

Bushcraft is basically about surviving in outdoor environments like the woods. It is the usage and practice of skills, acquiring and developing knowledge and understanding, in order to survive and thrive in the natural environment. It deals with making efficient use of seemingly random things in your immediate environment (e.g. plants, animals, and many other natural features) to assist in your survival and the general skills, expertise, and knowledge in doing so. Often referred to as “wilderness skills” or “woodcraft”.

The concept of getting lost and finding yourself in desperate need of bushcraft skills may seem far-fetched, but as the popular African saying goes; knowledge for its own sake – however seemingly useless – is a greater reward than any form of ignorance.

So, it doesn't matter how irrelevant this may seem to those with little idea/business about bush crafting, any additional knowledge is better than ignorance.

Also, if you're thinking of embarking on outdoor adventures and you need information, or you just wish to upgrade your bushcraft skills, then this should go some way in satisfying your need for information.



Before we go into details of our activities in the woods, it is important to note that nothing beats the best plans. Preparing for any outdoor activity with gear is just as important as having outdoor skills to begin with.

Bushcraft skills – by virtue of the kind of situation that we may find ourselves in– can be quite extensive, because there are many factors to deal with out in the wild. This is why it is important to learn the most essential skills in order to deal with them:

Man is a creature of need, and shelter is without question one of the most basic of man's needs of all. It should come as no surprise that it is listed first in this article. One cannot overemphasize the importance of shelter; it may be a deciding factor to your survival when you're caught out and exposed to the rain and wind.

SHELTER:

If you're out hiking, camping or doing any other recreational outdoor activity, a tent or tarp should be among the first things you pack. But for those who are caught out without a tent or tarp, creating a makeshift shelter should be your topmost priority. A debris hut is always a good idea, and you can look for items like tree branches, palm fronds; dry sticks, etc. If you find yourself in a snowy environment, you could build a snow house, since building in the typical igloo manner would be great.



While building your shelter, you should keep in mind that the elements are a factor to consider. Building a large shelter – while it affords you enough room – may



have some disadvantages; your body gives off a certain amount of heat and the smaller the shelter, the faster it warms up. On a very cold night, it is advised that you stick to a small type of shelter.

STARTING A FIRE:

You've seen enough survival movies or shows to know that fire is one of the most important survival skills of all. Not only does it keep you warm, but it also serves as a deterring factor for animals, especially if you're camped out in the wild. It's not everyone who goes about with a lighter or a



matchbox; you may find yourself out without a means of making fire. Do not despair, for there are a few methods of getting a fire going without the help of a lighter. You could use flint and steel: striking them together produces sparks, aim the object you wish to light and hold for a few seconds. Friction: probably the most available, since simply rubbing two surfaces together long enough will cause smoke to appear even if it is very time consuming.

It should be noted that starting a fire isn't just dependent on the lighting method, but it is also important to find dry tinder for a higher success rate and ofcourse maintaining the fire is as important as starting it.

FINDING AND PURIFYING WATER

Water is among the most important things to have around you at all times. An average person can last only three days without water, and severe headaches and a loss of energy will result after only one day without it. After setting your shelter, you should try to replenish your water reserves. You may find yourself without any obvious source of water like rivers, but there are other sources available.



For example, accumulating rainwater from leaf tops is an option. Following the trails of small animals will also eventually lead you to a source of water. Also, if you're out in the snow, you're in luck: get a bowl or a container, fill it up with enough snow and take it into your shelter or over your fire for defrosting. You can also search for damp



areas in the ground and then begin digging. Water will eventually appear that you can then take for filtering.

Learning to cook your own meals using primitive resources is an essential bushcraft skill to know.

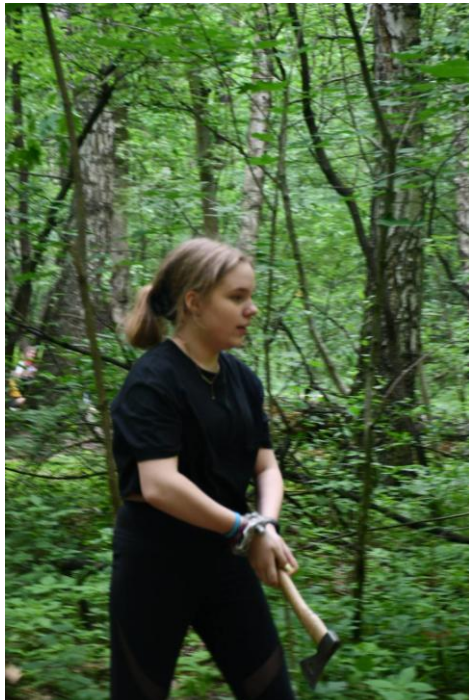
It is important to pay attention to what you digest. Do not drink dirty or poisoned water in your haste to quench thirst. A situation may arise where you can find no clean water, in which case using certain water purifying techniques will be important. Below are some techniques for purifying water:

- Boiling
- Distillation
- Filtration
- Chlorination etc.

Depending on the amount of dirt and type of liquid you find, the above listed purifying methods are quite efficient. Some are so efficient that you could purify urine, eliminating all trace of extraneous substances from it.

HUNTING FOR GAME:

Food is very essential, as such we need to hunt for us to survive and ofcourse we need to be able to make use of some tools such as axes and spears, thus axe throwing is very



important and with a good aim from a safe distance we hunt our games for food, likewise the act of carving our spears in a situation where axes are not available we make use of sticks and carve it into spears.

Having a mastery of the bushcraft skills is very pertinent and as such give children the opportunity to learn such survival techniques while experiencing the floras and faunas of nature.

