

Wilderness Survival Level 1

INTRODUCTION

The following is a basic guide line to follow so that if you are ever in a survival situation you will have every chance to come out of it alive. There are a few words to remember when you are in a survival situation and one of those words is “Survival”.

SURVIVAL ACTIONS

The following expands on the meaning of each letter of the word survival. Study and remember what each letter signifies because you may someday have to make it work for you.

S -Size Up the Situation

Size Up Your Surroundings

Determine the pattern of the area. Get a feel for what is going on around you. Every environment, whether forest, jungle, or desert, has a rhythm or pattern. This rhythm or pattern includes animal and bird noises and movements and insect sounds.

Size Up Your Physical Condition

The trauma of being in a survival situation may have caused you to overlook injuries you may have. Check for any injuries and give yourself first aid. Take care to prevent further bodily harm. For instance, in any climate, drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration. If you are in a cold or wet climate, put on additional clothing to prevent hypothermia.

Size Up Your Equipment

Check to see what equipment you have and what condition it is in.

Now that you have sized up your situation, surroundings, physical condition, and equipment, you are ready to make your survival plan. In doing so, keep in mind your basic physical needs; water, food, and shelter.

Wilderness Survival Level 1

U -Use All Your Senses, Undue Haste Makes Waste

You may make a wrong move when or if you react quickly without thinking or planning. That move may result in your impacting whether you will be able to survive the situation you are in. Don't move just for the sake of taking action. Consider all aspects of your situation (size up your situation) before you make a decision and a move. If you act in haste, you may forget or lose some of your equipment. In your haste you may also become disoriented so that you don't know which way to go. Use all your senses to evaluate the situation. Note sounds and smells. Be sensitive to temperature changes. Be observant.

R -Remember Where You Are

Spot your location on your map and relate it to the surrounding terrain. This is a basic principle that you must always follow. If there are other persons with you, make sure they also know their location. Always know who in your group has a map and compass. Pay close attention to where you are and to where you are going. Do not rely on others in the group to keep track of the route. Constantly orient yourself. Always try to determine, as a minimum, how your location relates to:

- The location of local water sources (especially important in the desert).
- Areas that will provide shelter and food.

This information will allow you to make intelligent decisions when you are in a survival situation.

V -Vanquish Fear and Panic

Your greatest enemies are fear and panic. If uncontrolled, they can destroy your ability to make an intelligent decision. They may cause you to react to your feelings and imagination rather than to your situation. They can drain your energy and thereby cause other negative emotions. You will need to do everything you can to vanquish fear and panic.

Wilderness Survival Level 1

I-Improvise

In the United States, we have items available for all our needs. Many of these items are cheap to replace when damaged. Our easy come, easy go, easy-to-replace culture makes it unnecessary for us to improvise. This inexperience in improvisation can be a huge negative influence in a survival situation. Learn to improvise. Take a tool designed for a specific purpose and see how many other uses you can make of it.

Learn to use natural objects around you for different needs. An example is using a rock for a hammer. No matter how complete a survival kit you have with you, it will run out or wear out after a while. Your imagination must take over when your kit wears out.

V-Value Living

All of us were born kicking and fighting to live, but we have become used to the soft life. We have become creatures of comfort. We dislike inconveniences and discomforts. What happens when we are faced with a survival situation with its stresses, inconveniences, and discomforts? This is when the will to live- placing a high value on living-is vital. Stubbornness, a refusal to give in to problems and obstacles that face you, will give you the mental and physical strength to endure.

A-Act Like the Natives

The people and animals of a region have adapted to their environment. To get a feel of the area, watch for where people have traveled and locate animal trails. Where are the water sources? Where are the food sources?

Animal life in the area can also give you clues on how to survive. Animals require food, water, and shelter. By watching them, you can find sources of water and food.

WARNING

Animals cannot serve as an absolute guide to what you can eat and drink. Many animals eat plants that are toxic to humans.

Wilderness Survival Level 1

L -Live by Your Wits, *But for Now*, Learn Basic Skills

Without training in basic skills for surviving, your chances of living through a survival situation are low.

Learn these basic skills **now**. How you decide to equip yourself will impact on whether or not you survive. You need to know about the environment to which you are going, and you must practice basic skills geared to that environment. For instance, if you are going to a desert, you need to know how to get water in the desert.

Survival training reduces fear of the unknown and gives you self-confidence. It teaches you to *live by your wits*.

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| S | Size up the situation |
| U | Use all your senses, Undue haste makes waste |
| R | Remember where you are |
| V | Vanquish fear and panic |
| I | Improvise |
| V | Value Living |
| A | Act like the natives |
| L | Live by your wits, but for now, Learn the basic skills |

PATTERN FOR SURVIVAL

Develop a survival pattern that lets you beat the enemies of survival. This survival pattern must include food, water, shelter, fire, first aid, and signals placed in order of importance. For example, in a cold environment, you would need a *fire* to get warm; a *shelter* to protect you from the cold, wind, and rain or snow; traps or snares to get *food*; a means to *signal* aircraft; and *first aid* to maintain health. *If injured, first aid has top priority* no matter what climate you are in.

Change your survival pattern to meet your immediate physical needs as the environment changes.

As you read keep in mind the keyword SURVIVAL and the need for a survival pattern.