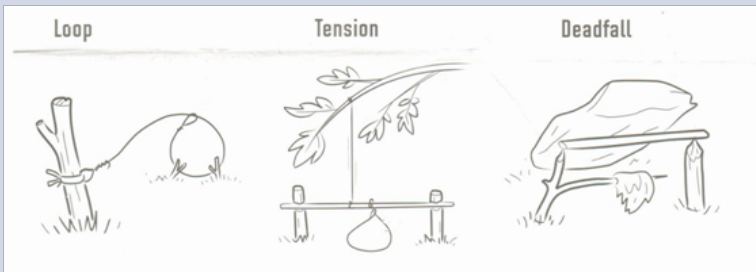
Follow game trails, animals or insects to surface water sources like rivers and streams. Look for lush vegetation as a sign that underground water may be present. Melt snow or ice. Plants and vegetation can provide fluids.

Food

Once you have protection, shelter and water, you need FOOD. Food provides vital energy to help you survive.

Snares / Traps

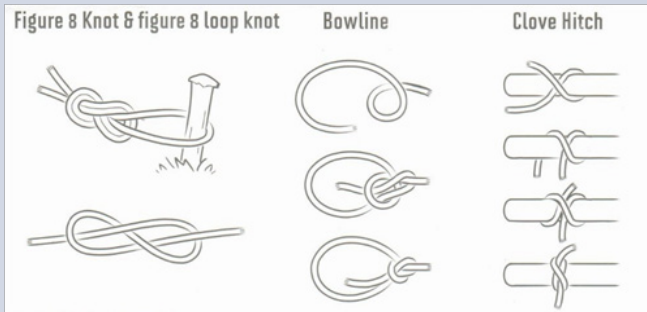
Hunting wild animals should not be your first thought when looking for food— instead snares and traps will use up less energy. Most animals can be snared with a wire noose in the right position, such as near a den or above a game trail. But don't set it too close to a den, as animals are wary when they first emerge from hiding. Also remember: funnel the animal towards your trap, camouflage the snare, mask your scent, and then bait it. And the more traps you set, the better your chances of success are. If there are rivers or other bodies of water nearby, these should be your first port of call for food.



Knots

There is no secret to the art of knot tying — just practice and patience. A few basic knots can provide a multitude of uses in a survival situation. And remember:

Keep It Simple! There is not much that you can't do with these three simple knots below.



Scavenging

The good survivor is a scavenger. Letting nature do the hard work is the best way to find food. Try anything you can get your hands on that is safe — you can't afford to be choosy — you don't know where/what your next meal will be. Generally if it walks, crawls, swims or flies — it can be eaten.

Think smart. Your brain is bigger than every animal or insect. When storing food, be sure that it is out of reach of any animals or insects that it may attract (especially bears).

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