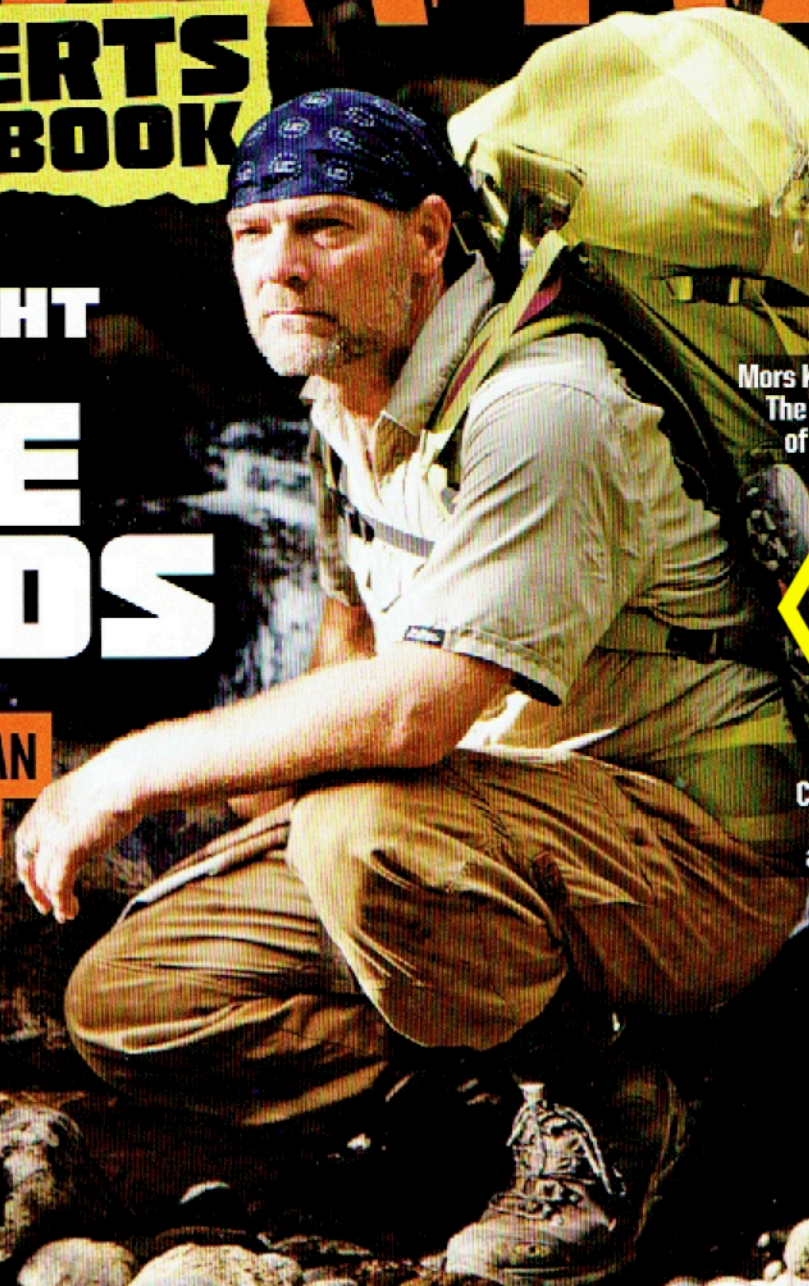


# SURVIVAL

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SURVIVOR'S  
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### Mykel Hawke

→ Mykel Hawke is a retired U.S. Army Special Forces officer after serving active duty for 12 years, holding top-secret clearance and working in numerous conflicts as a soldier and contractor. He holds degrees in psychology and biology, has achieved a 3rd degree black belt in the Japanese martial art of Aikido and a 1st degree in Judo. He is a licensed FCC Radio Operator, holds a paramedic's license, is a PADI scuba diver, and is a member of the



Green Beret parachute club. He is versed in firearms and is an extreme adventure and preparedness instructor. Mykel is an accomplished author, survival product designer, and television personality appearing in such survival programs as *Lost Survivors*, *Man Woman Wild*, and *Elite Tactical Unit*. Mykel is a well-rounded, military-taught survivalist who gets the job done and completes the mission no matter what that may entail. [www.MYKELHAWKE.COM](http://www.MYKELHAWKE.COM)



Survivors Edge Expert Edition



DEFINE



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Everybody is different. We think differently; we act differently; and we see events and situations from differing points of view. There's no reason to think this wouldn't apply to survivalism. But what kind of survivalist are you?



PHOTO BY  
RUTH ENGLAND

# SURVIVAL STYLE

Discover your best methods for survival based on location and resources.

BY MICHAEL D'ANGONA

## THE WORD "SURVIVALIST"

is a general term, one that has received much attention in recent years due to an ever-increasing need for people to be prepared for nearly any unexpected emergency. To many people on the outside of this rapidly expanding survival circle, there are few unnoticeable distinctions among the many practitioners of this "be prepared and live" ideology.

The uninformed public's perception of a survivalist ranges from a possibly paranoid individual stocking up for the end of the world, to a "jungle man" living off the land, to an obsessed person building a fully equipped underground bunker. But the real truth is, a survivalist is someone who understands that unexpected things happen in life, and they have the skills, mentality, and emotional motivation to not only overcome any initial emergency or disaster, but also to continue to live and thrive when the normalcy of everyday living has eroded into chaos.

Although most survivalists have a common goal—to overcome whatever man or Mother Nature throws at them—their paths to reach that goal can be very different. The style of each survivalist is based upon the individual's personal characteristics. Some come from military backgrounds so they tend to adapt the philosophy of the military

world into their survival. Some men and women enjoy the splendor of nature and focus their survival techniques upon primitive skills, using what's found in nature's backyard to shelter, feed, and protect themselves. Others pursue teaching, while some prep and constantly prepare for the future, and still others use modern tools and equipment while relying upon methods and techniques from centuries long ago.

### The Military Veteran

→ The survivalist with a military background generally is a no-nonsense, "get the job done and get out" type of person. They tend to think of their time under emergency conditions as a mission—one that has to be accomplished at all costs. They are accustomed to carrying extensive gear, and they are well trained to use the various pieces of equipment when the need arises.

A military survivalist more often than not feels comfortable handling sidearms or rifles, as well as combat knives, machetes, or tools that could double as a weapon if needed. This skill can be valuable when trying to secure wild game for food, for personal protection, or to protect belongings. Although not extensively immersed in survival techniques and training during their military service, they do receive some basic survival instruction that can be useful long after their service term has ended.

The military survivalist would likely →



# SPEC OPS 101



**Retired Special Forces Captain Mykel Hawke's Tips and Tricks That Might Save Your Life**

STORY BY MYKEL HAWKE

SPEC OPS



Special Forces are one of the most highly trained soldiers in the world. Former members of their ranks, like Mykel Hawke, have a lot of information to impart.



## WHEN IT COMES TO

dealing with life, we all are always on the lookout for anything that can give us an edge, help us out of a jam, or make us able to be better and get more.

So when *Survivor's Edge* magazine asked me what five things I learned from Special Forces that I could share with readers that may be of benefit to them, I thought that was a great way to try and distill 25 years of hard service and crazy experiences into a few key life lessons that everyone could use and anyone could understand.

That said, and as we like to say in the Green Berets, here's the B.L.U.F.—or Bottom Line Up Front. These are the five things I learned in Special Forces that can help you: Course of Action, Forget Rank, Dummy Cord, Do

or Die, Five-point Plan.

Now, I hope that got your attention. It likely kind of makes sense, but let me lay it out, and when I'm done, hopefully it'll resonate so much you'll get it and be able to begin incorporating into your life, immediately and effectively seeing results. It's a good approach for anyone in anything, and it even works well for kids, in my humble opinion.

### Course Of Action—Worst Case Scenario (COA-WCS)

— Whatever you do in life, is a course of action. Before you do anything, you make a decision. Before you decide, you go through a mental process of evaluating options. We call that "The decision making process."

This process is usually based on a lot of factors and they are the exact same for everyone as they are for the military.

First, we look at logistics or supplies. How much money do we have, or does one option take versus another?

Then how much time does each option take and how much do we have available?

Then we look at desired outcomes, to win a game, get the girl, land a job, finish a project.

Then we look at assets we have—the parental units, family, friends, investors, what have you, and we pool all our options.

Then we fuse all these factors and based on available information, or what we call it "intelligence" in the military, we decide on the best course of action.

Now, this is the normal process, or another way of looking at it, this is the "process of normal." That is to say, this is what most folks do based on what our normal life looks like. Rarely do we go through the potentially dark

and often negative thought process of what if things go wrong? This is becoming less and less commonplace as our social values change and everyone discourages thinking negative and not putting out the positive vibes.

But the harsh reality is, things do go wrong, accidents do happen, folks do lose, and people do . . . die. What Special Forces taught us is to always make a deep plan. We consider every option we can imagine. Anything we can think of that can go wrong. After all, if we can think of it, so can the enemy. And like I said, once we go in, we're mostly on our own. So if we can foresee a problem, then we can try to find a way to head it off, circumvent it, or flat out avoid it.

These planning sessions we do take time. Sometimes we'll go into an emergency planning session for 24 or 72 hours solid. Usually we go into "isolation" so we can focus on plan-

ning anywhere from a week to a month and sometimes, it will take many, many months. But once the mission starts, we don't have that kind of time, so we do the same process in a condensed version, and that's what I want you to take away from this. When it comes to Courses of Action, and we're in a bind for time, we look at only two: the Worst-Case Scenario (WCS) is always first; then we look at the Most Likely Scenario (MLS).

Since most folks do the basic "process of normal," and they do so with the same MLS, that isn't the key lesson here. The key point is this: Whenever you make a big plan in life, the first thing you want to do is consider what is the worst possible thing that can happen?

When we do this, it allows us mentally to look the beast right in the eye and decide what can we do, and what we can't do. Maybe we have an ace up the sleeve option, maybe the only option is flat failure. But what it does for us mentally is that it gives us the advantage of considering it, decided on what our COA for the WCS will be, and in this not only do we have more confidence, because we are prepared, but we also have less fear, because we already faced it.

My tip here is for everyone faced with a big decision, before you decided on your main course of action, always consider your worst-case scenario, make a plan, then forget it, and focus on your best-case scenario. By facing your fears upfront, you virtually vanquish them and free yourself up to fully focus on doing and being your very best.

### Forget Rank

— One of the factors I loved about Special Forces was that everyone went by first name most of the time. Now to a civilian's ears that may not sound like much, but in the military, rank is an important part of discipline and that is vital to success in battle. So the use of rank is a crucial part of the fabric of military society.

But in Special Forces, not so much. We have rank, and that means a lot to us, too. But more importantly, rank is a paycheck and a position. It does not define us as people and our ideas and potential contributions to the team and



↑ Over the years, Mykel Hawke has been in and out of a variety of territories, most of which were hostile, so his experiences are valuable teaching tools.



PHOTO THANKS  
TRAVEL CHANNEL



SURVIVOR'S  
EDGE

## SPECIAL FORCES

**FIRST, LET ME TAKE** a quick moment to explain what a Green Beret is, because a lot of folks don't really know—even the press gets it wrong most of the time. We're not Seals, those are like sea-going rangers for the Navy, bad-ass fighters, to be sure. We're not MARSOC, those are the elite for the Marines and they focus on counter-guerrilla warfare, fighting hard wars in small units. We're not PJs, those are the elite sky-diving, scuba-diving paramedics who rescue downed pilots behind the lines.

We are Special Forces, a.k.a. Green Berets—not Special Operations Forces, that is the term for all of us combined. Our job is the simplest and hardest at the same time. We do a bit of all the other guys' jobs, but we're the only force specially created to fight Guerrilla Warfare.

That means we get trained for years, in everything they can think of, to include language, religion, customs, culture, and the like, as well as every kind of way to fight there is, and then we get dropped deep behind enemy lines, with just the supplies we can carry and we have to find the locals, link up without them killing us, win their hearts and minds by providing medical care for their kids, families, animals, and

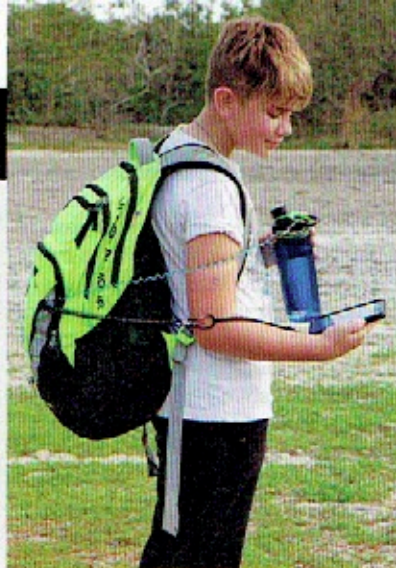
teaching them how to fight for themselves to overthrow tyrants and dictators.

What this means, in a nutshell, is that the only way we can get our mission accomplished is to do everything for ourselves, get all our supplies off the land, and we cannot succeed without the people themselves choosing to accept us and what we offer and then doing it for themselves.

We go in for the long war, and it's only dedication, creative problem-solving, good situational awareness, and environmental assessment that see us through.

In short, we are a "fire and forget" weapon. We have to "live off the land," resupply by taking from the enemy, and for us a job well done is when we get in, overthrow a tyrant, get out, and the locals get credit for it. That's why our moniker is, "The Quiet Professionals." We don't need that pat on the back or recognition. For us, the satisfaction is in a job done well, and well done. I like to say we're the underdog of the special-ops world and we fight for the little man.

So, all that mission success and operational ethos can really be boiled down to a few key principles, that can see you through any storm in life. — Mykel Hawke



↑ Passing this information on to his children is an important job that he takes seriously.

mission success are not limited by our rank and check.

All of us worked hard to be on the team, all of us have some skills, talents, and even gifts. We value those contributions from every and any corner. Sometimes, the lowest ranking man has the best idea that can save lives and save the mission. So we listen to everyone, as an equal, and we weigh every idea on it's merit, not the messenger.

If you're a low-ranking person in life, do not assign self worth and subsequent social value based on that. The world is full of geniuses and success stories from the bottom. If you're a high-ranking person in life, do not make the foolish mistake of thinking you know it all, and can't learn from a person of lower position and stature. Wisdom finds intelligence, in whatever form it comes.

So, yeah, acknowledge rank, enjoy it if ya' got it, but for the most part, when it comes to dealing with life, forget the rank and focus on what matters—the mission.

### Dummy Cord

→ This may sound funny to some folks, but in Special Ops, we do some crazy stuff in some wicked harsh environments. We have tons of gear to help us, and some of that gear is mission essential—meaning, if we lose it, the mission is in critical danger of failing, and we can't have that.





So how do we keep our gear on us in the middle of a fire fight or running through the thick jungle at night? We use a "Dummy Cord."

Simply put, we tie it to our bodies or our gear. It sounds like caveman, knuckle-dragger stuff, but it's simple and it works. You're not a dummy if you got your gear and win the day. If you lose you gear and fail you task, then you're a big, fat dummy.

What it means in life is also simple. If something is important to you or your purpose, "tie in." Connect to it, keep the tether, be it physically or metaphorically. Sometimes, the most important things in our lives are our loved ones, and the people we work with. If they are mission essential, do not be afraid to us the "dummy cord" concept and make the tie, keep the bond.

### Do Or Die

→ This one is fairly self-explanatory on the surface, but it has a much deeper meaning, and may very well be the most important idea I can share. A lot of people have a misconception that Special Ops guys are superhuman, but we are very much like most other folks, with one main exception—our dedication.

Some folks call it discipline or training; some have a natural propensity to be über-smart or super-strong; but there is one fundamental that seems to run through the veins of every good special operator with whom I've ever had the honor to work or serve, and that is very simply—belief.

If you believe with all your heart and mind and soul that what you are doing is right, good, and needed, then there is only one option for you, and this is simply to do your job or die trying. There is nothing else.

When you approach any endeavor in life with this mindset, there is almost no endeavor you can't achieve.

### Five-Point Plan

→ One of the ways Green Berets stand apart from the other special ops is our reputation for being deep planners. I like to say, We're the thinking man's commando-spy. The main way we do this is simple—we have a system of plans and backup plans for everything we do, every step of the way. So, if one thing fails we fall back



to the next thing, and so on and so forth. And when everyone knows all the plans, everyone can stay on the same plan, no matter what happens on the mission—and crazy things always happen on the mission.

So, here's what a Five-Point Contingency Plan looks like: P.A.C.E.-GTH.

Normally this means:

**PRIMARY:** This is what we use for the most likely scenario and ideal situation. Everyone knows what to do, where you're going, what their roles, duties or jobs are and how everyone hopes things will end up.

**ALTERNATE:** This is just a standard backup, where things may go wrong as a likely part of the mission and as such, a simple alternative can be put in place.

**CONTINGENCY:** This is when something serious goes wrong and you have to do something not desirable, but doable.

**EMERGENCY:** This is when something really bad happens. You usually have to stop everything and focus on fixing it, but you have a plan on how to do that so you can get back on the mission

### Go To Hell—or WCS [Worst Case Scenario]:

→ This is for when everything goes very bad. And you have to take an extreme action. It usually means the

mission is over and now it's just about survival to live to fight another day.

By having a Five-Point Plan for every phase of your operation, you will have the very best chances of success and survival. Especially when you make this a lifestyle habit to always keep a plan for what to do if things go wrong. It instills a sense of confidence and keeps hope alive. In short, there are no downsides, there are only good sides, and that is never a bad thing. Try to make it a habit to make a 5 Point Contingency Plan for a break in contact every time you got out.

Happy survivalin' comes from good plannin'. ☺

**AUTHOR BIO:** Mykel Hawke served 25 years in the US Army, with most of that time in the Special Forces, also known as the Green Berets. They are the world's only designated Guerrilla Warfare Experts. Hawke is a Retired Special Forces Captain (18A) and a former Sergeant First Class Special Forces Medic (18D) SF Communications (18E) and SF Intel & Ops (18F). He has served and/or worked in many conflicts, from Afghanistan and Iraq, to Colombia, Sierra Leone, and Azerbaijan. He is also known for his work on TV shows and books.



## COMMS

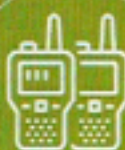


PHOTO BY



RUTH ENGLAND



Staying connected, especially in unsure times or times of emergency, is one of the most important things you can do to ensure your safety and immediate rescue.



# STAY CONNECTED

Building a Personal Comms Plan to Get You Out of Trouble

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY MYKEL HAWKE

FAMILY SURVIVAL COMMUNICATIONS  
BY MYKEL HAWKE  
SPECIAL FORCES COMMUNICATOR, 18E  
RADIO OPERATOR, 05B  
TELETYPE OPERATOR, 31C  
RADIO REPAIRMAN, 31V  
FORMER FCC LICENCE KC4GVX

## BAD THINGS HAPPEN.

It's a fact of life. They can happen to anyone at any time and they do happen to everyone at one time or another. The best way to deal with it? Get out of the situation.

That is especially true when it comes to survival. You can have all the gear in the world—and still die. You can have the best training in the world—and still die. Fatal events can happen to anyone and only the foolish would think otherwise. We can hope for the best, but hope is not a plan.

So when we plan, we plan for the best. And the best plan is to get out of the survival situation, as quick as possible. The best way to get out is to call for help. Sure, we can survive, and survive for a while, and maybe even survive long enough to walk out of danger and all the way





PHOTOS BY RUTH ENGLAND

back to Fort Livingroom. But it is so much easier to just call for help and get rescued.

And that rescue call requires planning and equipment. What is the best kit to get the heck out of trouble and back to your sweetie? Tech is constantly changing, evolving, and improving, so you need to figure out what the best tech is for your needs, skills, and budget. So here are some of the principles you need to consider—and the gear you need to be eyeballin’.

### Principles of Signaling

→ These are pretty straightforward: Make yourself seen or heard, because it’s the squeaky wheel who survives. But to get seen/heard/found, you should have a five-point contingency plan. Sure, you need a plan for everything, really, but especially for your

↑ There are untold different ways to communicate over great or small distances, from high-tech radios, satellite phones, and cell phones to small mirrors, whistles, light sticks, and radio beacons. How you choose between the many options depends on your terrain, situation, and type of emergency.

comms (communications) plan.

It’s best if you can have a few communications options with you at all times, if not all five of your go-to items. In the military, we call these “redundancy” systems, but I prefer to just call them backups. In Special Forces, we always have at least five layers—or, a “5 Point Contingency Plan.” We use the acronym, PACE-GTH, which stands for Primary, Alternate, Contingency, Emergency—and “Go To Hell” plan when all else fails.

You should have these items with you or in your bag at all times, and this

is particularly true if you’re out and about, traveling—be it in the woods, desert, or sea: and the desert and sea can be the deadliest places on the planet, more so than icy cold areas.

### What It Means: PACE-GTH

→ **P: CELL PHONE:** It might not work when out of range, but try to have phones with real GPS built in, so even when out of cell-tower range, you can use a map function to get to help. **A: RADIOS:** Hand-holds like Family or Marine can be good UHF/VHF options, or for carrying in a pack, or you



“  
**Tech is constantly changing, evolving, and improving, so you need to figure out what the best tech is for your needs, skills, and budget.**”



should have a CB type as a backup system, in your car, boat, or plane. And have some kind of HF long-range radio at your log cabin, beach hut, or other shelter.

**C: SAT PHONE:** These are more affordable and lightweight these days. Anyone going anywhere remote or dangerous or at risk should buy or rent one. This is a surefire means of communication to get help and get home anywhere in the world. Some systems work in specific regions, some work globally.

**E: AUDIO-VISUALS:** These are mainly for when your electronic communications fail, break, batteries die, are lost or . . . you just flat didn't bring 'em!

**E1) AUDIO, WHISTLE:** Travels farther than voice, night and day.

**E2) VISUAL, SIGNAL MIRROR:** These are used primarily in the day.

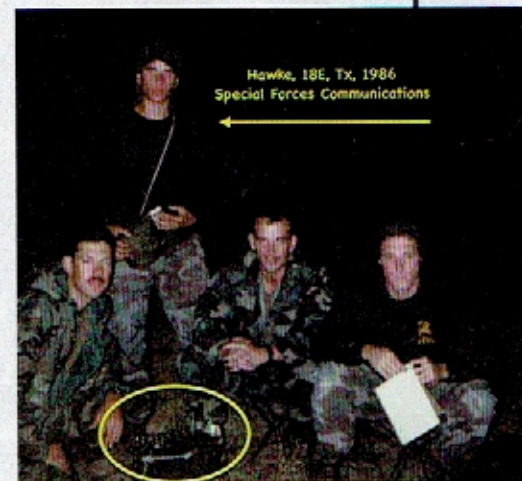
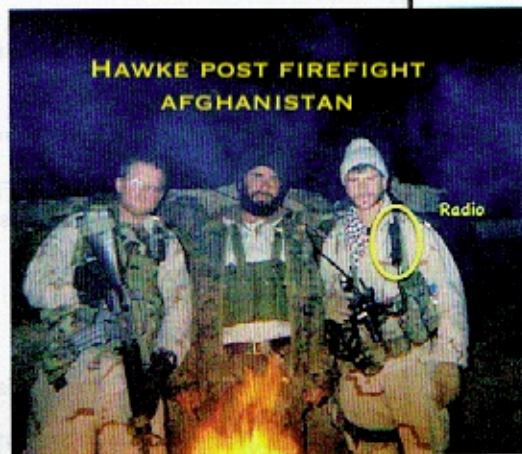
**E3) VISUAL, FLASHLIGHT, VISUAL:**

These are used primarily at night.

**GTH:** These are for when you're caught out in the wilds with nuthin' and ya gotta make use of whatever is around you. Some examples are fires and signs. Consult the list below for ideas on options in different terrains.

**Considerations for electronics in survival ammo plan:**

- For all phones, consider options that keep **GPS FUNCTION** even out of cell-tower range
- Consider **APPS** like Zello that work off phone's own WIFI or bluetooth and can act like a short-range walkie-talkie
- For all electronics, consider **DUAL-POWER SOURCES** as best
- **USE BATTERIES** that can be recharged by car, home, or solar
- The very best options have **HAND-CRANK**, too, for cloudy days
- **SAT PHONE:** Very Common and afford-



↑ Mykel Hawke is no stranger to diverse situations that relied heavily on differing modes of communications.



able. You'll find different sizes, plans, and prices—and also different satellites and areas covered. Getting one of these for your travel region is essentially like always having 911 emergency contact available to you.

**BGANS:** This is basically like the WIFI that lets other phones tether to yours for internet access, the BGANS converts satellite to data and then lets family use their phones, tablets and laptops to connect to it to communicate through the internet, but it is expensive and connection speed is slow.

**GPS RADIO (EXAMPLES: SPOT, RINO):** Wonderful tools to have, many brands and prices. Key things to look for are the standard functions of the higher priced models.

**EXAMPLE:** The RINO 750 has a two-way radio, with a range of about 20 miles (which is pretty good), but it also has a GPS so you will always

know where you are. Using the maps on the screen, you can find your way to safety.

**EXAMPLE:** The EXPLORER, gets you the GPS function with the extra satellite function that allows you to do some texting to a loved one, for example, to let them know you are okay or need help.

**EXAMPLE:** The SPOT, and devices with this technology built into them, means you have a sort of "BAT PHONE" in that you can press a button and an all-call alert goes out that you are in trouble, and it functions as a homing beacon to help bring rescuers to you.

Higher-priced options include watches that have a beacon transponder in them just like airplanes have. When the plane crashes, the beacon is activated. Its GPS device sends a distress signal to the satellites, they pick it up and then let the emergency services know the exact location the signal is emanating

from and sends a rescue crew out to get you. Breitling is the standard. You unwind the knob, pull the cable and activate the signal. It's \$18K for the watch and \$100K if you make a fake call.

**CB RADIOS:** Primarily a vehicle radio, they require a strong battery and antenna but have good range. If you do a lot of road trips, in a car, camper, van, SUV, or RV then this should be a mandatory part of your kit. Cell-phone range may drop out in remote regions but the CB will always be able to receive and transmit anywhere you are. The range is five miles to 50 miles. If anyone is near and has their CB on, they can respond. **VHF/UHF RADIOS:** These radios are like CBs for cars. They use slightly different frequency ranges and are mainly used in boats and on aircraft.

UHF is ultra high frequency with very little static, but a shorter range. Often used with family band hand held radios.

VHF is very high frequencies, travels

You never know when an emergency situation will present itself. Have the ability to communicate with rescuers is a game-changer.





farther, picks up more static.

HF will travel around the world, if the factors are right, but also has the most static.

**HF RADIOS (AKA-HAM RADIOS):** These have been around a long time, since about World War II. I consider these to be the best survival radios after SAT phones. They can be mobile, with some gear, or a base station. They are often the only thing that works after mass disasters. Ham radio operators often become the crucial link for FEMA, Red Cross, and other emergency responders trying to help in major catastrophes when all other communications fail. They require skill to work but can be the best radio out there. Good rules for communication plans, especially when power supply is limited.

#### Place And Time

→ **WHERE:** Always broadcast from the highest, and most open spot, a vantage point where you'll most likely be spotted, where visual signals can be seen from the greatest distance, and from which broadcast transmissions travel farthest.

**WHEN:** Try to concentrate your power-based communications in the first 24 hours, as this is when most search parties will be initiated. Broadcast your signal continuously during this window, if you're . Consider delaying your 24-hour broadcast period for a day or two if you have reason to believe it will take folks that long to begin looking for you. If you need to go in power-conservation mode, space out broadcasts, limit duration, transmit at regular intervals, at standardized times such as dawn, dusk, noon, and midnight.

**TIMES:** Dawn and dusk have atmospheric changes that can help broadcasts travel farther. At midnight and noon, the sky is "stable", making them good times. Finally, human habit is to listen to radio in morning and at night. So, think 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. as being good times to transmit for a person to catch your message.

**CHANNELS:** If you have an HF radio, tune to 5.000, 10.000, 20.000, etc. These broadcast WWV universal coordinated time. People around the world use this to set their watches. SOS tapped out in code has a good chance



↑ Some of the easiest ways to keep abreast of the situation around you, be it news or weather, is to make sure you keep with you a small radio. There are a variety on the market that can be powered by several different methods, from hand crank to rechargeable batteries and solar panels.

of being heard here.

**NOTE:** It's illegal to broadcast without a license, but you can deal with that after rescue!

#### Other Electronic Signal Options

→ **STROBES** are a great tool. They definitely can catch any human eyes, day or night. Some models actually flash in Morse code—SOS!

**LASER "FLARES"** are great. Like old flares, they are bright, go high or far. But, they are better as they are not single time use, they can be used for hours and days. And they are a lot safer in that they are not flammable, explosive or gaseous.

**LIGHTS:** Use these as an "SOS Signal" for any passing planes, ships, or any lights you can see in the distance. 3 long, 3 short, 3 long. Say it, practice it. APPS for phones can send this SOS signal using your flashlight and, if you have a radio, these APPS can make the Morse code sound for you, too. Some APPS can even read Morse code and

send it for any message you type.

**PYRO-FLARES** should be fired overhead, at a slight angle away from you, never directly at a ship or aircraft. Only use when you can see/hear the craft.

**LASER POINTERS** can be used for signaling, but may be disregarded as something used by kids. Use SOS.

Again, the best way to survive is to get back home and that means calling for help.

If you plan, you'll be ready. But if all else fails, these options can give you a chance. ☒

**AUTHOR INFO:** Mykel Hawke is a Retired Special Forces captain and former Sergeant First Class Special Forces Communications Specialist, (18E). He was trained in Morse code, Clandestine Communications, Satellites & Cryptology. Prior to S.F., Hawke was a Radio Operator (05B) and a Radio Repairman (31V). He is also a Combat Veteran and a Licensed Ham Radio Operator.



# COMMS



Staying connected, especially in unsure times or times of emergency, is one of the most important things you can do to ensure your safety and immediate rescue.



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