



# The Hatchet Survival Guide

## Chapters 3 & 4

**Recommendations:** For students in Grades 6 to 9. First activity can be done inside, the second is best done outside. Adult supervision recommended.

**Purpose:** Accompany reading a novel with learning some real survival skills

**Materials:**

- The Hatchet by Gary Paulsen
  - Free online pdf (*contains minor typos*) <https://scotland.k12.mo.us/view/637.pdf>
  - Audio: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBcCxRXtcwA>
- Activity Materials will be included with instructions for the specific activities below

**Chapter Summaries:** Brian crash lands the plane on an L shaped lake. As the physical and mental shock of the crash starts to pass, Brian pushes himself to get a sense of his surroundings.

### Survival Skill 3 – Keeping Bugs at Bay

*“and with the heat came clouds of insects—thick, swarming hordes of mosquitoes that flocked to his body, made a living coat on his exposed skin, clogged his nostrils when he inhaled, poured into his mouth when he opened it to take a breath.”*

Some simple strategies for avoiding biting bugs such as mosquitos include:

- Wear long sleeves and full-length pants (*if you're not showing skin, they can't bite it!*)
- Wear a hat (*most bugs will fly to the highest point*)
- Go for a swim. It is temporary relief but biting bugs can't get you underwater and the coolness will soothe any bites you already have. Otherwise, stay clear of stagnant water and marshes because that is where many bugs go to breed
- Get to high ground! If you find a place with a good breeze the bugs will be blown away
- Take a mud bath. In the absence of long, thick clothing, caking yourself in mud will cover your attractive smell and create a physical barrier that bugs will struggle to get through.

To check out this quick video on natural bug repellents [click here](#)

- For more on how to make a smudge fire, stay tuned for later Survival Activities

#### **Survival Skill 4 – Getting Your Bearings**

*He looked at his surroundings again. The lake stretched out slightly below him. He was at the base of the L, looking up the long part with the short part out to his right. In the morning light and calm the water was absolutely, perfectly still...The country around the lake was moderately hilly, but the hills were small—almost hummocks—and there were very few rocks except to his left. There lay a rocky ridge that stuck out overlooking the lake, about twenty feet high.*

In a survival scenario, you may not know exactly where you are, but it is still important to distinguish what is around you. Knowing your surroundings adds exponentially to the amount of resources available to you.

In your back yard or other well-known outdoor area near your home. Try to see it with new eyes as a space that you are dependent on for your survival. Draw a map or write a description of your surroundings that includes everything on this list:

- Cardinal Directions (North, East, South, West)
- Which way the wind is blowing
- Where is the nearest source of running water? If you cannot see it, take note of what direction you would need to travel to it or how you would go about finding a source
- The highest point of land that you can see or that you know is in the nearby area
- The species of three trees near you
- Five different sounds you hear
- Any wildlife or evidence of wildlife (tracks, scat, chewings, nests, dens, etc.)
- Any rock formations or deposits
- A spot that you think might be good for making a shelter

All of this and more Brian will need to familiarize himself with in order to survive in the Canadian wilderness.

See “The Hatchet Chapters 5 & 6” on the Gould Lake website for more content!