

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO U.S. ARMY
SURVIVAL
SKILLS, TACTICS, AND TECHNIQUES



Weapons • Tools • Equipment • Survival Psychology
First Aid • Shelter Design • Traps and Snares • Rescue Procedures
Treating Shock • Mountaineering • Close-Range Combat

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Edited by Jay McCullough

The Ultimate Guide to
U.S. Army
Survival
Skills, Tactics, and Techniques

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Jay McCullough



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INTRODUCTION

The U.S. has the best-equipped and well-trained Army in the world. Barring unforeseen political considerations or a catastrophic act of nature, it can deploy nearly anywhere and accomplish almost any reasonable mission. This is due in large part to the Army's experience as an institution in a variety of wartime environments. Its hard-earned wisdom about how to cope with almost every imaginable scenario, on a soldier-by-soldier basis, distinguishes it as a service of excellence whose individuals are highly adaptable. They are well prepared, they accomplish the mission, and when the circumstances are truly unfavorable to life itself, they are survivors.

The keys to this preparation are contained in the Army's many sensible, well-written, voluminous, and scattered publications. They address nearly every aspect of running, provisioning, or being in the Army, but they are especially useful for their tips on how to stay alive under any circumstances. The task of culling every bit of useful information about survival from every U.S. Army publication would take months however, so I've done it here for you in *The Ultimate Guide to U.S. Army Survival Skills, Tactics, and Techniques*.

Where subjects are duplicated throughout the literature, I've created a single clearinghouse for that information. For instance, almost every Army manual remotely connected to survival seems to include the same basic instructions about how to make a poncho lean-to, so you'll find a single discussion about that, and related information, in the Shelters section.

In other instances, a subject may be discussed in-depth in a more generalized or comprehensive manner, say for example venomous snakes as a subcategory of dangerous animals. But the subject of snakes also merits inclusion in other categories, especially within the contexts of those categories; jungle, desert, and medical manuals add valuable information not otherwise contained in a herpetologist's catalog of snake habitats, habits, and geographical ranges.

I've tried to make the selections useful to a general reader who may find him- or herself in a survival situation, whether they are alone or in a small group, probably unarmed. Some sections are invaluable; nearly every aspect of first aid will be useful to someone at some time. When in doubt about whether particular passages provide pertinent information, I've included them in the hope that they may serve as a useful reference, comfort the afflicted, or perhaps even save a life. As an example, you will find a caution in the first aid section that warns you not to apply a tourniquet to someone's neck.

Will you ever dig a defensive position with a sloping floor and a grenade trench? Probably not. But everyone who has done so probably never thought about it until they were up to their shoulders in dirt, wondering how much further they had to dig. I should hope that you never find yourself in that circumstance, or one like it. If you do, the best advice is contained in the first three chapters, particularly in regard to your state of mind. Whatever your condition, keep a positive outlook, keep your sense of humor, keep your humanity and sense of decency. Realize the conditions for what they are, be flexible, adapt, and never say die.

Jay McCullough
January 2007
New Haven, Connecticut

PART I

General Survival Skills

CHAPTER 1

Psychology of Survival

INTRODUCTION

This manual is based entirely on the keyword SURVIVAL. The letters in this word can help guide you in your actions in any survival situation. Whenever faced with a survival situation, remember the word SURVIVAL.

SURVIVAL ACTIONS

The following paragraphs expand on the meaning of each letter of the word survival. Study and remember what each letter signifies because you may some day have to make it work for you.

S - Size Up the Situation. If you are in a combat situation, find a place where you can conceal yourself from the enemy. Remember, security takes priority. Use your senses of hearing, smell, and sight to get a feel for the battlefield. What is the enemy doing? Advancing? Holding in place? Retreating? You will have to consider what is developing on the battlefield when you make your survival plan.

Size Up Your Surroundings. Determine the pattern of the area. Get a feel for what is going on around you. Every environment, whether forest, jungle, or desert, has a rhythm or pattern. This rhythm or pattern includes animal and bird noises and movements and insect sounds. It may also include enemy traffic and civilian movements.

Size Up Your Physical Condition. The pressure of the battle you were in or the trauma of being in a survival situation may have caused you to overlook wounds you received. Check your wounds and give yourself first aid. Take care to prevent further bodily harm. For instance, in any climate, drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration. If you are in a cold or wet climate, put on additional clothing to prevent hypothermia.

Size Up Your Equipment. Perhaps in the heat of battle, you lost or damaged some of your equipment. Check to see what equipment you have and what condition it is in.

Now that you have sized up your situation, surroundings, physical condition, and equipment, you are ready to make your survival plan. In doing so, keep in mind your basic physical needs—water, food, and shelter.

U - Use All Your Senses, Undue Haste Makes Waste. You may make a wrong move when you react quickly without thinking or planning. That move may result in your capture or death. Don't move just for the sake of taking action. Consider all aspects of your situation (size up your situation) before you make a decision and a move. If you act in haste, you may forget or lose some of your equipment. In your haste you may also become disoriented so that you don't know which way to go. Plan your moves. Be ready to move out quickly without endangering yourself if the enemy is near you. Use all your senses to evaluate the situation. Note sounds and smells. Be sensitive to temperature changes. Be observant.

R - Remember Where You Are. Spot your location on your map and relate it to the surrounding terrain. This is a basic principle that you must always follow. If there are other persons with you, make sure they also know their location. Always know who in your group, vehicle, or aircraft has a map and compass. If that person is killed, you will have to get the map and compass from him. Pay close attention to where you

are and to where you are going. Do not rely on others in the group to keep track of the route. Constantly orient yourself. Always try to determine, as a minimum, how your location relates to—

- The location of enemy units and controlled areas.
- The location of friendly units and controlled areas.
- The location of local water sources (especially important in the desert).
- Areas that will provide good cover and concealment.

This information will allow you to make intelligent decisions when you are in a survival and evasion situation.

V - Vanquish Fear and Panic. The greatest enemies in a combat survival and evasion situation are fear and panic. If uncontrolled, they can destroy your ability to make an intelligent decision. They may cause you to react to your feelings and imagination rather than to your situation. They can drain your energy and thereby cause other negative emotions. Previous survival and evasion training and self-confidence will enable you to vanquish fear and panic.

I - Improvise. In the United States, we have items available for all our needs. Many of these items are cheap to replace when damaged. Our easy come, easy go, easy-to-replace culture makes it unnecessary for us to improvise. This inexperience in improvisation can be an enemy in a survival situation. Learn to improvise. Take a tool designed for a specific purpose and see how many other uses you can make of it.

Learn to use natural objects around you for different needs. An example is using a rock for a hammer. No matter how complete a survival kit you have with you, it will run out or wear out after a while. Your imagination must take over when your kit wears out.

V - Value Living. All of us were born kicking and fighting to live, but we have become used to the soft life. We have become creatures of comfort. We dislike inconveniences and discomforts. What happens when we are faced with a survival situation with its stresses, inconveniences, and discomforts? This is when the will to live—placing a high value on living—is vital. The experience and knowledge you have gained through life and your Army training will have a bearing on your will to live. Stubbornness, a refusal to give in to problems and obstacles that face you, will give you the mental and physical strength to endure.

A - Act Like the Natives. The natives and animals of a region have adapted to their environment. To get a feel of the area, watch how the people go about their daily routine. When and what do they eat? When, where, and how do they get their food? When and where do they go for water? What time do they usually go to bed and get up? These actions are important to you when you are trying to avoid capture.

Animal life in the area can also give you clues on how to survive. Animals also require food, water, and shelter. By watching them, you can find sources of water and food.



WARNING

Animals cannot serve as an absolute guide to what you can eat and drink. Many animals eat plants that are toxic to humans.

Keep in mind that the reaction of animals can reveal your presence to the enemy.

If in a friendly area, one way you can gain rapport with the natives is to show interest in their tools and how they get food and water. By studying the people, you learn to respect them, you often make valuable friends, and, most important, you learn how to adapt to their environment and increase your chances of survival.

L - Live by Your Wits, But for Now, Learn Basic Skills. Without training in basic skills for surviving and evading on the battlefield, your chances of living through a combat survival and evasion situation are slight.

S	Size Up the Situation (Surroundings, Physical Condition, Equipment)
U	Use All Your Senses, Undue Haste Makes Waste
R	Remember Where You Are
V	Vanquish Fear and Panic
I	Improvise
V	Value Living
A	Act Like the Natives
L	Live by Your Wits, But for Now, Learn Basic Skills

Learn these basic skills now—not when you are headed for or are in the battle. How you decide to equip yourself before deployment will impact on whether or not you survive. You need to know about the environment to which you are going, and you must practice basic skills geared to that environment. For instance, if you are going to a desert, you need to know how to get water in the desert.

Practice basic survival skills during all training programs and exercises. Survival training reduces fear of the unknown and gives you self-confidence. It teaches you to *live by your wits*.

PATTERN FOR SURVIVAL

Develop a survival pattern that lets you beat the enemies of survival. This survival pattern must include food, water, shelter, fire, first aid, and signals placed in order of importance. For example, in a cold environment, you would need a fire to get warm; a shelter to protect you from the cold, wind, and rain or snow; traps or snares to get food; a means to signal friendly aircraft; and first aid to maintain health. If injured, first aid has top priority no matter what climate you are in.

Change your survival pattern to meet your immediate physical needs as the environment changes.

As you read the rest of this manual, keep in mind the keyword SURVIVAL and the need for a survival pattern.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO SURVIVE ANYTHING, ANYWHERE!

From the Official Manuals of the U.S. Army

Here for the first time in one place is everything you will ever need to know in order to survive just about any situation. Drawn from dozens of the U.S. Army's well-written field manuals on every conceivable subject, this huge compendium compiles the most useful and curious techniques for the would-be survivalist, including:

**First Aid in Toxic Environments • Chemical and Biological Agents
Treating Blood Loss • Treating Head Injuries and Fractures
Jungle and Desert Survival • Concealment and Camouflage
Edible Plants and Animals • Food Procurement • And Much More!**

With hundreds of photographs and illustrations showing everything from edible plants to rare skin diseases of the jungle, this book will be a revelation for even the most seasoned survivalist and outdoors enthusiast. If you can't find it in *The Ultimate Guide to U.S. Army Survival Skills, Tactics, and Techniques*, you don't need it.



JAY McCULLOUGH is a writer and editor specializing in the subjects of history and military history.



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