

Naked and Afraid Contestant Interviews (from well over 100 contestant interviews)

I have gone straight to survival skills, removing questions about nudity and working with a partner to survive, just survival skills questions.

1) What is more important, Mindset or Skills. All answered correctly with Mindset (attitude). A PMA, Positive Mental Attitude, is second only to addressing life threatening issues during a wilderness survival situation.

2) How to protect you skin from sun using only natural materials: Mud was the top answer with additional answers such as....Smudge fire, wild onions, termites and body odor.

3) Clothing: Most thought making shoes of some kind would be very important. Making a hat seemed to be second of importance, Others mentioned making grass skirts or loincloths. Materials were from using leaves to weaving from plant materials to using animal skins. Cordage from plant materials was also considered important.

4) Shelter Making: Lean-to shelters came up most frequently with others mentioned such as, debirs hut, raised bed, A-Frame, caves. Some mentioned not sleeping directly on the ground.

5) Fire Making: Flint & Steel came up most frequently (most likely talking about a ferro rod, not traditional “mountain man” actual flint & steel). Some mentioned friction fire with bow & drill then the hand drill and just a few mentioned fire plow and solar ignition. One or two mentioned using a battery and steel wool which would be difficult to get off the landscape.

6) Water Treatment: Boiling in some kind of pot came up most often. Boiling in shells, natural bowls, rock depressions and leaves, all using hot rocks was often mentioned. Some talked about using sand and charcoal as a natural filter. Some felt they needed to boil for 10 minutes while others thought the sand and charcoal type filter would make water safe to drink (both incorrect). Some mentioned digging a seep well next to a water source to purify water (still will not remove Giardia and Cryptosporidium).

7A) Food Procurement methods: spears, deadfall traps, snares, gill nets, fish hooks, fish traps, fish wier, pit traps, slingshots, slings, ability to track animals, ability to gut and clean animals. Making knives from rocks and bones was often mentioned as well as not hunting animals mid day. Weaving nets and baskets for food procurement came up from time to time.

7B) Food to Eat: bugs, frogs, snakes, grubs, rabbits, fish, crustaceans, lizards, birds and other small to mid size mammals from raccoon to deer. Knowing what plants are safe to eat came up often.

8) All were given a list of what to prioritize in a survival situation: Food / Water / Shelter / Fire. The contestants that ranked the highest scores understood Shelter was the most critical element and some understood further that “shelter” was actually “thermoregulation” which would incorporate “Fire” into the mix of the highest priority depending on the temperatures.

Several put water before shelter which would be incorrect. Even in the desert “Shelter”, shading up against the sun is more critical than finding water. Many have died from hyperthermia (too high a body temperature / heat stroke) with water still on their person. In the desert, regulate your body temperature then look for water. Looking at dawn and dusk would be even better.