

Escape and Evade Basics

(This is a quote from the Honor Graduate of Ft. Bragg's S.E.R.E. (Survival, evasion, resistance, escape) school. Brian Adams is the number one expert in the country!) This is what it all boils down to... They want to find you, and you fix it so they can't.

To find you they have to use their senses. But you become one with your environment--- invisible and inaudible, so their senses won't work. Confuse them and they can't think. Attack them, Harass them, trap them, destroy their minds, then their hearts, and finally some of their tired, beaten bodies, and the only thing that WILL work is their emotions. Then, You own them.

Stealth is your great ally. Speed is only used for emergencies. Many people think that the idea in escaping and evading is merely to put distance between you and your pursuers. That's wrong--- with one exception. In this game of life and death, stealth, and the ability to scheme are relative. It's them against you. In the beginning of the chase, flat out speed often works to your advantage, because it forces them into hot pursuit immediately, so they never get a chance to organize.

Even if you are running scared, so that the more lead time you have the better you like it, the answer may not be for you to run faster, but to make them run slower. Take at least one member of their party out and the rest will slow down to a crawl. When they start out after you with superior numbers, better weapons and dogs, they will press on and enjoy the chase. As soon as one of them dies, all will scare, and start thinking maybe this isn't fun after all.

DON'T PANIC; Stay cool! If you Panic you lose the ability to scheme and plan. Then you are dead meat. You have to know the power of the enemy and plan for every possibility. Don't just move. Think. Scheme. You must be able to PRECISELY assess the situation and then Plan and scheme around the facts.

Never make a maneuver that requires a strength you don't have or a weapon you don't own. On the contrary, Force THEM into over-extending, hurrying, and running scared. Why Tangle with them when they are fresh, confident and ready to fight. Wait. Sooner, or later, they will make a mistake.

The secondary factor is your physical condition and how well you maintain yourself as you escape.

Finally, distance is helpful, but remember--- ONLY HELPFUL.

Hiding in Water

DO NOT attempt to hide in Water. Every War movie from Rambo on back, puts the hero into the drink. He breathes through a reed while they pass, and then comes out behind them. That's show biz; Here's real life:

You go into the water. If they have dogs, the doggie will turn and say, "this is where he went into the drink because I can't smell him anymore." (Even if you have bathed 100%, you develop Maggot breath in the woods, and no dog could miss it.)

Then the Handler will fan left or right and find a place for the dog to pick up your trail on one side of the bank or the other. If they find no trail, they know you continued to bathe. They will find you. "But," you say, "you're hidden under a bunch of sacred lilies, Which they don't dare to disturb, so they can't see you." (yeah, right.)

So--they will just wait you out. Water takes away your body heat at a phenomenal rate, about 7 times faster than air. Your natural body temperature is about 98.6 degrees. Even if the water is a comfy 74, in time you will suffer from hypothermia. They will wait, and you will freeze. Even if they didn't have time to wait (but they certainly will...you are their priority), detection is a big problem. You have to get deep enough so they can't see you through the water. You also have to breathe. Now, we already know that you wouldn't be in the water if you didn't believe in fiction, so you just happen to have with you a special camouflaged hose six feet long.

At first you breath fine. But then it becomes labored. Why? You exhale carbon dioxide, which does not clear the hose, so you breathe back in your own carbon dioxide, and re-use the unexpended oxygen... you run out of air. You end up cold and sucking gas as you bubble to the top. Yes, water hideouts are great, but only in the movies...

Finally, there's the one about running in the creek. Then a scent dog can't track you and you get away. No,no. First, you run a tremendous risk of injury travelling in creeks because all the rocks on the bottom are slippery. You'll think somebody designed them just for breaking ankles. Second, you move more slowly in water than you do on land. Anybody can walk faster on the bank than you can run in the water... And you will make God's own noise while running. Hypothermia is, again, a problem, and at very least you lose calories, and therefore stamina. The creek getaway is an armchair dream; it won't work either.

Hiding In Trees

If you go up a tree, the enemy will make a monkey out of you. As you sit at home and think about it, treetops are alluring. Here's the scenario: With a slingshot you shoot a shot weighted fishline over a high limb. The fishline is tied to a parachute cord (550 lbs test) and you pull it over. With your foot in the loop on one side of the line, you Hand-over-hand up the other until you're into the tree tops. Then you connect tree to tree, and you befuddle the whole Posse. Bull; it really goes like this:

You finally get up in the trees and, miracle-- the branches are thick enough to connect. It takes a long time to pull this off so you lose lead time, and it is tiring. Also you could have fallen on your Butt and broken something, but you made it! Now, you're ten-twenty trees away, and they arrive.

The dogs either bark tree'd or stop and look up. So the posse fans out and goes heads up also. You don't dare move. If you happen to have a gun and shoot, you'll kill one, and the other 19 will venilate you. You are cornered.

They WILL find you, day or night, because they know you can't move. If you do.. they will probably kill you (weapons or the fall). Yes, the tree plan sucketh. Ask any dead bear or coon that has ever been tree'd---DONT TAKE TO THE TREES.

Food

You can't evade if you don't preserve yourself. If you let your diet go or get a case of food poisoning, you're history. You have to eat. No 7-11's in the woods, so you will have to go native, and eat what's available.

Most often in an E&E situation you must feed yourself on the run. Snake, birds and rodents are great, But it takes a ton of lead time to catch them. You are better off with ants, Termites and grubworms, because these are plentiful and take very little stopping time to catch and prepare.

Even grasshoppers take some time and energy to catch. Ants, termites and grubworms are the fast food of the jungle. Just think of this as the escapee's Kentucky Colonel. You can even sing, "We do termites right."

Turn over a rock and catch a bunch of ants on a leaf or piece of paper. Scoop them into a cup, add water, heat 'n serve. It will taste sweet. Break off a bottom chunk of wood to find termites, and flick these into the same cup. Incidentally, replace the log so that trackers won't know what you're eating. Add water, boil; enjoy.

Grub worms go down like a large pill. Break off the head and swallow the body with a swig of water. These are best because the fat content provides you with energy.

With enough lead time developed to enable you to build a small fire, you can upgrade your menu. Rodents, birds, squirrels, etc, make great meals. A fat rat isn't much less than a skinny rabbit. I am not in favor of snakes because the risk isn't worth the low fat diet they provide.

Birds can be snared alright, but they take a long time to prepare, and you have to boil any carrion-eater because they are full of parasites. Fowl are wonderful to eat, but they make a racket you would not believe when snared.

Plants are another chapter entirely, but as a rule grasses are edible unless they have saw toothed edges; this will tear up your digestive system. Avoid eating any plant with a milky sap, except dandelions, which are fine to eat cooked or raw.

Evasion - Celestial Navigation

Many of the things you will need to know are covered in Site Selection and Patrolling. Remember these things:

- Do not cross open areas
- Don't walk across the tops of hills, walk around them. Freeze if you see or hear an aircraft.
- Cross roads in curves, not on straight-aways.

- Parallel streams, rivers and roads if necessary, but be very cautious when doing so
- Avoid all habitated areas (traditional method).
- Travel at night, sleep during the day.
- Sleep in thick inaccessible wooded areas. Crawl under bushes to get into the center of thickly wooded areas. If traveling through populated areas you must adopt the customs of the people.
- Don't linger in one area. It arouses suspicion and authorities may be called to investigate.
- Alternate Method - Steal clothing from houses when no one is home. Try not to let them know what you took.

Keep a clean, neat set of clothes rolled up and protected. Change into these when you come to a populated area. Keep your sleeves rolled down and wear gloves when traveling through woods and fields. It is not hard to keep from getting cuts and scrapes when you are out for a day or two camping. It is much harder when you have to traverse hundreds of miles. After a few days you will be covered with scratches, insect bites, and torn, soiled, clothing.

It is very hard to look like anything but a vagrant but that is what you must do. The authorities will be looking for someone who looks like they have been traveling on foot. You want to look clean cut if you are in a town, like a farmer if you are in the country, or a factory worker if you are near shipyards, factories, etc.

The alternate method allows moving from one habitated area to another. If you have the balls to pull this off it could be much simpler than trying to avoid the enemy in the woods. You can't go around asking directions in a foreign tongue if you don't want to be noticed. You must find a place where you can blend in and observe the actions of others. If you are sitting outside, it helps to have a newspaper or book to pretend to look at. Get one from the trash. be very careful when trying to steal. If you are caught it will mean more than a jail term. If you are caught by a homeowner or proprietor, don't just run. Try pleading your situation to them. If you are a foriegner fleeing from an occupying army or unpopular gov't troops you may find sympathy. In Central America, you will be viewed as a rich yankee and shot for your shoes! It all depends on the situation. Rural farming people are distrustful of outsiders in any country. If you can win them over, they are also more friendly. They work at farming, animal husbandry, etc. and don't depend on nor expect the kindness of others. Poor urban dwellers will probably rob you or turn you in for a reward. Use your knowledge of the people to survive. You can see why there is less danger if you choose to make your own way through the wilderness. But it has it's own difficulties, shelter, clothing, food and other necessities are very difficult to come by with a knife, compass, and the clothes on your back.

If you are armed you may be able to take a road checkpoint, or other unaware small party of soldiers/civilians. Take their clothes, vehicle, food, weapons and simply haul ass as far as you can. Then strike out over the country again.

If you come to a road check point it may be a good idea to watch them for a while. Sit back in the woods and see what they do.

Celestial Navigation

Now is the time to learn to do this. Don't wait until it is necessary to learn basic constellations.

In the northern hemisphere you will need to find only one star. The hardest thing for some people is to forget myths they have learned over the years about certain stars and constellations. The ones we will discuss are the North Star, Big Dipper, Little Dipper, Cassiopea, and the Southern Cross. Many people if asked to find ANY constellation will point to the Pleiades and call it the little dipper. If you don't know the difference, get a star chart and find these constellations.

The North Star is important because it never moves. It is always in the same place -- the north sky. It is the very end of the handle of the little dipper. You can find it this way, or if the dipper is below the horizon, locate it by using the big dipper. Measure the distance between the two stars that form the end of the 'pan' Now draw a straight line through those two stars. Measure along that line 5 times the thickness of the pan. That is where the North or Pole star is located. To check your work, if you are close to 30 degrees latitude, the north star should be three hand widths above the horizon. The farther north you go, the higher it will be in the sky. On the north pole, it would be almost over head. Near the equator it is invisible, and it's location must be approximated by looking for the big dipper or cassiopeia.

In the southern hemisphere, you can find due south by looking for the southern cross. It rotates around the south pole. If you draw a line from the top of the cross straight through the bottom and on across the sky, the line will pass through a due south point. Remember this, if you are about -30 degrees latitude, the imaginary 'South Star' will about 3 hand widths above the horizon. There is no southern pole star.

Sun Navigation

Take a stick and push it into the ground straight up. Place small rock on the tip of the shadow that is cast. Wait about 20 minutes and place another small rock on the tip of the 'new' shadow. Now draw a straight line between the two rocks. This line points east - west. Stand with your left toe on the first rock and your right toe on the second. You are facing north. Think of it this way -- if the sun moves from east to west, then the shadow moves from west to east, right?

Take a small stick, pencil or something in the fold between your thumb and hand. Hold your palm up and flat. Tilt the stick about 15 degrees toward the center of your hand. Face due east. Look at the point on your hand where the shadow falls. Divide the hand into 12 hours, starting at the wrist and moving clockwise around to your index finger, 12:00 noon being about where your little finger meets your hand.

The place where the shadow falls is the time of day.