

# SAFE SURVIVAL AND PREPAREDNESS

Online Magazine - November 2005

[www.ambilacuk.com/safesurvival](http://www.ambilacuk.com/safesurvival)



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Hello and welcome to the November re-vamped edition of our Safe survival and Preparedness online magazine.

As many of you have witnessed recently, 2005 seems to have demonstrated many record-breaking weather events; major flooding, hurricanes, earthquakes and tsunamis to mention but a few. These unfortunate events offered many lessons to be learnt, while also demonstrating how unprepared local and National authorities, and the general populace is in general, to cope with these disasters. By arming oneself with a few basic preparedness guidelines, a little common sense and essential supplies, one could minimize, and even avoid, major damage to life and limb in future natural disasters.

In this issue, due to recent events, the articles reflect the preparedness activities involved in hurricanes and related flooding scenarios, while with the current warnings of a severe winter, we look at the various alternate methods of heating and lighting.

In addition, keep warm this winter by following our tips on what to wear when the chill factor drops below that zero line.

In future issues, we will be looking at both the short term and long-term issues involved in general preparedness and survival, such as bush-craft techniques, building temporary shelters and your own home, and many more related subject areas.

If you have any articles you may wish to contribute to the magazine, letters or reviews of equipment/books etc please e-mail me.

B-safe B-prepared B-wise and survive

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Editor

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## Hurry up – Hurricanes approaching;

This is an updated and abbreviated version of my article on Hurricane Preparedness on the safe survival website. The full article may be accessed here:

<http://www.ambilacuk.com/safesurvival/hurricane.html>



Bottom of Hurricane Floyd

Courtesy of the Hurricane Hunters

<http://www.hurricanehunters.com/welcome.htm>

We have witnessed some extraordinary weather patterns of late, hurricanes being no exception where a number of record-breaking events have occurred; record lowest pressure, record category 5 and record number of actual hurricanes. The tragic consequences of Katrina and Rita for example, will go down in the annals of history as extraordinary events and leave many lessons to be learnt for the authorities

At the time of compiling this article, late October 2005, we already have witnessed the effects of Wilma, the introduction of the Greek naming systems for Tropical storms and hurricanes (as we have run out of names) and now onto Beta, which is affecting the South American coast.

One of the main issues that came out of Katrina and Rita was the confusion and lack of organisation (especially Katrina) in the evacuation process. It appears from these two events, we witnessed confirmation of what many already knew... - When it comes to the crunch, you are on your own!

Well-rehearsed and safe preparedness is essential if one is to overcome many of the challenges faced in situations such as these natural disasters. Many of the tips and advice included here are also relevant for any natural (or man made) disaster. Be sure to check the many links and files available, and discuss the issues and preparedness ideas with your family and friends

## **What is a Hurricane?**

Hurricanes develop from a tropical storm that have reached a constant speed of 74 miles per hour or more. In the centre of a hurricane is a relatively calm area known as the “eye”, the area of which may be 20 –30 miles wide. The storm itself invariably extends outwards of up to 400 miles, and upon reaching land it brings torrential rains, storm surges (as we witnessed in Louisiana with Katrina) and high winds.

Hurricanes may last for two weeks over open water and run a path across the entire length of the US Eastern seaboard. The hurricane season normally lasts from the beginning of June until the end of November.

The preparedness advice below is listed initially under time frames, that is, what to do prior to a hurricane, right through to surviving a hurricane and post effects. While at the end of the article are a few useful links.

### **Before the Hurricane season;**

If you live in an area subjected to hurricanes, it would be advisable to plan your preparations well in advance of the season. As many have witnessed from Katrina and Rita, the adage of “it will not happen in my backyard” no longer applies. Hurricanes and other natural disasters may strike anywhere with no consideration for property or life.

### **Evacuation route:**

Discuss and plan a safe evacuation route with your friends and family. Practice driving this route well before the hurricane season starts by making a day out or weekend trip, so that you will get used to the procedures and what to take.

I have included an overview list of tips in the general preparedness article here <http://www.ambilacuk.com/safesurvival/emergencypreparedness.html>

However, ensure that if you decide to evacuate take sufficient fuel for the journey, remember the high increase in gas/fuel prices at the pumps, and even worse, shortages during Katrina and Rita.

Make sure you have a full gas tank, and if you do have spare fuel, ensure safe storage in the correct containers.

You may also wish to contact the local Emergency planning office for information on the local community hurricane preparedness plan.

Be prepared to drive at least 50 to 100 miles inland in order to locate to a safe area. So, as above, not only ensure you have sufficient fuel to get there, but you may want to return too!

Study the topography of your area; such as access to side roads and trails, you may have to avoid the highways when the crunch comes. Get to know the local terrain, rivers and boggy areas are to be avoided, search out for the high grounds, you may need them.

### **Disaster supply kit:**

We have discussed the contents of disaster kits in a number of preparedness articles, but as an overview, here are some essential items you should carry.

- Flashlight and spare batteries
- Radio – preferably the wind up and solar version to keep informed of events. Know which station emergency broadcasts transmit
- First aid kit – including current medications any of the family are taking
- Food and water – for at least 3-5 days
- Spare suitable clothing – including waterproofs and strong boots
- Hand can opener (“morfa” type or army type light weight are ideal)
  
- Cash and credit cards
  
- Personal documents and ID
  
- Pets – ensure you have made arrangements for their safety, remember if you are thinking of heading to a community shelter, pets may not be allowed to come with you
  
- Make sure all the family know how and where to shut off the domestic utilities, such as water, gas and electric.
  
- Check flood insurance etc on your home
  
- Cut back any overhanging branches near the house

- Batten down any loose materials and keep a supply of timber and boards on your property ready to board up windows and doors etc. If you leave it until the last moment, you will find all the local D.I.Y stores and lumber merchants have run out of stock. Remember to have nails and screws on hand, also – a hand screwdriver and a hammer!
- There is a possibility that a disaster may strike with minimum of warning, so ensure your family know who to contact in case they are separated, and importantly WHERE to meet.

### Hurricane Watch – given 36-24 hours prior to hurricane reaching location

- Maintain watch on radio and TV for current weather updates and hurricane reports for your area – be ready to move at moment's notice, if you have not already left!
- Check emergency supplies
- Check your vehicle – it should also be fuelled up ready to go by now
- Clear all loose objects lying around perimeter of house – anchor securely those you cannot move
- Board up windows and take down any aerials or antennae's that may be damaged, or worse that can cause damage
- Store drinking water in clean suitable containers – water for toilet facilities may be stored in garbage bins outside...make sure they are secure, or bring inside.
- If you have a boat or trailer etc, make sure you bring it to a secure place and anchor to the ground.
- Any furniture and possessions you are leaving behind, move to a higher floor, if this is not possible, elevate and stack the furniture so only minimum damage is sustained.

### During a Hurricane warning:

If you have been given a hurricane warning for your area, you should have left for your safe location by now. However, if for various reasons you are unable to evacuate, the following points should be noted.

- Listen continuously to battery operated radio for updates
- Do not go in elevators
- Ensure your home is secure – batten down – and if you are in a mobile home (avoid if at all possible) secure to ground.
- Stay away from glass windows, skylights and doors
- If you experience a power outage, turn off major electrical appliances to avoid a power surge when power returns.
- You should have evacuated by now, but remember to lock and secure all doors and windows prior to leaving, unplug all electrical items and let friends know where you are going.

## Post Hurricane:

After the storm:

- Keep tuned into your radio for current updates
- Assist trapped or injured persons if safe to do so
- Do not move the seriously injured, unless they are at immediate risk from further injury.
- Return home only when it is safe to do so
- Enter your home with caution – beware of loose or falling timbers, or electrical wires and report such damage to authorities as soon as possible. Be aware of any animals that may have taken refuge in your home during the storm
- Carefully open doors and windows to allow adequate ventilation and do dry out your house.
- Check electrical appliances before switching on power supply – Ensure there is no standing water or damp patches in areas near the appliances or switches. See below

### Inspecting Utilities

- Check for gas leaks – if you smell gas or hear any unusual noises, leave the building and call the gas/electrical company. Check to ensure that you have turned off the utility supplies. If you have turned off the gas mains it should only be turned back on by a registered professional
- Inspect for electrical system damage--If you see sparks, broken or frayed wires, or if you smell hot insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. If you have to step in water to get to the fuse box or circuit breaker, call an electrician first for advice.
- Check for sewerage and water supply damage – call a plumber if required. If the water pipes are damaged, contact the water company and avoid the water from the tap.

### Useful Links

[FEMA](#)

[Protecting your property from wind etc](#)

[Hurricane Preparedness \(Dale County Emergency management agency\)](#)

[American Red Cross Be prepared](#)

[American Red Cross Hurricane awareness](#)

For additional links and information, refer to the Hurricane Preparedness article on our website at

<http://www.ambilacuk.com/safesurvival/hurricane.html>

Howard Middleton-Jones  
October 2005

## **What? No power or gas?**

Have no fear – here are some solutions.

For many, especially those living in urban and city habitats, the sudden loss of power or mains gas utilities etc, may be a major traumatic event. Having been used to regular supplies by merely throwing a switch, or in many cases not even that, this unique experience, if not prepared, would throw one into panic! That is of course, unless you are safely prepared for such an event, as many country dwellers know too well.

I was brought up on the West Wales coast UK, where we often have strong storms and gusty squalls, and while the urban areas may be well protected from power spikes, for those of us living on the more remote cliff headlands the odd power outage was not exactly a rare event. In fact, many looked forward to these events, where the candles, hurricane lamps and bottled gas fires were lit with glee! It was an opportunity to sit in the atmospheric setting of the flickering shadowy candlelight, and the familiar smell of oil and hurricane lamps, where the distraction of Television and computers were suddenly switched off, just like throwing the power switch.

Naturally, many would be appalled of this situation, what? No TV! No computer? No lights to read or go to the bathroom! For those of you reading this that have experienced this scenario on a regular basis, I daresay would be smiling and muttering a few innuendos! However, with safe and wise preparation, the “traumatic” event of a power outage can be an exercise in adventure and intrigue for some, while for those with this experience already under their belts an opportunity to check over your alternate heating and lighting supplies.

By ensuring you have adequate alternate lighting and heating, and importantly, knowing exactly where the location of your supplies are stored, the sudden loss of power may help to turn a traumatic event into a stress-free and more relaxed affair.

**No light? No heat? No cooking? Have no fear...there is plenty you can do - prepare NOW!**

You are watching TV or sitting quietly reading the paper one winter's evening and suddenly that ominous “clunk” as your power trips and darkness befalls you. Yes, it can happen at any time and in any location, whether due to a demand of increase in power, an electrical or solar surge, or severe weather. The question is: are you prepared?



What will be your first reaction? A fuse or breaker circuit blown? And would you know (IF you were prepared in the first place) where to locate your torches, matches and candles? And importantly, SAFELY access them without falling downstairs or bumping into sharp objects?

The following tips and advice will help you to be prepared in such an emergency, and information on how to cope in the longer term.

Initial thoughts when a power outage occurs are what the heck happened? “where is that damned torch” or “I knew I should have bought those candles while on offer”. Then worries of heating or cooking set in, how do I make a cup of coffee? “How DO you cook those microwave meals” and so on.

We will deal with five main areas in the event of such an event, assuming we experience this outage in winter.

- Water - boiling
- Cooking - foodstuffs
- Heating – keep warm
- Lighting – safety see where you are going!
- Communications – how to keep in touch

## **Lighting:**

The most common form of alternate lighting is the battery operated torch or flashlight. These days one can also buy non-battery self-charging flashlights, whereby merely gripping the torch will be sufficient to charge it. Ensure you keep the torches at suitable and known locations, such as by the bedside, at front and rear exits in your home. Have at least two sets of batteries for each torch.

Re-chargeable batteries are also useful, as long as you are able to actually charge them, such as a car battery via the cigarette lighter adaptor etc. It is essential that all members of your household know the exact locations of the flashlights and it is a good idea for each member of the family to have his/her own torch, including young children.

## **Candles**

Stored and used sensibly candles are an excellent and cheap form of lighting, and cooking!

Try and prepare as much as possible by stocking up on candles, especially in the summer months when they are often on offer, as when the crunch comes, you may find stock depleted after a run on candle buying.

The best candles are the standard 10-inch which are more suitable for a variety of holders. Ensure you keep the lighted candles on a metallic or flameproof base and away from young children and pets. An ideal, and the safest method, is to place candles in metal wall holders.

Always ensure you have plenty of matches and or lighters on hand, and store safely, preferably in metal boxes in a dry location.

## **Cooking with candles:**

It is possible to boil water and cook with candles, and although a relatively slow method, under the circumstances who is in a rush? The best type of candles would be the smaller squatter T-light candles, which usually come in their own metallic holder. By using three of these candles placed under a metal triangular holder, where a kettle or pan is held, it is relatively easy to boil water or even cook your food. Make sure you use a firm flameproof surface and keep an eye on the progress of boiling/cooking.

Always collect the wax drippings as you can make further candles out of the remains. Caution – avoid touching hot wax, leave until cool.

## **Oil and Paraffin lamps**

I have used the terms “oil” and “paraffin” (Kerosene) to describe two types of similar lamps. Oil lamps are usually the smaller lamps used for internal use and fuelled by refined oil. While “Hurricane” lamps are the type used in both indoor and outdoor conditions and have a protected glass cover. These are usually fuelled by paraffin or kerosene, purchased at relatively low cost per gallon from your local hardware outlet.

Ensure you keep the lamps away from where they may be knocked over, and away from children and pets. The kerosene type lamps produce a little vapour as they burn which builds up over time, so make sure you have adequate ventilation. In addition, always keep a spare supply of lamp wick, available from your local hardware store.

## **Heating and cooking**

Whilst you may have stocked up on tins and dried fruits etc, and for some time may be able to survive on cold foods, in cold climates there is no substitute for a hot meal. When the utilities cut out, such as gas and electrics, there are a number of good alternatives to cook that much needed hot meal or soup. Let us start with methods that you may use already or at least have used in the past.

## **Wood burning stove or *Aga* and *rayburns*:**

These may be used as stand alone heaters/cookers or fitted into the plumbing system of your house to produce hot water and central heating. However, to use as central heating they would require a water pump, which is electrically driven thus of no use in a power outage. These are excellent house warmers, and may be fuelled by a variety of fuels however wood is the most popular choice.

The best woods are the hard woods if available, such as apple or cherry, and preferably timber that has been cut down and stored for at least a year, these are longer burning and will not “tar” up your burner or chimney. The softer woods, such as pine and spruce etc, burn rapidly and tar up your burner. However, the softer woods are ideal as fire starters, and mixed in with the harder timber.

It is also a good idea to have an axe and hand saw for timber cutting, where the exercise will keep you warm at least! In addition, a chain saw would be ideal, however, ensure you have ample fuel and oil for the saw and use with caution, wear safety boots and gloves.

Remember to site your wood burners on a flameproof surface, including a heatproof backing wall, such as stonewall or a metal protective sheet.

One last point, don't forget to store newspaper in a dry area, not just for starting a fire, but useful for insulation (wrapped around you or to sleep on).

See our special article on alternate methods of lighting fires.

### **Calor/Butane/Propane fuelled heaters**

**KEROSENE and PARAFFIN.**

Kerosene is a major alternate fuel in North America, Europe and in UK, but paraffin may also be available as a substitute many older readers will remember maintaining overnight heat in their greenhouse with paraffin stoves!

However, Kerosene is widely available and unlike gasoline is a lubricant, and is very stable in storage, its ignition point being more than 104 F. Kerosene may be safely stored in plastic containers, oil drums and old diesel tanks. Make sure you label the containers, and if you can avoid it do not use red or green containers, as these usually indicate gasoline (green for unleaded).

Do not store within the home, either use an old outside shed, garage or under surface bunker.

Kerosene is excellent for use with kerosene heaters, lamps and stoves, however do ensure your equipment is safe to use with Kerosene.

The same above conditions apply to paraffin.

[http://www.endtimesreport.com/kerosene\\_fuel\\_primer.html](http://www.endtimesreport.com/kerosene_fuel_primer.html)

### **BOTTLED GAS (LPG)**

Depending where you live in the world, bottled gas comes in a variety of mixed gases and containers, the most popular being Butane (UK and Europe) and Propane (mainly USA)

Normally a safe liquefied gas for a variety of purposes, cooking and heating etc. Ensure you have a few bottles in reserve.

<http://www.seminck.be/en/propaan.html>

<http://www.calorgas.co.uk/>

<http://www.weldingsupply.net/propane.htm> (Background and history of propane)

### **Camping stoves;**

These come in a variety of guises, however, these days mainly unleaded fuel or special fuels designed for each type of stove. The most popular camping stoves are the multi fuel (such as Coleman), methylated spirits and gas types.

Use on a hard flameproof surface preferably outdoors, to avoid carbon monoxide build up, and follow the safety precautions with each type of stove.

Here is a good review of camping stoves with a few useful hints

<http://gorp.away.com/gorp/gear/features/stoves3.htm>

### **ALTERNATE HOT WATER SUPPLY**

Depending upon prevailing environmental conditions, you can experiment now with simple alternate water heating methods, especially if you are now in your safe location.

#### **Old Radiators.**

Painted black, these provide an excellent storage system of hot water, especially if the sun shines for a number of hours per day. The water will remain quite warm for some time. Rig old hosepipes to the radiators and siphon off to the required area.

#### **Old piping or hosing**

A simple but effective method of keeping water warm, by stretching out as much hosing as you can and drape around the roof of your home. As the sun shines on the roof so does the heat within the hosing, the bigger the diameter of the hose the better it will be. Caution, on a hot day by mid afternoon the water in the hose will be near boiling!!

#### **Plastic containers**

Little used idea, is the filling of one or 5 litre or 2-gallon old plastic containers with water and stored within a depression or under a surface bunker. If you construct walls of these containers, (just like building a brick wall alternating joints etc) using their weight on top of each other, the gradual heat warms the water during the day, thus emitting the heat out slowly overnight. This principle was used in subsurface greenhouses for growing tropical vegetation.

I hope the above well tested ideas and hints will be of use to you. Try them out now before we experience any serious catastrophes in order that you will be well prepared and experienced. Remember to show caution when using any fuel substance, practice outdoors and preferably not within the vicinity of dry ground covering or trees, we have experienced too many forest fires of late! Keep a supply of water or sand and a fire beater to hand so that you may douse any fires before they get out of hand. Also, ensure that the remains of a fire are always well out and covered with water, sand or soil when you have finished. - and - as they say when lighting fireworks, light blue touch paper and stand well back!!

Safe preparation

I have edited and added to this section from our old magazine article on *Alternate Heating and lighting* at <http://www.ambilacuk.com/safesurvivalmagazine/alternateheat.html>

## Using your Vehicle in winter?

### **Do not be stranded this winter!**

Winter is bearing down upon any of us rapidly, and with warnings of severe and cold weather forthcoming, now is the time to think about vehicle preparation and tips on how to cope if you are stuck in a snowstorm etc.

Obviously, the best and safest method is prevention, that is, in severe weather do not drive your vehicle! However, for many that is not an option, we all have to get to work, take and pick up the kids from school and do the weekly food shop etc.

Prior to the onset to winter, your vehicle should always have a quick “medical” check-up, ensure all fluid systems are topped up, such as brakes, clutch (on manual systems), and that suitable antifreeze is added to the cooling system and windscreen washers et.

Check the tyres for wear, ensure a good tread for a good grip and traction, your tyres are the only contact between you and the road. If you live in an area that constantly experiences high snowfalls, then substituting normal tyres for winter ones may be an option. Failing that carry snow chains

Here in summary are a few preparation tips:

- Tyres – ensure good tread and they are pumped to correct pressure – including your spare!
- Battery – check to ensure it is fully charged
- Lights – all in working order and you have spare bulbs

- Windscreen washers – are full and contain suitable additives to prevent freezing
- Cooling system – is topped up and suitable anti-freeze added for the required climate

### **Prior to driving your vehicle**

- Is the journey necessary?
- Weather forecasts – check local radio and TV weather reports
- Consider alternative routes – but keep to the main roads and highways wherever possible as these will more likely to have been treated
- Make allowances for extra driving time

Tell someone your planned route and ETA. If you do get stuck, at least the search and rescue will have some idea of your route and location

### **Driving in Snow and Ice conditions:**

If it is necessary to drive under these conditions, then bear in mind the following points:

- Visibility – this may be poor, and often nonexistent! Turn your headlights on (in dimmed position) and rear fog lights if visibility is very low – remember to turn off your fog lights when visibility improves
- In adverse weather conditions, driver fatigue and stress increases, so more breaks from driving may be required
- Drive carefully – you are responsible for your own safety, your passengers' safety, your vehicle and other road users.

### **What to do if you get stuck in your vehicle during a snowstorm**

If you have not prepared and have no emergency kit in your vehicle, this will be a worst-case scenario, a solitary confinement under the worst conditions.

### **Follow these essential tips and you may survive!**

- Stay with your vehicle – unless assistance is nearby and within visible distance (100 yards). It is much warmer in your vehicle than outside, where you have shelter from wind and snow. In addition, a vehicle is easier to spot than a lone figure in the snow
- Wrap your body and head with all available clothes to maintain body temperature. If you have newspapers handy, sit on them these will offer added insulation. Wear gloves
- Keep warm by using the heater (and lights so you can be seen) for 10 minutes every hour, but ensure you have the engine running and be careful that your battery does not run flat.

- Ensure the end of the exhaust pipe is free of snow etc, to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.
- If there are two of you, take it in turns to sleep
- In remote areas, spread a large cloth over the snow to attract the attention of rescue planes.
- hang a brightly coloured cloth on the antenna to signal for help
- Open a window slightly for fresh air
- Do light exercises to stay warm
- Do not eat snow as it lowers your body temperature. If you do not have any other available water, water may be melted using a can and a lit match. Boil for one minute to kill off most germs.

### **Emergency Vehicle Kit:**

If you drive regularly over the winter, the following essential items should be carried in your vehicle. They may save your life!

- Fully charged mobile phone – emergency communications
- Folding spade – to dig your self out of the snow or ice.
- Blanket and emergency “space” blanket
- Torch/flashlight and spare batteries
- Fresh water
- Energy and chocolate bars/dried fruit
- First aid kit – including any necessary medication
- Tow rope
- Battery jump leads
- Ice scraper
- Bag of sand or cat litter– to place under wheels for extra grip when stuck
- Newspaper – excellent insulation
- Jacket – gloves – warm hat – boots
- Pen and paper – for leaving messages if necessary
- Coolant repair kit and spare PVC tape
- Plastic bags for sanitation purposes

### **Last, but by no means least, a fully charged mobile/cell phone**

Remember, it is not just snow and ice that may trap your vehicle, but beware of flash floods and landslides.

So, B safe – B wise - B Prepared and Survive.

**Next month – driving in flash floods and how to avoid the hidden dangers**

## No matches or lighters to start that fire?

No problem! There are many well-tried alternate methods of sparking up and starting your fire to cook that essential meal, or well deserved cup of coffee or tea.

We will look at just a few examples here to get that all- important fire up and running.

Fire – love it or loathe it, a necessary element for survival in many conditions, whether in the physical survival, such as boiling water, cooking food, making weapons or sterilizing medical equipment and keeping warm, to the “psychological” aspect of companionship and that basic ancient urge to see light and feel warmth.

Whatever the reasons for starting and maintaining a fire, you must bear in mind the important safety aspect, especially so in the more drier areas. Prior to lighting fires outdoors, ensure you are well clear of trees and overhanging branches, that you have a fire beater handy, and sand or soil to cover up the fire remains when you have finished.

The main methods of fire starting we will look at are the following:

- Wood drill (fire bow)
- Convex lens
- Battery and wire wool
- Steel fire starter

First prepare your fire with suitable kindling such as light twigs, dried leaves (see fire building techniques below) and prepare your tinder ready for lighting. This may be very fine crushed dried leaves, fine wood shavings or straw etc.

### **Wood Bow drill**

For this method you will need four main wood pieces, and a piece of cord. A piece of wood for the actual bow, about 18 inches, a smaller piece for the drill a flatter piece for the ember pan and a bearing block which you use to apply firm pressure whilst drilling. Some people find it useful to cap the top of drill with suitable cone shaped object such as a shell, to prevent friction burns on the hands.



## **Suitable woods for bow drill**

Alder – Birch – Red cedar – Clematis – Cypress – Elm – Hazel – Ivy - Juniper – Oak – Pine – Sycamore – Willow – Yucca

Cut a short piece of wood for the drill and strip away the bark. Next find a suitable piece of wood to act as a bow, and tie the cord either end, ensuring you have enough slack to twist the drill around the cord. See photograph below. The top end of the drill should be carved to a blunt point to minimise friction, while the bottom end should just be carved slightly so as to form a good insert in the indentation in your cut out on the base pan.

Strip away the bark on a flatter piece of wood to make the ember pan, and cut a V shape wedge on this base pan where you place one end of the drill. The other end of the drill sits securely through a hole in your bearing block which you hold firmly in one hand, while making a sawing motion with the other hand. Do this slowly at first to acquire the correct action. You will soon see smoke start to appear.



As you drill small fine pieces of black charcoal dust appear, once you have enough, place these quickly into a ball of fine tinder and holding the ball of tinder about a foot away from your face blow gently until you see glowing embers and smoke. Each time you take a breath, move the tinder bundle away from your face.



Once thick smoke develops, a resulting flame will ensue, quickly place the ball of tinder in the prepared fire, and apply a few breaths to get the flame going.

This is merely a brief overview and practice makes perfect! We will be discussing these methods in detail and much more in future issues of the Bushcraft series of the magazine.

### **Convex Lens – or magnifying lens**

We have all done this at some point in our lives, using a magnifying lens to produce a pinprick of intense heat via the rays of the sun. This method is ideally suited where sunlight is prevalent, however, as we shall see, your location does not have to be basking in heat!

You can use any type of lens, such as eyeglasses or magnifying lens, and by adding a drop of water on the lens will help to intensify the sun's rays. Just hold the lens at an angle so as to focus the rays of the sun into a pinpoint area where you have laid a small amount of tinder. It will not be long before

this heats up and smoke appears. Drop your lighted tinder into your prepared fire, and slowly blow air under the fire to get it started.

### **Ice Lens**

One can make a perfectly good lens for fire lighting by shaping a piece of ice, yep ice! You just need some gloves and some ice!

Have a look here for details:

<http://www.trackertrail.com/survival/fire/ice/rb/rbfirefromice3.html>

### **Battery and wire wool:**

While you may not have these items on your person in normal circumstances, if you were involved in a plane crash or similar accident, no doubt these materials would be available.

Using as thin strands of wire wool as possible, and keeping a small bundle of the wire in the middle, merely stretch the wire over each end of the battery. Each time you make contact with the wool and terminals of the battery, you will observe sparking. By using this method amongst your tinder, smoke and sparks should start up more or less instantaneously.

More on similar survival ideas and tips in the next edition of the Bush craft series.



## REVIEWS

Each month we will select a book, film, magazine and/or a website to discuss. If you have read any good survival or related preparedness books or magazines, or have come across a good website, perhaps you could write your own review and send it to the editor.

### Magazine/website:

Our first review in the new online survival/preparedness magazine will go to the established Backwoods home magazine.



This magazine, and associated website, is an extremely useful and entertaining mine of information on practical ideas for self-reliant living. It contains a diverse range of practical tips on self-reliant subject areas, such as self-build, recipes, preparedness and much more.

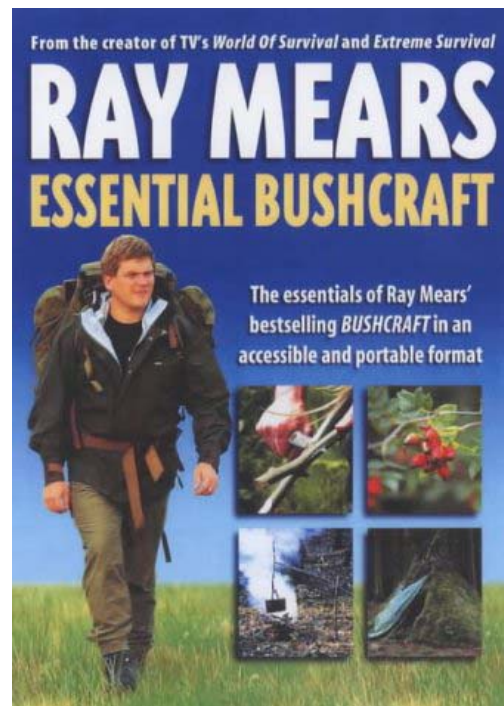
It has a “homely” practical feeling and the articles are always full of useful information, advice and tips from experienced contributors.

The magazine is available as an annual subscription, however, you can access the contents, selected articles and loads of additional material via their website, or click on their latest cover above.

<http://www.backwoodshome.com/>

## Book review:

Essential Bushcraft – Ray Mears



Ray Mears is now well known to millions of television viewers mainly through a number of his series; Tracks, Ray Mears World of Survival and Ray Mears Extreme Survival. This is one of the offshoots from those series, which is now available as a handy portable compendium of vital survival skills and essential wilderness techniques from around the globe

The book gives clear and concise step-by-step advice and instructions on a diverse number of subject areas, from constructing shelters in any climate, to the use of cordage and knots

Ray offers many handy safety tips under all manner of circumstances, handling knives, first aid and lighting fires.

The book is well illustrated with great photographs, and as the title suggests, it is indeed the essential bushcraft pocket book companion.

The paperback version was published in 2003  
Publisher Hodder and Stoughton Ltd  
ISBN 0340829710

**[In December edition of SOS and Preparedness online magazine;](#)**

**What to wear to keep you warm in winter**

**Flooding preparedness**

**Prepare for that Arctic winter in your home**

**Earthquakes – What causes them and how to prepare for them**

**Driving in floods**

**Bushcraft series:**

- **What seeds to store**
- **Shelters**

**Reviews**

**Letters**