# Bushcraft

# Bushcraft Survival Challenge Book

*Essential Skills, Team Challenges and Outdoor Survival for Youtit*



Firecraft | Shelter Building | Navigation | Foraging | Tracking & Signs | Team Challenges

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SKILLS • CHALLENGES • TEAMWORK • OUTDOOR SURVIVAL

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## Introduction to the Survival Challenge

The Bushcraft Survival Challenge is a fun and practical way for Scouts to learn, practise and test essential outdoor skills. It's not about surviving in a real emergency, but about building confidence, working as a team and seeing how well you can use bushcraft skills in a controlled and safe way.



## What Is the Challenge?

A series of practical outdoor activities and tasks that use key bushcraft and survival skills.

## What Will You Learn?

- ☑ How to stay safe and prepared outdoors.
- ☑ Key survival and bushcraft skills.
- ☑ Problem-solving and decision making.
- ☑ Working together as a team.
- ☑ Respect for the natural environment.

## The Challenges

You will take part in a range of hands-on challenges, such as:

- Fire Lighting
- Shelter Building
- Water Safety
- Navigation
- Foraging
- Tracking
- Knots & Lashings
- Woodland Skills

## How It Works

1. **Learn the skill** – or have a quick refresher.
2. **Take on the challenge** – on your own or as a team.
3. **Be safe** – follow the guidance and listen to your leader.
4. **Score points** – complete tasks to earn challenge points.
5. **Build your skills** – and aim for the Ultimate Bushcraft Challenge!

## Remember

- ☑ This is a learning challenge, not a real survival situation.
- ☑ Always follow safety rules and your leader's instructions.
- ☑ Look after the environment and Leave No Trace.
- ☑ Support and encourage your team.

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## The Survival Mindset

Survival is not just about kit or knowing skills – it's about having the right **attitude**. A positive mindset helps you stay calm, think clearly, solve problems and make good decisions in a challenging situation.



## Key Survival Attitudes

**Stay Calm**
Keep a clear head and don't panic.

**Be Positive**
Keep going, be motivated and look for solutions.

**Be Practical**
Use what you have, keep it simple and be resourceful.

**Work Together**
Support your team, share skills and listen to ideas.

**Respect Nature**
Look after the environment and Leave No Trace.

**Be Prepared**
Learn skills, practise them and plan ahead.

## The SURVIVAL Acronym

| | |
|---|---|
| S | **Stay calm** – keep a clear head. |
| U | **Understand** – assess the situation. |
| R | **Resourceful** – use what you have. |
| V | **Venture** – try sensible solutions. |
| I | **Improvise** – adapt and be creative. |
| V | **Value** – your team and their skills. |
| A | **Aware** – of risks, weather and your surroundings. |
| L | **Learn** – from the experience. |

## Challenges for Your Mindset



**Problem-Solving**
Find a safe route, build a shelter or make a tool with natural materials.



**Adaptability**
When things don't go to plan, think of another way.



**Resilience**
Keep going, learn from mistakes and try again.

## Top Tips

- ☑ Take time to think before you act.
- ☑ Focus on what you can control.
- ☑ Use your training and knowledge.
- ☑ Keep yourself and your team safe.
- ☑ Stay positive, even when it's challenging.



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## The Survival Priorities

In a survival situation, focus on the things you need to stay safe, healthy and alive. Use the survival priorities in the right order to guide your decisions, use your time and energy wisely.

## The Survival Priority Order

1



### WATER

You can only survive a few days without water. Find a safe source and make it safe to drink.

2



### SHELTER

Keep yourself dry, warm and protected from wind, rain and the sun.

3



### FIRE

Gives heat, helps you cook food, boil water, dry clothing and boosts morale.

4



### FOOD

Keep your energy up. Use safe foraging, simple cooking and natural food sources.

5



### NAVIGATION

Know where you are, find a safe route and get help if needed.

6 +




### FIRST AID

Look after yourself and your team. Treat minor injuries and know when to get help.

## Remember

- ☑ Stay calm and think clearly.
- ☑ Work through the priorities in order.
- ☑ Use what you have around you.
- ☑ Keep yourself and your team safe.
- ☑ Look after the environment (Leave No Trace).

## The Survival Triangle




Water, shelter and food are the three key things that work together to keep you alive and well.

## Key Takeaways

- ☑ Know the survival priority order: Water, Shelter, Fire, Food, Navigation, First Aid.
- ☑ Deal with the most urgent need first.
- ☑ Use simple, practical and safe methods.
- ☑ Keep checking and adjusting as the situation changes.

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## Essential Survival Equipment

Having the right basic equipment can make outdoor challenges safer, easier and more enjoyable. Choose simple, reliable kit that is strong, lightweight and suited to bushcraft use.



## Key Pieces of Survival Kit



### Knife

A sturdy, safe knife for woodwork, food and general tasks.



### Fire Lighting

A fire steel, matches or lighter to help you make a fire safely.



### Shelter

A tarp, bivi bag or emergency shelter to keep you dry and warm.



### Cordage

Strong cord such as paracord or natural cordage for shelters, repairs and lashings.



### Water Bottle

A durable bottle or water carrier to collect, carry and store water.



### Cook Pot

A small, tough pot for boiling water and simple outdoor cooking.



### First Aid Kit

A basic kit for minor cuts, grazes and sprains.



### Navigation

A compass and map to help you find your way and stay on track.



### Torch / Headtorch

A reliable light source for low light, evenings and emergency use.



### Emergency Items

A few extras such as a whistle, emergency blanket and a small repair kit.

## Pack It Smart



- Keep it simple and lightweight.
- Use a rucksack that fits well.
- Pack waterproof items in dry bags.
- Keep often-used kit easy to reach (e.g. map, compass, water, first aid).

## Kit Checklist

- ☐ **Knife** (age-appropriate and supervised)
- ☐ **Fire lighting** (fire steel, matches or lighter)
- ☐ **Shelter** (tarp or bivi)
- ☐ **Cordage** (paracord or natural cord)
- ☐ **Water bottle** (or water carrier)
- ☐ **Cook pot** (with lid)
- ☐ **First aid kit** (basic)
- ☐ **Navigation** (compass and map)
- ☐ **Torch / headtorch** (with spare batteries)
- ☐ **Emergency items** (whistle, blanket, repair kit)

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## Building an Emergency Shelter

A shelter gives you protection from wind, rain and cold, helps keep you dry, retains body heat and provides a safe place to rest. In a survival situation, a simple, well-built shelter can make a big difference to your safety and comfort.

## Key Shelter Principles

- ☑ Choose a safe, flat area.
- ☑ Use natural materials where possible.
- ☑ Build for the weather (wind, rain, cold).
- ☑ Keep it simple, strong and quick to build.
- ☑ Make it large enough to stay dry and warm.

## Suitable Shelter Types



**Lean-to**

A quick and easy shelter using a ridge pole and a sloping cover.



**A-Frame**

A strong, simple shelter that keeps you dry and out of the wind.



**Debris Shelter**

A natural shelter using sticks and leaf litter for insulation and warmth.

## Step-by-Step – Build a Lean-to Shelter




**Set the Ridge Pole**

Find two strong supports (e.g. trees) and tie a ridge pole between them.




**Add the Framework**

Lean smaller poles at an angle against the ridge pole to form a sloping frame.




**Add the Cover**

Cover the frame with branches, foliage, a tarp or both to keep out wind and rain.




**Finish and Improve**

Add a layer of dry leaves, bracken or a groundsheet inside for insulation and comfort.

## Site Safety

**Avoid dead trees and falling branches.**

**Keep a safe distance from any fire.**

**Stay clear of riverbanks and areas that may flood.**

## Top Tips

- ☑ Use natural materials such as branches, leaves and bracken.
- ☑ A tarp can make a quick, weatherproof shelter.
- ☑ Add a natural insulating layer on the ground.
- ☑ Build with your team and share the tasks.
- ☑ Leave no trace – take it down and return the area to how you found it.

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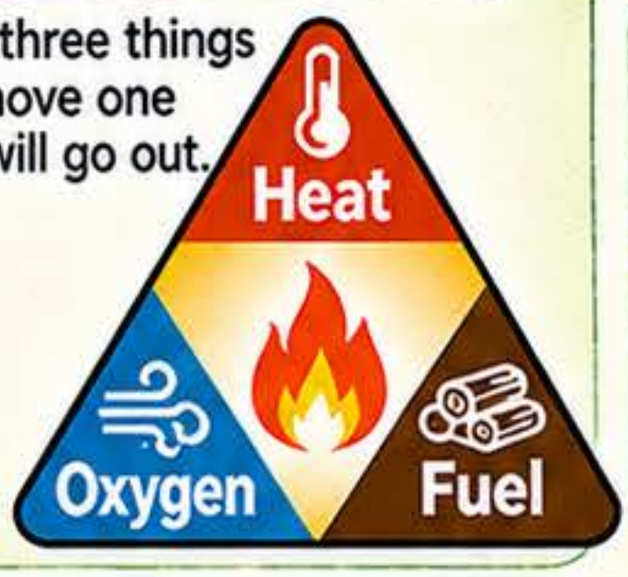
## Fire Lighting Challenge

Fire is a key survival skill. In this challenge, you will collect natural materials, prepare a fire lay and light a fire using a safe and appropriate method, such as a fire steel, matches or a traditional friction method (e.g. bow drill).



## The Fire Triangle

A fire needs three things to burn. Remove one and the fire will go out.




## Types of Tinder

Tinder is dry, easily ignited material that catches a spark and burns quickly.



**Birch Bark**



**Dry Grass**



**Plant Down** (e.g. clematis)



**Wood Shavings**



**Tree Resin** (e.g. pine)

## Step-by-Step – Lighting a Fire

1



**Gather Materials**

Collect dry tinder, kindling (thin sticks) and fuel (larger sticks).

2



**Build a Fire Lay**

Use a teepee or log cabin lay with space for your tinder in the centre.

3



**Create a Spark**

Use a fire steel, match or other safe method to ignite the tinder.

4



**Get It Going**

Let the tinder catch, then add small kindling gradually to build the fire.

5



**Build and Maintain**

Once established, add larger fuel to keep a steady, controlled fire.

## Your Challenge

**In a team or individually:**

- ☑ Collect suitable natural tinder, kindling and fuel.
- ☑ Build a safe and efficient fire lay.
- ☑ Light a fire using a chosen method.
- ☑ Keep the fire burning for at least 10 minutes.

## Safety Rules

- ☑ Only light fires in a designated, safe area.
- ☑ Check for local fire restrictions (e.g. dry weather).
- ☑ Keep fires small and controlled.
- ☑ Always have water or a fire bucket nearby.
- ☑ Never leave a fire unattended.
- ☑ Ensure the fire is completely out before leaving (cold to the touch).

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## Natural Tinder Identification

Tinder is dry, fine, and flammable natural material that catches a spark easily and starts to burn. Learning to identify good natural tinder will help you light a fire in the outdoors using simple, often free materials found in the woodland.



## Examples of Natural Tinder



### Birch Bark

Thin, papery layers that burn easily, even when damp.



### Seed Heads
(e.g. clematis)

Dry, fluffy material that takes a spark well.



### Dry Grass

Fine, dry grass ignites quickly and is common in woodlands.



### Wood Shavings

Thin curls from dry, dead wood or feather sticks burn very easily.



### Bark Fibres
(e.g. willow, lime)

Fibrous inner bark that can be teased into a soft, fluffy tinder.



### Lichen

Dry, brittle lichen can catch a spark and burn steadily.



### Dry Leaves

Crisp, dry leaves can be crumbled to make a fine tinder.



### Bracken

The dry, brown fronds of bracken are light, fluffy and burn well.



### Catkins
(e.g. willow, poplar)

Dry, fluffy catkins can catch a spark and ignite quickly.



### Resinous Wood
(e.g. pine)

The dry, resin-rich fibres from pine and other conifers burn hot and steady.

## How to Find Good Tinder



- Look for dry, airy and fine materials.
- Check under trees, logs and fallen branches.
- Choose materials that feel dry and light.
- Collect a variety and keep it in a dry bag.

## Your Challenge

- Find and collect at least 5 different types of natural tinder.
- Identify each one and explain why it would make good tinder.
- Use your collected tinder to help light a fire (e.g. with a fire steel) as part of your survival challenge.

## Top Tips

- The drier and finer the material, the better it will burn.
- Mix different types of tinder for a more reliable fire.
- Keep collected tinder in a dry, waterproof container.
- Always gather materials responsibly and Leave No Trace.



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## Water Collection and Purification

Clean, safe water is vital for survival. In the outdoors you can collect water from natural sources, but it should always be treated (purified) before drinking to remove harmful germs, dirt and other contaminants.



## Ways to Collect Water



### From a Stream

Look for clear, flowing water (ideally upstream from people and animals).



### Rainwater

Collect rainwater using a tarp, poncho or clean container. Rainwater is usually one of the safest natural sources.



### Dew Collection

In the morning, wipe dew from grass or leaves using a clean cloth and then squeeze it into a container.



### Transpiration (Leaf Bag)

Tie a clear plastic bag around a leafy branch in sunny weather. The plant releases moisture (water vapour) which collects as water in the bag.

## Purifying Water

**Always purify water from natural sources before drinking, cooking or cleaning.**



### 1 Boiling

The most reliable method. Bring water to a rolling boil for at least 1 minute (3 minutes at high altitude).



### 2 Purification Tablets

Use water purification tablets as instructed on the packet. They kill harmful germs and bacteria.



### 3 Filtration (Pre-Filter)

Remove dirt and debris using a simple filter. This makes the water clearer and more effective to boil or treat with tablets.

## Simple Water Filter



**Build a basic filter using natural materials:**

- **Pebbles / Gravel** (blocks larger debris)
- **Sand** (traps smaller particles)
- **Charcoal** (helps remove odours and impurities)
- **Cloth or Filter Material** (keeps the layers in place)

## Your Challenge

- ☑ Collect water from a natural source (e.g. stream, rain or dew).
- ☑ Build a simple water filter.
- ☑ Purify the water using either boiling or purification tablets.
- ☑ Explain to your team why it is important to treat water before drinking.

## Water Safety Tips

- ☑ Always assume natural water is unsafe to drink untreated.
- ☑ Use a combination of filtration and boiling or tablets.
- ☑ Avoid water that looks cloudy, has a strong smell or is near animals, camps or pollution.
- ☑ Use clean containers and keep them covered.

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## Finding Your Way: Navigation Challenge

Being able to find your way in the outdoors is an important survival skill. In this challenge, you will use simple navigation methods, natural clues and a map and compass to stay on track and reach a given destination.

## Navigation Essentials



**Compass**
Shows direction (North, South, East and West).



**Map**
A drawing of the area, showing features, paths and contour lines.



**Whistle**
A simple way to signal for help if needed.



**Notebook**
Record clues, bearings and the route as you go.

## Using a Compass




## Orienteering Basics

1. **Set the Map**
   Lay the map flat and orient it to North.
2. **Take a Bearing**
   Use the compass to find the direction to your target.
3. **Follow the Route**
   Keep the compass arrow pointing the right way and check your progress.
4. **Check and Adjust**
   Use landmarks and map features to confirm you are on course.



## Natural Navigation Clues



**Moss**
Often grows more on the shady (north) side of trees.



**The Sun**
Rises in the east and sets in the west, giving a general sense of direction.



**Tree Rings**
Rings can be wider on the south side (where there is more light).



**Lichen**
Often more common on the north side of trees.



**Ant Hills**
Often built on the sunny (south) side of trees or stumps.



**Wind Shape**
Trees can grow leaning in the direction of strong, prevailing winds.

## Your Navigation Challenge

**In a team or individually:**

- ☑ Use a map and compass to follow a short route (or orienteering course).
- ☑ Find at least three control points (e.g. marked with a flag or symbol).
- ☑ Use at least one natural navigation clue (e.g. moss, sun or tree growth).
- ☑ Record your route and the time taken.

## Top Tips



- ☑ Keep your map dry and protected.
- ☑ Use simple, clear bearings.
- ☑ Look for obvious landmarks (e.g. paths, streams, trees).
- ☑ Check your position regularly.
- ☑ Work as a team and communicate clearly.
- ☑ If you become lost, stop, stay calm and retrace your steps.

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## Woodland Identification Challenge

Being able to identify common trees in the UK is a useful bushcraft and survival skill. Trees provide shelter, fuel, materials and food, and help you understand and look after the woodland environment.



## Common British Trees



**Oak**
Lobed leaf, acorns in autumn.



**Birch**
Small, triangular leaf with serrated edge.



**Hazel**
Round, toothed leaf, often heart-shaped at the base.



**Sycamore**
Large, palmate (hand-shaped) leaf with 5 broad lobes.



**Ash**
Compound leaf with 5–9 leaflets.



**Beech**
Smooth, oval leaf with a slightly wavy edge.



**Pine**
Long, slender needles in bunches (evergreen).



**Elder**
Compound leaf with 5–7 leaflets, red/purple berries in late summer.

## Leaf Shape Guide



**Oval** (e.g. Beech)



**Toothed** (e.g. Hazel)



**Lobed** (e.g. Oak)



**Palmate** (e.g. Sycamore)



**Compound** (e.g. Ash, Elder)



**Needle** (e.g. Pine)

## Other Identification Clues



**Bark**
Colour, texture and pattern can help identify a tree.



**Buds**
The shape, size and colour of buds are often distinctive.



**Flowers**
Many trees have catkins or small flowers in spring.



**Fruits and Seeds**
Look for acorns, cones, berries or winged seeds ("helicopters").

## Your Challenge

**In a team or individually:**

- ☑ Find and identify at least five different trees in the local area.
- ☑ Use leaf shape, bark, buds or fruits to help with your identification.
- ☑ Record your findings on a tree ID sheet (or in a notebook).
- ☑ Choose one tree and explain how it could be useful in a survival situation (e.g. shelter, firewood, cordage or food).

## Top Tips

- ☑ Look at the leaf shape, edge and size.
- ☑ Check the bark and any buds or fruits.
- ☑ Compare with a tree ID guide or field card.
- ☑ Take clear notes or draw the leaf shape.
- ☑ Be respectful – don't damage or remove parts of the tree.

## Why It Matters

- ☑ Helps you find useful natural resources.
- ☑ Builds your bushcraft and outdoor skills.
- ☑ Increases awareness of woodland wildlife.
- ☑ Encourages care and conservation of our trees and local environments.

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## Natural Cordage Challenge

Cordage is a strong, flexible string or rope made from natural materials. In the wild you can make cordage from plant fibres, which can be used for shelters, lashings, traps, repairs and many other bushcraft tasks.



## Good Plants for Cordage



**Nettle**

Strong, long fibres when processed (wear gloves).



**Willow**

Tough, flexible bark fibres, ideal for cordage.



**Lime (Linden)**

Long, tough fibres from the inner bark.



**Bracken**

Fibrous stems that can be twisted into cord.



**Hemp (Dogbane)**

Strong, versatile fibres (where legal).

## Preparing the Fibres



**1. Collect**

Choose long, straight stems or bark strips.



**2. Separate**

Remove the outer layer and keep the tough fibres.



**3. Dry**

Let the fibres dry in a shaded, airy place until slightly stiff.

## Making Simple Natural Cordage – The Reverse Wrap



**1 Prepare**

Take two bunches of fibres of equal thickness.



**2 Twist**

Twist each bundle in the same direction (e.g. clockwise) until tight.



**3 Cross**

Cross the two twisted strands over each other in the opposite direction.



**4 Continue**

Keep twisting each strand and wrapping them around each other (a reverse wrap).



**5 Finished Cordage**

Continue along the length until you have a strong, even cord or rope.

## Your Challenge

**In a team or individually:**

- ☑ Find a suitable natural material (e.g. nettle, willow or bracken).
- ☑ Prepare and make at least 1 metre of natural cordage.
- ☑ Test the strength of your cordage (e.g. by tying a simple lashing).
- ☑ Record what material you used and how well it worked.

## Top Tips



- ☑ Use fresh, flexible plant material.
- ☑ Remove the soft, inner pith and keep the strong outer fibres.
- ☑ Make the strands as even as possible.
- ☑ Keep tension on the fibres as you twist.
- ☑ Practise to make longer, stronger cordage.
- ☑ Be sustainable – only take what you need and avoid damaging the plant.



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## Knots and Lashings Challenge

Knots and lashings are essential bushcraft skills. They help you secure equipment, build shelters, create camp furniture and make many useful structures in the outdoors.



## Useful Bushcraft Knots



### Sheet Bend

Joins two ropes together, even if they are different thicknesses.



### Bowline

Makes a strong, reliable loop that won't slip.



### Clove Hitch

Fast and adjustable knot, useful for securing a rope to a pole or tree.



### Figure of Eight

A stopper knot that helps prevent a rope from running out through a fitting.

## Essential Lashings for Campcraft



### Square Lashing

Joins two poles at right angles, useful for frames and shelters.



### Diagonal Lashing

Joins two poles at an angle (e.g. a tripod), giving a strong and stable joint.



### Tripod Lashing

Binds three poles together to make a tripod, ideal for cooking and shelter building.

## Common Uses

- ☑ Build a simple shelter frame.
- ☑ Make a cooking tripod.
- ☑ Create camp furniture (e.g. a bench or table).
- ☑ Secure a tarp or groundsheet.
- ☑ Practise joining poles for pioneering projects.



## Your Challenge

**In a team or individually:**

- ☑ Practise and tie the four knots shown above.
- ☑ Create a square lashing and a tripod lashing.
- ☑ Use your knots and lashings to build a small structure (e.g. a mini shelter, washing line or pot hanger).
- ☑ Check that your lashings are neat, secure and strong.

## Top Tips

- ☑ Use natural or synthetic cordage (e.g. paracord or sisal).
- ☑ Keep your rope neat and untangled.
- ☑ Pull the knots tight and check they are secure.
- ☑ Practise each knot slowly, then build up speed.
- ☑ Use the right lashing for the job.
- ☑ Always check the strength and safety of your structure before use.



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## Campcraft and Improvised Equipment

Good campcraft means being organised, working safely and using what is available in the outdoors. With some basic skills and natural materials you can make useful, lightweight equipment for camp.



## Campcraft Basics

- ☑ Choose a safe and suitable campsite.
- ☑ Keep your area tidy and organised.
- ☑ Use natural materials responsibly.
- ☑ Build low-impact, removable structures.
- ☑ Leave the site as you found it (Leave No Trace).

## Useful Campcraft Projects



**Cooking Tripod**
A simple, strong frame for hanging a cooking pot over a fire.



**Pot Hanger**
A lightweight option for cooking over a low fire.



**Camp Table**
A useful surface for cooking, preparing food and equipment.



**Drying Rack**
A simple rack for drying clothing, footwear or wet equipment.

## Shelter Ideas



**Lean-To**
Quick and simple shelter using a ridge pole and covering.



**A-Frame**
A strong, versatile shelter that sheds rain and gives good protection.



**Debris Shelter**
A natural shelter using branches and leaf litter for insulation.

## Improvised Equipment



**Camp Utensils**
Make simple spoons, forks or stirrers from natural wood.



**Bark Container**
A lightweight container for carrying small items or food (e.g. berries).



**Water Carrier**
A temporary container for collecting or carrying water (short term use only).

## Your Challenge

**In a team or individually:**

- ☑ Choose and build one item from above (e.g. tripod, table, rack or shelter).
- ☑ Use natural materials and basic lashings (not damaging trees).
- ☑ Show that it is safe, stable and fit for purpose.
- ☑ Explain how it could be useful at camp.

## Top Tips

- ☑ Plan your build before you start.
- ☑ Use dead and fallen wood where possible.
- ☑ Keep structures strong, stable and safe.
- ☑ Use simple, reliable lashings (e.g. square or tripod).
- ☑ Think about how to pack away and leave no trace.

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## Food and Foraging Challenge

Knowing what natural foods are safe to eat can be a useful bushcraft skill. The UK countryside provides a range of wild foods throughout the year, but it's important to identify them correctly, forage responsibly and stay safe.



## Common Edible Wild Foods (UK)



**Blackberry**
Juicy berries in late summer and autumn.



**Bilberry**
Small, dark berries on low bushes (summer).



**Hazelnut**
Nuts from hazel trees (autumn).



**Elderflower**
Fragrant creamy flowers (late spring/ early summer).



**Elderberry**
Dark berries (autumn, cook before eating).



**Wild Garlic**
Garlic-scented leaves in damp woodland (spring).



**Nettle**
Young leaves can be cooked (e.g. soup, tea or greens).



**Dandelion**
Leaves, flowers and roots are edible and versatile.

## Foraging Safety Rules



- ☑ Be 100% sure of the identification – when in doubt, leave it out.
- ☑ Only pick a small amount and leave plenty for wildlife.
- ☑ Avoid foraging near roads, polluted areas or places with chemicals.
- ☑ Follow the Countryside Code and respect the environment.
- ☑ Check for local rules or site permissions before foraging.

## Plants to Avoid



**Lords-and-Ladies (Arum)**
Toxic berries and leaves.



**Lily of the Valley**
All parts are poisonous.



**Foxglove**
Toxic if eaten – do not forage.

## Simple Wild Camp Recipes



**Wild Nettle Soup**
A simple, nutritious soup made from young nettle leaves, onion and stock.



**Campfire Flatbread**
A quick and easy bread cooked on a pan or hot stone using flour, water and a pinch of salt.

## Your Challenge

**In a team or individually:**

- ☑ Find and identify at least three edible wild foods (e.g. leaves, flowers, berries or nuts).
- ☑ Prepare and cook a simple bushcraft snack (e.g. nettle soup or campfire flatbread).
- ☑ Record what you found, how you used it and what you learned.



## Top Tips

- ☑ Take a reliable field guide with you.
- ☑ Forage with an experienced adult or leader.
- ☑ Wash and cook wild plants where needed.
- ☑ Try seasonal foods to learn what's available throughout the year.

## Remember

- ☑ Foraging can be a great way to learn about nature, food and the environment.
- ☑ Be responsible, respect the habitat and take only what you need.

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# Bushcraft Survival Challenge Book

## Tracking and Wildlife Signs

Tracking is the skill of finding and following signs that animals leave behind. By looking for footprints, droppings, feeding signs and other clues, you can learn which animals live in the area, what they are doing and how they use the woodland.



## Common UK Animal Tracks



**Deer**
**(Roe / Fallow)**
Two pointed hoof prints.



**Fox**
Four toes with claw marks, triangular pad.



**Badger**
Five toes with long claw marks, broad print.



**Rabbit**
Hind print larger and longer than the front print.



**Squirrel**
Small front paws (4 toes) and larger hind paws (5 toes).



**Hedgehog**
Small, rounded prints with five toes and claws.



**Otter**
Five toes, often with webbing marks, found near water.



**Bird**
Three forward toes (sometimes a small back toe), varies by species.

## Common UK Wildlife



**Roe Deer**
A common woodland deer, look for tracks, droppings and browsed shoots.



**Fox**
Widely found across the UK, look for paw prints, scat and feeding signs.



**Badger**
Nocturnal and shy, look for paw prints, setts (burrows) and droppings.



**Hare**
Larger than a rabbit, with long ears and distinctive tracks, often seen in open areas.

## Other Wildlife Signs



**Droppings (Scat)**
The size, shape and contents can tell you which animal has been there.



**Feeding Signs**
Chewed nuts, browsed leaves or stripped bark show what animals have been eating.



**Runs and Trails**
Clear paths through grass or undergrowth are often used regularly by wildlife.



**Diggings**
Holes and disturbed soil can be a sign of foraging for food (e.g. badger, fox or boar).



**Claw and Rub Marks**
Scratches on tree bark or rubbing marks can show territory, feeding or the presence of larger animals.

## Your Challenge

**In a team or individually:**

- ☑ Find and record at least three different wildlife signs (e.g. tracks, droppings, feeding signs).
- ☑ Try to identify which animal made them.
- ☑ Make a simple sketch or photo record of what you find.
- ☑ Explain how these signs help you understand the local wildlife.

## Top Tips

- ☑ Look carefully on soft ground, along trails and near water.
- ☑ Check under trees, around fallen logs and in quiet areas.
- ☑ Use a field guide or ID app to help with identification.
- ☑ Be patient, move quietly and look for a range of clues.
- ☑ Treat wildlife with respect – do not disturb setts, nests or resting animals.

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## Emergency Signalling

If you are lost, injured or need help, you can use simple, reliable methods to attract attention and let others know where you are. Plan ahead, keep calm and use what is available in the outdoors.



## Common Signalling Methods



### Smoke Signals

Create a smoky fire using damp leaves or green vegetation. Three bursts is a common distress signal.



### Whistle

A whistle is loud and carries a long distance. Use three short blasts (repeat) as an international distress signal.



### Signal Mirror

Reflect sunlight towards aircraft, boats or people. Use short, regular flashes to get noticed.




### Ground Signals

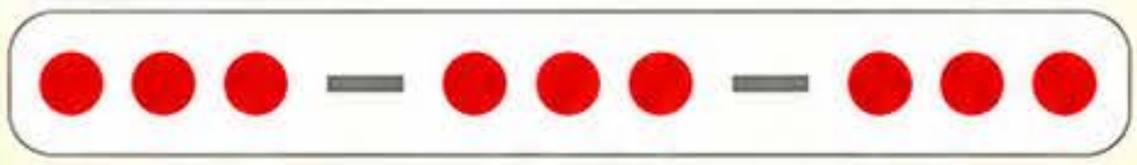
Make large, clear signals on open ground (e.g. SOS) using stones, logs or bright materials. Signals need to be big enough to be seen from the air.



### Signal Flags

Use a bright cloth, flag or tarp in an open area. Move it slowly and regularly to attract attention.

## International Distress Signal



**Three short signals, repeated.**

- ☑ Works with a whistle (three blasts).
- ☑ Can be used with a torch at night (three flashes).
- ☑ Can also be done with smoke (three bursts).

## Other Useful Signals



### Light Signals

Use a torch or headtorch. Three short flashes repeated at regular intervals.



### Fire at Night

A bright, well-built fire can be seen from a long distance, especially in the dark.



### Bright Markers

Use a tarp, bivvy bag or clothing in a bright colour (e.g. orange) on open ground to stand out.

## Your Challenge

**In a team or individually:**

- ☑ Try three different signalling methods (e.g. whistle, smoke and ground signal).
- ☑ Make a clear ground signal (e.g. SOS).
- ☑ Practise sending a simple signal (e.g. three whistle blasts).
- ☑ Discuss where and when you would use each method.

## Top Tips

- ☑ Keep calm and think safely.
- ☑ Use high ground and open spaces if possible.
- ☑ Make your signal big, clear and simple.
- ☑ Use bright, natural materials (e.g. stones, logs, cloth).
- ☑ Be prepared – carry a whistle, torch and a bright cloth in your kit.



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## First Aid and Emergency Situations

When enjoying the outdoors it's important to be prepared for minor injuries and unexpected situations. Knowing some basic first aid, how to stay calm and what to do in an emergency can help keep you and your team safe.




## The DRABC Check

- **D** **Danger** – Check the area is safe for you, the casualty and others.
- **R** **Response** – Check if the person is awake and responding.
- **A** **Airway** – Make sure the airway is clear and open.
- **B** **Breathing** – Look, listen and feel for normal breathing (up to 10 seconds).
- **C** **Circulation** – Check for serious bleeding and control it.

## Common Outdoor Injuries



### Cuts and Grazes

Clean with clean water, cover with a dressing.



### Insect Stings and Bites

Remove the sting (if present), clean, cool the area and watch for a reaction.



### Blisters

Keep the area clean and dry, cover with a blister dressing to reduce rubbing.



### Sprains and Strains

Rest, apply a cold pack, use a support and keep the injury elevated.

## Basic First Aid Kit




- ☑ Plasters (assorted sizes)
- ☑ Sterile dressings and pads
- ☑ Bandage (crepe or elastic)
- ☑ Antiseptic wipes
- ☑ Medical tape
- ☑ Scissors (blunt tipped)
- ☑ Gloves (disposable)
- ☑ Triangular bandage
- ☑ Emergency contact details

## Dealing with Common Situations



### Feeling Cold (Hypothermia)

Get out of wind and rain, add dry layers and a heat source (e.g. blanket or survival shelter).



### Feeling Hot (Heat Exhaustion)

Rest in the shade, cool down, drink water and loosen clothing.



### Severe Weather

Be aware of changing weather, find safe shelter, avoid high ground and stay with your team.

## Your Challenge

**In a team or individually:**

- ☑ Build a simple first aid kit list for a day outdoors.
- ☑ Practise the DRABC check with a partner.
- ☑ Identify how to treat a small cut, blister and an insect sting.
- ☑ Discuss what to do in a real emergency (e.g. lost, injured or severe weather).

## Top Tips

- ☑ Stay calm and think clearly.
- ☑ Keep a first aid kit with you on outdoor activities.
- ☑ Learn basic first aid and practise regularly.
- ☑ Know how to get help (e.g. phone, location, grid reference).
- ☑ Stay with your team and a responsible adult.
- ☑ Tell a leader if you feel unwell, are injured or need help.

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# Bushcraft Survival Challenge Book

## Team Survival Challenge

Put your bushcraft skills to the test in a team challenge. Work together to plan, build and complete a small survival camp, using natural materials and the skills you have learned throughout this book.



## The Challenge Tasks

**Work as a team to complete a range of bushcraft tasks, including:**

- ☑ Choose a safe campsite location.
- ☑ Build a shelter (e.g. lean-to, A-frame or debris shelter).
- ☑ Light and manage a small campfire safely.
- ☑ Prepare a simple wild camp meal or snack.
- ☑ Show your knowledge of navigation, nature and Leave No Trace.

## Suggested Team Tasks



**Build a Shelter**
Using natural materials and basic lashings.



**Light a Fire**
Use safe fire lighting skills and a suitable fire lay.



**Cook a Meal**
Prepare a simple camp meal or hot drink on a campfire.



**Navigation**
Find a location or follow a short route using a map and compass (or natural signs).



**Woodland ID**
Identify at least three trees or plants in the area.



**Knot Skill**
Use a useful knot or lashing (e.g. square lashing) in your build.



**Wildlife Signs**
Find and record a wildlife sign (e.g. track, feather, nest or feeding sign).



**Leave No Trace**
Make sure your camp is tidy, safe and returned to its natural state.

## Planning and Teamwork




- ☑ Plan as a team before you start.
- ☑ Share jobs and work together.
- ☑ Use good communication.
- ☑ Be flexible and solve problems together.

## Your Challenge

**In a team:**

- ☑ Complete at least four of the tasks from above.
- ☑ Work safely and look after each other.
- ☑ Show good teamwork and problem solving.
- ☑ Be ready to explain what you did, what worked well and what you would do differently next time.

## Top Tips for Success

- ☑ Keep it safe, simple and achievable.
- ☑ Use natural materials where possible.
- ☑ Look after the environment (Leave No Trace).
- ☑ Make sure everyone in the team is involved.
- ☑ Be prepared for changing weather.
- ☑ Have fun, learn from the experience and build your skills.

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# Bushcraft Survival Challenge Book

## The Ultimate Bushcraft Challenge

Put everything you've learned in this book to the test! Work as a team to plan, build and run a small bushcraft camp, show your skills, solve challenges and enjoy a safe, practical outdoor experience.



## The Challenge Brief

In a small team, set up a simple bushcraft camp and complete a range of practical tasks using your outdoor skills, teamwork and resourcefulness.

## Suggested Challenge Plan

1. **Plan** – Choose tasks, share roles and check safety.
2. **Set Up** – Build your shelter and camp area.
3. **Skills** – Complete your chosen bushcraft tasks (e.g. fire, cooking, navigation).
4. **Cook** – Prepare and enjoy a simple camp meal.
5. **Review** – Talk as a team about what went well, what was challenging and what you learned.

## Challenge Tasks (Choose a Minimum of 6)



**Light a Fire**
Use safe methods to light and maintain a camp fire.



**Build a Shelter**
Create a sturdy, weatherproof shelter using natural or simple materials.



**Cook a Meal**
Prepare a simple, hot meal or snack on a campfire.



**Knot and Lash**
Use at least two useful knots or lashings.



**Navigate**
Follow a short route, map or natural signs to a given point.



**Woodland ID**
Identify at least three trees or plants in the area.



**Wildlife Signs**
Find and record a wildlife sign (e.g. track, print, feather or feeding sign).



**Foraging**
Find and identify a safe, edible wild food (e.g. berries, leaves or nuts).



**Leave No Trace**
Pack away, leave the area as you found it and show care for the environment.

## Teamwork and Safety




- Work together and share responsibility.
- Follow safety rules at all times.
- Use and care for equipment properly.
- Look after each other and the environment.

## Your Challenge

**As a team:**

- Plan and complete at least six challenge tasks.
- Show good teamwork and communication.
- Be safe, responsible and respectful outdoors.
- Record your challenge (notes, photos or a simple log).
- Present what you achieved and what you learned to your group or leader.

## Top Tips for Success

- Keep it simple and well planned.
- Use natural materials where possible.
- Check the weather and be prepared.
- Stay organised and keep your camp tidy.
- Be flexible and solve problems as a team.
- Most of all – have fun and enjoy the challenge!

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# Bushcraft Survival Challenge Book

## Survival Skills Scorecard

Use this scorecard to record your progress in the Bushcraft Survival Challenge. Work as a team or individually to complete the key skills and challenges from the book. Tick off each task as you achieve it and add your score.



### Core Bushcraft Skills

| | Completed ✓ | Points |
|---|---|---|
| Fire Lighting and Fire Safety | ☐ | 10 |
| Shelter Building | ☐ | 10 |
| Knots, Lashings and Cordage | ☐ | 10 |
| Tree and Plant Identification | ☐ | 10 |
| Tracking and Wildlife Signs | ☐ | 10 |
| Navigation and Route Finding | ☐ | 10 |
| Bushcraft Cooking | ☐ | 10 |
| Foraging (Safe and Identified) | ☐ | 10 |
| Basic First Aid and Emergencies | ☐ | 10 |
| Leave No Trace and Conservation | ☐ | 10 |

**Core Skills Total (Max 100)** ☐

### Challenge Tasks (Choose a Minimum of 3)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Light a fire using natural tinder | ☐ | 5 |
| Build a simple shelter (e.g. lean-to) | ☐ | 5 |
| Cook a simple camp meal | ☐ | 5 |
| Find and record three wildlife signs | ☐ | 5 |
| Identify three trees or wild plants | ☐ | 5 |
| Navigate a short route (e.g. 500 m) | ☐ | 5 |

**Challenge Tasks Total (Max 30)** ☐

### Teamwork and Attitude

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Good teamwork and communication | ☐ | 5 |
| Work safely and look after each other | ☐ | 5 |
| Show respect for the outdoors (Leave No Trace) | ☐ | 5 |
| Be prepared, positive and take part | ☐ | 5 |

**Teamwork Total (Max 20)** ☐

### Your Results

Name / Team: _____ Date: _____

**Total Score (Max 150)** ☐

- ☐ 120 – 150 **Bushcraft Champion** – Excellent skills!
- ☐ 90 – 119 **Well Done** – Great bushcraft knowledge!
- ☐ 60 – 89 **Good Effort** – Keep practising!
- ☐ Below 60 **Keep Going** – Build your skills and try again!

### Skills Achieved

Tick the badges or skills you have completed:



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**Bushcraft Survival Challenge Book**

# Scout Survival Certificate

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## BUSHCRAFT SURVIVAL CHALLENGE

### CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that

_____

has successfully completed the Bushcraft Survival Challenge, showing outdoor skills, teamwork, problem solving and a respect for the natural world.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Leader / Instructor

## Challenge Achievements

**Skills and challenges completed:**

- ☐ Fire Lighting and Fire Safety
- ☐ Shelter Building
- ☐ Knots, Lashings and Cordage
- ☐ Navigation and Route Finding
- ☐ Tracking and Wildlife Signs
- ☐ Bushcraft Cooking
- ☐ Foraging and Natural Foods
- ☐ First Aid and Emergencies
- ☐ Leave No Trace and Conservation
- ☐ Teamwork and Survival Challenge

## Well Done!

**You have shown:**

- ✓ Practical outdoor skills
- ✓ Teamwork and leadership
- ✓ A positive and safe approach
- ✓ Care and respect for the environment

**Keep building your bushcraft skills, exploring the outdoors and looking after our woodlands for the future.**

# Scouts Bushcraft

## Bushcraft Skills, Resources and Practical Guides for Scouts

The **Scouts Bushcraft** book series provides practical, easy-to-follow guides to help Scouts, Explorer Scouts, Scout Leaders and other youth groups learn outdoor skills, develop confidence, work as a team and build a greater understanding and respect for the natural world.

### In This Series

- Expert, practical guidance
- Step-by-step activities
- Useful tips and techniques
- Printable worksheets and resources
- Ideas for meetings, activity days and camps
- Supports safe, responsible and sustainable use of the outdoors



### Visit Scouts Bushcraft Online

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**www.scoutsbushcraft.org.uk**

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