

Essential Wilderness Skills For Beginners

by
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Introduction

To me, nothing is more exciting than spending quality time in the wilderness, especially when it is spent with people you care about. Therefore, the aim of this book is to inspire those of you with little or no wilderness experience to gain the knowledge and self-confidence necessary to spend time in the wilderness. A wilderness trip can be relaxing, but it can also be a way to strengthen relationships with your children, friends, and significant others. If you are able to increase your knowledge of how to take care of yourself and others when in the wilderness, you will feel more confident and may be able to enjoy your wilderness trips even more.



The information presented in this book is based on my 30 years of wilderness backpacking experience. These trips provided me with a solid understanding of basic and practical wilderness skills. My experience is from temperate and polar climactic zones, such as the conditions found in Canada, northern and central USA, and Europe. However, I have full respect for people's different viewpoints, and acknowledge that not everyone may agree with me on every point.

The blue underlined text throughout this book are external links, where you can find additional information on specific topics. If you are connected to the Internet and click on one of those links your web browser will open the link to the relevant text.

Take care and safe travels!

Erik C. Falk



Before you head into the wild

Planning and preparing a wilderness trip is an exciting and fun activity, and, in most cases necessary to have a safe and enjoyable trip.

Type of trip

What type of trip are you planning? Canoeing, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, hiking, backpacking or maybe another of the many ways to enjoy the nature? My fascination is wilderness backpacking. It is the activity I most enjoy and appreciate. Wilderness backpacking is exploring wild countries on foot, carrying all your gear in a pack on your back, and, as I see it, the best way to experience nature.

If you are a beginner, or have small children with you, do not fret. You can always pick a shorter more level trail or stay in an area that provides huts to sleep in. Huts have the advantage of enabling you to travel lighter, because you don't need, for example, to bring a tent. This way you are still experiencing the outdoors, but have less weight on your back and fewer worries if it is raining or snowing. However, I really encourage you, at some stage, to try backpacking.

Where to go

At some stage in your trip planning process, you have to decide where to go. You may already be familiar with the area you plan to visit, or maybe it's your first time. Many mountainous regions of the world are popular among backpackers, and several countries have well established trails designed specifically for backpackers and day hikers. If you need proposals and ideas of wilderness areas to visit, one good tool to use is, of course, the Internet. If you would like some of my ideas and tips on destinations, click on the links below.

Hiking and backpacking trips in:

- [US](#) (click to follow links)
- [Canada](#)
- [Europe](#)
- [Scandinavia](#)

