

Wilderness Survival² (Գոյապահպանում) Skills

AHS PRESENTATION

FEBRUARY 23, 2022



Presentation Format

- ▶ The presentation is approximately 30 minutes long
- ▶ Please keep your suggestions and comments until presentation is complete. There will be opportunity to hear your questions and comments at the end of the presentation
- ▶ All constructive comments and suggestions will be incorporated into these slides and will be made available to those interested in having a copy

Goal of this presentation

- ▶ AHS was formed by a group of mountaineers for their love and passion for climbing
- ▶ In the past 9 years, AHS has attracted not only mountain enthusiasts, but also those who just love being in nature
- ▶ As beautiful and awe inspiring as nature is, it is also extremely unforgiving and cruel
- ▶ What I hope to have achieved in these slides is to present a collection of ideas, suggestions and how to's from people who have experience in this subject. This is meant to not only broaden your knowledge of the outdoors but also to inspire your interest in finding out more and learning all you can to equip yourself with survival skills

What does “survival / գոյատևում” mean?

- ▶ Survival is a mindset! It is **mental stability (հոգեկան կայունություն)** under **pressure**, handling situations with strength and intelligence and making good, tactical decisions
- ▶ You are on a hiking trip with a group of friends, weather is good, trail is clear, everyone is in good health and spirits
- ▶ What if this is not the case? Mistakes happen and you thought you knew a short cut and now you find yourself isolated and alone. It is getting dark, and you can't find your way back? Some of you may have experienced this. I have! It's not a pleasant feeling
- ▶ If this happens, you are now in survival mode. Depending on the season and the weather, what you do next will determine your survival chances

How to achieve survival mindset?

- ▶ Stay positive. Believe that you will survive
- ▶ Study your surroundings
- ▶ Trust yourself
- ▶ Take control of the situation. Don't let the situation control you
- ▶ If you can't do what you want, look for alternative solutions
- ▶ Refuse to give up

Survival Principles

The three most important rules for being safe in the wilderness are:

- ▶ Planning
- ▶ Equipment
- ▶ Knowledge



Planning..
Steps you need
to take before
venturing out
into wilderness



Equipment..
Things you must
have in order to
survive in
wilderness



Knowledge..
This is about knowing
what to do in any
circumstance while in
wilderness

Planning

- ▶ Review the area map. Know your entry and exit points, the elevation, the weather, wildlife, water source, etc.
- ▶ Confirm to make sure you know who is joining you (cancel the outing if you are alone)
- ▶ Share your adventure plan with your family or friends. Let them know where you are going and when you expect to return
- ▶ Always be prepared for the unexpected. For every trip to wilderness, even if it's a day hike, you are with friends, it's a familiar trail or route, be prepared for the worst

Equipment: What Matters Most

What are the most important survival essentials?

- 1) Proper Clothing
- 2) Proper Shoes (footwear)
- 3) Proper Gear

When you are considering what to bring on a trip or how to prepare for a possible survival situation, it helps to start with the most important gear. Though what you ultimately choose to pack will depend on specific conditions and situations, there are survival essentials that should always be considered

Safety First!

There are many opinions about what to carry with you when outdoors or on a hiking trip.

Weight is a major factor. **There is a price to pay for safety.** It's a constant battle to decide what to carry and what to leave behind every time you pack your backpack

Factors such as total familiarity with the area, length of planned outing, terrain and weather play a major role in deciding what safety equipment/tools to have. When in doubt, **think about your safety as it is far more precious than carrying an extra few pounds!**

Equipment: Survival Essentials (must have at all times)

Protection – Warm layers of wool, rain gear, hat, gloves, sunglasses, sunscreen lotion	First Aid Kit – Sterile gauze, Antiseptic wipes, Adhesive tape, bandages, Tweezers, Safety pin, Scissors, Benadryl, Ibuprofen
Water Container – To be able to transport water. Metal container can also be used to heat water	Light – Headlight or Flashlight. Make sure you carry extra batteries
Water Purification System – Water filtration pump or purification tablets	Knife * – A fixed blade knife
Fire Starting Tools – Lighter, waterproof matches, magnesium fire starter, or a 9V battery and steel wool	Navigation Tools – Topo maps & Compass, Signal Mirror, GPS, Cell Phone
Food – Snack bars, dehydrated food	Miscellaneous – Small mirror, Whistle, Rope (10m)

Equipment: Survival Essentials (Winter)

Additional gear to have during winter outings

Crampons

Micro-Spikes

Ice Axe

Helmet

Reppeling Rope (optional)

Clothing, Footwear

- ▶ If this is your first time going to wilderness in a season you have no experience with, **PLEASE** consult one of the experienced members of the club to learn about proper clothing
- ▶ Do NOT go out with boots/shoes not appropriate for the type of weather and terrain outing is planned. Doing so, will not only risk your safety but also safety of the others
- ▶ Have an extra pair of socks , extra top, rain gear, etc.

Gear: Why fixed blade knife?



A fixed blade knife is more reliable than a folding knife. A fixed blade knife can be used not only for cutting but also chopping wood, and hunting/defense

Survival Knowledge

- ▶ Stay on trail (no bushwhacking)
- ▶ Never leave the group you are with
- ▶ know how to effectively use your gear. Practice using all your essentials under a variety of conditions and get comfortable with them. Do not leave your gear unopened and unused until a survival situation arises
- ▶ Survival situations demand that you be flexible, adaptable and skilled with utilizing what you have. Resourcefulness is a key to survival, and an attitude of being open to possibilities is an absolute must

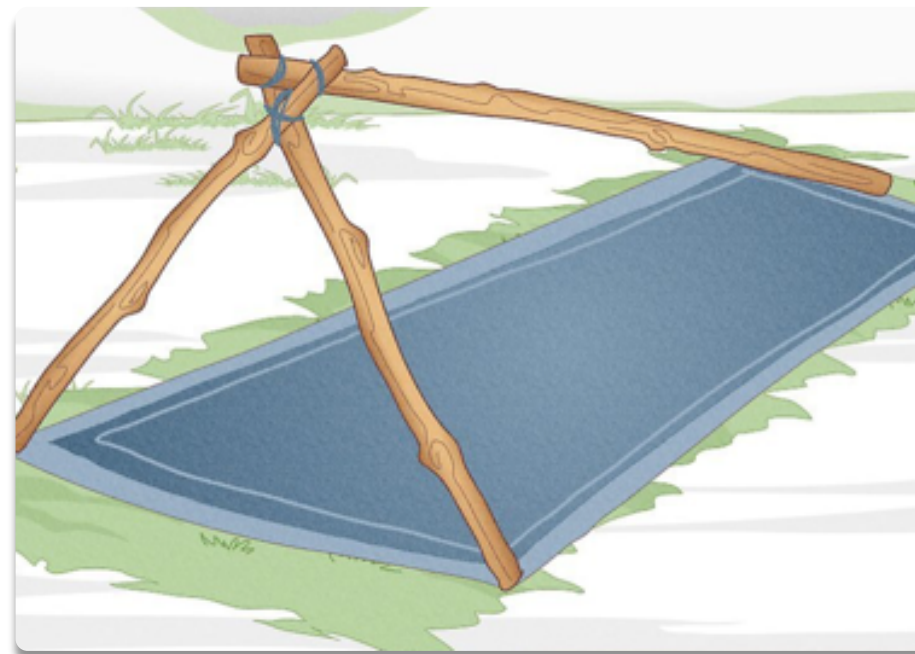
Steps you need to take in survival mode

In any survival situation, you **MUST** immediately perform the following:

- ▶ **Attitude.** Your chances of survival increases **exponentially** if you focus on maintaining a positive attitude. Stay calm and don't panic
- ▶ **Shelter** *. You must quickly assess and locate a spot where you are protected from elements. Build a simple shelter (few branches, an emergency blanket, your back against a tree, bolder, etc.)
- ▶ **Fire** *. Quickly build a fire near your shelter. It will provide warmth and will keep unwanted guests away
- ▶ **Water.** Check your water supply and ration if necessary. Check if there is any water source around you
- ▶ **Food.** Although some believe food is NOT the absolute must have in a survival mode as our bodies can survive without food for several days, but it provides much needed energy
- ▶ **Protection.** Layer your clothing, protect your skin, and be prepared to defend against elements

Building a basic shelter

Shelter is your top priority in most survival emergencies. Severe weather conditions **can kill** within a few hours if you don't have some type of shelter to protect yourself from the elements





A short video
How to build
a Shelter

Navigation Techniques

In wilderness, we cannot always rely on an electronic GPS or Cell service for navigation.

It is essential that we learn several navigation techniques and practice them **before we need them**. A survival situation is not the time to learn a new skill, so prepare ahead of time. Here are a few methods:

- ▶ GPS
- ▶ Cell Phone
- ▶ Compass
- ▶ Watch, Sun, Moon, Stars

Navigation Techniques Explained

Method	Description	Pros	Cons
GPS	By far, the most reliable and accurate method	Uses satellite, extremely accurate, supports waypoints, tracking, and wealth of other useful information	Needs batteries to operate
Cell Phone	Reliable, reasonably accurate	Uses cell service and satellite to provide navigational support, very nice user interface	Needs batteries and cell service to operate
Compass	Reliable, accurate	Light weight, inexpensive, accurate	Must know how to use it
Watch	Using an analog watch	Somewhat accurate, no cost	Need an analog watch, need to know how to interpret. Provides directional help
Sun	Using shadow	Somewhat accurate, no cost	Provides directional help
Moon	Use the light side of the moon to determine east/west	Relatively simple, no cost	Provides directional help
Stars	Using Big Dipper and Casseopeia constallations, find North Star	Relatively simple, basic directional help, no cost	Must be able to see stars. Provides directional help

Navigation using a Compass



A **compass** is a very powerful and reliable tool for wilderness navigation. Everyone should have one in their pack. Just as important as having a compass is the ability to use it correctly

An in-depth training class is being planned along with a field trip to test skills learned in the class.

Fire

Fire is the king of survival techniques! Fire **can purify water, cook food, signal rescuers, provide warmth, light,** and comfort. It can also help **keep predators at a distance** and can be a most welcome friend and companion

Fire needs **oxygen (air), igniter (matches, lighter, etc.),** and **fuel (tinder, kindling, logs)** to light



Igniter: Several Options



A lighter 2/23/2022

Tinder: Needed to start a fire

- ▶ Birch bark
- ▶ Spruce sap
- ▶ Hand sanitizer sprinkled on small kindling
- ▶ Soak half a cotton ball in melted candle wax, cover the rest with Vaseline
- ▶ Light corner of a few **Doritos, Cheetos** or any kind of oily chip

NOTE: The waterproof matches shown on previous slide may not work well at higher elevations (6000m+). Always carry a second type of ignitor

Birch bark contains a natural oil that's water-resistant, so it will catch fire even if it's wet

How to identify Birch tree?

You can recognize birch trees by **their peeling bark that can be white, gray, or yellow**. You will also notice horizontal diamond-shaped raised marks on the light-colored bark. Look at the leaves—birch leaves are typically triangular with jagged-looking edges



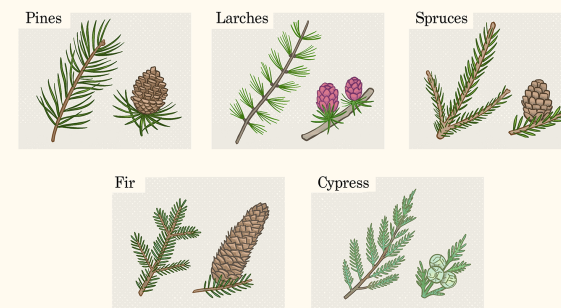
Spruce sap: The flammable substance oozes out of injured trees and hardens into a resin, which can be snapped off and set ablaze

How identify Spruce tree?

Spruce trees can be identified **by their needles which have four sides**. Each needle is individually attached to the branch and can be rolled easily between your fingers. Another way to identify spruce trees is by their cones that are covered with smooth thin scales.



Evergreen Conifers with Needles



Treehugger

How to start a fire



Fire Base



Tinder



Place Tinder on Base



Add Kindling



Light



Add more

Short Video – How to build a fire



Signal for help!



Outdoor adventurers are always at risk of an emergency in the wilderness. Here are five ways to draw attention to yourself if caught in a dangerous situation in the outdoors.

- ▶ Cast a beam of light on the mirror (can reach as far as 10 miles)
- ▶ Three blows of a whistle are accepted as a universal signal for distress
- ▶ Start a small fire then pile green vegetation on top to produce smoke
- ▶ Attach a flare to a long stick and wave it in the air
- ▶ Use bright color windbreaker or a brightly colored shirt to mark a path to your location to help on-foot searchers find you

In summary..

- ▶ Learn and practice outdoor survival skills. Your life may depend on it
- ▶ Let your family and friends know about your outing ...
- ▶ Never go into wilderness alone ...
- ▶ Carry the right tools, know how to use them ...
- ▶ Wear proper clothing, shoes ...
- ▶ Be aware of the weather changes ...
- ▶ Make note of the landmarks and mark your trail to be able to back track ...
- ▶ Always think about safety!

A 10-minute video to share survival tips



Homework 😊

- ▶ Practice building a basic shelter in your backyard
- ▶ Make homemade tinder. Practice starting fire using methods explained
- ▶ Learn a variety of knots. Checkout: <https://knots3d.com>

Remember, you need to be able to do this when under stress, in rain, in windy conditions, or in the sun!



Thank you!

QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, COMMENTS