Survival Checklist

Essential survival gear and priorities for the outdoors, from shelter and water to fire, signaling and first aid.

Shelter and Warmth

- [ ] An emergency bivvy, space blanket or lightweight tarp
- [ ] Extra insulating layers and a hat and gloves
- [ ] A rain shell or poncho to stay dry
- [ ] Paracord or strong cordage to build a shelter
- [ ] A foam pad or material to insulate you from the ground
  Cold ground draws away body heat faster than cold air

Water

- [ ] Carry enough water for the planned trip plus a reserve
- [ ] A water filter or purifier for refilling on the trail
- [ ] Purification tablets as a lightweight backup
- [ ] A metal container you can use to boil water
- [ ] Know how to find and treat water sources safely

Fire

- [ ] Waterproof matches or a stormproof lighter
- [ ] A ferro rod as a reliable backup ignition source
- [ ] Dry tinder stored in a waterproof bag
- [ ] A small fixed-blade knife for processing wood
- [ ] Know how to build a fire safely and put it out fully

Signaling and Communication

- [ ] A loud whistle to call for help
- [ ] A signal mirror for daytime signaling
- [ ] A charged phone and a power bank where coverage exists
- [ ] A headlamp or flashlight with spare batteries
- [ ] A personal locator beacon or satellite messenger for remote trips
- [ ] Tell someone your route and return time before you leave

Navigation

- [ ] A topographic map of your area
- [ ] A reliable compass and the skill to use it
- [ ] A GPS device or app with offline maps downloaded
- [ ] Note landmarks and your route as you travel
- [ ] Spare batteries or a charger for electronic navigation

First Aid and Tools

- [ ] A compact first aid kit suited to your trip
- [ ] Any personal medications and a list of allergies
- [ ] A multi-tool with a knife, pliers and screwdriver
- [ ] Sun protection, including sunscreen and lip balm
- [ ] High-energy emergency food rations
- [ ] Duct tape and repair items for gear and minor fixes