

SURVIVAL KIT INFORMATION

If you are taking the Maine Firearms or Bowhunter Courses you will be required to create a survival kit and bring it to class to show to your instructor. Your instructor will advise you when it is due. If you are taking the online course, you must bring it to the Skills and Exam Day. If you do not arrive with your completed survival kit you will not continue with the course. One kit will be accepted for two or more people from the same family, however, we encourage families to work on creating a survival kit for each person.

People get lost in the Maine woods almost every day. Those that plan ahead and have a survival kit have a better experience than those who do not. There are 7 issues you may face when lost: Fear/anxiety; cold/heat; thirst; hunger; boredom/loneliness; fatigue and pain/injury. The purpose of your survival kit is to provide you with the items needed to deal with these issues and to get you found. Your kit should be small so you can attach it to your belt if you are out on a short hike or you can put it in your backpack if going on a day long hunt. You need to make it small and light enough so you will carry it, but be functional. There will be a discussion of survival and first aid in class.

KNIFE. Should be sharp and have a handle to fit your hand. Small knives will not provide the function you may need when lost. In addition, you might also consider a small survival wire saw with handles on each end to assist in cutting firewood. (If you are attending a class in a school or other facility that prohibits knives, please put a picture of a knife in your survival kit. That will serve as a promise the you will carry an appropriate knife.)

FIRE. You must have two different types of fire starters. We recommend blizzard matches and a good quality magnesium/fire stick starter. You might want to include a butane lighter, however, they are not always functional. To get the fire going, you should have a small zip lock bag with 10-12 cotton balls saturated with petroleum jelly. It only takes a couple of cotton balls to get your fire going. You should also include a couple small pieces of birch bark which can be used to start your fire. Being able to build a good fire is extremely important as it will deal with your fear and anxiety; get you warm; dry wet clothes; cook food; boil water and serve as a signal for those searching for you.

SPARE COMPASS. A clear, base plate compass is preferred. Having a GPS does not replace the requirement to have a spare compass. While GPS' are great for navigation, batteries can die and leave you in the middle of nowhere with no method of determining your location.

WHISTLE. Plastic without the pea in the center. A Fox 40 whistle is the loudest and marine whistles are also quite loud.

WATER TREATMENT. You have several options. There are tablets designed for purifying water. You can have a small bottle with an eyedropper with bleach in it. 3 drops per liter for 10 minutes. You can carry a 3' x 3' piece of heavy duty aluminum foil and fold it into a container to boil your water. Fairly new on the market are survival straws which sanitizes the water as you suck it through the straw. You can survive without water for 3 days. You become dehydrated in a day or less.

LIGHT. A small flashlight or headlamp with spare batteries.

SIGNALING DEVICE. A signaling mirror is great. An old CD will do the same thing for free. Your fire will also serve as a signaling devise --- smoke by day and fire by night.

SPARE GLASSES AND MEDS. 3 days worth of meds you take daily. Make sure you rotate them out on a regular basis to keep them up to date and keep them in a waterproof container.

LARGE TRASH BAG AND PARACORD Fold it up tight and wrap it with paracord to keep it folded tight. Trash bag can be used as a poncho or as a base for a roof of a debris tent. A length of 550 paracord will provide you with cordage to help build a shelter and lash things together as needed. Individual strands can also be used as fishing line.

FOOD. Most people can survive without food for 3 weeks. You should have something you do not like that will provide you with protein. You can also pack some fishing flies and small split shot sinkers in a small container like a film canister and wrap it with monofilament fishing line. Wrap the line onto the container, cover with electrical tape and you also have the tape to close wounds with.

FIRST AID A homeowner's first aid kit does not perform the functions you may need. You need to be able to perform self help first and you will need items to control serious bleeding, stabilize a sprain or broken bones. A bandana and feminine hygiene pads can be used to deal with bleeding. By using sticks from the woods, and a couple of triangular bandage you can splint a limb and deal with bleeding. Completing a first aid course and CPR course is strongly recommended.

SPACE BLANKET A mylar space blanket can be used to reduce loss of body heat and may also be useful in making a shelter.

DUCT TAPE a few feet of duct tape wrapped around a pencil or stick will provide you with the ability to tape things together as well as help with wound closure.

ELECTRONICS You are not required to have electronic devices in your survival kit. However, if you have a GPS and/or a cell phone, you should know how to use them and carry them with you. Make sure they have fresh batteries or are fully charged and remember that they do not always work everywhere.