

78 Skills Everyone Should Know

by Jeremy Knauff

Survival is based largely on two things: a positive mental attitude and knowledge. With those two covered, you can make up for any lack of tools. Knowledge doesn't break, wear out, and short of forgetting a thing or two, you generally can't lose it.

Below, I've compiled a list of skills I think everyone should know. This is by no means a "complete" list because there is always room to learn more, and the more you know, the greater your chances of survival. But this will give you a solid foundation and a far broader skill set than most people. Everyone should know how to:

1. Drive a stick shift
2. Swim
3. **Start a fire without matches or a lighter**
4. Build a garden
5. Use herbal remedies
6. **Produce beer/wine**
7. Build your local community
8. Tan leather
9. **Cure/smoke meat**
10. **Make soap**
11. **Construct animal/fish traps**
12. Make activated charcoal
13. Survive hypothermia
14. Properly load a backpack
15. Conduct basic repairs (home, auto, equipment, etc.)
16. **Operate a ham radio**
17. Defend yourself without a weapon
18. Identify surveillance
19. Build a rainwater collection system
20. **Weld**
21. Accurately fire an arrow
22. **Dehydrate food**
23. Construct snowshoes
24. Build a raft with a tarp
25. **Navigate using the stars**
26. Right an overturned raft
27. Build with stone/brick (basic masonry)
28. Cut down a tree with an ax
29. **Forage for food**
30. Sew and/or make clothing
31. Pilot a boat
32. Shoot a firearm accurately
33. Find water
34. Utilize camouflage
35. Construct a pond
36. **Can food**
37. Ski
38. Dig a latrine
39. Build with wood (basic carpentry)
40. Determine authenticity of gold and silver
41. Rappel

42. Follow a trail/tracking
43. Use less-lethal weapons (baton, stun gun, pepper spray, etc.)
- 44. Metal working (blacksmith)**
45. Lose a tail
46. Operate power tools
47. Construct a splint
48. Open a can without a can opener
49. Drive a motorcycle
- 50. Construct a net**
51. Identify animals by tracks and/or scat
52. Patch a tire
- 53. Reload ammunition**
- 54. Build a bow and arrow**
- 55. Administer first aid**
56. Identify venomous snakes
- 57. Accurately fire a slingshot**
- 58. Make candles**
59. Raise fish (for food)
- 60. Distill water/alcohol**
- 61. Hot wire a car**
- 62. Cook without a stove**
63. Survive heat injuries
64. Raise livestock
65. Find tinder
66. Create fertile soil
- 67. Make charcloth**
68. Properly store food
69. Survive a riot
- 70. Sharpen a knife**
71. Butcher livestock
- 72. Purify water**
73. Make leather products (sheathes, holsters, boots, etc.)
74. Hunt and fish
75. Cast bullets
76. Maintain a bee hive
77. Use hand tools
- 78. Tie a knot**