

Survival Skills

test equipment to gain woods wisdom



When deciding what to take along in your survival pack, ask yourself the following questions: Have you practiced and mastered using the piece of equipment in a controlled environment as well as in various weather conditions? Are there any limitations to the equipment that you need to be aware of? Have you tried different brands or varieties of equipment to see what best suits you and the conditions of your trip?

One reader, Mark F. Stuart, recently shared a concern about waterproof matches. In his experience, these have not worked because the striker on the box did not work when wet. Mark found “strike anywhere” matches kept in a waterproof container to be a more useful tool. It is always smart to keep any fire-making materials in water-tight containers. I have always had success with my waterproof matches because I have stored them with their striker in a waterproof container.

Match technology is not foolproof, especially when water is present. If you decide to use “strike anywhere matches,” test them on a variety of surfaces, wet and dry. Experiment with the matches in ideal conditions and then try them in windy and rainy conditions. Check to make

sure the containers you put them in are durable and waterproof.

In previous articles, I have mentioned carrying a lighter or secondary source for starting a fire. It is important to carry at least one source on your person and one in your pack. If you’re around water, add more back-up sources. It is important that you find equipment you feel comfortable with and confident about. Testing your skills and equipment before heading outdoors is the best way of turning your survival knowledge into woods wisdom. 🌲

–Shawn Grose