

CAMP CRAFT SURVIVAL GUIDE

Build a system. Live efficiently.



LAYOUT

BUILD

STORE

MAINTAIN

KNOWLEDGE • SKILL • DISCIPLINE • SURVIVAL

Independent educational field guide • verify current laws, local conditions, and expert guidance

READ THE RISK, THEN CHOOSE THE LEAST COSTLY SAFE MOVE

How to Use This Guide

Survival work is a sequence, not a shopping list. Stabilize exposure, establish a clean water routine, protect fire and sleep, then spend energy on upgrades that reduce future work. Adapt every method to local terrain, law, weather, wildfire restrictions, wildlife rules, and your actual training.

1 STOP Check injury, weather, daylight, and exit.	2 STAY DRY Rain and sweat defeat insulation quickly.	3 BUILD SYSTEMS Water, wood, sleep, repair, and sanitation reset daily.	4 SAVE CALORIES Short lanes and boring routines beat heroic chores.
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4	Zoning, Paths, and Weather Flow	Put each job where its mess, heat, water, and scent belong
5	Tool Safety and Workstations	Make the safe motion the easy motion
6	Knots, Lashings, and Cordage Discipline	Use the knot that fits the load and can still be untied
7	Core Camp Builds	Simple structures that return labor every day
8	Wood System, Containers, and Small Tools	More vessels and better staging create cleaner systems
9	Kitchen, Food Processing, and Storage	Separate raw, hot, clean, and waste
10	Sanitation, Wildlife, Repair, and Morale	Clean camp and a functioning person are both survival infrastructure
11	Build Phases and Maintenance Rhythm	Front-load risk reduction, then shift to calorie-smart maintenance

IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTE

This material is educational. It does not replace hands-on instruction, emergency medical care, official water-treatment directions, local fire orders, or site-specific avalanche, flood, tree-fall, wildlife, and weather guidance.

FIELD CARD

SURVIVAL PRIORITY

- 1 Stabilize exposure before spending calories on upgrades.
- 2 Build repeatable water, fire, sleep, repair, and sanitation systems.
- 3 Check current local rules and verify every high-risk method.



RESET: tools • water • wood • food • paths

A COMPACT WORKSITE BEATS A COLLECTION OF PROJECTS

Camp as a System

Long-duration camp should reduce movement, protect dry resources, separate clean from dirty work, and make the correct action easy even in darkness. The best camp is organized, slightly boring, and profitable in calories.

CORE SYSTEMS - Shelter and dry sleep. - Fire, fuel, and cooking. - Raw-to-clean water. - Food processing and storage. - Tool use and repair. - Sanitation, waste, and wildlife. - Weather monitoring and emergency exit.	DESIGN GOALS - Short travel lanes with no hidden stumps, hooks, blades, or guy lines. - Every tool has a dry assigned home. - Wet gear can dry without entering bedding. - Food scents and waste stay away from shelter and clean water. - The camp can be reset in a few minutes before sleep or bad weather. - Every major build reduces future walking, bending, drying time, fuel use, or risk.
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CAMP RULE

Build systems, not moments: a wood system, water system, drying system, storage system, sanitation system, and work-rest rhythm.

FIELD CARD

CAMP AS A SYSTEM

1

Shelter and dry sleep.

2

Fire, fuel, and cooking.

3

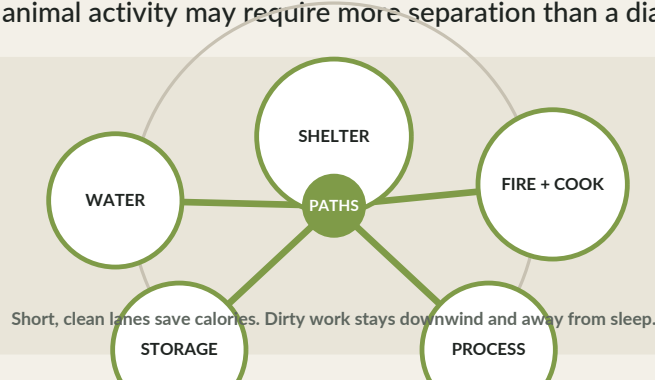
Raw-to-clean water.

RESET: tools • water • wood • food • paths

PUT EACH JOB WHERE ITS MESS, HEAT, WATER, AND SCENT BELONG

Zoning, Paths, and Weather Flow

Zones should be distinct enough to control contamination and wildlife, but close enough to reduce energy. Terrain, wind, drainage, local rules, and animal activity may require more separation than a diagram can show.



CLEAN CORE

- Sleeping platform, dry clothing, bedding, repair kit, emergency ignition, clean water shelf, and one clean sitting area.
- No raw fish, bait, greasy tools, waste, or dirty boots inside the sleep zone.
- Keep an exit line, light, footwear, and first-aid supplies easy to reach.
- Place the wet-gear entry on the dirty side of shelter.

DIRTY PERIMETER AND LANES

- Food processing, latrine, fish gear, hide work, and scent-heavy storage stay downwind and away from sleep.
- Route roof runoff away from paths, fire, water storage, and work surfaces.
- Build pole, bark, or stone walkways through mud where permitted.
- Mark stakes and guy lines; orient tools and footwear consistently for night use.
- Keep wood processing near enough to carry but outside living and walking space.

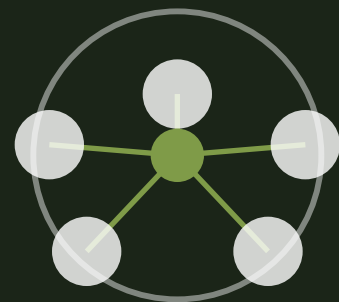
PATH RULE

A good camp lane remains safe in rain, snow, darkness, and fatigue. Fix the stump today; it has a meeting with your shin tonight.

FIELD CARD

ZONING, PATHS, AND WEATHER FLOW

- 1 Sleeping platform, dry clothing, bedding, repair kit, emergency ignition, clean water shelf,...
- 2 No raw fish, bait, greasy tools, waste, or dirty boots inside the sleep zone.
- 3 Keep an exit line, light, footwear, and first-aid supplies easy to reach.



RESET: tools • water • wood • food • paths

MAKE THE SAFE MOTION THE EASY MOTION

Tool Safety and Workstations

A stable chopping block, clear saw lane, controlled carving posture, and assigned tool wall reduce injury and lost gear. Most camp injuries are not cinematic. They are tired hands, poor footing, dull tools, and one careless cut too many.

PROCESSING STATIONS - Chopping: use a flat stable block and clear the full swing, ricochet, and rolling-round radius. - Sawing: support the work so the cut opens rather than pinches the blade. - Carving: sit with back support, brace work on a bench, cut away from the body, and keep the off-hand behind the edge. - Use a sharp tool; dull edges demand dangerous force. - Stop when cold, fatigue, poor light, or frustration reduces control.	TOOL WALL AND RESET - Assign a hook or slot for axe, saw, knife, gloves, cordage, pot gripper, repair kit, and light. - Mount under the driest eave and above mud splash. - Store cutting edges sheathed and handles oriented consistently. - Count tools at the end of each work block. - Clean pitch and dirt, dry metal, inspect handles and pivots, sharpen as needed, and return every item. - A tool on the ground is not stored; it is a future search party.
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STOP RULE

When a tool starts feeling wrong, stop. Fatigue is not a character test; it is a loss-of-control forecast.

FIELD CARD

TOOL SAFETY AND WORKSTATIONS

1

Chopping: use a flat stable block and clear the full swing, ricochet, and rolling-round radius.

2

Sawing: support the work so the cut opens rather than pinches the blade.

3

Carving: sit with back support, brace work on a bench, cut away from the body, and keep the o...

RESET: tools • water • wood • food • paths

USE THE KNOT THAT FITS THE LOAD AND CAN STILL BE UNTIED

Knots, Lashings, and Cordage Discipline

Cordage is a limited structural resource. Protect it from abrasion, heat, sharp edges, unnecessary cutting, and permanent knots. Practice with the actual rope and gloves used in the field.

USE	GOOD CHOICE	WHY
Fixed loop	Bowline or figure-eight loop	Stable anchor loop; inspect loading direction and tail
Adjustable guy line	Taut-line hitch, trucker-style tensioning, or hardware	Retensions after rain, wind, and temperature changes
Temporary pole position	Clove hitch backed up when needed	Fast positioning; not a universal critical-load knot
Join similar ropes	Appropriate bend or double fisherman	Choose for material and leave adequate tails
Square-frame structure	Square lashing with tight fraps	Controls crossing poles when geometry is sound
Tripod	Tripod lashing	Creates controlled splay for pot stands and racks

CORDAGE MANAGEMENT

- Cut only when a shorter reusable piece will serve long term.
- Coil by length and assign locations.
- Pad rock and bark contact points.
- Keep cordage away from sparks, knives, saw teeth, and hot cookware.
- Mark structural lines so no one mistakes them for a clothesline.

INSPECTION

- Check glazing, fuzzing, cuts, melted fibers, crushed sections, and knot creep.
- Retire damaged cord from structural use and reserve it for light ties or markers.
- Retension after wetting, freezing, and load changes.
- Never trust an unfamiliar knot with a suspended person or critical load.
- Cordage cannot repair bad geometry; brace the frame first.

FIELD CARD

KNOTS, LASHINGS, AND CORDAGE DISCIPLINE

1

Cut only when a shorter reusable piece will serve long term.

2

Coil by length and assign locations.

3

Pad rock and bark contact points.

RESET: tools • water • wood • food • paths

SIMPLE STRUCTURES THAT RETURN LABOR EVERY DAY

Core Camp Builds

A drying rack, tool wall, work table, seat, pot system, and wood roof can return more value than a dramatic cabin addition. Build from sound material, brace every structure, and test it cold and unloaded.

DRYING AND STORAGE - Place a drying rack near useful heat but outside sparks and scorching. - Use a high garment tier and a separate lower kindling tier only with generous clearances. - Space items for airflow and rotate them. - Build tool pegs, line winders, shelves, and a repair box under the driest eave. - Keep clean-water and food surfaces separate from hide, bait, and dirty tool work.	TABLES, SEATS, AND WOOD ROOF - Build one flat prep surface and one backed seat under cover. - A stable seated posture saves calories during carving, mending, food prep, and line work. - Use a nonflammable hot-pot landing area and lid rest. - Build a steep wood roof with raised floor and open sides for airflow. - Reserve the driest bay for tinder, kindling, and the next 24 hours of fuel. - Level, brace, load-test, then use. Rustic is a material choice, not permission for wobble.
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BUILD RULE

Every project must have a job, a safe load path, a maintenance plan, and a measurable return.

FIELD CARD

CORE CAMP BUILDS

1
 Place a drying rack near useful heat but outside sparks and scorching.

2
 Use a high garment tier and a separate lower kindling tier only with generous clearances.

3
 Space items for airflow and rotate them.

RESET: tools • water • wood • food • paths

MORE VESSELS AND BETTER STAGING CREATE CLEANER SYSTEMS

Wood System, Containers, and Small Tools

The wood yard should convert raw rounds into sorted dry fuel with the fewest steps. Containers support water settling, dry storage, gathering, processing, repair, and inventory.

WOOD FLOW - Raw fuel arrives at the processing edge. - Saw to fire length on stable supports, then split on a dedicated block. - Sort tinder, kindling, feed wood, steady fuel, and marginal drying stock. - Move the daily reserve under cover and off the ground. - Carve sound hardwood wedges and a wooden mallet for difficult splitting and construction. - Use wind control, lids, and coals to reduce the amount of wood the system demands.	CONTAINERS AND SMALL EQUIPMENT - Folded bark trays for dry goods and processing; woven baskets for gathering and airflow. - Carved spoons, cups, ladles, toggles, pegs, pot hooks, lid rests, net needles, measuring sticks, and tally sticks. - Build smooth edges, stable bases, glove-sized handles, and lids where insects or ash matter. - Know the material: some woods, bark, resin, dyes, and treated lumber are unsafe for food or hot liquid. - Assign raw-water, raw-food, clean-storage, and tool roles by shape or location.
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CONTAINER RULE

Assign a job before building the vessel. A beautiful mystery bowl is still a project looking for a problem.

FIELD CARD

WOOD SYSTEM, CONTAINERS, AND SMALL TOOLS

1

Raw fuel arrives at the processing edge.

2

Saw to fire length on stable supports, then split on a dedicated block.

3

Sort tinder, kindling, feed wood, steady fuel, and marginal drying stock.

RESET: tools • water • wood • food • paths

SEPARATE RAW, HOT, CLEAN, AND WASTE

Kitchen, Food Processing, and Storage

A camp kitchen is a sanitation system. Stable supports, clean water, raw-food separation, protected storage, and a clear waste route reduce illness and wildlife conflict.

COOK AND PROCESS • Use a stable pot suspension, lid rest, clean utensil pegs, dry fuel, and a nonflammable hot-pot landing area. • Keep clean water above mud and separate from raw collection. • Create a washable processing surface away from shelter and the water source. • Keep hooks, knives, bait, blood, hides, and scraps contained. • Process promptly and move food to cooking, smoking, drying, cooling, or approved storage. • Never clean fish at the shelter threshold.	STORAGE AND WASTE • Follow current local wildlife rules and use approved bear-resistant containers or methods where required. • Store attractants away from sleep and downwind when feasible. • Keep dry goods covered, raised, and inspected for moisture, mold, insects, and animal damage. • Move scraps and gray water according to land-manager and Leave No Trace rules. • Never leave grease, bones, foil, food, or synthetic trash in the fire ring. • Secure scent-heavy clothing and gloves away from bedding.
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KITCHEN RULE

Raw side, hot side, clean side, waste route. When those four overlap, illness and wildlife both get a vote.

FIELD CARD

KITCHEN, FOOD PROCESSING, AND STORAGE

1

Use a stable pot suspension, lid rest, clean utensil pegs, dry fuel, and a nonflammable hot-p...

2

Keep clean water above mud and separate from raw collection.

3

Create a washable processing surface away from shelter and the water source.

RESET: tools • water • wood • food • paths

CLEAN CAMP AND A FUNCTIONING PERSON ARE BOTH SURVIVAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Sanitation, Wildlife, Repair, and Morale

Poor sanitation can undo shelter, water, and food work through illness and wildlife conflict. Long nights and bad weather can still support low-risk repair, planning, and morale work.

SANITATION AND WILDLIFE • Use toilets where provided; follow local rules for cat holes or packing out human waste. • Keep sanitation far from water, camp, trails, and food zones. • Strain food particles from wash water and pack them out. • Never feed wildlife, intentionally or through sloppy storage. • Secure food, trash, toothpaste, bait, greasy cookware, and scented items according to current local rules. • Complete a clean sweep before dusk.	REPAIR AND HUMAN SYSTEM • Maintain needles, thread, patches, tape, cordage, spare laces, seam sealer, awl, and sharpening tools. • Repair cuffs, knees, elbows, pack straps, boot seams, and shelter tie-outs before damage spreads. • Use darkness for low-risk mending, inventory, line preparation, planning, and simple seated carving. • Build one dry place to sit, eat, and repair. • Small morale projects - a carved spoon, tally stick, game, journal, or doorway trim - can support patience and routine. • Stop work before exhaustion becomes the camp foreman.
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MORALE

A well-run camp creates small evidence that tomorrow is manageable. That is not decoration. It is operational resilience.

FIELD CARD

SANITATION, WILDLIFE, REPAIR, AND MORALE

1

Use toilets where provided; follow local rules for cat holes or packing out human waste.

2

Keep sanitation far from water, camp, trails, and food zones.

3

Strain food particles from wash water and pack them out.

RESET: tools • water • wood • food • paths

FRONT-LOAD RISK REDUCTION, THEN SHIFT TO CALORIE-SMART MAINTENANCE

Build Phases and Maintenance Rhythm

Construction intensity should decline as camp becomes functional. By the second phase, only projects that improve warmth, dryness, food, water, safety, or morale should survive the budget meeting.

PHASE	OBJECTIVES
Days 1-3	Scout; emergency shelter; dry bed; water treatment; legal safe fire; dry fuel; clean/dirty zones; tool inventory.
Days 4-10	Durable roof; drainage; porch; wood cover; drying rack; tool wall; table; sanitation route; food-storage compliance.
Days 11-30	Improve insulation; shorten paths; expand fuel reserve; add containers; refine cooking and processing; establish repair rhythm.
Days 31+	Maintain more than build; simplify routes; preserve clothing; improve passive systems; prepare for worsening weather and lower energy.

DAILY CLOSE

- Clean water full.
- Tomorrow's ignition staged.
- Wood under cover.
- Tools counted and dry.
- Food and waste secured.
- Paths clear and night hazards marked.
- Bedding protected and weather checked.

WEEKLY RESET

- Inspect shelter, racks, anchors, and drainage.
- Sharpen and maintain tools.
- Wash and dry storage vessels.
- Repair clothing, cordage, and footwear.
- Reassess wildlife signs and food storage.
- Remove projects that no longer earn their space.

FIELD CARD

BUILD PHASES AND MAINTENANCE RHYTHM

1

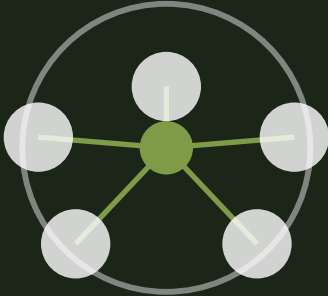
Clean water full.

2

Tomorrow's ignition staged.

3

Wood under cover.



RESET: tools • water • wood • food • paths

USE, INSPECT, RESET, AND VERIFY

Field Checklist and Sources

This guide consolidates the project’s long-duration ALONE-style field-manual iterations and updates high-risk claims with current public-health, fire-safety, cold-stress, and Leave No Trace guidance. Practice before relying on any skill and check current local orders at the point of use.

FINAL CHECK ❑ Short, clear paths connect shelter, fire, clean water, wood, and work areas ❑ Tools assigned, counted, dry, sharp, and stored with edges protected ❑ Raw food, clean water, sleep, sanitation, waste, and wildlife attractants separated ❑ Dry fuel, tinder, clothing, and bedding protected from rain, sparks, and mud	FINAL CHECK ❑ Cooking supports, tables, racks, and seats stable and load-tested ❑ Food storage and human-waste practice comply with current local rules ❑ Daily close and weekly repair/inspection rhythm completed
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AUTHORITATIVE REFERENCES

National Park Service: [Leave No Trace Seven Principles](#)

USDA Forest Service: [Fire Safety: Know Before You Go](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Make Water Safe During an Emergency](#)

USE WITH JUDGMENT

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FIELD CARD

PRACTICE BEFORE DEPENDENCE

- 1 Short, clear paths connect shelter, fire, clean water, wood, and work areas
- 2 Tools assigned, counted, dry, sharp, and stored with edges protected
- 3 Raw food, clean water, sleep, sanitation, waste, and wildlife attractants separated

