



# The Bushcraft Safety Award

# TRAINING

# SYLLABUS

Ver.1.1  
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Bushcraft safety award Association





## The Bushcraft Safety Award

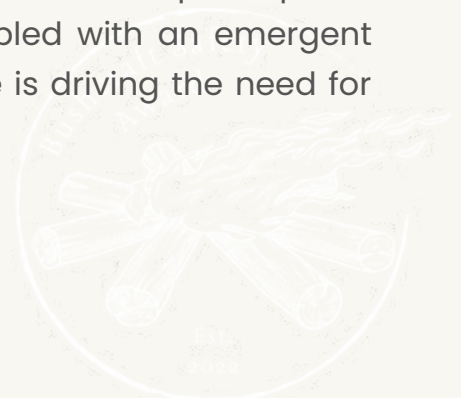


# OUR AIMS

Bushcraft Activities are being hosted more and more by activity providers as a means to introduce people to Nature and give them a framework to engage in problem solving and team dynamics. As instructors your goal with bushcraft sessions is to provide an activity that allows people to develop their perseverance, motivation, self confidence and communication skills.

The reason we choose to run these sessions is to provide a space in which people can engage with risk management and team building whilst learning about nature as a resource to be used, and looked after.

Outdoor instructors are being asked to deliver dynamic, challenging and enjoyable sessions in activities that can present a real risk to the participants and the environments they are operating in. This coupled with an emergent skill set in fire craft, shelter building, and sharp tool use is driving the need for observed safe practice amongst outdoor instructors.



## The Bushcraft Safety Award

# SCOPE OF THE AWARD



The Bushcraft Safety Award (BSA) is dedicated to enabling outdoor instructors to deliver safe and inspiring entry level bushcraft sessions to groups.



### Remit of Awarded Instructors

Instructors holding the award have demonstrated a knowledge and understanding of how to maintain best safety standards while delivering sessions in fire craft, shelter building, and basic hand tool use.



### Limits of the Award

The award does not assess an instructor's ability to deliver safe sessions outside of those referenced in the training syllabus.

The award does not aim to assess an instructor's knowledge base or experience as a Bushcraft practitioner in general; instead the aim is to demonstrate the instructor can deliver a safe session within the remit of the award.



### Award Prerequisites

Candidates undertaking the award must already have at minimum:

- Outdoor first aid qualification (16 hours) or equivalent
- A basic level of experience in the activities referenced in the remit of the award
  - Candidates are expected to draw on a pre existing personal skill level in the topics for assessment. For example: A candidate should be competent in using a ferrocerium rod to light a fire in difficult weather, the award training will look to coach the candidate in managing that ability safely within a group activity session.
- A genuine drive to deliver engaging and inspiring sessions in Bushcraft







## The Bushcraft Safety Award

# TRAINING + ASSESSMENT

The Bushcraft Safety Award (BSA) is dedicated to enabling outdoor instructors to deliver safe and inspiring entry level bushcraft sessions to groups.

### Training

Training will involve a minimum of 9 hours contact time delivered over a minimum of 1 day.

Training ratios will be maintained at 1:8 maximum.

Candidates will be expected to participate in every element of the training to be eligible for assessment.

### Assessment

Assessment will be ongoing throughout the training delivery, with a mix of practical skill/ understanding demonstration, and via a multi-choice test at the end of the training period. Results will be Pass or Fail. A failing mark will require further training followed by reassessment.

### Training and Assessment Delivery

Assessment must be delivered by a Bushcraft Safety Award Leader.

Training may be delivered by an Instructor meeting the requirements of the BSA Trainer remit.

Training ratios are delivered to a maximum of 1 instructor to 8 candidates.

Minimum course size 2 candidates, maximum 16 candidates.

Awarding Organisation: The Bushcraft Safety Award Team



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# AWARD SYLLABUS



## 1 SESSION PLANNING

In the case of all activities outdoors, planning is often all that is needed to maintain a safe session, along with an understanding of what the hazards are and how to recognise them. Setting yourself up for success is key when managing dynamic sessions where risk assessment is adopted as a learning outcome for groups. The award provides an understanding of potential risks and hazards involved in bushcraft type activities as well as an approach to session planning which allows for constant assessment within the sessions.

The award will empower participants to confidently appraise a venue, and the session plan to generate a safe environment for the delivery of an awe inspiring activity session.

### 1.1 Leadership

- Understand the role of the instructor and how a dynamic approach to leadership and enthusiasm can impact the safety and enjoyment of an activity session for a group

### 1.2 Group assessment

- Understand the abilities, backgrounds, and mindsets of a group can impact how they engage with an activity, and the safety parameters given to them
- Understand the limits of the instructors ability to manage safety with regards to group size, behaviours, equipment in a changing outdoor environment

### 1.3 Site Assessment

- Able to assess a venue for safety issues and practical consideration relevant to delivering the required sessions
- Understand the need for access right and land owner permissions
- Understand an awareness of weather systems and how to mitigate risks with the use of group shelter options to provide a safe and enjoyable session
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to set up an area for a specific session with regards to access to first aid equipment, escape routes and general group observation and management

### 1.4 Equipment auditing

- Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate equipment for bushcraft sessions for groups
- Demonstrate an understanding of what to look for in key pieces of equipment to ensure they are safe and functioning properly for a group
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to put a first aid kit together with relevance to the specific activity undertaken

### 1.5 Hazards and emergency procedures

- Demonstrate an understanding of environmental risk in the outdoor setting to the instructor and the group
- Demonstrate an understand of how to mitigate or minimise these risks in the context of a bushcraft session
- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of planning for emergencies and having appropriate procedures in place

# AWARD SYLLABUS



## 2 FIRE

Fire lighting sessions have become a standard in bushcraft activities for groups. The benefit for a group, especially of young people, in learning this quintessentially human skill is proven to aid mental health, issues of connectedness to one's history, practical wilderness travel, nature appreciation to name just a few. Being able to inspire a group to light their own fire is a wonderful tool in the outdoor instructors repertoire, and under this award we'll look at how to fulfil that role safely.

### 2.1 Venue and Ground conditions

- Understand the legal requirements in the UK pertaining to having a ground fire
- Demonstrate an understanding of the risks involved in having a fire on the ground and strategies for mitigating that risk
- Demonstrate how to make the ground ready for a fire, for safety and for leave no trace clean up
- Understand how recent and current weather conditions affect the safety of a fire lighting session for the group and the local environment

### 2.2 Setting up and assessing the activity area

- Understand what hazards are likely in an outdoor space and how to assess those in the context of setting up an activity area
- Understand how hazards may change over the course of a session and how to dynamically assess the risk
- Understand how to setup a new site for a fire lighting session with attention given to access, evacuation and first aid provision
- Understand what to consider when organising an area, equipment and a group to maximise safety prior and during a session.

### 2.3 Group Management and risks

- Demonstrate a knowledge of the risks involved with having several fires run by clients and how to mitigate those risks.
- Understand how movement, personal practice, tidy camp areas, etc can impact personal safety around fires and by extension help keep clients safe by coaching them to adopt the same practices.
- Understand how to manage a group in the event of an emergency

### 2.4 Ignition sources

- Demonstrate an understanding of the risks from lighters, matches, ferrocerium rods, flint and steel and the mechanism for injury
- Demonstrate an ability to coach participants in the use of matches, lighters and ferrocerium rods to light a fire safely using various techniques
- Understand how to manage equipment with a group to maintain control of tools

### 2.5 Tinders

- Demonstrate an understand of what tinders are, and how they can be applied in a group setting for a fire lighting activity
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to control, contain, and otherwise safely allow a group to experiment and play with lighting various examples of tinder with a ferrocerium rod



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### 2.6 Fire building

- Understand the particular risks involved in transitioning from tinder to kindling and established fires in a group setting
- Demonstrate an ability to work with a group to produce and manage a safe established fire
- Demonstrate an understanding of how Kelly Kettles work, their risks, and how to manage their use as part of a group session

### 2.7 Purposeful sessions

- Understand the need to think about how to approach a fire lighting session with respect for the outdoors, and with an enthusiasm for the subject in order to provide an enjoyable and rewarding outcome for groups

### 2.8 Closing down procedures

- Understand how to put out a fire with water, both planned and unplanned.
- Understand how to apply a leave to no trace ethos to a fire lighting session
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to close down a fire lighting session to leave a venue safe and tidy after a session



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# AWARD SYLLABUS



## 3 SHELTER

Whether using natural materials or manmade alternatives a shelter building activity provides a shared goal for the groups – construction of a ‘home’ outdoors. Communication skills are key to this activity where people are encouraged to plan a shelter and as a team execute that plan in full scale. Instructors in this role are often placed to ensure the structural security of these shelters to mitigate a collapse, as has been documented in various outdoor centres, causing injury. This award delivers a solid understanding of some key principles to follow when running a shelter session.

### 3.1 Resources

- Understand available resources at venue centres
- Understand how to sustainably manage natural resources to gather materials for shelter building sessions including storage.
- Understand the limits of integrity with natural materials in order to assess poles and forked sticks for strength

### 3.2 Group management

- Demonstrate an understand of how shelter materials can pose a risk to groups
- Understand the limitations in being able to assess that risk in a group setting and how to mitigate that risk with session planning
- Emphasise the value of planning and execution as two stages to a shelter building session from a group dynamic and group safety perspective
- Understand the issues involved with using natural resources for shelter building session and how that impacts the environment long term, as well as group safety in the session

### 3.3 Equipment

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of knots and an ability to coach knot work during a group session
- Demonstrate an ability to use tarps to construct a group shelter
- Understand how natural resources can be crafted into effective shelter

### 3.4 Safe structures

- Demonstrate an ability to erect a safe structure to form a shelter with and without cordage
- Demonstrate an understand of the limits of tripod structures for shelter
- Understand the risks posed by large scale shelters both on and above the ground
- Understand the importance of taking down any shelter built once the session is over

### 3.5 Purposeful sessions

- Demonstrate an ability to provide fun and engaging context for shelter building with a group setting, use of imaginative play, and sensible application of survival strategies to form a group activity session





# AWARD SYLLABUS



## 4 TOOL USE

Working with a group to run a safe session involving sharp tools can be a daunting task, and many outdoor instructors are rightfully wary when asked to provide a carving session. During the award training we look at ways to introduce the craft knife and a saw into an activity in a controlled way. We'll explore how to observe the group to maintain overall behaviour, as well as detail strategies to bring tool use into a practical problem solving exercise. This is not a comprehensive knife craft setting, but a pragmatic look at the issues that arise from using sharp tools with groups, and the award seeks to provide you with a framework to assess risk for yourself.

### 4.1 Tool selection and maintenance

- Understand there are various options for wood craft tools available, and how to assess whether they are appropriate for a given session
- Understand the legality in the UK with regards to sharp tools
- Understand how to audit tools based on their condition and functionality
- Understand how to sharpen a knife and why this is important in a group setting

### 4.2 Safe knife use

- Have a detailed understanding of the means by which the knife user is commonly injured and highlight protocols to mitigate these risks.
- Demonstrate an awareness of safe working practices including mental fatigue, spacial awareness, location of key arteries.
- Demonstrate efficient and well practised skill in the use of a knife for various tasks, while maintaining best safety practices. Carving should be calm, unlaboured, and maintainable.

### 4.3 Safe Saw use

- Explain the differences and uses for a pruning saw, folding buck saw, and bow saw.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the means by which saws specifically can injure you and how to mitigate that.
- Demonstrate safe use to cut appropriate sized timber with each saw listed above.

### 4.4 Group management and Observation strategy

- Demonstrate an understanding of group/ individual dynamics, markers to watch in clients for potential risk (flippancy, lack of concentration, etc). And how to operate as an instructor to give you the best field of view, access to group members.
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the risks posed to a group through knife use with multiple participants at the same time and how to mitigate those risks.
- Demonstrate an understand of what to do should there be an emergency/ injury during a tool use session

