

While the ability to improvise is a useful skill in survival, do not use it as an excuse for ill preparedness. Carry what you need (self sufficiency) and seek the knowledge to properly use those resources (self-reliance).

- Cold water immersion (plus flotation)

## RULES AND PRINCIPLES OF IMPROVISING

- Six simple steps make up the improvising process similar to the six step planning process described in Chapter 2.
  1. **Size up the situation.** Determine your needs.
    - What is your priority? Shelter? Fire? Medical?
    - What will harm me or kill me first?
    - How was it done in early or primitive times?
  2. **Identify contingencies.** Could the situation get worse if I don't improvise something? If so, how bad could it get?
  3. **Determine your goal.** Exactly what do I need and what's the time frame?
  4. **Inventory your resources.** Available materials and tools.
  5. **Build a plan.** Consider the alternatives: What can I use instead?
    - Keep it simple, and think about simple machines.
    - Select the alternative providing the most efficient use of your materials, time and energy.
  6. **Take action.** Make your product durable and safe. Remember the real priorities and necessities of life.
- Be cautious of expending more energy on improvisation than the benefits gained from the finished product.
- Consider the following when improvising:
  - What normally works or does the job? Focus on function, be ingenious.
  - How is it constructed? Think basic, it's not a watch.