

EXTREME SURVIVAL

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Having gained this badge the members will:

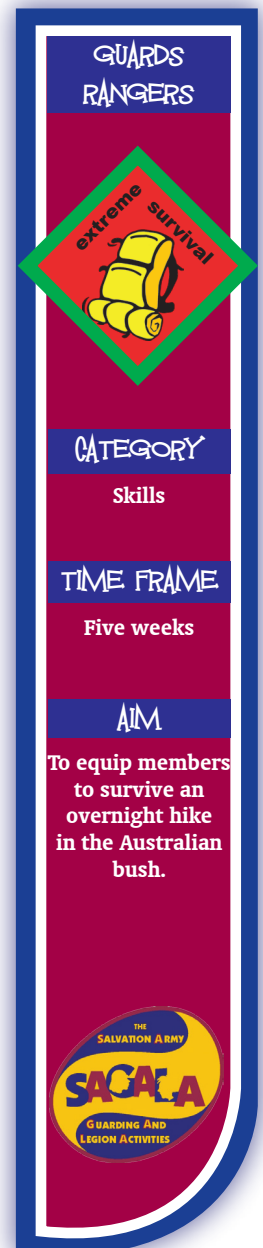
- demonstrate how to pack a kit for a bush hike;
- demonstrate skills in survival catering, first aid and shelter in the bush;
- demonstrate skills in estimation and orienteering;
- have experienced an overnight hike.



BADGE REQUIREMENTS

1. Know the essential elements of a kit/backpack for an overnight hike and how to pack it correctly.
2. Demonstrate basic skills in survival first aid.
3. Create a menu for an overnight hike and know how to prepare the food.
4. Construct a shelter for an overnight hike.
5. Know the international distress signal and how to use available material to send a distress signal.
6. Set a hike route using a map of the chosen area.
7. Learn how to estimate distances, heights and walking times.
8. Participate in an overnight hike: a hike of at least a 10 kilometre round trip with one night camp-out.
- 14+ optional challenge: a hike of at least a 15 kilometre round trip with two different overnight camp sites.

The Extreme survival badge assumes prior knowledge of some skills taught in the Bushbeat and in tents badges. It is therefore advisable to attempt this badge following the completion of the other two in the series.





Teaching ideas



1. Know the essential elements of a kit/backpack for an overnight hike and how to pack it correctly.

Members should practise packing a backpack and carrying it on their backs over a period of three weeks prior to going on an actual hike. The length of time wearing the pack should be extended each week. Groups may like to take mini hikes to allow members to get used to the weight of their backpack.

The kit for an overnight hike must be well planned so that the weight will be able to be carried by the Guard/Ranger. Set a maximum weight limit of 10 kilograms or one-fifth the body weight. Weigh the kit before starting out. If it weighs more than 10 kilograms unpack and think about leaving something out.

Only essentials are needed. The packing of the contents must be ordered so that things that are needed early in the hike are near the top and the things needed later are towards the bottom of the backpack.

The backpack should be made of lightweight, durable materials with inner and outer pockets and straps to hold necessary accessories. Good hiking backpacks have wide shoulder straps and a support strap for the lower back to avoid strain on the spine.

Shelter – depending on the expected weather conditions, members may choose between carrying a lightweight tent or a groundsheet used to make a simple shelter. A foam bed roll is the lightest ground protection on which to sleep. These items are normally strapped to the outside of the backpack. A sleeping bag may be optional in summer but a necessity in cooler months.

Food can be a very heavy item so it is essential to plan exactly what is going to be eaten and when. Remember that all rubbish needs to return home with you. Snacks need to be packed in an outer pocket for easy access. Main meals are packed inside the backpack with the last meal at the bottom and the first meal at the top. A small emergency ration pack should be included.

Drink – water is best but it is very heavy to carry. The purity of creek water can never be known so it is vital to know how much water you will need for cooking and a close estimate of what is needed for drinking. Water purifying tablets can be taken along as an emergency aid should you run out of water. Water can be carried in bottles balanced either side of the backpack.

Utensils and portable cooking equipment may be used at each meal time so need to be placed inside the backpack within easy reach.



Teaching ideas



Kit essentials

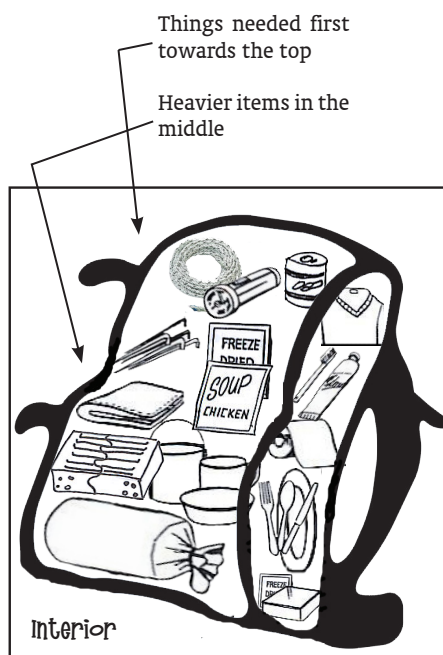
- Food
- Water
- Sleeping bag (optional)
- Lightweight tent/groundsheet
- Foam bed roll
- Cooking utensils
- Toothbrush/small paste
- Wet washer (in plastic bag)
- Insect repellent/sunscreen
- Poncho-style raincoat
- Spare clothes (jumper, socks)
- Waterproof matches
- First aid kit
- Torch (new batteries)
- Whistle
- Small tissue pack (for toilet)
- 3 x 1 metre lengths string
- Compass
- Map

It is a good idea to carry an amount of small coins for using a telephone or have a mobile phone for emergencies. The emergency mobile number is 112, which is activated even when no service or phone credit is available.

A quick reminder for packing a kit

- Always pack the same way so that items may be found quickly.
- Pack the items needed first last.
- Put soft things against your back.
- Use plastic bags to keep gear dry.
- Keep the weight down.

You may use **Handout 1** to reinforce how to pack a kit.





Teaching ideas



2. Demonstrate basic skills in survival first aid.

Refer to the 'Emergency First Aid Kit' section in the **Bushbeat badge**.

Members will actively learn the skills to treat the following health problems which may occur when hiking:

- sore feet/blisters;
- sunstroke;
- heat exhaustion;
- hypothermia;
- shock;
- fractures;
- ticks;
- leeches;
- snake bites.

Note: Treatment methods constantly change so check with a qualified first-aider or www.stjohn.org.au. The following information marked with an asterisk was obtained from the St. John's Australia website in February 2008.

sore feet

Precautions:

- wear strong shoes or boots;
- have tread-patterned soles;
- wear two pair of woollen socks to allow the feet to 'breathe', and also swell a little;
- don't wear brand new boots on a hike, break them in first;
- keep feet clean and dry (i.e. change to a dry pair of socks if they become wet or sweaty, hang the wet socks on the outside of the backpack to dry).



Blisters

The best way to treat blisters is to not get them in the first place.

Cause: Constant rubbing on the skin. This can be from loose-fitting shoes, hard parts of your shoes or stones in your shoes.

Treatment: Stop as soon as you feel a sore spot. Cover the spot with an adhesive dressing to stop the rubbing.



Teaching ideas



Sunburn

Wear a hat, suitable clothing and use a high SP factor sunscreen.

Heat exhaustion*

Symptoms: feeling hot, exhausted and weak; persistent headache; thirst and nausea; rapid breathing and shortness of breath; pale, clammy skin; rapid, weak pulse; giddiness and faintness. Heat stroke may develop.

Treatment:

- stop walking and lay patient in a cool shady spot with circulating air;
- loosen tight clothing and remove unnecessary garments;
- sponge with cold water;
- give plenty of fluids.

Heat stroke*

Symptoms: extremely high body temperature; mental confusion; can have seizure and become unconscious.

Treatment:

- follow DRABCD;
- apply ice or cold pack to neck, groins and armpits;
- cover with a wet sheet;
- ring 000 or 112 on mobile phones;
- if casualty is fully conscious, give fluids.

Hypothermia or Exposure*

Symptoms: Body temperature drops below normal; feeling cold; shivering; clumsiness and slow speech; apathy and irrational behaviour; slow pulse rate.

Warning: ring 000 (or 112 on mobile phones) if level of consciousness declines, shivering stops and pulse is difficult to find. Do not heat the patient's body in front of an open fire. Use a sleeping bag, blanket or body-to-body contact.

Treatment:

- follow DRABCD;
- remove casualty to a warm, dry place;
- protect the casualty and yourself from wind, rain, sleet, cold and wet ground;
- avoid excess activity and movement;
- maintain casualty in horizontal position;
- remove wet clothing;
- warm casualty – place between blankets or in a sleeping bag and wrap in a survival blanket or groundsheet; cover head to maintain body heat;
- give warm drinks if the casualty is conscious (do not give alcohol).

Shock*

Symptoms: weak, rapid pulse; cold, clammy skin; rapid breathing; faintness/dizziness; nausea; pale face, fingernails, lips.

Treatment:

- assess casualty – follow DRABCD, reassure, manage injuries (bleeding);
- ring 000 (or 112 on mobile phones);
- position casualty – raise legs over level of heart (unless fractured or a snake bite);



Teaching ideas

- treat any other injuries – stop bleeding, treat wounds, burns and immobilise fractures;
- ensure comfort – loosen tight clothing around the neck, chest and waist; maintain body warmth; if casualty is conscious and doesn't have abdominal trauma and unlikely to need an operation immediately give small amounts of water frequently; monitor and record breathing and pulse; place casualty in recovery position if there is difficulty in breathing, is likely to vomit or becomes unconscious.

Sprains*

Symptoms: swelling and bruising; extreme pain at the joint.

Treatment: If unsure whether it is a sprain or a fracture treat as for fracture.

- Follow DRABCD.
- Follow **RICE** management plan:
 - R – rest
 - I – ice or cold pack
 - C – compression bandage
 - E – elevation
- Seek medical aid.

How to apply a bandage on a sprained ankle

Make one turn around the ankle then go over the instep, under the foot, back across the instep and around the ankle again several times. Tuck the end back into the bandage. Metal clips are not to be used.



Fractures*

Symptoms: pain at or near the site of the injury; difficult or impossible movement; loss of power; deformity or abnormal mobility; tenderness; swelling; discolouration and bruising.

Treatment:

- follow DRABCD;
- control bleeding and cover wounds;
- check for fractures – open, closed, complicated;
- ask casualty not to move injured part;
- immobilise fracture – broad bandage to prevent movement of joints above and below the fracture; support the limb, passing bandages under the natural hollows of the body; place padded splint along injured limb; place padding between the splint and the natural contours of the body and secure tightly; check that the bandages

Teaching ideas

are not too tight or too loose every 15 minutes; for leg fracture immobilise foot and ankle with 'figure of eight' bandage; watch for signs of loss of circulation;

- call 000 (or 112 on mobile phones).

Ticks

Symptoms: itchiness; nausea.

Treatment: remove using fine pointed tweezers; if itchiness continues over a few weeks seek medical help.

Prevention: Apply insect repellent to skin and clothing, reapply every few hours.

Leeches

A thin dark worm-like creature that can attach to the skin when walking through damp undergrowth

Symptoms: blood loss.

Treatment: apply salt and the leech will fall off; wash the area and apply pressure to stop the bleeding; cover with a band-aid.

Snake bites

Symptoms: puncture marks; nausea; possible paralysis

Treatment:

- keep casualty calm and still;
- apply a broad, firm bandage from just above the fingers or toes and continue to bandage the whole limb to the arm-pit or groin;
- splint the limb and immobilise the limb by bandaging it to the body at the natural hollows of the body;
- ring 000 (or 112 on mobile phones), bring transport to casualty if possible.

Spider bites

Funnel web – treat as for snake bite.

Red-back spider – apply ice pack to bitten area and seek immediate medical aid.



3. Create a menu for an overnight hike and know how to prepare the food.

Members brainstorm appropriate foods to be carried on a hike and prepare a suitable menu for an overnight hike. Practise cooking various foods with a small stove to see which efforts are the most successful. It is too late to have a failure when the group is out in the bush.

The number of meals and the types of meals (e.g. breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks) for a hike will depend on the proposed departure and return times.



Seal your food in plastic bags. Boil the lot in one billy. Try peas, potato, carrot, egg. Try it at home — it really works.





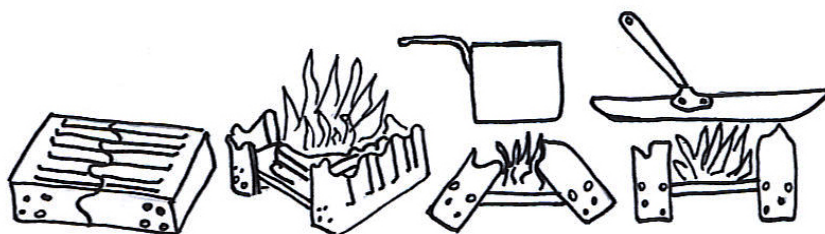
Teaching ideas

Foods need to be lightweight, energy sustaining and convenient to prepare with the most basic equipment. Perishable foods are unsuitable for hiking. Remember that any rubbish has to be carried home.

Utensils

The ideal cooking/eating utensil for hiking is a simple mess kit consisting of two or three components which have several purposes (i.e. a pot with a lid which may be used for preparing, cooking and/or eating food, with a nesting cup) and a folding knife, fork and spoon set. These items may be purchased at camping or disposal stores.

A portable stove allows the hiker to cook anywhere and in all climates without destroying the bush and risking the spread of fire. There are many varieties of these available through camping stores with varying costs. A very simple style is the folding hexi-stove which uses flammable tablets. When lit with a match the tablets burn long enough to heat water or tinned food.



Water will be used in every meal and for drinking throughout the hike. When practising cooking your meals, measure and record how much water was used so that a 'good estimate' can be made for the amount of water needed to be carried by each member for the actual overnight hike.

Meals

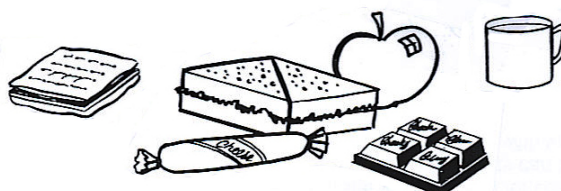
Breakfast needs to be energy giving as there is a full day of hiking ahead.

- Cereal – individual packs of Weetbix, porridge or variety pack cereals are ideal together with small long-life milk cartons;
- Hot food (optional) – frankfurts, baked beans or spaghetti, toasted bread;
- Drink – water, tetra-pak juice, sachet tea or coffee, sachet sugar.



Lunch may be a short stop in the day so it may not be convenient to cook food.

- Biscuits (Sao, Vita-weat, Ryvita or similar) or bread made with favourite filling, e.g. Vegemite, peanut butter/paste, Nutella;
- Cheese stick;
- Dark chocolate;
- Fresh fruit;
- Drink – water or energy drink.

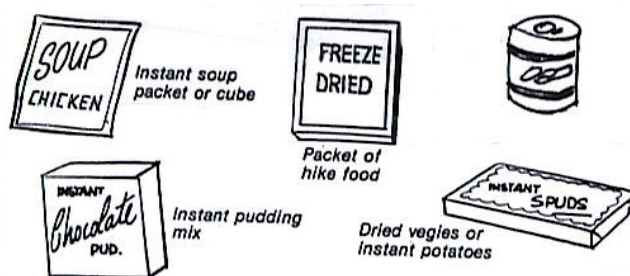


Teaching ideas

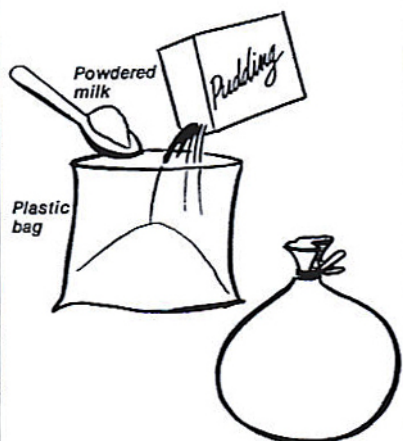


Dinner is prepared at the site of the overnight camp.

- Packet foods (to re-hydrate with boiled water) – instant soup, two minute noodles, freeze dried foods, dried vegetables or instant potato;
- Tinned foods – e.g. steak and vegetables, baked beans and frankfurts;
- Dessert – Instant milk pudding (made from packet/powdered milk), tetra fruit pack with long-life custard;
- Drink – water, tea or coffee.



Make up instant pudding in a plastic bag. Prepare at home.



Add water at camp. Shake up well in bag.
Let it set and eat from bag . . .

Supper

- Drink – e.g. Milo;
- Biscuit – portion control pack (i.e. 2 biscuit pack).

Snacks can be eaten during the hike to sustain energy. Supermarkets sell 'trail mix' which contains dried fruits and nuts which give high levels of energy. Other foods high in energy are sultanas, dried apricots, glucose lollies and dark chocolate. Place the snacks in small resealable plastic bags for easy handling.



Teaching ideas

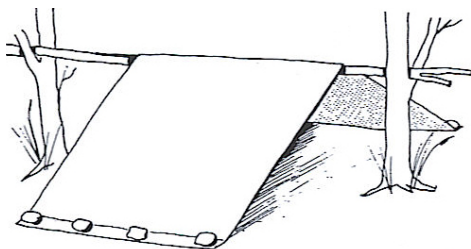


4. Construct a shelter for an overnight hike.

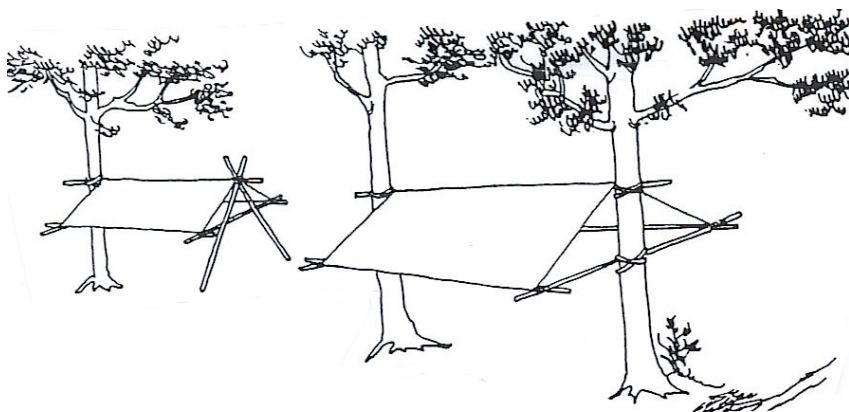
A shelter can be made from simple lightweight equipment;

- Tent: two members can share a 2-man tent and can also share the weight, e.g. one member carries the tent while the other can carry the pegs;
- Groundsheet/plastic sheet: the sheet can be suspended in various ways as illustrated in the following diagrams.

Use one tree plus cross poles or two trees if available. (Remember camping under trees in high winds is very dangerous and should be avoided.)



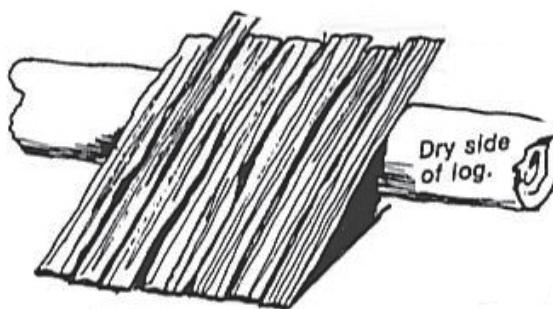
No rope or string required



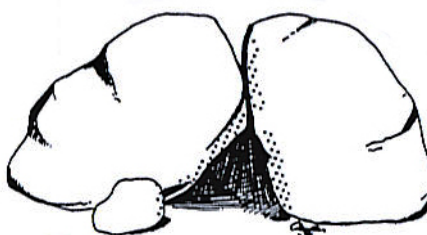
Rope/string required

Shelters from natural materials

- Strip of bark or branches placed against the dry side of a log

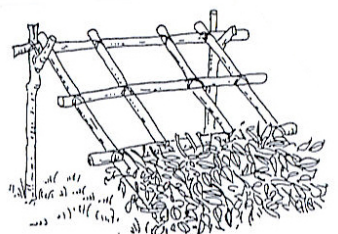
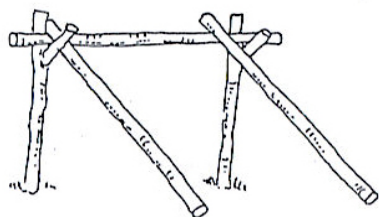


- A rocky cave or hollow



Teaching ideas

- Lean-to constructed of branches and leaves

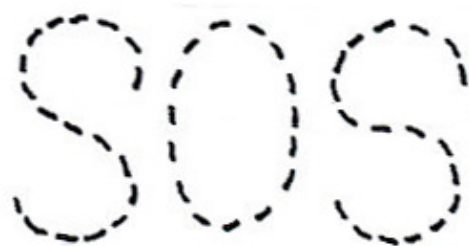


5. Know the international distress signal and how to use available material to send a distress signal.

The **International distress signal** is used by hikers to attract attention when they become lost or in times of emergency, e.g. serious injury, sickness, caught in a storm. It is a signal of any kind that is repeated three times, for example three distinct calls, three whistle blasts, three fires equally spaced, three flashes from a mirror, tin lid or torch.



Ground-to-air signals must be large enough to be seen by an aeroplane or helicopter. The letters SOS can be made by tramping the letters in the sand or snow or made from using branches, burned grass or any material that can be seen.



Practise making signals within your parade room (this is a drill only and should not attract attention – Emergency Service agencies are never pleased to attend ‘false alarms’).





Teaching ideas



6. set a hike route using a map of the chosen area.

Provide maps for members to choose an appropriate hike route for the group – members could work from copies of the same map or from maps showing different areas. Discuss the pros and cons of each route and decide which one will be the route used to complete **Badge requirement 8**.

Maps may be purchased from a variety of book stores, travel agents and service stations. National Parks and Wildlife Services have detailed maps showing walking trails indicating length of trail, expected time to walk the trail and the difficulty rating of the trail.

To set a hike the following things need to be considered:

- compass and map reading skills (ability to read contours, legends, grid referencing – see **Bushbeat badge**);
- the age and walking ability of members;
- the time of year/season and expected weather conditions;
- the time it will take to complete the hike; and
- a trained leader and/or competent adult (with a current Senior First Aid certificate) must be in charge of the group who are going on the hike.



7. Learn how to estimate distances, heights and walking times.

Estimations

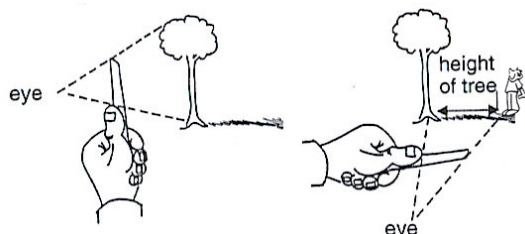
To estimate accurately, we need to know the measurements of various body parts. When hiking it is not possible to carry a ruler or tape measure, therefore if we can relate to certain items in our pack or on our bodies knowing their measurements, we will be able to use this information to measure other objects, e.g. how high is a cliff we need to climb.

You may use **Handout 2** to record personal details that can be used to estimate length and height.

Estimating heights

Lumberman's method

- Stand where you can see the whole object, e.g. a tree, a tower.
- Hold up an object such as a twig so that the top of the object (e.g. tree) being measured is in line with the top of the twig, then place your thumb on the twig where it is in line with the base of the object.
- Swing the twig at a right angle on the axis to your thumb.
- Instruct your partner to stand against the tree and he/she walks away, at a right angle to you, until he/she appears to be in-line with the end of the twig.
- Measure the distance between your partner and the base of the tree to find the height of the tree.

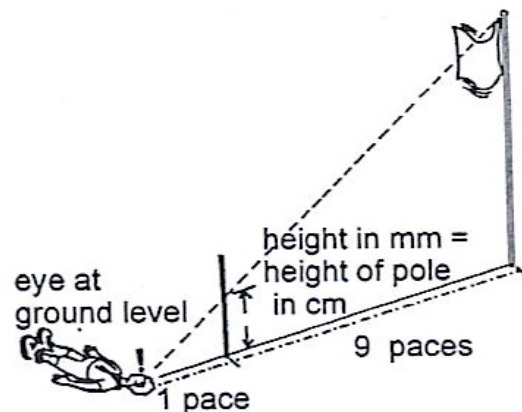


Teaching ideas



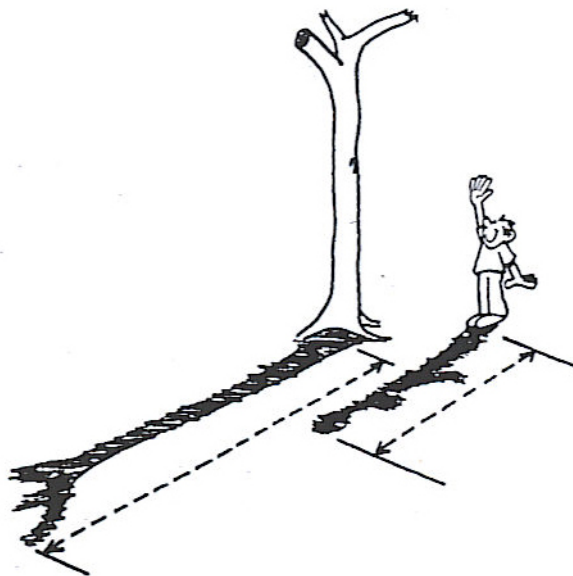
one in ten method

- From the base of the object a distance of nine units is stepped out. The unit may be of any convenient length, e.g. a stick, a pace.
- At the ninth unit mark the spot, then take a further unit making 10 in all.
- A pole is held vertically at the ninth mark and is sighted from the tenth mark.
- On sighting the tip of the object, a spot on the pole is marked where the line of sight cuts the pole.
- The height of this mark from the ground in millimetres equals the height of the object in centimetres.



shadow method

- Measure the shadow cast by a known height, e.g. a person;
- See how many times this shadow length will divide into the shadow of the object being measured;
- Multiply the number obtained by the height of the person to obtain the height of the object.

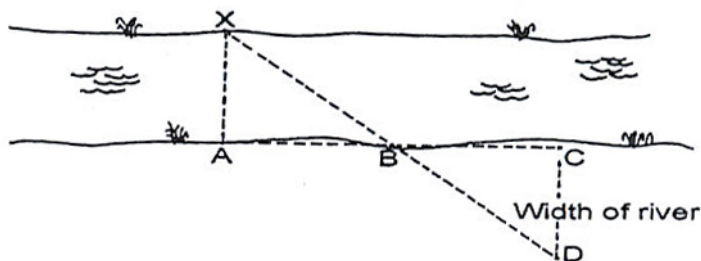




Teaching ideas

Measuring distance across a river

- Select a landmark such as a bush or tree on the water's edge on the opposite side of the river at a spot where the river has a fairly straight course. Call this spot 'X';
- Place a stone or peg at a point 'A' exactly opposite 'X'. Pace a suitable distance from 'A' along the bank to a spot 'B' then continue pacing to 'C' so that 'AB' equals 'BC'. Place stones or pegs at 'B' and 'C';
- At the point 'C', walk inland at right angles to the river bank until you reach point 'D' which is in line with 'B' and 'X'. Place another stone or peg at 'D';
- Measure the distance between 'C' & 'D' to identify the width of the river.



Estimation of Walking times

Naismith's rule (for average walker, medium backpack)

- Allow one hour for
 - 5 kilometre easy going
 - 3 kilometre easy scrambling
 - 1.5 kilometre of extremely rough country, deep sand, soft snow or thick bush
- Add one hour for
 - every 500 metres up
 - every 1000 metres down
- For every hour after 5 hours add an extra hour for fatigue
- Very experienced and very fit walkers can reduce the total by one third
- Always work out your time on your slowest, smallest or most tired member

Teaching ideas



8. Participate in an overnight hike: at least a 10 kilometre round trip with one night camp-out

14+ optional challenge: a hike of at least a 15 kilometre round trip with two different overnight camp sites

Members are to undertake a 10 kilometre hike with an overnight camp-out. Challenge members **14+** who are capable of the extra five kilometres and another night in the bush to attempt the 'extreme survival' experience.

Note: The *Activity Approval Form* must be completed and forwarded to DHQ no less than one month prior to this activity.

safety in the bush

Safety in the bush depends on thorough preparation, adequate equipment and clear-headed actions.

- Before starting off, leave details of the route and proposed timetable with Corps' leaders and family members, and be certain that they are aware of Emergency Services numbers. If the hiking party is overdue, the appropriate steps can be taken immediately to attempt a search.
- Do not undertake too much within the allowable time and realise the party's overall limitations.
- Solo walking is dangerous. A party of at least four is recommended. In case of an accident two can go for help while the other remains with the injured person.
- Obtain the best available maps and always carry a compass.
- Every hiking party must be in the charge of a competent leader, who should assume firm command on the appearance of any difficulty or danger, and who is responsible for keeping the group together.
- All members should know the intended route and should take notice of landmarks.

Hiking comfort

Personal health and well being is vital when hiking.

- Carry drinking water
- Avoid sunburn
- Use sunglasses
- Watch for poisonous plants and reptiles
- Avoid overheating – strip off outer layers of clothing as you warm up, replace when resting to avoid a chill
- Don't rush, set a steady pace
- Have spare socks handy to replace sweaty socks. Rest and air feet occasionally and inspect for the start of any blisters





Teaching ideas

Clothing

- Layer upper clothing to assist in heat regulation of the body
- Wear loose fitting long pants to help prevent scratches from low vegetation and protect from insect bites
- Wear a broad-brimmed hat for sun protection
- Rain gear – poncho-style is best as it can cover the backpack keeping all the gear dry
- Clothes need to be comfortable enough to sleep in

Footwear

- Socks – two pair (heavy over light)
- Boots – appropriate for the terrain, well broken in, properly fitted and waterproof
- Extra laces

Toilet/Washing

- One member of the group may carry a small, folding shovel which each member uses to dig a 'toilet' hole and then bury any human faeces
- A small amount of toilet tissue may be needed
- A wet washer (kept in a small plastic bag) together with a toothbrush and paste are all the requirements for personal hygiene in this situation
- Dishes/pots can be cleaned with sand or soil and rinsed off with a little water (detergent is harmful to the environment)

Optional Teaching ideas



Swimming in unknown water

When on a hike it is tempting to take a swim in a waterhole or creek.

- Be careful**
- check the depth of the water with a long stick
 - look for snags or weeds
 - never dive in
 - check tides and watch out for strong currents

Unexpected weather conditions

Always check the meteorological report for the entire time you will be on the hike. Sometimes the weather can change unexpectedly.

- Watch for**
- a sudden change in wind direction
 - the build-up of dark threatening clouds
 - a haze around the moon (usually indicates a storm or rain on the way)

Risky situations

- **Flooded creeks** – never risk lives in flooded creeks or rivers. Wait for the water to recede or find another route
- **Steep country and rocky slopes** – where the climbing becomes so severe that a member could fall, and such a fall be serious, proper rock-climbing safeguards must be taken or the route avoided
- **Fire hazards**
 - try to move to bare or burnt-out ground
 - do whatever you can to protect yourself from radiating heat: use wheel ruts, depressions, large rocks or logs for protection, or cover yourself with dirt or sand
 - do not run uphill or away from the fire unless there is a refuge
 - do not try to run through flames unless you can see what is behind them
 - take refuge in water at ground level, not in elevated water tanks
- **Electrical storm**
 - don't shelter under a tree or near anything else that could be a lightning conductor
 - in open country, squat down with feet together. The idea is to be as close to the ground as possible but to touch the least area
 - don't cover yourself with an umbrella or any object containing metal
 - first aid treatment – follow DRABCD and seek medical aid immediately

Handout 1 -

Guards/Rangers

Draw a line from each picture to the correct place it would be packed in a backpack.



Spare socks



Jumper
(if needed)



Matches



Billy



Knife, fork, spoon,
plate cup , bowl



Poncho Raincoat



Hike tent with cord



Lightweight
groundsheet

Pegs



Map



1st aid kit

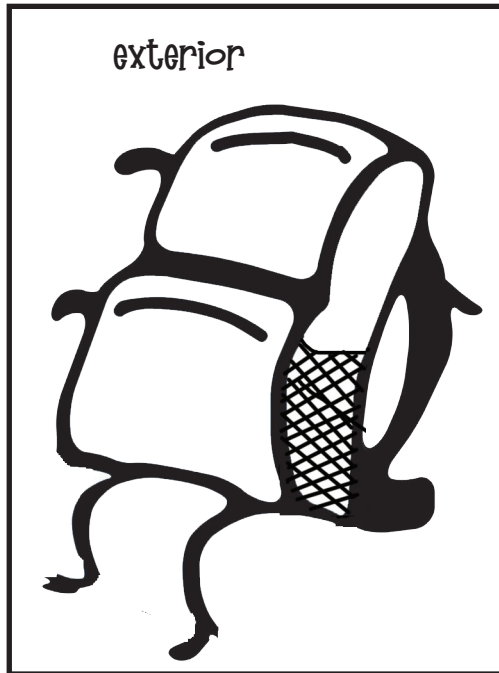


Tooth brush & paste

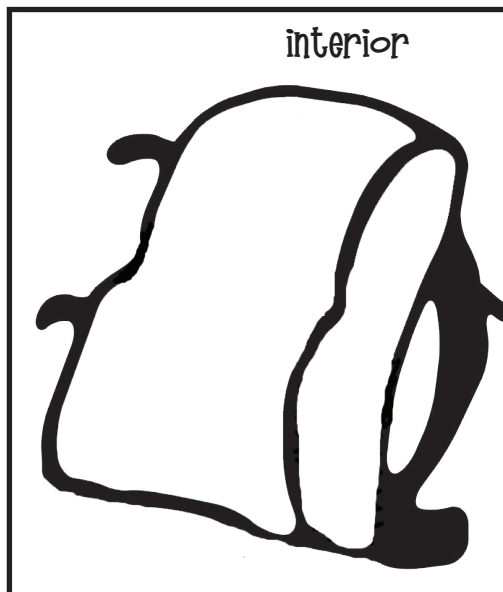


Toilet paper

exterior



interior



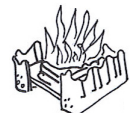
Food



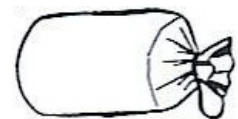
Emergency
rations



Water



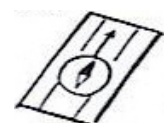
Hexi stove



Sleeping bag



Torch



Compass



Money

Handout 2 -

Guards/Rangers

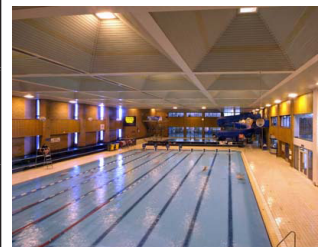
Personal measurement record to help make easy estimations

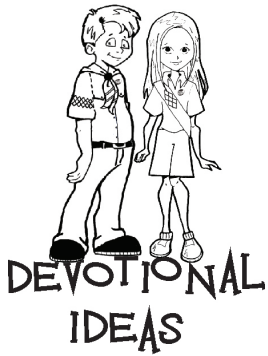
Height	
Length of arm, armpit to fingertips	
Extended arms, from fingertips to fingertips	
Length of thumb	
Span of hand, thumb to small finger	
Length of bare foot	
Length of shoe	
Length of pace on level ground	
Length of pace up hill	
Length of pace downhill	



Measurements of common sights in the neighbourhood that can be used for comparison of lengths

Cricket pitch	
Swimming pool	
Telegraph pole	
Telephone box	
Football field	
Tennis court	
Favourite car	





Devotional ideas



1. **Title:** Be prepared
Bible: 2 Timothy 3:16
Thought: God equips us for the right purpose
Supplies: Bible, packed backpack as per examples below

Have a packed backpack ready for a hike. Include in the backpack items that are necessary and items that aren't – leave some necessary items out. A list of possible items that could be included:

Women's Weekly or other magazine

Matches that are used

Map that is damaged

First aid kit (or one that's some of its contents are already used or empty)

Appropriate clothing

Empty can of food (e.g. baked beans)

Torch

Folding shovel

Nut/muesli bars (could be their wrappers only)

Choose different members to unpack one item at a time. Each item is displayed and members are asked to determine if the item is necessary and appropriate for a hike, or not. Separate the items into those that are necessary or appropriate and those that aren't.

Ask members if this backpack is adequately supplied for a hike. Ask members to identify what items are missing. Ask members to discuss why the items in the 'necessary and appropriate' pile are important for a hike.

A backpack is a little like life: if we aren't prepared for life, if it's packed with inappropriate things, we could find ourselves in trouble. Paul wrote to a young Christian telling him how to be prepared for life. Read 2 Timothy 3:16.

Paul said that the Bible prepares us for life. How does the Bible do this? (Allow some time for the group to discuss what the verse says and any practical advice the Bible gives.)

Ask God to help us understand how the Bible prepares members for life.

Devotional ideas



- 2. Title:** The blind leading the blind
Bible: Luke 6:39
Thought: Follow Jesus – He knows the way
Supplies: Bible, blindfolds and a simple maze or obstacle course

Game

Members play in pairs and all members are blindfolded. Each pair must work through an obstacle course or maze. Assign one of each pair as the 'leader' and the other member holds the 'leader's' elbow from behind. Allow members to attempt the obstacle course or maze until you sense their frustration, for a short time or they complete it.

Remove the blindfolds and discuss with the group what made the task difficult.

Was it harder to be a 'follower' and why or why not? (*The first person didn't know where they were going because they were also blindfolded.*) When someone follows a person who can't see it's easy for them both to get lost or hurt.

Read Luke 6:39.

These words of Jesus are about people who lead others on the wrong track. They are like blind people leading other blind people because they can't see the way either. They probably aren't physically blind, but they are unaware and don't know the best way to go. It's like following a leader on a hike when the leader doesn't know the way or hasn't adequately prepared for the hike. He/she hasn't studied the map; isn't aware of the obstacles that may be faced during the hike; haven't got enough supplies.

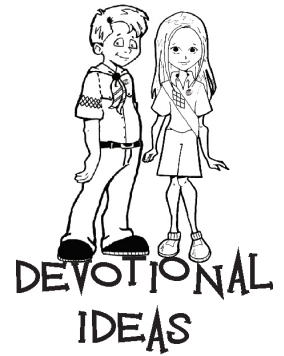
Maybe you know people who do things that are wrong and invite you to join them for example to shoplift, lie or gang up others. They are just like the blind people that Jesus was talking about. If you follow them you could get into trouble.

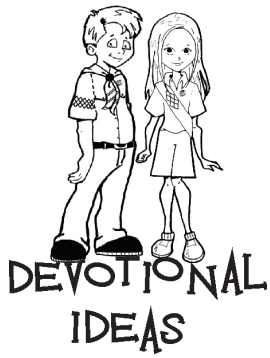
Think of the things that you have done this week. Were you led by the crowd or by someone who's 'popular'? Did you think for your self? Was there a better example you could have followed?

Read Luke 6:40

In this verse Jesus is saying that if we follow Him, do as He teaches, then we will become like Him. He is the best example we could follow. We learn about the example Jesus set, the life He lived, in the Bible. The books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John tell the story of His life and by reading these books we can know how to live like Jesus.

Prayer: Lord, help us not to behave as if we are blind. When people try to lead us the wrong way help us to question if we are following them blindly. Remind us that Jesus is the best way to go. Amen.





Devotional ideas



3. Title:

Someone to lean on

Bible:

Psalm 20:7, 37:5

Thought:

We can rely on God to support

Supplies:

Bible, walking stick (either a manufactured one or a firm natural stick)

Display the walking stick. In small groups, or as a whole, ask members to discuss how God is like a walking stick. Answers might include: strong, solid, supportive, able to test the ground ahead, give stability, clear the path, can lean on. Answers may be written on a chart or board.

Read Psalm 20:7. The Psalmist says that some people trust in chariots and horses. Chariots and horses can be defeated and broken; they can let us down. The same is true of a walking stick, but we can lean on God, trust God, all the time and He will never let us down or break.

Use Psalm 37:5 as a memory verse.

Prayer: Lord, help us to call on you for support when things are difficult for us. Help us to ask you for what we need. We know that our prayers will be answered.