



Fundamental Bushcraft Course with Ray Mears

Pre~Course Information

Preparing your path to discovery...



THE COURSE SITE, FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT PROVIDED

The Course Site

This course will be conducted from an expedition style camp set amongst the beautiful English woodland of a large, private estate in East Sussex. It is a hidden gem and a wonderful example of ancient British woodland, containing staggering specimens of Oak, Beech and Yew trees. Being England's oldest deer park, it really does feel wild and it's not hard to see why some of the most eminent figures in British history chose to spend some of their leisure time here. Henry VIII hunted here on several occasions, as did, on one occasion, his daughter Elizabeth I, spending six days hunting in 1573.

With three species of deer, foxes, badgers, hares - not to mention the array of bird life it is blessed with, your time spent here is guaranteed to be an experience in itself.

Although there are public footpaths in some areas of the estate, it is little known and in general is very secluded.

Having met in Tunbridge Wells, driven in convoy to the estate and parked, we will walk 900 metres to the camping area where you will have space to set up your personal camp. This beautiful area is made up mainly of broadleaf deciduous trees with plenty of flat, level areas for you to set up a tent and more than enough trees to string a tarp or a hammock between.

As well as your own camping set-up, there will be a communal area which will be used both for lectures as well as coffee breaks. Here you will find a circle of logs for seating, a black board, a fire, a kettle and a brew box.

A thorough camp tour will be given on your arrival to help you familiarise.

Catering

We will provide all food for you during the course which will be served at our camp kitchen. This is a simple arrangement with a table and cooking equipment which is protected from rain by a large canvas tarp strung up between trees. There will be a fruit bowl here at all times for your use. For breakfast there will be a selection of cereals and some bread that you can toast over the fire. Depending on the weather, lunch will be either a buffet with a selection of cold food or a hot alternative. Dinner will be a tasty, nutritious and filling hot meal. If you have any dietary requirements then please contact us as soon as you can.

Some meals however, will be prepared by you and the other course participants, giving you the opportunity to do some outdoor cooking. In these instances we will provide a well-stocked 'kitchen box' containing chopping boards, knives and other useful items. A set of stainless steel billy cans will also be provided for use over open fires.

Fresh drinking and washing water is always available in our camp as we have a large water bowser. We have several jerry cans distributed around the camp in convenient areas for your use.

For refreshments, we provide a communal brew box supplying tea, coffee, milk, sugar, hot chocolate, fruit squash and biscuits.

Communal washing bowls are also provided along with sponges and washing up liquid, soap and a nailbrush.

Toilets and Showering

There are two latrines available which are located approximately 600m downhill from camp. The location and distance have been carefully chosen in order to preserve the sensitive spring water sourced from this very special course site.

The latrine is simply a trench dug into the ground in a secluded spot, just like you would use when on a trip in the wilderness and away from facilities. We provide a container with toilet paper, hand gel and matches. This is a hygienic, easy and practical method.

If you would like to have a shower, we have a canvas bag shower in a private area and a bucket for heating water over the fire. You may find it useful to bring some flip flops or similar to avoid getting your feet dirty while showering.

Equipment

The following items will be provided by Woodlore for your use during the course:

Tarp

A tarp is a waterproof sheet that provides a very simple way to form a shelter from the elements. You will be taught how to erect a tarp properly and set yourself up comfortably for the night.

Fixed blade knife

Each student will be given a [Morakniv Companion Heavy Duty MG Knife Knife](#) to use, which is theirs to take home at the end of the course. Students who are under the age of 18 will not be able to take cutting tools away from the course unless there is an adult who can receive it on behalf of them at the completion of the course.

Tools

A leather tool roll will be issued to you during the course. It will contain several items that are necessary for various tasks during the week. It will include: a [Bahco Laplander Folding Saw](#), a [Steel Striker](#) and piece of flint, a [Fire Stick](#), a [Fallkniven DC4 Diamond/Ceramic Whetstone](#) and a [S.Djarv Hantverk Spoon Knife](#). This must be returned in good order at the end of the course.

We also have very well stocked first aid kits, fire extinguishers and fire blankets for your safety kept in our store tent on site.

Please note that the use of axes is not permitted on this course.

If you wish to use a mobile phone during the course, please consider the other members of the group and switch it on to silent mode.



CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

This clothing and equipment list is designed to help you decide which items to bring and to ensure that you have the best experience possible. Having the right kit will make your experience more enjoyable and enable you to focus more on learning.

In the past we have been asked by clients for help in sourcing certain items of clothing and equipment. This list therefore includes options stocked by Woodlore which have been tried and tested by Ray Mears and the Woodlore Team. There is of course no obligation to buy from us and we will be delighted to offer you advice and guidance to ensure your preparation goes smoothly. With this in mind, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us, even for the slightest query.

All items listed in red are essential for this course. All other items are just recommendations.

ITEM:	SUITABLE OPTION STOCKED BY WOODLORE:	✓
<p>BASE LAYER</p> <p>What you wear next to the skin is of course dependent on the weather you are experiencing at the time. In midsummer it may only be necessary to wear a t-shirt, but if you are attending a course in spring or Autumn it would be wise to bring something more substantial such as a woolen thermal layer. That way, you are prepared should there be a cold spell.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodlore Organic Cotton T-Shirt 35th Anniversary or • Woolpower Ullfrotte Original Zip Turtleneck 200g and • Icebreaker Anatomica Boxers with Fly 	✓
<p>MID LAYER</p> <p>This should be sturdy, warm and comfortable. A pullover will suffice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fjallraven Singi Trekking Shirt or • 5.11 Tactical Long Sleeve Shirt and • Swannndri Ranger Wool Bushshirt 	✓
<p>OUTER LAYER</p> <p>This should be waterproof and windproof. Mute, natural colours will increase your chances of observing wildlife closely.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swazi/Ray Mears AEGIS Tahr XP Anorak or • Bergans Super Lett Jacket or • Buffalo Systems Mountain Shirt 	✓
<p>TROUSERS</p> <p>Lightweight, quick drying cotton trousers are best. Jeans are not suitable, being cold, restrictive and slow-drying.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fjallraven Vidda Pro Regular Trousers • Fjallraven Barents Pro Shorts 	✓
<p>FOOTWEAR</p> <p>Footwear should be sturdy, give ankle support and have good grip. You will find it most useful to bring a lightweight pair of boots or trainers for dry conditions as well as a pair of waterproof boots in case the weather is bad. Another option, in the event of wet conditions is to wear waterproof/breathable socks inside your dry weather boots.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hanwag Tatra Top GTX Boots or • Rogue RB-2 Light Trail Boots and • Thorlos Socks or • SealSkinz Socks 	✓
<p>SUN HAT</p> <p>You may wish to bring a sun hat if you are easily sun burned.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tilley T3 Cotton Duck Hat 	✓
<p>WOOLLEN HAT</p> <p>The temperature could drop suddenly at any time of year and combined with dampness, it can get rather chilly. A woollen hat can make all the difference to your comfort when sleeping outside or standing still for a while.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possum Fur and Merino Wool Beanie Hat or • Fjallraven Forest Flat Cap 	✓
<p>WARM SLEEPING BAG</p> <p>Please ensure you bring an adequate sleeping bag. If you are purchasing a bag, go for one that is rated to be warmer than you think you need, you can always open it or use it as a duvet if it is too hot.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ray Mears 3-Season Sleeping Bag - Osprey or • Ray Mears 4-Season Sleeping Bag – Golden Eagle or • Ray Mears 3-Season Down Sleeping Bag – Black Bear or • Ray Mears 4-Season Down Sleeping Bag – Grizzly Bear 	✓
<p>LIGHTWEIGHT TENT OR SIMILAR SHELTER</p> <p>You should bring some kind of shelter in which you can spend the night of your arrival. The other nights out you will have the opportunity to either sleep under a tarp (provided by Woodlore) or a natural shelter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hilleberg Tent or • MSR Tent or • Hilleberg Tarp XP 10 or • Fjallraven Abisko Tarp - Pine Green 	✓

<p>GORE-TEX / BREATHABLE BIVI BAG</p> <p>You will need a bivi bag as we will be building shelters that require one during the week. This will ensure your sleeping bag remains dry. Please make sure it is made from a breathable Gore-Tex or similar material. There are some fairly cost effective options available from army surplus stores.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snugpak Special Forces Bivvi Bag 	
<p>INSULATING SLEEPING MAT</p> <p>You could have the warmest sleeping bag but without an insulative mat under you, you will feel the warmth being drawn away from you by the ground.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Therm-A-Rest Mattress 	
<p>MUG & EATING UTENSILS</p> <p>Please bring suitable utensils for eating your meals and a mug for drinks. A good set up is to have a NATO crusader cup, which can be used for meals as well as drinks, and a spoon or spork for eating with. This is perfectly adequate and keeps things simple, but feel free to apply your own system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCB NATO Crusader Cup and • Esbit Titanium Folding Spork 	
<p>WATER BOTTLE (1 litre) x2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Osprey NATO Water Bottle 	
<p>SMALL FIRST AID KIT AND PERSONAL MEDICATION</p> <p>Our staff will have swift access to first aid equipment at all times, but you will need to bring a small first aid kit including plasters and any personal medication, including headache tablets, reading glasses/contact lenses, inhalers etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O'Tom Tick Twister and • Uncle Bill's Sliver Gripper Tweezers 	
<p>WASH KIT & TOWEL</p> <p>We provide hand washing facilities including bowls, nail brushes and hand soap. We also have a screened camp shower; You will need to bring some soap and will find it useful to bring flip flops or similar to avoid getting dirty feet.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grandpa's Pine Tar Body Wash or • Grandpa's Charcoal Soap or • Grandpa's Wonder Pine Tar Soap and • Nikwax Travel Towel – Trek Size 	
<p>GOOD INSECT REPELLENT</p> <p>There have been ticks encountered on our course sites and a good repellent is the first and best line of defense against them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pyramid Trek Repellent 	
<p>WATCH</p> <p>You will be asked to meet at certain times for lectures or meals and we cannot wait for anyone who is not on time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GWS H3 G10 Pro Diver Watch - Woodlore Badged 	
<p>WHISTLE</p> <p>A valuable tool should you become lost and an item of equipment you should have on you at all times during your stay with Woodlore.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fox 40 Micro Whistle 	
<p>WATERPROOF NOTEBOOK AND PENCIL</p> <p>There will be a lot of information to take away from the course and you may also like to record your experiences for future use.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chartwell Watershed Waterproof Notebook or • Rite in the Rain Tactical Binder Kit 	
<p>HEAD TORCH WITH FRESH BATTERIES & 2 SPARE SETS</p> <p>This is a very important but often forgotten piece of equipment. Under the cover of the trees it can get surprisingly dark and therefore it can not only be inconvenient to move around without light, but dangerous too. A head torch is the most convenient as it leaves your hands free for other jobs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petzl TACTIKKA Plus RGB Headtorch 	
<p>DAY SACK</p> <p>During the course we will be walking a short distance from camp and you will need to carry a waterproof jacket, some lunch and a drink with you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karrimor SF Sabre Delta 25 litre Rucksack 	
<p>10m PARACORD</p> <p>Useful for numerous tasks, paracord is essential for making your bow-drill set.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 550 Nylon Type III Paracord – 10 metre 	
<p>RUCKSACK to contain all of your kit</p> <p>For most of the week we will be static in our base camp, however, midway through the course there will be a bivvy phase where we hike 3 or 4 kms from our camp to another location. You will be required to carry the equipment, clothing and food you need for two nights out on the trail. Choose a rucksack that is at least 45 litres in volume and fits comfortably when loaded. Dry bags will help to keep your kit dry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karrimor SF Sabre 75 litre Rucksack or • Karrimor SF Sabre 45 litre Rucksack and • Karrimor SF Sabre Side Pockets or • Ray Mears Leaf Cutter Rucksack and • Dry Bags 	