

Survival Tips - Ten Life-Savers

Contributed by Steve Gillman
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Thinking of going out into the wilderness soon? Be prepared, with these top ten survival tips.
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1. Read Or Watch Survival Stories

If you have read many true wilderness survival stories, you know that many people who probably shouldn't have survived did so because they refused to give up. Attitude matters, and to get the right attitude, you need to be able to truly believe that you will find a way to survive. Knowing what people have faced and overcome before makes this easier. If you are with others in a survival situation, you should even tell those stories to them, so they can see that survival is possible and even likely.

2. Tell Others Where You Are

{bot_wrgoogle}This is something that has to be done before you have a survival situation, which means before you head off into the woods. And if you decide to take a new route, you may want to leave a note where it can be found, just in case.

3. Know Your Priorities

Protection from the elements and water to drink are usually at the top of the list of priorities in a survival situation. However, every situation will be unique. Think carefully about what is most important and urgent. For example, searching for food is a waste of time if a cold night is coming and you have no shelter. Do the important things first.

4. Learn First Aid

If you don't take the time to learn a few basics of medical first aid, at least carry a small booklet that outlines basic procedures. You can find these in many first aid kits.

5. Be Aware Of Possible Shelters

If you are possibly facing a survival situation (not sure if you are lost, for example), start looking around for what kinds of shelters are available. Are there piles of dry leaves you can crawl under to stay warm? Are there caves or overhanging trees that can protect you from the rain or snow?

6. Always Plan Ahead

This may be one of the more important survival tips. Don't wait for problems and then start looking for a solution. Before you get thirsty you should be looking around for sources of water. Before the rain comes, you should be thinking about how to stay dry. With sufficient foresight, getting lost in the wilderness for a few extra days should be nothing more than an inconvenience. Don't let it become an emergency.

7. Always Have Fire Starters

Anytime you will be in the wilderness overnight or longer, have at least two ways to start a fire. These can be matches and a magnesium fire starter, or a lighter and the magnifying glass on your compass. Being able to start a fire can save you from the biggest killer in the wilds - hypothermia. A fire also provides comfort and better sleep, both of which can keep you motivated to do the right things.

8. Learn What Is Edible

Food is not usually a priority in a wilderness survival situation. Water, shelter and getting found are more important. Psychologically, however, you will be less stressed and more willing to face the situation if you know a few plants and animals that you can eat. Try eating some cattails or wild rose hips on your next hike.

9. Learn How To Navigate

Even if you have lost your backpack, with the maps and compass, you should know how to determine the cardinal directions. That way, if you know that there is a road to the north, for example, you will know which way to go. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west, of course, but there are other ways to determine direction. Why not learn a couple of them?

10. Know How To Stay Warm

Learning a few tricks about staying warm can save your life. Since hypothermia is the number one killer of people in wilderness survival situations, this may be the most important of these survival tips. Stay dry and think of ways to insulate yourself when it is cold. Stuffing a jacket full of dry grass or leaves or cattail fluff could save your life.

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