

6. Bush Survival

Opening

Start by standing in a large circle spread out as much as possible. Walk in slowly, singing *Hello* or another opening song as girls walk. Keep going until the girls are in a tight circle.

Plan Well

Before adventuring into the bush, know how to read a map and use a compass. Find out about the type of country and weather conditions to expect and plan your food and water supplies and clothing to suit. Carry an emergency kit with basic First Aid supplies, matches and water purification tablets. Always leave details of your trip, destination and expected return time. If you become lost you will be able to work out how long it will be before someone will be looking for you.

Remember the motto 'Be Prepared' every time you plan a hike or overnight expedition into the bush. Use the checklist below:

YOUR B.P. HIKE KIT and CHECKLIST

HAVE YOU: -

1. current basic First Aid knowledge?
2. researched where you are hiking (maps, terrain, weather)?
3. considered the physical ability of hikers?
4. planned the expected duration of the hike?
5. notified a responsible person of where you are going and your Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA)?



Your Kit (packed in a backpack)

- ▶ Mini first aid kit
- ▶ Small torch (with new batteries)
- ▶ Suitable clothing for weather conditions
- ▶ Matches (waterproof or in waterproof container)
- ▶ Water for the time you will be hiking
- ▶ Sunscreen and hat
- ▶ Food (lightweight and sustaining)
- ▶ Raincoat
- ▶ Map
- ▶ Just before you leave, check current weather conditions and fire restrictions
- ▶ Notify the person who is your emergency contact of where and for how long you are going out.
- ▶ Check the condition of any other form of transport you are using e.g. canoes, bicycles

What should you do if lost in the bush?

- ▶ Stop and think
- ▶ Keep calm
- ▶ Keep warm
- ▶ Light a fire
- ▶ Find shelter

Attract attention - Smokey fire during day, bright fire at night; mark out 'SOS' or 'HELP' in stones in a cleared area

Stay put - especially at night to prevent becoming even more lost. Conserve your energy and food and water

If you do decide to try to find your way out follow these few rules. Follow a fence line or stick to high ridges. Leave tracking signs as you go. These will help anyone looking for you and help you if you decide to retrace your steps.

Ask a member of the SES to explain how they organise searches.

PATROL HIKE FIRST AID KIT

- ▶ Waterproof container or bag to carry:-
- ▶ 10 Adhesive Strips (Band-aids)
- ▶ 3 Towelettes (KFC or similar) 1 Adhesive Tape
- ▶ Non-Adhesive Dressing
- ▶ Alcohol Swabs
- ▶ 1 Plastic Bag 1 Combine Dressing (large)
- ▶ 1 Crepe Bandage 5cm 2 Crepe 7.5cm
- ▶ 1 Eye Pad - Sterile
- ▶ 1 Sterile Eye Wash Solution - 10ml
- ▶ 1 Sterile Water Ampoule - 10ml
- ▶ 1 Triangular Bandage
- ▶ Gauze Swabs
- ▶ Gloves - Disposable
- ▶ 1 Scissors - blunt ends/sharp 1 Splinter Probe
- ▶ 5 Safety Pins
- ▶ Stingose
- ▶ Panadol (for your own personal use)
- ▶ 1 Thermal Accident Blanket
- ▶ First Aid Pamphlet

SURVIVAL CHALLENGE

Temporary shelter

Use a groundsheet to make a shelter from rain or wind or sun. You may be able to make a natural shelter with a framework of sticks thatched with branches or fern fronds. Remember though that we need to care for the environment and not damage the bush unnecessarily. Wherever possible use material already on the ground.



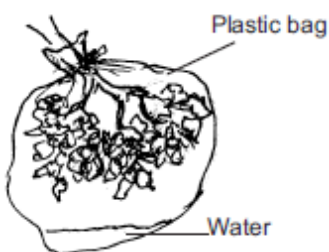
Water collector

WATER: essential for survival!

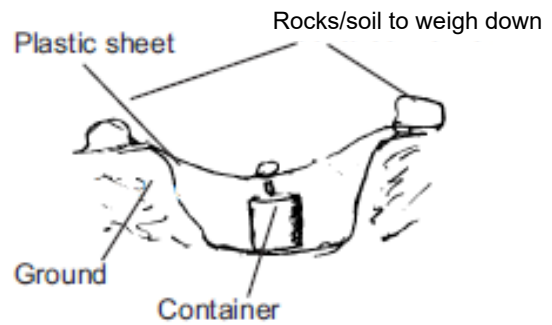
Of the total weight of the human body, about 90% is water. The body requires that volume of water to carry out its normal functions. It obtains about 50% of its requirements through drinking and the remainder from the food we consume. Each day the body will lose 1 - 10 litres of water depending on how active we are and the amount we perspire and through normal body functions and breathing. When lost it is important to be aware of keeping up a water intake.

Look for a water supply:

Are there any animal trails nearby? These will lead you to water, a river, creek, billabong or dam. When you find water, check it is not brackish (salty) and always boil and then cool water before drinking. If you can't find a body of water there are other methods to try.



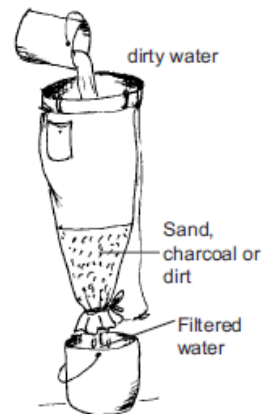
Tie a plastic bag over a bunch of green leaves early in the morning and in three or four hours you will have water in the bag, caused by the transpiration of the leaves as they pull water up from the ground.



When the soil is damp, Make a hole in the ground and place a container in the bottom. Place a piece of plastic over the hole and weight the edges with soil or rocks. A small stone in the centre of the plastic will direct the condensation that forms on the underneath of the plastic to drip into the container.

Hold a competition to see who can collect the most water...

Get the mud out of muddy water by filtering it. A simple method is to pour water through a coffee percolator filter. Another way is to cut off an old trouser leg or shirt sleeve, tie a cord around the end, fill it with 15cm of sand, charcoal or dirt, and pour water through. The water may look clean, but it still needs to be purified by adding a water purification tablet or being boiled and cooled.



Stay Alive

Use a series of situation cards to practise your skills. You will only have what you would carry with you on a hike, so be prepared.

- ▶ Janey fell and broke her arm
- ▶ You were walking on a very cold day and Casey has hypothermia
- ▶ Kate capsized the canoe...
- ▶ A stampede of sheep knock three girls down...
- ▶ Meg went walking for the first time and now she has blisters...
- ▶ Jo was stung by a bee...



- ▶ After walking through long grass you all have leeches on your ankles...
- ▶ Mary forgot to put on sunscreen and the back of her neck is badly burnt...

Take turns to be patient and first aider.

Bring in some dolls or large soft toys and practise putting on slings, bandages and splints.

Distress Signals

Find out the international distress signals. There are body movements e.g. arm waving a particular way, and letters to make on the ground with special meanings. Practice laying out the messages.

Practise making a smoky signal fire for a rescue plane or helicopter.

Get an EPIRB and find out how it works.

Find North

If you can't see landmarks like hills or streams it can be hard to know how to orientate a map. Use the sun and a stick to tell direction.



If you have a watch, then it can be used to find north. The sun is due east at 6 am, north at 12 pm and west at 6 pm when it is not daylight saving time. Can you figure out how this helps?

Survival Relay

Each patrol starts at one end of an open space with materials for a shelter and first aid kit. One at a time, the gear is raced across and dumped. The patrol must build a shelter and prepare the first aid kit. When all is ready, they receive instructions to go to a 'home' spot.

Closing

Finish with a formal horseshoe and singing Taps.