

Section 3: Being A Hunter

Chapter 8: Outdoor Safety

In this chapter, the student should learn:

1. How to signal for help when lost or injured in the outdoors
2. At least three primary components that should be included in a survival kit
3. What item is required by law for each person in a boat
4. Why it is important for everyone to wear a lifejacket while boating
5. Two factors that increase the possibility for hypothermia and frostbite
6. Two factors that increase the possibility for heat exhaustion
7. The causes, prevention, symptoms, and field treatments of hypothermia, heat exhaustion, and frostbite
8. How to create a hunting plan

Long before the hunting season arrives, a hunter should start preparing himself or herself mentally and physically. This will help to provide a safe and enjoyable hunting experience. Important things to consider include:

- Physical conditioning
- The creation of a hunting plan
- Knowledge of first aid

Physical Conditioning

Physical conditioning is the strengthening of your heart, lungs, and muscles. Physical conditioning takes time to accomplish. Don't put it off until the last minute! You should develop an exercise program that takes into consideration your age, weight, and general health condition. You may want to consult with your doctor when designing your exercise program. Listed below are some general health concerns to consider:

1. Age
2. Weight
3. Heart condition
4. Allergies
5. Physical limitations
6. Medications

The type of hunting that you plan to do will also have an effect on your exercise program. You should consider the environmental conditions you will encounter when getting in shape for a hunting trip. Some of these include:

1. Anticipated weather
2. Altitude
3. Terrain

Topography, or the changes in elevation, such as hills and valleys, is important for a hunter to consider when planning an exercise program. Walking up and down hills requires much more energy than walking on flat ground. Also, you will place added demands on your body if you carry a backpack. If you will be hunting at higher elevations you will need to remember that the air will have less oxygen. This, too, will reduce your strength and endurance.



OUTDOOR SAFETY KEY TERMS

Physical conditioning
Topography
First Aid
CPR
Hypothermia
Frostbite
Heat Exhaustion
PFD

Creating a Hunting Plan

Some hunters don't consider their hunt until they step into the field. These hunters are missing out on a very important part of the hunt, the hunt plan.

There are many benefits in taking time to plan a hunting trip in advance. You will increase your chances of having an enjoyable and successful outing when you carefully plan each hunt. Planning in advance with your friends and hunting partners also builds excitement and increases everyone's knowledge. Most importantly, a hunting plan could save your life by helping you be prepared and by letting others know your location and time of return.

A hunting plan should address many different things. For example, the area where you will be hunting and the type of weather you may encounter will determine what type of clothing you need to take with you. Remember that weather conditions may change quickly. A wise hunter will be prepared for these sudden changes.

Obviously, a long and distant hunting trip will require much more planning than a one-day hunt close to home. For a single day's hunt, you may choose to take a snack with you.

For longer hunting trips, especially those that include setting up a campsite, you will need to plan much more carefully for food and shelter needs. This may not be a problem if you will be driving to your hunting area. If you will be backpacking, however, you will need to plan much more carefully. For these trips you will need to take into account the amount of weight you will be able to carry.

Make a list of all the hunting equipment you will need so that you will not forget any important items. Carefully check all your equipment to be sure it is in good condition. Make sure that you are familiar with the use of all your equipment.

Become familiar with the habits of the game you will be hunting, and be able to accurately identify the game. Study the hunting laws for the area where your hunt will occur. Know what licenses or permits are needed. You may also need to learn about the altitude and topography of the location where your hunt will take place.

Write out a detailed schedule for your hunt and leave a copy with someone who will not be going with you. This becomes very important when emergencies develop or if you fail to call or return on time.

Things to Consider in a Hunting Plan:

- Hunting licenses
- Proper clothing
- Expected weather conditions
- Food
- Water
- Shelter
- Necessary equipment
- Method of travel
- Educational preparation
- Hunting law familiarization
- Detailed schedule
- First-aid kit
- Survival kit
- Signaling devices
- Watch

Someone should know when you plan to return and your actual hunting location.





If you have done a good job of planning, it is likely that you will have a safe and enjoyable hunt. It then becomes important that you stick closely to your plan. There is much truth in the old saying, “**Plan your hunt and hunt your plan.**”

When you return home, you should review your plan to see what changes you should make for your next trip. This will help to make your next outing more enjoyable and successful than your last.



First Aid

Everyone, especially hunters, should take a class in first aid. First aid is the immediate and temporary care of the victim of an accident or sudden illness until a professional medical person arrives.

In order to give first aid, it is essential that you carry a first-aid kit. A good first-aid kit includes:

- ✓ Latex gloves
- ✓ Sterile gauze dressings
- ✓ Roller bandages
- ✓ Tape
- ✓ Triangular bandages
- ✓ Space blanket
- ✓ Rescue barrier for CPR
- ✓ Maintenance medications
- ✓ First-aid book



Review your hunting plan carefully and often. You should add information as you have new ideas and eliminate things that are unnecessary or excessive. As the time for your hunt approaches, you will need to finalize your hunt plan.

Hunters should also learn how to properly perform CPR. **CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation)** is a combination of chest compressions and rescue breathing. Severe injuries, such as a victim of a heart attack or a person whose injury causes breathing or heartbeat to stop, will need CPR.

An injury can occur while hunting even when we are careful. It is important to know what to do, and what not to do, in such medical emergencies. Improper care could worsen the victim's condition.

Anytime first aid or CPR is needed you should remember the three basic steps:

CHECK CALL & CARE

CHECK the area to be sure it is safe to attend the victim. If it is safe, **CHECK** the victim to find out what happened and determine their condition.

If possible, **CALL** for help.

After help has been contacted, you should then **CARE** for the victim, using the knowledge you learned in a first-aid / CPR class. A first-aid kit that you have with you will help greatly in providing care for the victim.

Understand that mild bleeding and fractures are not usually life threatening. However, a person who is not breathing or has no pulse is at great risk of dying. A victim who is unconscious should also be considered at risk of dying.

Extreme Conditions

Extreme weather conditions can also create dangerous health situations for hunters. Proper precautions can greatly reduce a hunter's risk of injury or even death.

Hypothermia is a condition where your body loses heat faster than it can produce heat. This may be the greatest threat to a hunter's safety. If your body temperature drops too much in your vital organs, especially your brain and heart, they will stop functioning.

Hunters may be at risk of hypothermia due to exposure to cold air or cold water. Wet clothing, wind, exhaustion, and cold water greatly increase the danger of developing hypothermia. It is important to remember that hypothermia can occur at any time of the year. Hypothermia has been called "The killer of the unprepared." Hypothermia is a common condition and the number one killer of outdoor recreationists. It is important to plan ahead before going into the field.

While hypothermia is a reduction of your overall body temperature, **frostbite** is the freezing of body tissue (skin). Frostbite most commonly affects your fingers, toes, ears, nose, and face. It is usually caused by direct exposure to cold or to high wind.

Frostbite may lead to the loss of skin and tissue, and may cause blisters. The resulting damage may be permanent. To avoid frostbite, keep skin surfaces covered in cold weather and take the same precautions as given for hypothermia.

Heat exhaustion is a condition when your body becomes overheated. Increased air temperature, poorly ventilated clothing, loss of body fluids, low physical fitness, or being overweight can cause heat exhaustion. If severe, death may occur from damage to vital organs.

You can help prevent heat exhaustion by avoiding too much activity on hot days. Also, be sure to wear loose clothing and wear a hat when in the sun. Drink plenty of water even when you are not thirsty.



HYPOTHERMIA

Prepare

1. Choose layered clothing that will keep you warm and dry
2. Check weather forecasts
3. Be alert for early signs of hypothermia

Symptoms

1. Feeling cold
2. Numbness
3. Uncontrolled shivering
4. Slow, slurred speech
5. Incoherent speech
6. Muscles stiffen
7. Loss of coordination
8. Loss of memory
9. Drowsiness
10. Faulty judgement
11. Diminished reasoning

Treatment

1. Move to warm, sheltered area, out of wind & cold
2. Build a fire for warmth
3. Replace wet clothing with dry clothing or get in a dry sleeping bag
4. Use warm packs
5. Share body heat
6. Do not let victim sleep
7. If conscious, give victim warm, nonalcoholic drinks
8. Seek medical attention

FROSTBITE

Symptoms

1. Cold, flushed skin
2. Skin turns white or grayish yellow
3. May be painful, but more often is numb

Treatment

1. Move to warm, sheltered area, out of wind & cold
2. Build a fire for warmth
3. Replace wet clothing with dry clothing or get in a dry sleeping bag
4. Use warm packs
5. Share body heat
6. Do not let victim sleep
7. If conscious, give victim warm, nonalcoholic drinks
8. Seek medical attention



HEAT EXHAUSTION

Symptoms

1. Muscle cramps
2. Headaches
3. Dizziness
4. Fainting
5. Blurred vision
6. Vomiting
7. Skin may be flushed or pale
8. Dry, clammy skin
9. Intense thirst
10. Fast, shallow breathing

Treatment

1. Move victim to cool, shady place
2. Apply cool, wet cloths
3. If conscious, give water to drink
4. Seek medical attention

Wind Chill Chart

		Temperature (°F)																		
		Calm	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45
Wind (mph)	5	36	31	25	19	13	7	1	-5	-11	-16	-22	-28	-34	-40	-46	-52	-57	-63	
	10	34	27	21	15	9	3	-4	-10	-16	-22	-28	-35	-41	-47	-53	-59	-66	-72	
	15	32	25	19	13	6	0	-7	-13	-19	-26	-32	-39	-45	-51	-58	-64	-71	-77	
	20	30	24	17	11	4	-2	-9	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-48	-55	-61	-68	-74	-81	
	25	29	23	16	9	3	-4	-11	-17	-24	-31	-37	-44	-51	-58	-64	-71	-78	-84	
	30	28	22	15	8	1	-5	-12	-19	-26	-33	-39	-46	-53	-60	-67	-73	-80	-87	
	35	28	21	14	7	0	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-82	-89	
	40	27	20	13	6	-1	-8	-15	-22	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57	-64	-71	-78	-84	-91	
	45	26	19	12	5	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-79	-86	-93	
	50	26	19	12	4	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-60	-67	-74	-81	-88	-95	
	55	25	18	11	4	-3	-11	-18	-25	-32	-39	-46	-54	-61	-68	-75	-82	-89	-97	
60	25	17	10	3	-4	-11	-19	-26	-33	-40	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-84	-91	-98		

Frostbite Times

30 minutes
 10 minutes
 5 minutes

Effective 11/01/01

Survival

Any time a hunter is on a trip, there is a chance that he or she may become lost. This is especially true when hunting in an unfamiliar location. In a populated area, this will not usually be a serious problem. However, becoming lost could become a survival situation in a wilderness region that is far removed from towns and homes.

You should always plan ahead to be prepared when going hunting. The greater the chance of becoming lost, the more detailed your preparation should be.

Preparation should start with a personal survival kit that should be carried every time you go hunting. A belt pouch or fanny pack can hold items needed in a survival situation. A good survival kit should include the following:

- √ Pocket knife
- √ Compass
- √ Plastic whistle
- √ Matches in a waterproof container
- √ Second fire making method
- √ Fire starter
- √ Soap
- √ Water purification tablets
- √ Medication (If needed)
- √ First-aid kit
- √ Drinking container
- √ Nylon cord
- √ Extra glasses (if needed)
- √ Sunglasses
- √ Signal mirror

If you do become lost or injured while hunting, remember to **STOP**.

S = Sit

T = Think

O = Observe

P = Plan

First, SIT and rest for a while. Being rested will help you to THINK more clearly. OBSERVE your surroundings and PLAN your course of action. By following these steps, you will be more calm and prepared to evaluate your situation more realistically.

Panic is the worst thing you can do when lost. By admitting that you are lost, you will know to follow the steps outlined below. You are less likely to make mistakes that will make your situation worse if you follow these steps.

1. Wait for help as long as possible. Wandering through the woods to try to find your way back to camp will most likely result in being further off course. Since a hunter should always tell his hunting partners where he will be going, they will be better able to find you if you stay where you are.
2. Before it gets dark, make preparations for an overnight camp. Start a campfire and build

METHOD OF SIGNALING FOR HELP

- 3 blasts on a whistle
- 3 fires in a triangle
- Signaling mirror
- SOS in snow or sand



BELIEVE IT OR NOT.

You **CAN** get lost in Ohio or become injured! Survival knowledge should be important to every hunter.

a shelter. Take an inventory of your supplies and plan on how you will make the best use of each item. Plan on making your supplies last for three days.

3. Remember that the international signal for help is three of anything.
4. Three loud blasts on a whistle will alert those within hearing distance of your need for help. The proper response when hearing this signal is two return whistle blasts. Anyone going into the field should always carry a whistle for such emergencies.
5. If for any reason you do not have a whistle, you may fire three shots from your gun. Use extreme care to be sure your shots will be in a safe direction.
6. At night, three fires located in a triangle will give notice of your emergency. In daylight, a small mirror may be used to reflect the sun's rays and attract attention. You may also spell out "SOS" in snow or sand.

When you are hunting alone, or if all of your hunting party becomes lost, remember that you left a hunt plan with someone. When you don't return or call on time, they will start looking for you. This is why it is very important for you to closely follow your hunt plan. That way your

rescuers will know where to search for you.

Water Safety

A boat can help a hunter get to an area that would be impossible to get to by foot. A boat is also an easy way to carry your gear.

Before getting into your boat, you should check the local laws for any required equipment that must be carried aboard your boat. One such item that the law requires is a **PFD**, or a *personal flotation device sometimes called a life vest*. Everyone in the boat must wear a PFD. If you should ever fall overboard, a PFD will keep you afloat until you reach safety.

You should never stand up in a boat. Any quick motion or wave could cause you to fall out of the boat.

Always remember to load equipment and passengers evenly in the boat and do not overload the boat. This could cause the boat to turn over or sink.



When hunting near water or from a boat this device can SAVE YOUR LIFE!

Water Survival Chart

Water Temperature °F	Exhaustion	Death
32.5	Under 15 Minutes	15 Minutes or Less
32.5-40	15-30 Minutes	30-90 Minutes
40-50	30-60 Minutes	1-3 Hours
50-60	1-2 Hours	1-6 Hours
60-70	2-7 Hours	2-40 Hours
70-80	3-12 Hours	3 Hours - Indefinite