



WILDERNESS SURVIVAL WEEKEND



Thank you for choosing Island Alpine Guides for your wilderness survival skills training. This package contains important information to help you prepare, including a complete equipment list.

If you have any questions, please contact us by email at info@islandalpineguides.com or by calling (250) 400-2870.

We hope you find the course enjoyable and informative.

Jan Neuspiel
Director/Guide
Island Alpine Guides



WILDERNESS SURVIVAL WEEKEND

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed to prepare you for survival in the wilderness with minimal resources and will cover the essential skills for backcountry users travelling in south west British Columbia. You will spend the entire weekend in the field learning and practicing basic navigation with a map and compass, fire starting, basic foraging, tracking skills, and shelter-building. Your guide will also discuss survival psychology, pre-trip planning, risk management and emergency preparedness. After completion of the course, you will have the confidence to handle most survival situations.

MEETING TIME AND PLACE

Participants will meet at 9am on day one of the course at the [Forbidden Plateau trailhead](#) at the end of Forbidden Plateau Road, approximately 25km from downtown Courtenay. The course will take place in a forested area just outside Strathcona Provincial Park at approximately 1000m elevation. Day two will be spent hiking into Strathcona Park.

ITINERARY

The course consists of two full days in the forested wilderness. After meeting your group, you will hike into the training site (approx. 1-2 hours), and will spend the day practicing site selection, shelter building, fire starting, emergency response, mental preparedness, and incident management. That evening, you will spend the night in your emergency shelter. On day two, you will head out on a hike to practice navigational skills, route-finding, emergency communication skills like signalling, as well as some and tracking and edible plant identification. You will return to the trailhead by about 3pm for a course debrief.

FOOD LOGISTICS

This trip is not catered so you are responsible for providing your own food. You will need to bring the following: 1 breakfast, 2 lunches, 1 dinner, and adequate snacks. As participants will likely be sharing stoves and pots, coordinating a group dinner is recommended.

GROUP GEAR LOGISTICS

We recommend participants organize and share camping and cooking equipment. We will contact the group shortly before the trip to put participants in touch with each other to help facilitate the coordination of this. The guide will provide the equipment needed to do a food hang.

WILDERNESS SURVIVAL WEEKEND

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT LIST

Temperatures you will encounter on this trip could range from close to freezing at night to the high 20s during the day. The list below should work for these conditions.

Clothing

- Poly-pro, wool or silk underwear, top and bottom, one set
- Wool sweater or fleece or pile jacket
- Windproof/waterproof jacket and pants
- Wool, fleece or pile hat
- T-shirt or long-sleeved cotton shirt (white or other light colour)
- Lightweight hiking trousers of nylon or similar
- Lightweight gloves

Footwear:

- Solid, waterproof hiking boots which are sturdy enough to carry a heavy load
- Wool, fleece or pile socks, 2 pairs
- Poly-pro or silk liner socks, 2 pairs (optional)

Overnight:

- Sleeping bag that will keep you warm to 0°C
- Sleeping pad, thermarest style inflatable or closed-cell foam which is more durable
- Survival blanket or Bivy (SOL Escape Lite recommended as its breathability is well-suited to the west coast climate)
- Tarp, 2 x 3m, and 15m of cordalette no bigger than 5mm
- Ground sheet, 1 x 2m (can be lightweight plastic)
- Stove and fuel
- Matches/lighter
- Cooking pot

Personal:

- Backpack, internal frame pack with a 40-60L capacity, big enough to carry your gear
- Pack liner and/or stuff sacks (see notes about packing tips)
- Sun hat
- Sunglasses which block 100% UV
- Sunscreen (high factor for body, face, and lips)
- Water bottles or hydration system (1 litre minimum, 2 litres preferred)
- Eating vessel and utensils
- Headlamp (much better than hand-held flashlight)
- Knife (a full blade or folding style that locks)
- Compass (IAG has some loaner compasses if required)
- Personal kit (toothbrush, toothpaste, toilet paper - keep to a minimum)



WILDERNESS SURVIVAL WEEKEND

- Insect repellent
- Water purification (pristine drops, Aquatabs, UV pen, etc)

Optional but recommended:

- Small wilderness handsaw (folding saw, wire saw, etc)
- Gaiters
- Notebook and pencil
- Camera
- Bug net for your head
- Hiking pole(s) for the ascent/descent, and for increased variety in your emergency shelter set-up

Packing tips

Everything that must stay dry (particularly sleeping bag and clothing) should be packed in stuff-sacks lined with plastic bags. Place the plastic bag inside the stuff-sack, fill it with the contents and then use the plastic bag to squeeze all of the air out. Then twist shut the plastic bag, tucking the end inside the stuff sack, and finally, drawing stuff-sack closed. This method will compress your gear, waterproof it effectively, and the stuff-sack being on the outside prevents you from putting holes into the plastic bags, which would render them useless for waterproofing. Please be sure that all clothing and equipment is in good repair and functioning properly with crampons fitted properly to boots. Malfunctioning equipment uses up precious time for all participants. Please come properly prepared.

RISKS, DANGERS, HAZARDS AND WAIVER

All Island Alpine Guides courses and trips take place in an outdoor, wilderness environment. This means that as a participant you will be encountering various risks, dangers and hazards some of which include avalanches, cornices, crevasses, cliffs, trees, creeks, rockfall, difficult travel conditions, weather, illness, equipment failure, wild animals, becoming lost as well as the possibility of mistakes being made by IAG guides and instructors. To participate in these activities you will be required to read and agree to our [waiver](#) as part of the registration process. You will also be required to sign the waiver at the start of the course or trip. In doing so you will waive or give up certain legal rights including the right to sue or to claim compensation following an accident.

If you are a minor (under 19 years of age), we require your waiver to be signed by your parent or legal guardian. In this case, please download the appropriate waiver from the link above, print it, have your parent/guardian sign it, scan or photograph the completed copy and send it to info@islandalpineguides.com. Minor students arriving without a waiver signed by their parent or legal guardian will not be allowed to participate in the course or trip.