

Survival Tips

This guide, taken from the U.S. Army Survival Manual, is based entirely on the keyword "SURVIVAL." The letters in this word can help you in your actions in any survival situation. Whenever faced with a survival situation, remember the word "SURVIVAL."

SURVIVAL ACTIONS

The following sections expand on the meaning of each letter of the word "survival." Click on the link to each section to study further and remember what each letter signifies because you may some day have to make it work for you.

- * **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 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* friendly 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 the rest of this manual, keep in mind the keyword "SURVIVAL" and the need for a survival pattern.

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 wounds you received. Check your wounds 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.

U - Use All Your Senses, Undue Haste Makes Waste

You may make a wrong move when you react quickly without thinking or planning. That move may result in your death. 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. Plan your moves. Be ready to move out quickly without endangering yourself, especially if you're in a dangerous situation. 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, vehicle or aircraft has a map and compass. If that person is killed, you will have to get the map and compass from him. 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 your shelter.
- * Areas where you can signal for help.
- * The location of local water sources.
- * Areas where you can get food & firewood.

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

V - Vanquish Fear and Panic

The greatest enemies in a survival situation 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. Previous survival training and self-confidence will enable you to vanquish fear and panic.

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 an enemy 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. The experience and knowledge you have gained through life and your training will have a bearing on your will to live. 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 natives and animals of a region have adapted to their environment. To get a feel of the area, watch how the animals go about their daily routine. When and what do they eat? When, where and how do they get their food? When and where do they go for water? What time are they usually out and about? These actions are particularly important to you when you are trying to catch/trap/hunt 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.

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 slight.

Learn these basic skills **now** — not when you are headed for or are in the situation, or en route for an excursion to a remote or harsh environment. How you decide to equip yourself *before* 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.

Practice basic survival skills during all training programs and exercises. Survival training reduces fear of the unknown and gives you self-confidence. **It teaches you to live by your wits.**