

Winter Wilderness Survival

Section 1: Understanding survival gear

1. Know three most important survival items that you can carry in your pocket.
2. Choose from some of the items on the following list and create your own survival kit that can be carried in a Hydro-pack or Fanny-pack. Tell how each item would be useful.
 - Survival whistle
 - Fire starter
 - Tinder (dryer lint, candle)
 - Water
 - High calorie energy bar
 - Flashlight or headlamp
 - Compass
 - Pocket knife / leatherman
 - Mylar emergency sleeping bag
 - Hand warmers
 - First aid supplies
 - Compact folding shovel
 - This honor sheet
 - Rain poncho / small tarp
 - Cell phone, GPS, FRS Radio
 - Signal flare

Section 2: Putting it into practice

3. Review and demonstrate the following instructions for survival and rescue:
 - a. Blow your whistle. Remember that three of anything is universally recognized as a call for help.
 - b. Mark your location with something unmistakable. Venture out and circle your marker while blowing your whistle and praying. Move your marker when you recognize something or if you lose sight of the marker. If you are cold, wet or hungry skip this step, build a fire and spend the night.
 - c. Light a fire and build a shelter if it is after noon. Stop trying to find your way out and plan to spend the night. Remember that possibly nobody is looking for you yet. Your ability to start a fire and be prepared for the night can make the difference between living and dying. Fire can provide warmth, companionship, comfort and safety. Your smoke and flames may signal a rescuer.
4. Practice the following survival skills on a club outing:
 - a. Discuss with your group how you are going to know when you are lost.
 - b. Know how to find direction without a compass.
 - c. Know how to start a fire using flint and magnesium, steel wool and battery.
 - d. Keep a fire going using fuzz sticks, shaved sticks, moss or your tinder. Practice in wet conditions.
 - e. Demonstrate how to build a rescue fire (lots of smoke)
 - f. Explain why you need calories.

Explain the buddy system and why it is important.

Research and discuss the benefits and disadvantages of clothing made of wool, polypropylene, cotton and nylon. Discuss the benefits of layering clothing. What materials are new and recommended? How do they insulate the body when they are wet?

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Group activity: Build three shelters such as: a snow cave, a shelter with tree branches, a shelter with a tarp or rain poncho. Where is your fire?

Make your own fire starter using paper egg carton, sawdust and wax or other materials of your choosing that will make the fire last at least 10 minutes.

Section 3: Understanding cold weather

5. Discuss with your group each phrase of the following statement:

“One of the most difficult survival situations is cold weather. Cold is a far greater threat to survival than it appears. It decreases your ability to think. It weakens your will to do anything except get warm. It numbs the mind and body. It subdues the will to survive.”

6. Defining Hypothermia: It is a condition in which core temperature drops below the required temperature for normal metabolism and body functions. Body temperature is usually maintained near a constant level of 98–100 °F.

MILD Hypothermia: If exposed to cold and the internal mechanisms are unable to replenish the heat that is being lost, a drop in core temperature occurs. Characteristic symptoms occur such as shivering.

MODERATE symptoms: The victim becomes pale. Lips, ears, fingers and toes may become blue. Surface blood vessels contract further as the body focuses its remaining resources on keeping the vital organs warm.

SEVERE symptoms: Difficulty in speaking, sluggish thinking and amnesia. Inability to use hands and stumbling are also present. The exposed skin becomes blue and puffy. Muscle coordination becomes very poor. Walking becomes almost impossible and the victim exhibits incoherent/irrational behavior. Major organs fail and clinical death occurs.

7. Memorize the Hypothermia “Umbles” and which stage they occur in: (Mumble, Grumble, Fumble, Stumble and Tumble).
8. Contact your local Search and Rescue and ask them to speak to your club.
9. YouTube: Watch videos on Survival and Hypothermia such as:
1) 2001 Dateline NBC Winter Survival Feature
2) Severe Hypothermia - Hunting Chris Ryan - BBC Endurance
10. Use the following subjects for worship talks:
Spiritual Hypothermia
Spiritually Lost
Spiritual Preparedness.

Skill Level 1

New in 2012