EVASIVE WILDERNESS SURVIVAL TECHNIQUES PREVIEW

HOW TO SURVIVE IN THE WILD WHILE EVADING YOUR CAPTORS

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Consult a physician before undertaking any new form of physical activity.
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INTRODUCTION

Evasive wilderness survival is the ability to keep yourself alive in a wilderness setting while avoiding capture (or recapture) by your enemy. An example scenario of this may be escaping a hostage situation where you were held captive in the wilderness.

This is the hardest type of wilderness survival there is, and the best type of survival to learn.

Evasive wilderness survival training focuses on worst-case scenarios, but is easily adapted to general wilderness survival. In fact, if you can survive in the wilderness under evasive circumstances, then non-evasive survival situations become much easier.

There are three key elements for succeeding in evasive wilderness survival:

- **Minimalism.** When you escape your "prison," you will probably not be able to take much with you.
- **Evasion.** Staying hidden from your enemy so you can avoid recapture.
- **Staying on the go.** Surviving while continuously moving away from your enemy and towards friendly territory. Your objective is to get to safety ASAP.

This no-fluff manual contains all the information you need to evade and survive in any terrain or climate, whether it be jungle, desert, arctic, etc. Even if these are the only wilderness survival lessons you learn, you will be very well equipped.

**Training**

Few people will carry a survival guide with them. It’s better to learn the information (through practical activity where possible) so that you have the knowledge and hard skills.
You can use any single chapter from this book as a practical activity and/or a theory lesson, either individually, in succession as presented, or compiled into a multi-day survival course.

When training in this subject, please observe eco-friendly practices. Do not cut down live trees or kill animals. These things are okay in real survival situations, but not in training.

**Local Knowledge**

Every place in the world is different. You can adapt many survival skills (like the ones taught in this book) to a variety of situations, but having specific knowledge of the area you’re in will make survival easier. Research the specific areas you’re commonly in and/or plan to go to. Find out about the animals, useful plants, weather, etc.

**Survival Needs**

As an evasive survivor, you have needs that are the same as those of any wilderness survivor—namely food, water, shelter/warmth (clothing), fire, rescue, self-defense, first aid, and navigation.

However, you must also consider stealth while obtaining these things.

The specific things you need to acquire first depend on your situation, but the rule of three will be a consideration.

You can survive for three:

- Seconds without blood.
- Minutes without air.
- Hours without shelter.
- Days without water.
- Weeks without food.
- Months without human company.
The Will to Live

A big part of survival is maintaining your will to live and a strong belief that you will survive. Remember your reasons for living (e.g., loved ones) and have faith in yourself, your abilities, and your god if you have one. No matter what happens, do not give up your will to live, and always be prepared to seize opportunities.
RESOURCES AND IMPROVISED TOOLS

Obtaining a few items before you escape will make wilderness survival easier, but too much stuff becomes a burden. You also need to consider evading your enemy. Anything that will make noise or reflect light while you move will give you away.

Gather things that will help you meet your survival needs. Here’s a list of those needs, with related items in parentheses:

- Shelter (winter clothing, poncho, cordage).
- Water (purification tablets, hiking filter).
- Food (fishing tackle, candy bars, foraging guide).
- Fire (matches, lighter, ferro rod).
- Medicine (first aid kit).
- Rescue (mirror, whistle, flashlight).
- Navigation (map, compass).
- Self-defense (knife, gun, club).

Your ability to gather survival resources before escaping may be minimal, but there will be additional opportunities once you’re on the run. Always be on the lookout for useful items. A broken-down
vehicle, for example, can provide cordage (wiring), fire (battery), digging tools (hubcaps), signal mirrors, and more.

Whatever resources you do have, ration them from the start. Even if you expect a quick rescue, things can go wrong. When you first escape, it’s better to consume rations than to spend time scavenging. Once you have enough distance, live off the land as much as you can and conserve any excess stores for as long as possible.
A good knife is arguably the most useful survival tool there is.

If you have a choice, choose a carbon-steel blade with a V grind (Scandi grind). They are good all-around survival knives, and are easier to sharpen with improvised abrasives than knives made from other materials.

In an evasive survival situation, your chances of obtaining a real knife are slim. Here are some ways you can improvise one. If your enemy is close, consider the noise you will make constructing these before you do so.

**Glass, Plastic, and Metal**

You can turn hard plastic or soft metal into a blade by heating it up and hammering it into shape between two rocks before it cools. Sharpen the edge. Glass will already be sharp, but you can sharpen it more.

**Bone**

The larger the bone, the larger the knife you can make. Clean it well first.

Find a large, flat, hard rock for a table. You also need a hard, medium-sized stone with a round surface. This is your hammer stone.
Put the bone on the table and use your hammer stone to shatter it. Choose the best fragment to use as a knife. Ideally it will be one piece, with a sharp edge section and a handle section. Sharpen the edge more if you need to.

**Stone**

Stone blades are good for puncturing and chopping, but most won’t hold a fine edge for long. Some exceptions are chert or flint.

First, look for a stone that already has a sharp edge. If you can’t find one, making one isn’t too hard, provided you can find the right stones.

To make a stone blade, you need two stones. The first is your blade stone. The bigger your blade stone, the easier the knife is to make. It also means you will get a bigger blade.

Look for a stone with a glassy surface. Check near rivers and creeks. If you find two of them, they should make a ringing, glass-like sound when hit together. Chert, flint, obsidian, and quartz are good examples.

The second stone you need is a hammer stone. Look for a hard, medium-sized round stone.

Place the blade stone on a larger rock, or on your thigh, and hold it firmly in place. Smack the hammer stone down on the edge of the blade stone, but don’t do it too hard. Follow through with a strong, glancing blow. When you do this correctly, blades will chip off the bottom of the blade stone. Sharpen their edges more if you need to.

**Wooden Knife Handle**

You can use improvised blades as they are, or make handles from wood. To do the latter, split a piece of hard wood, insert your blade, and tie it in.
Related Chapter: Resources and Improvised Tools > Blade-Sharpening
STEALTH MOVEMENT

In this section you’ll discover how to leave minimal signs of presence while evading your enemy. You’ll also learn navigation, safe ways to move in various terrains, and more.
OBSERVATION

Constant observation using all your senses is required when you’re moving. Even when you stop, you must keep observing. Observe your enemy and/or any obstacles in your way, so you can choose how and when to move.

Searching Ground

Use this method to look for signs of your enemy, or anything else you want to look for, from a stationary position. It will help if you have something specific to look for (certain equipment, humans, dogs, vehicles, etc.).

Divide the ground into three ranges: immediate, medium, and long. Scan each section from right to left. Start with the immediate range, and work your way back systematically.

Right to left is better than left to right because we read from left to right and are more likely to overlook things if we follow that habit. Horizontal scanning is better than vertical, as that way you don’t have to be continuously adjusting for distance and scale.

When you come across areas that are more likely to hide something, take a bit more time to search and look for parts of objects as well as whole ones. Things may be hidden behind something, but with bits of them still visible.

Look through visual screens, e.g., vegetation. If you want to look further, make a small head movement.

Tips for Seeing in the Dark

It takes 30 minutes for your eyes to fully adjust to the dark (night vision) and you need at least a little ambient light from a source like the moon.
Once your eyes have adjusted to the dark, you need to protect them. A flash of light can ruin your night vision in a second. When there is a bright area you want to observe, cover one eye to preserve it while you use the other one to look.

Even with your night vision, objects in the dark are harder to make out. Looking next to them will make them clearer. Changing your focal point every few seconds (up, down, to the sides) will also help.

Things may seem to move. Make sure they’re staying still with the sticky finger method. Stretch a finger out in front of you and "stick" an object to it.

When you need extra light to see (if you’re reading a map, for example), use red or blue light. It does minimal damage to your night vision and is harder for your enemy to spot. Don’t rely solely on your vision. Sound, smell, and touch can tell you many things.

Hearing is a human’s next best sense, and you can often hear things that are out of sight. Stay still, open your mouth a little, and turn your ear in the direction you want to hear.

The wind can carry smells quite far, and some smells, like food cooking or smoke, are very distinctive to humans. Turn your nose up toward the wind and smell like a dog does, taking many small sniffs. Concentrate on the inside of your nose and try to determine what the smell is.

When you can’t see anything at all, it’s safer to stay still until there’s light, but certain circumstances may require you to move. In this case, you need to feel your way around. Move slowly, testing every movement.

Lift your feet high to give yourself the best chance of clearing any obstacles, but ensure you do not lose balance. Stretch your hands in front of you to feel for obstacles. Use the back of your hand to feel stuff, in case it’s sharp or hot. This will protect the inside of your hand and the arteries in your arm.
Building a shelter is not ideal in an evasive survival situation. It’s time-consuming and can leave large signs of presence. But if you’re on the run for long enough, you’ll need to rest eventually, either to prevent injury or to protect yourself from extreme weather.

When the weather is fine, crawling into the thickest vegetation you can find will keep you hidden. If the vegetation is thick enough, it will even keep light rain off you. Another option is to dig a depression, crawl in, and cover yourself with foliage.

When the weather is extreme, you need to construct a shelter. The key to a good evasive shelter is to keep it simple. You need it to be fast to make and dismantle, and to show the least sign of presence while you occupy it and after you leave.

Specific ways to make shelters are detailed in the following chapters, but there are some extra points you need to know for desert and snow shelters first.
Desert Shelters

In the desert, it’s vital to keep cool during the day. If you have some material to build your shelter, use it in a way that maximizes airflow:

- Place the material about 50cm (20in) from your head.
- Create a 40cm (15in) airspace between the sheets. Avoid cutting the material. Fold it in half instead.
- Arrange it so the lightest side faces out to reflect heat, but only do so if it won’t attract your enemy.

Snow Shelters

In the snow, you need to stay warm when you’re not moving, and you may need to make snow blocks to construct your shelter.

Choose snow that you can cut, but that’s also strong enough to support your weight. Make the blocks 50cm x 50cm (20in) and 15cm (6in) thick. When constructing your snow shelter, ensure the entrance faces away from the wind. Insulate the floors with vegetation (or whatever is available) and pile snow around the sides.

Brush off all snow and frost before entering, and keep a shovel close by in case you need to dig yourself out.

It’s best to keep your shelter at least 5m (15ft) from the edge of a body of water, even if that water is frozen. The freezing and thawing of ice/water will change its level.
CLOTHING

Adequate clothing can prevent the need to make a shelter, and can help to protect you when you’re on the move. Here are some general tips to get the most out of clothing, as well as how to improvise it.

No matter what environment you’re in, loose-fitting clothing is best. Cover as much of your skin as possible and take care of what you have. Keeping your clothes clean and dry will prolong their life. Make any repairs as soon as possible to prevent the damage getting worse, and always keep your clothes off the ground and shake them well before putting them on.

Dressing for Warmth

To maximize insulation, use the layer system. The more layers you have, the warmer you will be. If that is not enough, stuff dry insulating materials (leaves, grass, feathers, moss, paper, car seat foam, etc.) between your layers of clothing.

Outer garments should be windproof, but not waterproof. Animal skins are ideal and wool is better than cotton. If clothes made from improved materials are available, use them.

Waterproofing

Plastic is a good waterproofing material, but it doesn’t breathe. Use it to protect you from the rain, but be careful of it hindering ventilation.

When plastic isn’t available, use large sections of birch bark. Discard the outer bark and insert the inner layer under your outer clothing.
Gaiters

Gaiters protect your lower legs from insects, low-lying foliage, sand, snow, etc. Most materials will work. Wrap them around your legs and tie them in place.

Headwear

Wearing a hat protects you from the sun, and will prevent body heat escaping through your head.

You can improvise headwear with some cord, a handkerchief, and a 120cm x 120cm (50in x 50in) piece of cloth. This design protects you from the sun while ensuring ventilation, which is important in the desert and other hot areas.

- Make the handkerchief into a wad on top of your head.
- Fold the cloth diagonally into a triangle and place it over the handkerchief, with the long edge forward.
- Secure it around your head with a piece of cord.

If you only have one piece of material, you can forfeit the ventilation gap and use it as a keffiyeh. Fold the material diagonally into a triangle and place it over your head, with the long edge forward. Fold the left side of the cloth over to the right side of your face, just below your eyes.

Wrap it around your head and tuck it in. Do the same thing with the right side going left.
You can have your mouth and/or nose covered or pull that part down.

**Mosquito Protection**

Mosquitoes are annoying and a health risk. The best protection from them is to keep covered, especially at dusk, dawn, and during the night. When your clothing is inadequate, covering exposed skin with oil, fat, or mud may help.

Campfire smoke deters mosquitoes and other bugs, but is not a good idea in a covert situation.

**Poncho**

Improvise a poncho with any piece of material that’s large enough, such as a blanket or bedsheet. Use plastic if you want it to be waterproof. Find the center of the material and cut a hole for your head to go through.

**Shoes**

Protecting your feet is important. Make improvised moccasins with two pieces of fabric 1m squared (more layers are better) and cord (optional).

• If you have multiple layers, place them on top of each other.
• Fold the layers together into a triangle.
• Place your foot in the center, with your toes facing the corner.
• Fold the front over your toes, then fold the side corners over your instep.
• Secure each shoe with cord or by tucking the layers into each other.

You can make thicker soles from other material, such as rubber tires or bark.

When you have soles and cord but no fabric, make holes around the edges of the soles and tie them on like flip-flops.

**Skirt**

Skirts are good for warm climates. Wrap any piece of material large enough around yourself like a sarong. Tie it in place if you have cord. Alternatively, tear leaves and fibers into long strips and tie them around a cord “belt” so they hang down like a hula skirt.

**Sun/Snow Glasses**

Glasses help to protect your eyes from dust, glare, and other things. To make improvised shades:

• Find a strip of fabric wide enough to cover your eyes and long enough to tie around your head.
• Place the middle of the fabric between your eyes and mark where your eyes sit.
• Cut small, horizontal slits where you marked it.
• Tie the fabric around your head so you can see through the slits.

When you don’t have any spare fabric, use bark. Another way to reduce glare is to put soot under your eyes.
Water is essential for life and you will not last long without it, especially while running from your enemy.

Although it’s not always easy, there are ways to acquire water in any climate. Unfortunately, many sources of water are not suitable for drinking, and using them can make you ill. Therefore, you must learn how to find water and how to treat it.

There are two basic ways to treat water: filtration and purification. A good water filter can eliminate many harmful types of bacteria, but it will not eliminate viruses. Purification will kill the viruses.

Ideally (besides having fresh drinking water), you’ll filter water first and then purify it. When doing both is not possible, one or the other is better than nothing. Always treat the clearest water you have available.
CONSERVING WATER

When water is abundant, drink a minimum of one liter a day. When you’re active, you’ll need more. This is true no matter what the climate. Your body still loses liquid when it’s cold, and dehydration can kill.

In all other cases, ration the water until you find a source of replenishment.

When water is scarce, (in the desert or at sea, for example) do the following to conserve what your body has:

- Cool your body with breezes and non-drinking water.
- Don’t eat when nauseated. If you throw up, you’ll lose water and any food.
- Don’t smoke or drink any diuretics like alcohol or coffee.
- Eat less. Food requires water for digestion.
- Keep your body well shaded from above and below, if applicable. Avoid exposing yourself to reflections off water, for example. Cover as much of your body as you can.
- Keep your mouth closed. Don’t talk, and breathe through your nose.
- Rest in the shade during the day and move at night.
- Separate yourself from the hot ground by sitting 30cm (10in) above it—on a branch, for instance.
- Sip whatever water you do have slowly and frequently. Moisten your lips, tongue, and throat before swallowing.

When at sea, soak your clothes in the water, then wring them out and put them on again. Only do this occasionally; otherwise, you might get saltwater boils. Be careful not to get the bottom of your raft wet.
While on the run, you’ll need to keep your energy up, but you won’t want to spend too much time acquiring food—at least not until you’ve created enough distance between you and your enemy.

Store up food while in captivity, but eat off the land whenever possible. Forage for food you can eat raw (edible plants and insects) and conserve your rations for when they’re needed, such as when there’s no other food available or when your enemy is too close for you to stop.

Once you create enough distance, you can catch fish and/or small animals, such as birds or reptiles. Use the lessons in the stealth movement chapters to get close to your prey.

Hunting or trapping larger game takes too much time, and preparing game leaves significant signs of presence.
COOKING

Cooking food is important for killing bacteria and parasites, but fire is a big sign of presence. The *Fire* section will teach you how to minimize this.

The best way to cook is by boiling. It is the most likely way to kill harmful organisms, and retains the most nutrients. It is also the most palatable way to eat "strange" foods such as insects, allowing you to pulverize them and cook them in a soup or stew.

To get the most nutritional benefit, drink the water you boil the food in. The exception to this is if you are boiling out toxins from plants or other materials.

The downside of boiling is that you need water. Some alternative ways to cook are:

- Roasting on a skewer.
- Frying on a thin flat rock, sheet of metal, etc.
- Using a solar oven. This takes a long time, but negates the need for a fire. Improvise one with aluminum foil or a survival blanket.

Once you have hot coals, use them as a stove. Flatten the fire, pile the embers, and then compact them. Place your pot directly on the coals. When time is limited, cook over the flames. You can make a simple potholder out of sticks.
Drying or smoking food is a good way to save it for later. Suitable foods for this include fruits, nuts, and thin strips of meat and fish.

Clean and cut what you want to dry. The thinner you slice your food, the faster it will dry. Remove all the fat from meat.

Sun drying takes too long for the evasive survivor. Place the strips near the fire instead, either on hot rocks or by hanging it. Ensure there are no folds; otherwise, there will be moist spots and it will grow bacteria.

To test if it’s dry enough, bend it. When it cracks, it’s ready.

At night, wrap the food up to prevent critters and moisture from the morning dew from spoiling it.
FIRE

Building a fire while evading your enemy is risky. Only do it if it’s absolutely necessary—that is, in cases of extreme cold, to purify water, and/or to cook food.

Better alternatives to fire-building are to:

- Build a shelter and insulate your body.
- Collect fresh water.
- Eat things you don’t have to cook.

If do decide to build a fire, conceal it as much as possible. Build it behind a natural barrier you put between you and your enemy. This will block the light, protect it from wind, and reflect heat back to you.

Consider the wind for safety and tactical reasons. It will flicker the flames and move smoke. Dusk, dawn, or bad weather will keep the smoke down. Smoke rises straight up on a fine day.

For safety reasons, never leave a fire unattended.
GATHER FUEL

Gathering fuel is the first step in building a fire. There are three types of fuel: tinder, kindling, and main fuel.

Gather the amount you need to last for the duration of the fire. Stack it close enough that it’s handy, but far enough from the flames to be safe.

Dead wood is best since live wood contains a lot of moisture. Do not use wood from a biologically contaminated area, and protect all fuel from moisture.

To find dry fuel in wet weather, look:

- Inside hollow logs.
- For wood that is off the ground.
- For wood that stands vertically.
- Under the first layer or two of tree bark.
- Under the snow.
- Under top layers of foliage.

Tinder

Tinder is any material that takes only a spark to ignite. It must be very dry. Here are some examples:

- Birch bark.
- Char cloth.
- Cotton fluff.
- Down.
- Grass.
- Powdered fungi.
- Shaved bamboo.
- Shredded plastic or rubber.
- Termite nests.
- Thread.
• Toothpick or smaller-sized twigs.
• Waxed paper.
• Wood dust or shavings.

You can get tinder to burn better by saturating it with petroleum products (Vaseline, Chapstick, hand sanitizer, insect repellant, gas, etc.). You can also do this to the kindling.

**Char Cloth**

Char cloth is like a pre-made tinder. It’s highly combustible, slow-burning, and easy to make. To create some:

Make a small hole (1mm max) in the top of a small, airtight tin.

Place (do not pack tightly or throw in) small squares of 100% natural cloth inside the tin. Any 100% natural cloth will work, but it must be 100%—an old cotton t-shirt, for example.

Put the tin in a gentle fire or in the embers. Do it so you will be able to see the smoke coming out of the hole in the tin. It may catch on fire. This is okay; it will burn itself out. When no more smoke comes out, take the tin out of the fire.

Let the tin cool down a bit before opening it, or it may ruin the cloth.

You want the cloth to be completely black, a little soft, but not too fragile. If it crumbles, it’s overdone, and you’ll have to start again. If there are brown patches, put it back in the fire for a little longer. Once it’s done, separate each piece gently.

**Tinder Nest**

Constructing a tinder nest gives you a chance of starting a fire in a wilderness setting.
Collect lots of fluffy, stringy, fibrous materials, such as bark shavings, dried grass, or lichens. Shred it with your hands. Aim to make the strands as soft as possible.

Get the largest pieces and mold them into a palm-sized “bird’s nest.” Gather the next biggest pieces and add them to the middle of the nest. Do not pack them down. Repeat this process, using smaller and smaller fibers, until there’s nothing left.

It is possible to ignite a tinder nest from sparks, but putting a char cloth and/or an ember inside it is better.

If the tinder will not ignite, it might be because:

- It’s not dry enough.
- It’s woven too tight.
- You’re blowing too hard.
- You didn’t knead it enough.

**Kindling**

Kindling is the material ignited by the tinder, which will burn long enough to ignite the fuel. You need a good supply of it and it must be dry.

Look for pencil-thick, soft wood. Resinous wood is good, because its sap is flammable. Feathering the wood by shaving shallow cuts into it will make it catch fire more easily. This is a feather stick.
Some non-natural products, such as a plastic spoon or a piece of a flip-flop, make good kindling because they catch fire easily and stay alight for a while.

**Main Fuel**

This is what keeps the fire going. It’s okay if it’s a little damp, but that will create more smoke.

Some good materials for main fuel are bamboo, coal, dry dung mixed with grass and leaves, dry peat, non-aromatic wood, etc. Hard woods burn longer. They are found on broad-leaf trees.

To split a log without an axe:

- Break the log over a rock.
- Burn it in the middle to weaken it, then stomp on it.
- Use a fork in a tree as a fulcrum. Put the log in in the middle of the fork to snap it.
RESCUE SIGNALS

Setting up rescue signals is risky for the evasive survivor. It may lead your enemies to you, but there are some circumstances where you may want to try it anyway—for example, you’re injured or sick and will die if you’re not rescued. In this case, set up as many signaling devices as you can.

Note that there are ways to signal for rescue without alerting your enemy.
Dear Reader,

Thank you for reading the *Evasive Wilderness Survival Techniques Preview*.

If you would like to purchase the full book please visit:


Thanks again for your support,

**Sam Fury, Author.**
Survival Fitness

When in danger, you have two options: fight or flight.

This series contains training manuals on the best methods of flight. Together with self-defense, you can train in them for general health and fitness.

- **Parkour.** All the parkour skills you need to overcome obstacles in your path.
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- **Swimming.** Swimming for endurance and/or speed using the most efficient strokes.

It also has books covering general health and wellness, such as yoga and meditation.


Self-Defense

The Self-Defense Series has volumes on some of the martial arts used as a base in SFP self-defense.

It also contains the SFP self-defense training manuals. SFP Self-Defense is an efficient and effective form of minimalist self-defense.


Escape, Evasion, and Survival

SFP escape, evasion, and survival (EES) focuses on keeping you alive using minimal resources. Subjects covered include:
• **Disaster Survival.** How to prepare for and react in the case of disaster and/or societal collapse.

• **Escape and Evasion.** The ability to escape capture and hide from your enemy.

• **Urban and Wilderness Survival.** Being able to live off the land in all terrains.

• **Emergency Roping.** Basic climbing skills and improvised roping techniques.

• **Water Rescue.** Life-saving water skills based on surf life-saving and military training course competencies.

• **Wilderness First Aid.** Modern medicine for use in emergency situations.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sam Fury has had a passion for survival, evasion, resistance, and escape (SERE) training since he was a young boy growing up in Australia.

This led him to years of training and career experience in related subjects, including martial arts, military training, survival skills, outdoor sports, and sustainable living.

These days, Sam spends his time refining existing skills, gaining new skills, and sharing what he learns via the Survival Fitness Plan website.

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