



# SURVIVAL CODE



# HUNTING

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Keen observation of all signs of wildlife and knowledge of the kind of animals you are hunting are as necessary to the hunter as skillful tracking and accurate marksmanship. They make it easier to be in the right place and to take advantage of the terrain.

Always proceed as quietly as possible. Move slowly and stop regularly. Carry your weight on the rear foot so that you can test the next step with the toes before transferring your weight. Thus you will avoid stumbles and help to reduce the amount of noise you produce from undergrowth and snapping sticks. Fast or sudden movements will startle the game. Sniff the air and listen. Hunt against the wind, or at least across it.

The ideal time to hunt is at first light, when more game is likely to be about. Animals are also about in the evening, but the light will be getting rapidly worse so you need to be sure of the terrain and know your way back to camp. In territory you know well this will not be a problem, particularly if there is a clear sky and moon or starlight to see by.

If hunting in the evening go out at least an hour before dusk so that your eyes will get used to the failing light and you will develop night vision - though your prey will probably be able to see better than you do.

When hunting during the day, try to hunt moving uphill in the morning and return to camp in the afternoon. Signs of animals will be easier to read as you move uphill for those on the ground will be closer to eye level. Thermal currents build up with the heat of the day and carry scents upwards — so when you are coming down the hill the scent of the game will reach you before your smell reaches it. After a day out hunting and foraging the descent will take less energy than an upward climb and by then you'll welcome the easier going.

## **SURVIVAL ADVICE: HUNTING**

If you are moving correctly, game often will not see you. If an animal catches a glimpse of you, freeze. You may be the first human it has seen. It will be more curious than frightened. Keep absolutely still until the animal looks away or continues feeding. Avoid large animals, such as bears, unless really desperate or confident of a first shot kill - or you could end up becoming the hunted not the hunter.

Get as close as you can without revealing your presence and take up a steady position, aiming for the area giving the greatest margin of error. An accurate head shot is very effective but risky unless you are very close and the animal still. A point just to the back of the front shoulder is a good target. A firm, accurate strike here will drop most animals instantly. A badly aimed shot may mean unnecessary agony for the animal and a long follow up for the hunter.

If an animal drops first shot, wait five minutes before approaching. Just stand back and observe. If not dead but bleeding, the loss of blood will weaken it and, when you do approach, it will not be able to bolt. If an animal is wounded and moves away wait 15 minutes before following up. If you follow immediately the animal may travel all day.