



BASIC NEEDS



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To reiterate, the main elements required for survival are FOOD, FIRE, SHELTER and WATER. Use PLAN (Protection, Location, Acquisition, and Navigation) to help you to priorities your survival needs. If you don't have shelter in the desert, having 2 liters (3¹/₂pts) of water is of little use to you in the longer term.

It takes a healthy person quite a long time to die of starvation, for the body can use up its stored resources, but exposure to wind, rain and cold can be fatal even in temperate climates and death comes in only minutes in the icy waters of the poles. Food is rarely the first priority. Even in those places where it is difficult to find there are usually other problems to face first. Shelter will often be the prime necessity in extremes of climate or temperature - not just in the frozen polar regions or the baking deserts, but for walkers trapped by mist on a hillside. The need for fire is closely linked.

Water is something that most people in the modern world take for granted. They are so used to turning on a tap that until an extreme drought causes water rationing they scarcely think about it. Yet the survivor at sea, or after a flood, though surrounded by water, may be desperate for drinkable water - and there are many places where, unless it rains, no obvious water is available. The other survival necessities are dealt with later in the book, but water is universally important.