

20 Crucial Skills Preppers Relied On 100 Years Ago

Our generation and the upcoming ones are getting more and more engulfed by technology, and we forget that some time ago, people were counting on their own survival skills to live the day.

In the last one hundred years or so, many of these skills have been forgotten, and few people remember what they meant for survival. Those still holding onto such skills are having a hard time passing them forward and will soon be forgotten.

The legacy our grandparents left us is not celebrated and treasured as it should be, and even though there are a few books out there describing their way of living, I believe we can do more to preserve their memory. Most of their survival skills can still provide us with warmth, comfort, food, and the knowledge to use sustainable resources in an environment that allows us to be ourselves.

Kids nowadays don't want to learn about the old ways of living, and there's no one to show them how simple and beautiful life once was. Most kids are being handed everything they need, and today's educational system doesn't allow much room for self-sufficiency or off-grid living.

I honestly believe that people should take a break from the rat race every once in a while and look back at their

ancestors. Our current lifestyles provide few, if any, opportunities to discover our real potential. Most members of society are spoon-fed, and they will never understand what they are truly capable of and if they can survive if this modern society will one day fail them.

Survival skills you should learn

1. Start a fire in any environment



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Every wilderness environment will provide you with the resources to survive, but you need to have the proper knowledge to use such resources. The same goes when building a fire, and besides having the right tools to ignite the kindling, you also have to know how to build various types of fires and keep them going.

2. Build a shelter from materials you can find

Our grandparents and ancestors didn't have the luxury of using all the synthetic fibers we have today to protect themselves from the elements and stay warm. They had to use their skills to improvise shelters and survive the night. Even the tents they had weren't as

complicated as today, and only a few of them could afford them. They had to learn to build a vast array of shelters based on what resources were available.

They experimented with various designs to make their long-term shelters comfortable while at the same time provide enough room to cook, eat, and sleep inside. Not to mention that planning was an important process before the build stage itself since building a shelter for one is much easier than building one for the entire family.

3. Natural navigation

Finding your way in the wilderness is not an easy task, and our ancestors often had to rely on the sun and stars to calculate their position. They would often improvise a simple solar compass to calculate their longitude and latitude, the angle of the North Star, and an equation of timetable. To find their sense of direction, they had to learn the paths of celestial objects, but also pay attention to what was on the ground. The shapes, shadows, and natural formation can all be used for various natural navigation techniques.

4. Acquiring food

This is a mandatory skill for preppers, but few of us use it quite often. Back then, providing food for the family meant using all their fieldcraft, tracking, hunting, and practical skills. It didn't matter if they had to fish for meat or if they had to forage. What matters was to be both physically and emotionally prepared for such tasks since failure was often more present than success.

5. Make water safe to drink



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6. Tracking

Reading signs or tracking is one of the oldest skills that helped mankind survive. Our ancestors had a keen sense of observation that allowed them to easily look for deviations in the way things

were normally supposed to look in their natural environment. The rule was simple back then, as it is today. During your tracking sessions, if you spot something that is out of place, you need to stop and investigate it further. Based on your skill and experience, you will discover new details and additional info you would need to track someone or something.

7. Snaring

Making a snare was a skill that required practice, and snaring, in general, required a lot of patience. Snaring helped our grandparents catch small game, but it was also used to get rid of rodents and other upsetting pests. Using snares for food and defense can make the difference between life and death for the smart survivalist. Trappers have known about snares for generations, but today's technology has pulled the snare out of the dark ages and turned it into a finely tuned instrument.

8. Preparing a mammal

As a hunter, you had to learn game preparation since it was a skill required to maintain the meat edible. They didn't have the luxury to preserve the pray in coolers or use other modern means we have today. They would gut, skin, and prepare the prey on the spot for easy transportation or preservation. In fact, in the field, most mammal preparation

is very similar, and it's mostly a matter of size.

9. Fishing using primitive skills



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To save time and take care of other chores,

they often built fishing traps. However, using fish traps is a labor-intensive method of obtaining fish. You need to build the trap, place it in the right spot, and wait. But on the other hand, you can't go wrong with this method if traditional fishing is not for you.

10. Preparing a fish

Most folks don't know how to fillet a fish and use the guts and all other parts as bait for other purposes. When your ancestors managed to catch a fish in the wilderness, they knew how to prepare it and how to make the most of it (using the guts as bait for snare or fish traps). Nowadays, besides learning how to prepare a fish, you should also learn how to remove pollution and contamination in the fish you catch before feasting on it.

11. Preparing a bird

If wilderness living is on top of your survival list of things to do and in your bug out plan, you should learn how to prepare a bird. You will have better chances of trapping or hunting birds rather than big game, especially if you lack hunting experience. Learn what parts are edible and how to remove the meat from a bird using just your hands.

12. Making cordage

Making a variety of cordage was a necessary skill back then, and in today's world, few people can make a

string from natural fibers. I've learned to make cordage from stinging nettle and various longer fibers, and I must admit it takes some time to get the hang of it. However, once you master the learning curve, you will own a skill that is invaluable.

13. Learning different knots



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14. Plant identification

This is a topic I'm fond of, and I have a great deal of respect for every forager out there. Our ancestors paid with their lives so that we can today know which plants are edible and which plants have medicinal uses. In the wilderness, being able to tell plants apart will provide you with both food and medicine.

Foraging includes not only using the plant but also being ready to transplant it or protect it for future generations.

Since the early days, humans managed to survive with what nature had to offer. You may not have the skills for trapping animals and be an efficient hunter, but you can still be a successful gatherer. As a precaution to not get poisoned or worse, I advise you to learn how to do a universal edibility test and always carry with you a field guide for plant identification and preparation before consuming unknown plants.

15. Wilderness first aid

In unfamiliar environments, you have to look out after yourself since professional medical aid will not be available.

You need to be able to prevent accidents and take care of medical emergencies without making things worse. Even so, the more you live in an inhospitable environment, the higher the chances of getting injured or ill. By having first aid training, you will be able to take care of minor injuries and illnesses.

However, to be on the safe side of things, you should attend a wilderness first aid course. By doing so will learn how to treat various medical emergencies, but most importantly, you will learn how to improvise when resources are scarce and make do with what you have available.

16. Using an axe

If you plan on spending a lot of time in the woods, an axe will become your most valuable tool to have and use. However, it may also become a dangerous tool for you and others if you don't know how to use it properly. Learning to swing an axe requires proper training and experience on the field, and you can't master such a tool just by reading about it. Even more, it becomes critical to learn how to look after your axe as it may become your primary survival tool.

17. Improvised cooking



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There are all sorts of scenarios that can force you to test your improvised cooking skills and use your iron skillet and/or Dutch ovens properly. Not to mention that in certain cases, you can be separated from your tools, and you will need to improvise even more.

18. Moving silently

In today's world, our environment is governed by speed and noise, and we all have the habit of making noise willingly or without even realizing it. Learning to move quietly in an

environment will not only help you observe the world around you without attracting attention to yourself, but it's also a good survival skill. Moving without creating a phonic impact will help you track or stalk people and animals, and it will help you move undetected while traversing dangerous zones.

19. Making glue

Making glue in the wild can be as simple and easy as mixing pine resin with a bit of beeswax. This is another one of the survival skills that would have been lost to time if it wasn't for survivalists and bushcraft enthusiasts keeping it alive. It will help you do various types of repair if you run out of duct tape or other resources.

20. Respecting nature

The general concept of survival for the unprepared people living in an environment full of resources is to hunt and fish, and overall, get anything they need or want from nature. This may be true in certain cases, but we must also acknowledge that most people are just consumers, and that's pretty much all they know to do.

You can see that right now, "in times of peace," we are already destroying nature at a fast pace. Imagine what will happen if folks around you will become desperate for food, or natural resources to heat their homes or cook their food. In the past, our grandparents learned

to exploit nature only for what they needed and protect it for their future needs, but how about us?

My two cents

The survival skills I've listed in this article are just a glimpse of the knowledge our ancestors had. I honestly believe that we should take a break every once in a while from this rapid pace and look back at the old ways of living. It's not only a proper way to keep the legacy of our ancestors alive, but also a good occasion to learn new things and improve our skillset.