

The Australian Bush Catechism of Camping

SURVIVAL

1. *What do we need to survive in the bush?*

To survive in the bush
we need water and food,
clothing and shelter.

WATER

2. *Where do we find water?*

We find water in creeks, springs,
and water roots of trees;
by digging wells,
and by condensation on plastic.

3. *How do we purify polluted water?*

We purify polluted water
by boiling it to make tea
or with water-purification tablets.

FOOD

4. *Describe good camping food.*

Good camping food is nutritious,
cheap to buy, light to carry,
easy to package, prepare and wash up.

CLOTHING

5. *How do we know what to wear?*

We know what to wear
by working down from our heads:
hat, shirt, shorts, socks and boots.

6. *What are hats for?*

Hats are for keeping off the sun, rain, cold,
falling sticks and stones;
for fanning fires, carrying water,
and charging head-down through the scrub.

7. *Of what should our clothes be made?*

Our clothes should be made
of cotton, not polyester,
but wool for cold, wet and windy weather.

8. *Describe good boots.*

Good boots are light and tough,
grip the ground, fit the foot,
and easy to lace and unlace.

9. *What other clothes do we need?*

Other clothes we need are raincoat,
woollen jumper and swimming costume.

10. *When do we wear long trousers?*

We wear long trousers and even over-pants
in cold and windy weather, and scratchy scrub.

11. *What if clothes get dirty, wet or torn?*

If clothes get dirty, we wash them;
wet, we dry them; torn, we mend them.

PERSONAL GEAR

12. *What is basic personal gear?*

Basic personal gear is
a knapsack, sleeping bag (or blanket), toothbrush,
mug, dixie and spoon, (and shaving gear.)

13. *What are pockets for?*

Pockets are for handkerchief, pocket knife,
matches, string and Rosary Beads.

14. *What are handkerchiefs for?*

Handkerchiefs are for blowing noses,
mopping faces, drying hands,
holding hot handles,
and for bush baths and bandages.

15. *Describe a good pocket knife.*

A good pocket knife has a big blade

With a keen edge but no dagger point,

A marlinspike, tin opener, and screwdriver.

16. *What use is a staff?*

A staff is an extra *leg* on steep slopes,
an extension *arm* for pointing at things
and rescuing people from drowning
in water or quicksand,
and a *weapon* for defending the innocent.

17. *What extra items must the leader bring?*

First Aid Kit, rope and torch,
map and compass, watch and whistle.

18. *Describe a good knot.*

A good knot does not slip or jam.

19. *What lights do we need at night?*

The lights we need at night are
torches or LED headband torches.

FIRST AID KIT

20. *What items should the First Aid Kit have?*

The First Aid Kit should have
2 crepe bandages, 12 band aids,
a tube of Butesin Picrate,
and phials of ammonia and tea tree oil.

21. *What are crepe bandages for?*

Crepe bandages are for binding up
bleeding, broken bones,
sprains and snakebite.

22. *What is Butesin Picrate for?*

Butesin Picrate is for burns, scalds and cuts.
It eases pain and kills germs.

23. *What is ammonia for?*

Ammonia is an antidote for
bull ant bites and bee stings.

24. *What is tea-tree oil for?*

Tea-tree oil is for fly and mosquito bites
and to soothe cuts and inflamed skin.

GROUP GEAR

25. *What group gear do we need?*

The group gear we need is
cooking gear, cleaning gear and a tent.

26. *What is group cooking gear?*

Group cooking gear
is enough billy cans and dixies
to cook the food on the menu.

27. *What is group cleaning gear?*

Group cleaning gear is soap, scourer (*i.e. pot mit*),
toilet paper and toothpaste.

SHELTER

28. *How do we sleep warm and dry?*

We sleep warm and dry using a tent or cave,
or a gunyah of bark or branches.

29. *Describe a good tent.*

A good tent is rain-proof,
roomy enough, light-weight,
and needs a floor or groundsheet.
It may also need a fly.

CAMPCRAFT

30. *Describe a good campsite.*

A good campsite has level grassy ground,
no branches overhead,
and is out of the wind and above the flood,
with wood and water handy.

31. *How do we light a fire in the rain?*
We light a fire in the rain
using dry kindling and graded fuel,
with a hat to keep the rain off,
and fan it to a blaze.

32. *Describe dry kindling.*
Dry kindling is
tiny sticks which point upwards,
or stringy bark or turpentine bark
rubbed into bull's wool.

HYGIENE

33. *What is camp hygiene?*
Camp hygiene means washing and latrines:
wash hands with soap and water
before meals and after using toilet paper;
wash up utensils in hot soapy water
and clean teeth after eating;
wash face and hands on rising,
and, on long camps, having bush baths.

34. *What is a latrine?*
A latrine is a bush toilet,
a hole, dug with boot, stick or tool,
well away from creek and camp.
Bury manure and toilet paper, then wash hands.

35. *What is a bush bath?*
A bush bath is sponging the body all over
with hanky, hot water and soap,
rinsing well-away from waterways,
and a cold plunge in the creek.

36. *What does rubbish disposal mean?*
Rubbish disposal means that
any plastic, tins or glass are taken home,
food scraps buried,
but paper may be burnt.

THE LEADER AND GOOD DISCIPLINE

37. *What is essential for bush safety and happiness?*
Good discipline is essential
for bush safety and happiness.

38. *What are the two rules for good discipline?*
The two rules for good discipline are
'Answer properly when you're spoken to'
and 'Obey, straight away'.

39. *What must a good leader do ?*
A good leader must be both friendly and strict,
control the group and look after them,
tutor them to look after each other,
prevent accidents by Safety First,
be able to give First Aid,
and find the way there and back.

40. *What is the leader's duty before setting out?*
Before setting out, the leader's duty
is to plan out everything;
leave every family with written directions
of where the party is going,
when they'll be back
and whom to contact if overdue.

THE SEVEN DEADLY DANGERS

41. *What are the Seven Deadly Dangers which lead to death in the bush ?*
The Seven Deadly Dangers
which lead to death in the bush
are getting lost, getting drowned,
violent collisions, snakebite,
burns, dehydration/heat exhaustion/hyperthermia,

and hypothermia.

(Hyperthermia is 'sunstroke' with dangerously high body temperature. Hypothermia is 'exposure' and dangerously low body temperature)

42. *How do we avoid getting lost?*
We avoid getting lost by
following a good leader,
not splitting-up the party,
navigating by creeks and ridges,
map and compass, sun and stars.

43. *How do we avoid drowning?*
We avoid drowning by
not trying to cross flooded rivers,
not swimming in cold or muddy water,
not after eating or for too long at a time,
not diving because of rocks, snags or weeds,
not bombing and breaking people's necks,
keeping to shallow water
and having a resuscitation officer.

44. *What are violent collisions?*
Violent collisions are falling over cliffs,
or being hit by falling rocks
or limbs from trees.

45. *How do we avoid snake bite and spider bite?*
We avoid snake bite and spider bite
by wearing boots at all times,
watching where we're walking,
not distracting the man in front
and using a torch at night.

46. *What is the First Aid for snake or spider bite?*
The First Aid for snake or spider bite (not red backs)
is crepe bandages bound as tight as for sprains
on top of the wound, and above and below it,
immobilizing the limb in splints,
re-assuring the victim,
treating for shock and getting a doctor.

47. *How do we avoid burns and scalds?*
We avoid burns and scalds
by not fooling with fire,
and never passing hot things over people.

48. *What is the First Aid for burns?*
The First Aid for minor burns
is to immerse them in icy water;
but for major burns
to cover them with a clean wet cloth,
treat for shock and get a doctor.

49. *Between October and March,
do the bushfire regulations allow cooking fires?*
Between October and March,
except during a Total Fire Ban,
the bushfire regulations allow cooking fires
if cleared around for 3 metres with an adult,
or cleared around for 2 metres
in a permanently constructed fire place.

50. *Recite the seven points on the Camping Checklist.*

CAMPING CHECKLIST:

1. Food: three proper meals a day.
2. Drink: tanking up with lots of tea.
3. Clothing: protection and modesty.
4. Shelter: tents or caves or gunyahs.
5. First Aid: for the wounded and sick.
6. Safety First: avoid accidents.
7. Hygiene: wash body; bury manure and scraps