

Essential Wilderness Skills For Beginners

by
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Table of Contents

Introduction	8
Before you head into the wild	9
Type of trip	9
Where to go	9
What to learn – prepare yourself	10
Show respect for the nature	10
What to do	11
Outdoor gear	12
Backpack	12
Loading options	12
Daypacks	13
Frame backpacks	13
Choosing your backpack	14
Loading your backpack	15
Sleeping bag	16
Shell materials	16
Liner for your comfort	16
Insulation fill	17
Features and options	18
How to choose a sleeping bag	19
Stove	21
Stove basics	21
Pressurized gas stoves	21
Non-pressurized Stove - Alcohol stove	22
Picking the most appropriate stove	23
Tent	24
Tent types	24
Designs and styles	24
Care	27
Snow gear	28
Cross country skiing	28
Snowshoe hikes	29
The appropriate clothing	30
The layering principle	30
Comfort	30
The Base layer	31
Layer two - insulation	31
Shirt	31
Sweater	32
Pants	32
The outer layer	32
Weatherproof outerwear	33
Headgear	33

Clothing for hot climates	34
Loose fitting clothing	34
Protect your head	34
Clothing for cold and snow	35
Footwear	36
Designs	36
Pick the appropriate socks and take care of your feet	37
Boots for snow and cold	38
Cutting tools	39
Fixed blade knives	39
Tang and handle	39
Knife blade	39
Characteristics	40
Maintenance	40
Folding pocket knife	40
Basic knife safety tips	41
Knife Sharpening	42
How to sharpen a knife	42
Axe	43
Basic axe safety	43
Using a axe	43
Sharpening	44
Folding saw	45
Folding knife saw combo	45
Wire saw	45
Wilderness survival kits	46
Pocket survival kit	46
Pouch style survival kit	47
Backpacking gear list	48
Trail food	49
Backpacking food suggestions	49
Construct a day-by-day trip menu	50
The principles of survival	51
Stress	51
The will to survive	51
Survival techniques	51
Basic needs	52
Warmth	52
Water	52
Sleep	52
Food	52
Navigation by map and compass	53
Read the terrain	53
Walking speed	53
How to use a map	54
Scales	54

Contour lines	55
Grids	55
Colors and symbols	55
Cover your maps	55
Make your own map	55
How to use a compass	56
360 degrees	56
Declination	56
Bearing	57
Cross-bearing	58
Make your own compass	59
How to use electronic navigation tools	60
GPS	60
Barometer	61
Altimeter	61
Backup compass	61
Natural navigation	62
Navigation by the sun	63
Using a pocket watch	63
The shadow stick method	64
Navigating by moon	65
Understanding the Moon phases	65
East - West	66
A rough rule of thumb	66
Navigating by the stars	67
North Star	67
Southern Cross	68
Navigating by wind	69
Trees	69
Sand and snow	69
Breeze	71
Navigating by trees and plants	72
Plants	72
Trees	72
Moss	72
Walking direction	73
Walking in circles	73
Walking in a straight line	73
River crossing	74
Walking in deep snow	76
How to make a fire	77
Fireplace	77
Wet ground	77
Fire material	78
Tinder	78
Kindling	78

Fuel	78
Type of fire	79
How to start a fire	80
Start a fire with matches	80
Flint striker	81
The bow drill method	82
Find and build a shelter	84
Shelter site	84
Natural shelters	85
Making ropes and cords	86
Natural fibrous material	86
Roots	86
Building a survival shelter	87
Debris hut	87
Lean-to shelter	88
Sleeping place	89
Snow shelters	89
Keeping your body warm	90
Snow cave	90
Snow house - igloo	91
Finding water	92
Dehydration	92
Indicators of water	92
Where and how to find water	93
Dew	93
Rainwater	93
Condensation	94
Solar still	95
Seawater	95
How to melt ice or snow to drink	96
Water purification	97
Waterborne contaminants	97
Basic methods of water purification	98
How to make a water filter	98
Portable water filter bottle	100
How to deal with food shortages in the wild	101
Natural food	101
Wild edible plants and berries	102
Berries	102
Pine needle tea	102
Quack grass	102
Cattail	103
Poisonous plants	104
Edibility test	104
Bird eggs	105
Edible insects	105

Ants	105
Fishing	106
Angling	106
With a spear	108
Fishing net	108
Fish trap	108
Preparing the catch	108
Catch small game	109
Trails	109
Prey	109
Deadfall trap	110
Box trap	110
Snare trap	111
Skinning small game	112
Skinning birds	112
Methods of cooking	113
Hot stone cooking	113
Cooking in clay	113
Smoking Meat	114
Drying Meat	114
Signaling for help	115
Visual signals	115
SOS signal	115
Signal fires	116
Signal mirror	116
Aerial signal flares	116
Basic wilderness first aid	117
First aid priorities	117
Improvised stretchers	119
Personal Hygiene	120
Take care of your feet	120
First aid kit	121
Prevention of heat illness	122
Heat cramps	122
Heat Exhaustion	122
Heat Stroke	122
Preventing heat casualties	123
Hypothermia	124
Symptoms of hypothermia	124
How to prevent hypothermia	124
Frostbite	125
Two different grades	125
Signs of frostbite	125
Preventing frostbite	125
Start frostbite treatment if no risk of refreezing	126
Food poisoning treatment	127

Food poisoning cure	127
How to predict weather from nature	128
Nature signs	128
Clouds	128
Red Sky	129
How animals predict the weather	129
Wild Animals	130
Snake safety	130
Rattlesnakes	130
How to avoid snakebites	131
How to treat snakebites	131
Bear safety	132
Bear attack	132
Basic rules of survival	133
Wilderness Survival Quiz	134

Introduction

To me, nothing is more exciting than spending quality time in the wilderness, especially when it is spent with people you care about. Therefore, the aim of this book is to inspire those of you with little or no wilderness experience to gain the knowledge and self-confidence necessary to spend time in the wilderness. A wilderness trip can be relaxing, but it can also be a way to strengthen relationships with your children, friends, and significant others. If you are able to increase your knowledge of how to take care of yourself and others when in the wilderness, you will feel more confident and may be able to enjoy your wilderness trips even more.



The information presented in this book is based on my 30 years of wilderness backpacking experience. These trips provided me with a solid understanding of basic and practical wilderness skills. My experience is from temperate and polar climactic zones, such as the conditions found in Canada, northern and central USA, and Europe. However, I have full respect for people's different viewpoints, and acknowledge that not everyone may agree with me on every point.

The blue underlined text throughout this book are external links, where you can find additional information on specific topics. If you are connected to the Internet and click on one of those links your web browser will open the link to the relevant text.

Take care and safe travels!

Erik C. Falk



Before you head into the wild

Planning and preparing a wilderness trip is an exciting and fun activity, and, in most cases necessary to have a safe and enjoyable trip.

Type of trip

What type of trip are you planning? Canoeing, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, hiking, backpacking or maybe another of the many ways to enjoy the nature? My fascination is wilderness backpacking. It is the activity I most enjoy and appreciate. Wilderness backpacking is exploring wild countries on foot, carrying all your gear in a pack on your back, and, as I see it, the best way to experience nature.

If you are a beginner, or have small children with you, do not fret. You can always pick a shorter more level trail or stay in an area that provides huts to sleep in. Huts have the advantage of enabling you to travel lighter, because you don't need, for example, to bring a tent. This way you are still experiencing the outdoors, but have less weight on your back and fewer worries if it is raining or snowing. However, I really encourage you, at some stage, to try backpacking.

Where to go

At some stage in your trip planning process, you have to decide where to go. You may already be familiar with the area you plan to visit, or maybe it's your first time. Many mountainous regions of the world are popular among backpackers, and several countries have well established trails designed specifically for backpackers and day hikers. If you need proposals and ideas of wilderness areas to visit, one good tool to use is, of course, the Internet. If you would like some of my ideas and tips on destinations, click on the links below.

Hiking and backpacking trips in:

- [US](#) (click to follow links)
- [Canada](#)
- [Europe](#)
- [Scandinavia](#)

