

SURVIVAL CODE



SURVIVAL KIT

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A few key items can make all the difference in the fight for survival. Collect the things listed below. They can all be fitted into a small container, such as a 2 oz tobacco tin, that will be hardly noticeable when slipped into an anorak pocket. Make a habit of always having it with you. Do not choose something bigger, you may find it inconvenient to carry and leave it out on the one occasion you actually need it. Many people who roll their own cigarettes carry such a tin.

Experience has proved that each item earns its place, though some are more use in some situations than in others: fish hooks, for instance, may be invaluable in the jungle but less so in the desert.

Polish the inside of the lid to make a mirror-like reflecting surface and seal it, to be waterproof, with a strip of adhesive tape (see (a) over) which can be easily removed and replaced. Don't then just forget the tin. Regularly check the contents, changing any which deteriorate, such as matches and medicine tablets. Mark all drug containers with use and dosage and a run-out date when they should be replaced. Pack spare space in the tin with cotton wool, which will keep the contents from rattling and can be used for fire lighting.

Matches

Waterproof matches are useful but bulkier than ordinary non-safety, strike-anywhere matches, which can be made 'shower-proof' by dipping the heads in melted candle fat. To save space, snap off half of each matchstick.

It is much easier to use matches than to make fire by other methods but don't waste them, use only when improvised methods fail. Take them from the tin one at a time and replace the lid. Never leave the container open or lying on the ground.

Candle

It is invaluable for starting a fire as well as a light source. Shave square for packing. If made of tallow it is also fat to eat in an emergency or to use for frying — but be sure it is tallow; paraffin wax and some other candles are inedible. Tallow does not store well, especially in hot climates.

Flint

Flints will work when wet and they will go on striking long after you run out of matches. Invest in a processed flint with a saw striker.

Magnifying glass

Can start a fire from direct sunshine and is useful for searching for splinters and stings.

Needles and thread

You will need several needles, including at least one with a very large eye that can be threaded with sinew and coarse threads. Choose strong thread and wrap it around the needles. They can be used for repairing or making clothes in an emergency.

Fish hooks and line

This is a selection of different hooks in a small tin or packet. Add a few split lead weights. Remember that a small hook will catch both large and small fish but a large hook will only catch big ones. Include as much line as possible, it will also be useful for catching birds.

Compass

A luminous button compass - but make sure you know how to read it, as some small compasses can be confusing. The liquid-filled type is best, but first check that it does not leak, has no bubbles in it and is fully serviceable. The pointer is prone to rust. Make sure it is on its pivot and swings freely.

Beta light

Beta lights provide a reliable and continuous light source for about 15 years. The lights are generally the size of a small coin, are self-illuminating requiring no batteries, and are ideal for map reading.

Snare wire

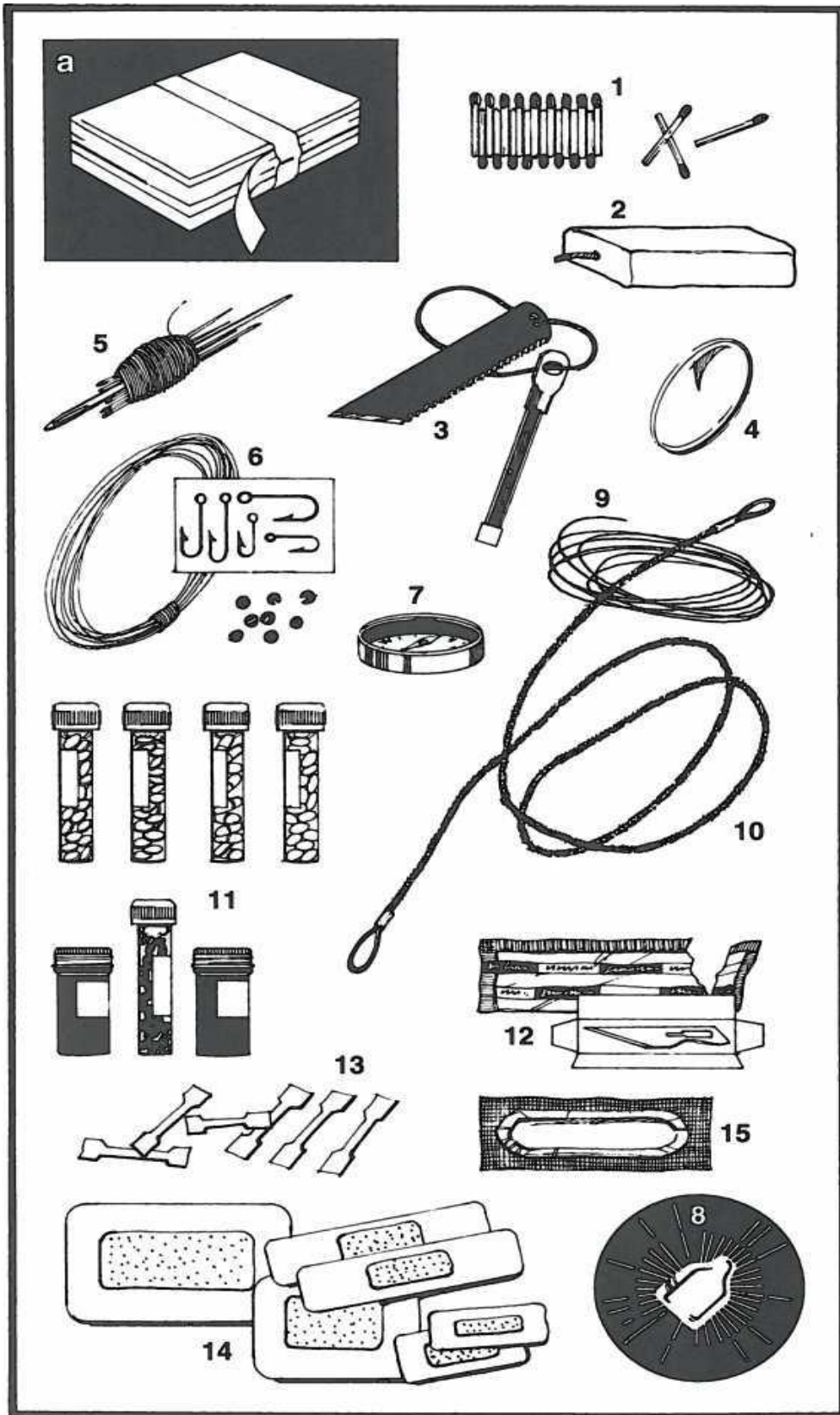
Preferably brass wire - 60-90cm (2–3ft) should do. Save for snares, but could solve many survival problems.

Flexible saw

These usually come with large rings at the ends as handles. These take up too much room, so remove them; they can be replaced by wooden toggles when you need to use it. To protect from rust and breakage cover it in a film of grease. Flexible saws can be used to cut even quite large trees.

Medical kit

What you include depends upon your own skill in using it. Pack medicines in airtight containers with cotton wool to prevent rattling. The following items will cover most ailments:



Analgesic: A pain reliever for mild and moderate pain. Codeine phosphate is ideal for tooth- ear- and headaches. DOSE: one tablet every six hours as needed but can cause constipation as a side-effect so will help in cases of loose bowels. Not to be taken by children, asthmatics or people with liver disorders.

Intestinal sedative: For treating acute and chronic diarrhea. Imodium is usually favored. DOSE: two capsules initially, then one each time a loose stool is passed.

Antibiotic: For general infections. Tetracycline can be used even by people hypersensitive to penicillin. DOSE: one 250mg tablet, four times daily, repeated for five to seven days. Carry enough for a full course. If taking, avoid milk, calcium and iron preparations or other drugs containing aluminum hydroxide.

Antihistamine: For allergies, insect bites and stings (may also help in cases of a bad reaction to a drug). Piriton is recommended in Britain, Benadryl in the USA. Sleepiness is a side-effect of Piriton, as useful as a mild sleeping pill. Do not exceed recommended dosages or take with alcohol.

Water sterilizing tablets: For use where water is suspect and you cannot boil. Follow manufacturers' instructions.

Anti-malaria tablets: Essential in areas where malaria is present. There are types which require only one tablet taken monthly.

Potassium permanganate: Add to water and mix until water becomes bright pink to sterilize it, deeper pink to make an antiseptic and to a full red to treat fungal diseases such as athlete's foot.

Surgical blades

There are at least two scalpel blades of different sizes. A handle can be made from wood when required.

Butterfly sutures

Use to hold the edges of wounds together.

Plasters

Assorted sizes, preferably waterproof, for minor abrasions and keeping cuts clean. They can be cut and used as butterfly sutures (see ***Stitching wounds*** in ***Health***).

Condom

This makes a good water-bag - holding 1 liter (rApt). It is easiest to fill it from a source that has an abundance of water and a degree of water pressure, like a waterfall.