ROYAL CANADIAN ARMY CADETS

GOLD STAR

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 5

EO C425.01 – DISCUSS ACTIONS TAKEN WHEN A PERSON IS LOST

Total Time: 60 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-704/PG-001, *Gold Star Qualification Standard and Plan*, Chapter 4. Specific uses for said resources are identified throughout the instructional guide within the TP for which they are required.

Review the lesson content and become familiar with the material prior to delivering the lesson.

Refer to local area instructions as well as the corps / regional standard operating procedure (SOP) for information on when to contact emergency services after a person is missing or lost, for use in TP 5.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

Nil.

APPROACH

An interactive lecture was chosen for TPs 1–4 and TP 6 as it introduces the cadets to precautions to take, lost person behaviour, ways to communicate with a lost person and common search and rescue techniques.

A group discussion was chosen for TP 5 as it allows the cadets to interact with their peers and share their knowledge and opinions about when to contact emergency services when lost. Sharing in the discussion encourages the cadets to examine their own thoughts and feelings and may prompt them to re-examine their previously held ideas. Participating in a group discussion improves the cadets' listening skills and team development.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

Nil.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall have discussed actions taken when a person is lost.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

IMPORTANCE

It is important for cadets to know what actions to take when lost as well as the actions searchers will take to find them. When completing cadet activities in the field, the possibility of becoming lost is always present. When planning and leading activities, it is important to understand and communicate search and rescue principles. Cadets participating in an activity should be aware of the actions they must take when lost, as it will increase the chances of them being found quickly.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

Teaching point 1 **Discuss lost person behaviour.**

Time: 10 min Method: Interactive Lecture

LOST PERSON BEHAVIOUR



Every lost person will react differently. The behaviours listed are generalizations of lost persons.



It is possible that some cadets have been lost before (eg, in a big department store, driving to an unfamiliar destination with their parents, out for a walk). Have the cadets share their experiences.



Have the cadets briefly answer the following questions:

- If you became lost, how would you react?
- Do you think you could control fear and panic?
- Would you be prepared to analyze the situation and establish a logical course of action?

Understanding / predicting the behaviour of a lost or missing person can greatly increase the chances for a successful search.

Initial Actions

A person who has received some survival training will know that the first step when becoming lost is to STOP (stop, think, observe and plan) and then gather information in order to try to determine current location. Someone who has not been trained may begin to panic when they realize that they are lost.

Movement Patterns

If a lost person finds a trail, they will most likely start hiking on it. It is more likely they will follow a route of easy travel than one more advanced. A lost person will rarely reverse direction on a trail. They may hike to higher elevation, hoping to see more of the area.



The person may convince themselves that they are making their way back to the group, when in fact they are heading in the opposite direction.

Behaviour Patterns

Behaviour will differ from one person to the next, from situation to situation.



Have the cadets imagine they have become lost. Ask them if they think their behaviour would be different in the daytime than in the night-time? Why?

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

Day behaviour. Throughout the day, a lost person will most likely attempt to be found by wandering to look for people or wait for searchers to locate them. When a person keeps themselves busy, feelings of fear and panic will be minimized.

Night behaviour. A lost person may become scared and lonely in the night and seek temporary shelter. They will usually stay in the same place throughout the night. If capable, they will try to ignite a fire (which may also act as a signal).

Panic behaviour. Panic often causes a person to act without thinking. When a lost person panics, they become disoriented and wander aimlessly, possibly becoming hysterical.

Behaviour when a person does not want to be found. A person who does not want to be found likely became lost to gain attention or for fear of punishment. They are most likely seeking solitude and will not respond to searchers' efforts and will do very little to aid in their rescue.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

QUESTIONS:

Q1. What are some typical movement patterns of a lost person?

Q2. If a person is lost and finds a trail, what will they likely do?

Q3. Why would a person not want to be found?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. If a lost person finds a trail, they will most likely start hiking on it. They are also much more likely to follow a route of easy travel than one more advanced. A lost person will rarely reverse direction on a trail. A lost person may hike to a high elevation, hoping to see more of the area.

A2. They will most likely start hiking on it.

A3. A person who does not want to be found likely became lost to gain attention or for fear of punishment.

Teaching point 2 **Explain precautions that will minimize the possibility of a person becoming lost.**

Time: 10 min Method: Interactive Lecture



This lesson concentrates on becoming lost as an individual. Stress that the same principles apply when a group of cadets become lost.



There is a possibility of becoming lost at all times when in the field, even when going to the washroom or filling up a canteen. It is good practice to carry a whistle at all times and have a general idea of the layout of the land.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

PRECAUTIONS THAT WILL MINIMIZE THE POSSIBILITY OF A PERSON BECOMING LOST



All of the precautions listed below should be included during the initial briefing of an activity.

Provide Clear and Detailed Instructions on the Activity Being Completed

When briefing the cadets on the activity to be completed, ensure the instructions are clear and detailed. All cadets should know the what, where, why, when and how prior to the start of the activity.

Everyone involved in the activity should have a clear understanding of the route and the route plan. During the initial briefing, make sure everyone looks at their map and follows along the route as it is identified and described. This way, the cadets can visualize where they are going as well as see the features along the route, such as hills, rivers, trails and other conventional signs.

Set Activity Boundaries

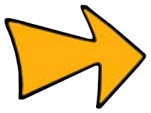
Objects such as pole lines, fences, and rivers make great boundaries. Have all of the cadets look at the map and outline the boundaries along the route. When the cadets participating in the activity have clearly-defined and well-understood boundaries, the chances of becoming lost are minimized. If a person does become lost, they will likely be found quicker, by staying within the boundaries.

Provide All Personnel With a Safety Bearing

A safety bearing, when set on a compass, leads a person to a major feature such as a road, fence or landmark. It is designed to assist a person who is lost or separated from the group to find a location where they can then be located. A safety bearing should be derived for every cadet activity involving hiking / navigation / expedition-type activities. It can be set on the compass and walked on until the feature is reached. It is also good to provide a general direction to travel (eg, hike north-west until a road is reached)

Enforce a "Buddy System" at All Times

Using the buddy system will help reduce the possibility of a person becoming lost, because they will never be alone. The buddy system should be enforced throughout all weekend training activities, even at night when a person has to use the washroom.



Becoming disoriented by going to the washroom in the dark could result in becoming lost.

Provide All Personnel With Noise-Making Devices

A series of three anything (eg, whistle blasts, flashes) is the universal signal for distress. Each cadet should have devices that can be used to signal when training in the field. Noise-making devices can be whistles, horns or even yells.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

QUESTIONS:

Q1. Why is it important to set activity boundaries?

Q2. What is a safety bearing?

Q3. What is the universal sign for distress?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. When the cadets participating in the activity have clearly-defined and well-understood boundaries, the chances of becoming lost are minimized. If a person does become lost, they will likely be found quicker (if they stay within the boundaries).

A2. A safety bearing, when set on a compass, leads a person to a major feature such as a road, fence or landmark. It is designed as a way to assist a person who is lost or separated from the group to find a location where they can wait to be found.

A3. A series of three anything (eg, whistle blasts, flashes).

Teaching point 3 **Explain immediate actions to take when one becomes lost or separated from the group.**

Time: 5 min Method: Interactive Lecture

Each survival situation must be analyzed and dealt with according to the circumstances. In addition to being proficient in survival skills, individuals should also know something about the area they may be required to survive in—the climate, flora, fauna, escape routes, search and rescue procedures, etc. The mind is the most essential component for survival. Being prepared means being able to cope with the seven enemies of survival, while still being able to make good decisions.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TO TAKE WHEN ONE BECOMES LOST OR SEPARATED FROM THE GROUP

Employ the STOP Procedure

Once it is determined that one is lost, the best thing to do is to stay in one place, keep calm and try to gather information to determine one's location. It is extremely important to concentrate on making good decisions.

STOP is a mnemonic for:

- **Sit.** Stop where you are! Do not panic. Many lost people waste valuable energy and risk injury by panicking —running aimlessly, continuing to travel after dark, or walking in circles. If a lost person decides to immediately wander in an attempt to find their location, in most cases they will move further away and increase the distance between the known points of their course. This will only increase the size of the search area, increasing the time it will take for a rescue team to locate an individual. As long as there is no immediate danger, stay in one place. During the first 30 minutes of being lost is when people tend to make their biggest mistakes. Making good decisions about the situation involves thinking through options without panicking.
- **Think.** Think about immediate and future dangers and the factors involved in the situation. Consider the time of day, personal physical condition and the last time water or food was consumed. Try to list the options that are available.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

- **Observe.** Observe and listen for the signals of rescuers. Study the immediate environment, determining weather, terrain and resources available. Check the immediate area for a shelter location, fresh drinking water, and for clues of the current location.
- **Plan.** Plan the best course of action. It could be close to dark and consideration should be given to setting up shelter, finding water or starting a fire. A safety bearing could have been provided prior to beginning the activity and consideration should be given to use it or not. Include how to signal rescuers in the plan.

Listen for a Whistle Signal / Yell / Horn Honking From the Group / Searchers

When the group becomes aware that a person is missing or lost, one of the first steps is to make noise, that the missing person may hear.

Communicate the Location to the Group / Searchers by Making Noise

As a missing person, it is important to make noise that the group / searchers may hear so that they can approach the general area. Blowing a whistle or banging objects together to make noise will save the voice.

Walk on the Safety Bearing to the Nearest Road or Fence Line

After employing the STOP procedure and listening for and communicating with noise, the next step is to walk on the safety bearing provided in the briefing. The safety bearing should help a missing person become located by leading them to a major feature such as a road, fence or landmark. Once the feature has been reached, the person should stop, remain in their position and wait to be found.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 3

QUESTIONS:

Q1. What is the first action to take when lost?

Q2. What should one think about when employing the STOP procedure?

Q3. Why should a lost person make noise?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. Employ the STOP procedure.

A2. Think about immediate and future dangers and the factors involved in the situation. Consider the time of day, personal physical condition, and the last time water or food was consumed. Try to list the options that are available.

A3. It is important to make noise that the group / searchers may hear so that they can approach the general area.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

Teaching point 4 **Explain actions the group / searchers will take when a person becomes lost.**

Time: 15 min Method: Interactive Lecture



The actions listed below are the first steps a group will take when it is confirmed that a person has become lost.

The leader of the group will begin to complete these actions without search and rescue personnel. These actions will help make the decision about when to call search and rescue personnel to be dispatched to the area.

If search and rescue professionals are dispatched, they will require this information.

ACTIONS THE GROUP / SEARCHERS WILL TAKE WHEN A PERSON BECOMES LOST



When it is discovered that a person is missing, the first instinct may be to go in the direction they were last seen, shouting their name. If everyone in the group has the same instinct, the list of missing persons may soon include the entire group.

Panic is triggered when a person becomes lost; however, it is a time when people need to remain calm, think clearly and act deliberately.

Analyze the Severity of the Situation

A combination of factors affecting urgency will help determine not only how quickly to respond, but the nature and level of response. A decision whether or not to contact emergency services will have to be made. The first step is to analyze the severity of the situation. If the majority of these factors are a high level of concern, it is likely that the leader should contact emergency services.

Time of day. A person lost in the evening is more of a concern than in the morning. Searching is more likely to be successful during daylight.

Weather. Severe weather (eg, torrential rain, snow, cold, fog) lessens the chances of a person being found. The forecasted weather should be considered. Searching is more likely to be successful in good weather.

Age and experience level of the person. A person with limited navigation and survival training will be more concerning than a person who has completed a variety of survival training.

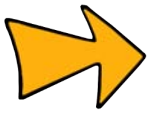
Medical concerns. When a missing person has a medical concern or injury, their condition must be carefully analyzed. Will they need medication soon? How long can they go without medication? Will they need medical attention when found?



People with serious medical issues could behave abnormally.

Equipment in the person's possession. When a person has limited equipment, the necessity to begin a search becomes more important. When participating in an activity, it is important that cadets have equipment such as a signalling device, water and rain gear (if the forecast is calling for rain). Knowing what the person is wearing will help the search process, since personnel know what colour(s) to look for.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.



When conducting activities, it is a good idea to give every cadet a garbage bag. The garbage bag can act as raingear, a water collection device, temporary shelter and a signalling device, yet it is small enough to fit in the cadet's pocket.

Signalling devices available. When a missing person has a signalling device, such as a whistle, a horn, matches or a flashlight, the group can be made aware of the sounds and sights to look for. The leader should also complete an inventory of the signalling devices available that the group can use to signal the lost person.

Communicate With the Lost Person

There are a variety of ways in which the group should try to communicate with the lost person.

Make noise. When a lost person hears noise, they will likely move toward it. Also, hope of being found will begin to rise, since they are now aware that people are looking for them close by.

Mark trees. A lost person may wander around the area. If they see a marking on a tree left by the group, they will know that people are near. When marking trees, the group could also leave instructions stating what the person should do.

Use signalling devices. There are a variety of signalling devices that the group could use, such as a signal fire, flares, a whistle, and a horn. If the lost person sees a signal, they will know which direction to head toward.

Confine the Area to Establish a Search Perimeter



Confinement area. A search perimeter that encompasses the last known area of the missing person and beyond. Once the area has been established, it should be unlikely that the missing person could pass through it without being detected.

Road blocks / trail blocks / patrols. Roads or pathways provide routes in which the missing person could depart. Road blocks / trail blocks / patrols leading in and out of the confinement area should be established. It is possible that the missing person could find a car passing by and simply hop in it and get transported to the closest town (while people are still searching). Also, personnel in the area can be made aware of the situation and provide searchers with any known information.

Lookouts. Searchers find locations at high elevations and look for the missing person.

Track traps. Areas in which tracks easily appear (eg, dusty road, sandy area, and mud) and are brushed off so that there are no tracks or marks. These areas are then checked frequently for tracks. If tracks are found in a track trap, searchers know that the missing person has moved through the area.

String lines. As searchers make their way through the perimeter of an area, one person carries a spool of string. As they walk through an area, the string unrolls, leaving a visible trail. The string then serves as a perimeter to confine the missing person, as well as a sign that assistance is nearby.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 4

QUESTIONS:

Q1. What are the factors considered to analyze the severity of the situation when a person becomes lost?

Q2. What is a confinement area?

Q3. What are some ways to confine the area to establish a search perimeter?

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. The factors used to analyze the severity of the situation are:

- the time of day,
- the weather,
- the age and experience level of the person,
- medical concerns,
- equipment in the person's possession, and
- signalling devices available.

A2. A confinement area is a search perimeter that encompasses the last known area of the missing person and beyond. Once the area has been established, it should be unlikely that the missing person could pass through it without being detected.

A3. A search perimeter can be established by using:

- road blocks / trail blocks / patrols,
- lookouts,
- track traps, and
- string lines.

Teaching point 5 **Discuss when to contact emergency services.**

Time: 5 min Method: Group Discussion

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE



The point of the group discussion is to draw the following information from the group using the tips for answering / facilitating discussion and the suggested questions provided.

WHEN TO CONTACT EMERGENCY SERVICES

There are no hard and fast rules that state when emergency services should be contacted after a person becomes lost. It is the responsibility of the leader to make the call based on the following factors:

- time of day,
- current and forecasted weather,
- age and experience level of the cadet,
- medical concerns,
- equipment in the cadet's possession, and
- signalling devices available.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

If there is any doubt whether or not the cadet will be found, there is little light left in the day or the temperatures are dropping, it is recommended that emergency services be contacted.

It typically takes emergency services a minimum of one hour to initiate a search and rescue mission once they have been notified and even longer for rural areas without teams stationed in the area. Also, emergency services will usually not begin a search after dark—they will wait until first light.



It is much easier to call off emergency personnel than call them in.

GROUP DISCUSSION



TIPS FOR ANSWERING / FACILITATING DISCUSSION:

- Establish ground rules for discussion, eg, everyone should listen respectfully; don't interrupt; only one person speaks at a time; no one's ideas should be made fun of; you can disagree with ideas but not with the person; try to understand others as much as you hope they understand you; etc.
- Sit the group in a circle, making sure all cadets can be seen by everyone else.
- Ask questions that will provoke thought; in other words avoid questions with yes or no answers.
- Manage time by ensuring the cadets stay on topic.
- Listen and respond in a way that indicates you have heard and understood the cadet. This can be done by paraphrasing their ideas.
- Give the cadets time to respond to your questions.
- Ensure every cadet has an opportunity to participate. One option is to go around the group and have each cadet answer the question with a short answer. Cadets must also have the option to pass if they wish.
- Additional questions should be prepared ahead of time.

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

Q1. What local area instructions and corps / regional SOP for when to contact emergency services exist in your area?

Q2. What factors would influence the decision whether or not to contact emergency services?

Q3. Approximately how long do you think it would take emergency services to get to your local area and begin a search mission?



Other questions and answers will develop throughout the group discussion. The group discussion should not be limited to only those suggested.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.



Reinforce those answers given and comments made during the group discussion, ensuring the teaching point has been covered.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 5

The cadets' participation in the group discussion will serve as the confirmation of this TP.

Teaching point 6 **Discuss ground search procedures used by search and rescue professionals when dispatched.**

Time: 5 min Method: Interactive Lecture



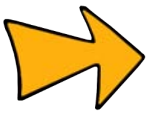
There are a wide variety of documented search and rescue procedures. These procedures will be completed by search and rescue professionals, once they have been dispatched to the area.

GROUND SEARCH PROCEDURES USED BY SEARCH AND RECUE PROFESSIONALS WHEN DISPATCHED

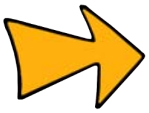
Hasty Search

A hasty search does not have definable boundaries. This type of search is used to discover evidence / the missing person quickly by visiting general locations where they are likely to be found (eg, campsites, abandoned vehicles, roads, trails). Hasty search techniques are usually used in the early stages of a search, but can be used anytime to check an unconfirmed sighting or to recheck specific, likely locations.

The goal of a hasty search is speed. The team is normally comprised of two to four searchers.



Running a trail, path or track is an example of a hasty search.



Other terms used to describe hasty searches include scratch, eyeball, quick-look, 360s, sign-cutting, ridge running, road / trail patrolling and trail running.

Loose Grid Search

This search involves searchers lining up on a baseline, at a wide spacing. Spacing is dependent on terrain and visibility. Generally, the amount of overlapping area should be minimal; however, searchers should always be able to maintain occasional visual / voice contact with the searchers on either side.

Once the search lanes are established, each searcher proceeds to search their area by weaving / roaming forward.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

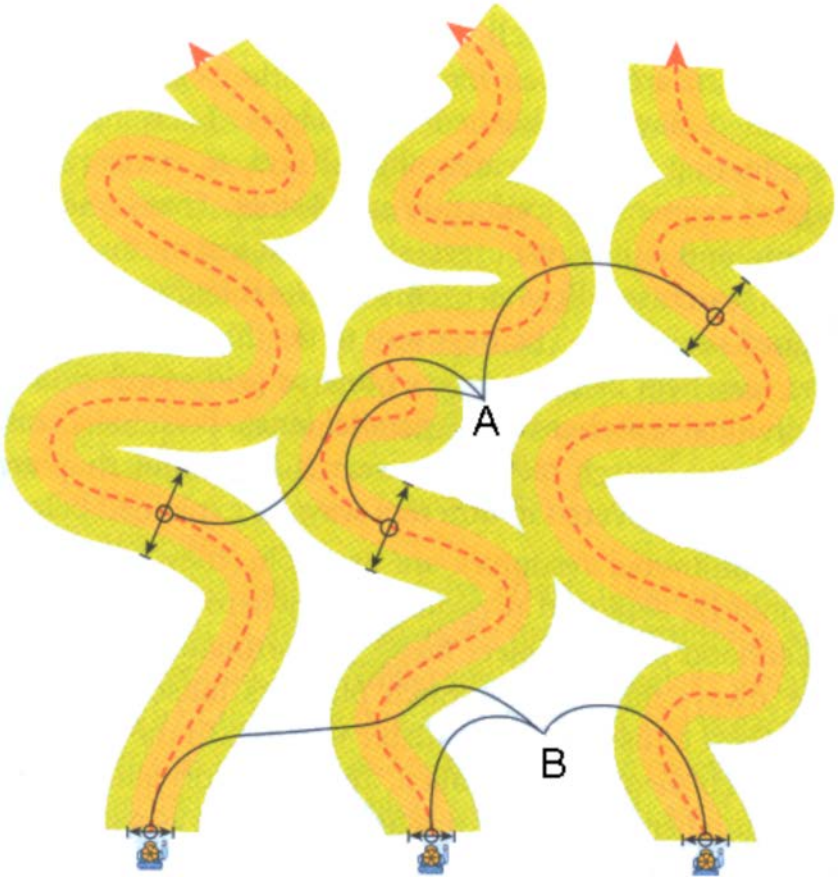
The loose grid search is generally used in the early stages of a search operation, especially if hasty searches found clues and the time frame is short. They may also be valuable in situations where the search area is large and the area has not been confined.

The goal of a loose grid search is to cover a large geographic area quickly, with few resources. The team is normally comprised of three to seven searchers.

Other terms used to describe loose grid searches include open grid and low coverage searches.

For Figures 1–3:

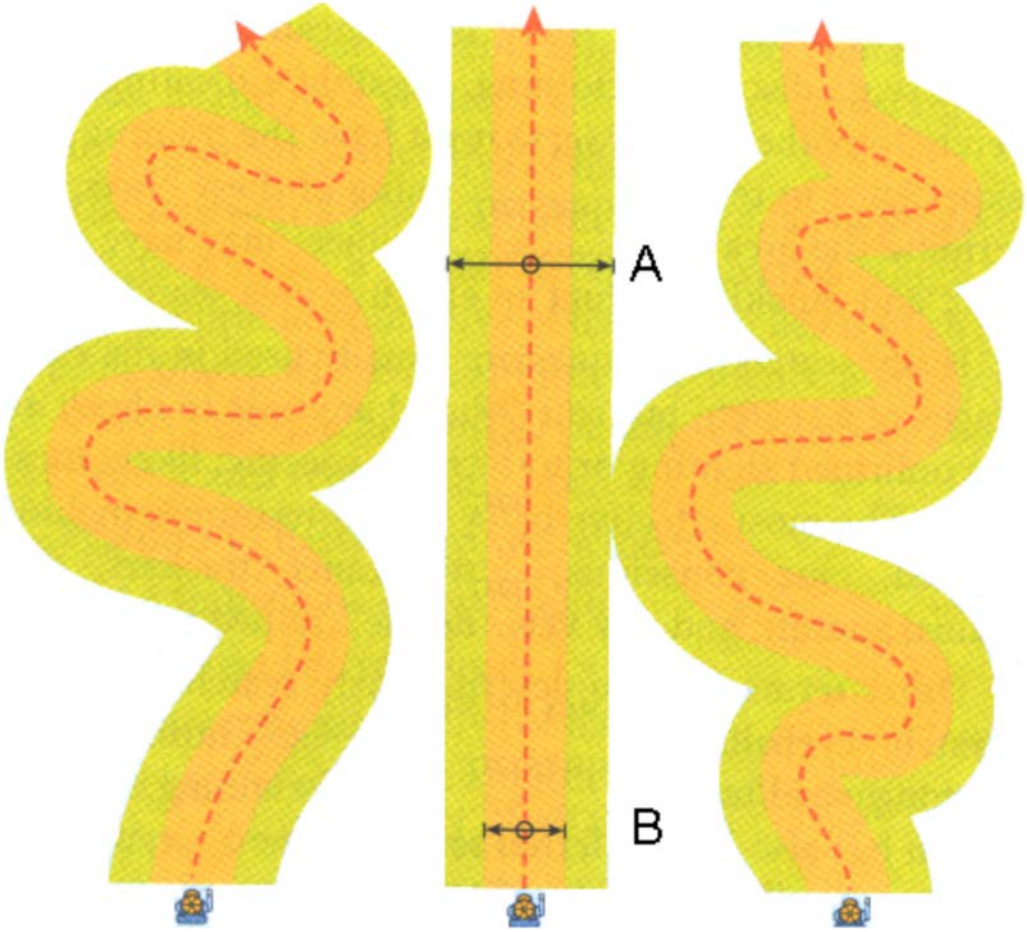
- A = the visual scan width, and
- B = the sweep width.



Note. From Fundamentals of Search and Rescue (p. 244), by National Association for Search and Rescue. 2005, Mississauga, ON: Jones and Bartlett Publishers Canada. Copyright 2005 by Jones and Bartlett Publishers, Inc.

Figure 1 Loose Grid Search—Example 1

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.



Note. From Fundamentals of Search and Rescue (p. 244), by National Association for Search and Rescue. 2005, Mississauga, ON: Jones and Bartlett Publishers Canada. Copyright 2005 by Jones and Bartlett Publishers, Inc.

Figure 2 Loose Grid Search—Example 2

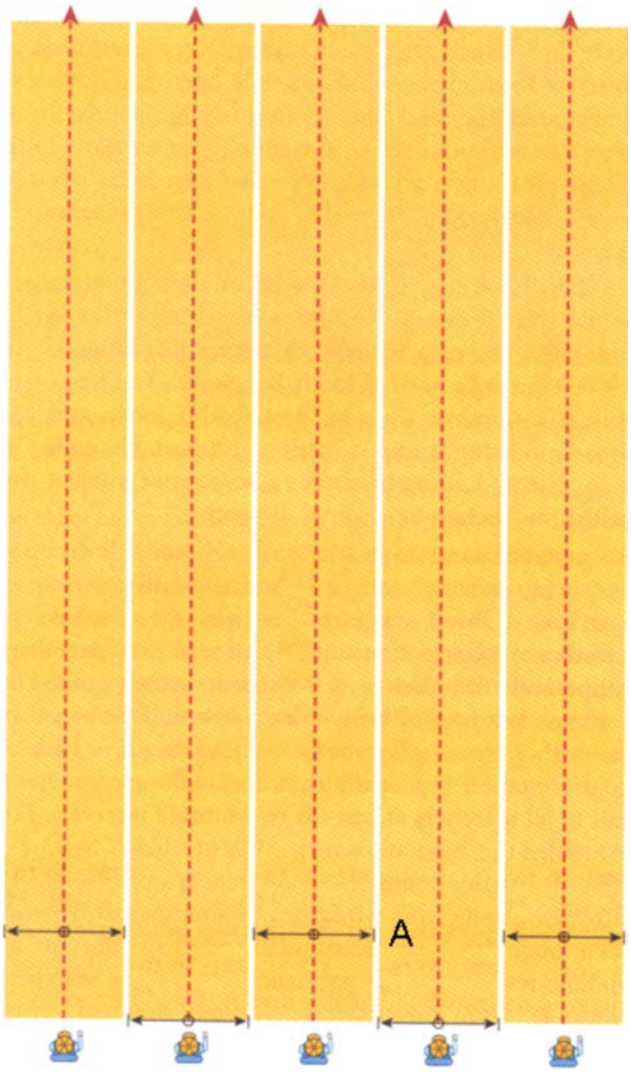
Tight Grid Search

A tight grid search is a slow, highly systematic area search. It is generally used when a very thorough, high-coverage search is required. This involves searchers lining up on a baseline, relatively close together. They then proceed along straight, parallel, equally spaced tracks, scanning the area. Since searchers are close together, there will be a visual overlap by adjacent searchers into the other person's area.

The goal of a tight grid search is to minimize the chances that a clue or the missing person will remain undetected. The team is normally comprised of four to seven searchers.

Other terms used to describe tight grid searches include closed grid, sweep searches, Type III searches and saturation searching.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.



Note. From Fundamentals of Search and Rescue (p. 246), by National Association for Search and Rescue. 2005, Mississauga, ON: Jones and Bartlett Publishers Canada. Copyright 2005 by Jones and Bartlett Publishers, Inc.

Figure 3 Tight Grid Search Example

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 6

QUESTIONS:

Q1. What is a hasty search?

Q2. The goal of this type of search is to cover a large geographic area quickly, with few resources.

Q3. What type of search team is normally comprised of three to seven searchers?

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. A hasty search does not have definable boundaries. This type of search is used to discover evidence / the missing person quickly by visiting general locations where they are likely to be found (eg, campsites, abandoned vehicles, roads, trails).

A2. A loose grid search.

A3. A loose grid search team.

QUESTIONS

Q1. Describe the steps of the STOP procedure.

Q2. What is a string line?

Q3. When should emergency services be contacted?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. Once it is determined that one is lost, the best thing to do is to stay in one place, keep calm and try to gather information to determine one's location. It is extremely important to concentrate on making good decisions.
STOP is a mnemonic for:

- **Sit.** Stop where you are! Do not panic. Many lost people waste valuable energy and risk injury by panicking—running aimlessly, continuing to travel after dark, or walking in circles. If a lost person decides to immediately wander in an attempt to find their location, in most cases they will move further away and increase the distance between the known points of their course. This will only increase the size of the search area, increasing the time it will take for a rescue team to locate an individual. As long as there is no immediate danger, stay in one place. During the first 30 minutes of being lost is when people tend to make their biggest mistakes. Making good decisions about the situation involves thinking through options without panicking.
- **Think.** Think about immediate and future dangers and the factors involved in the situation. Consider the time of day, personal physical condition and the last time water or food was consumed. Try to list the options that are available.
- **Observe.** Observe and listen for the signals of rescuers. Study the immediate environment, determining weather, terrain and resources available. Check the immediate area for a shelter location, fresh drinking water, and for clues of the current location.
- **Plan.** Plan the best course of action. It could be close to dark and consideration should be given to setting up shelter, finding water or starting a fire. A safety bearing could have been provided prior to beginning the activity and consideration should be given to use it or not. Include how to signal rescuers in the plan.

A2. As searchers make their way through the perimeter of an area, one person carries a spool of string. As they walk through an area, the string unrolls, leaving a visible trail. The string then serves as a perimeter to confine the missing person, as well as a sign that assistance is nearby.

A3. There are no hard and fast rules that state when emergency services should be contacted after a person becomes lost. Answers will vary.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK / READING / PRACTICE

Nil.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Nil.

CLOSING STATEMENT

A person can become lost simply by leaving a tent to go to the washroom and becoming disoriented or by following an incorrect compass bearing on a hike. Cadets participating in an activity should be aware of the actions they must take when lost, as it will increase the chances of them being found quickly.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES / REMARKS

Nil.

REFERENCES

C0-111 ISBN 0-9740820-2-3 Tawrell, P. (2006). *Camping and wilderness survival* (2nd ed.). Lebanon, NH: Author.

C2-009 ISBN 0-684-85909-2 Harvey, M. (1999). *The national outdoor leadership school's wilderness guide*. New York, NY: Fireside.

C2-016 ISBN 0-517-88783-5 Curtis, R. (1998). *The backpacker's field manual: A comprehensive guide to mastering backcountry skills*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.

C2-069 ISBN 0-9694132-0-3 Ferri, G. F. (2000). *The psychology of wilderness survival*. Hanover, ON: Skyway Printing.

C2-229 ISBN 0-913724-30-0 LaValla, P. (1999). *Search is an emergency, field coordinator's handbook for managing search operations*. Olympia, WA: ERI International, Inc.

C3-208 ISBN 978-0-7637-4807-4 National Association for Search and Rescue. (2005). *Fundamentals of search and rescue*. Mississauga, ON: Jones and Bartlett Publishers Canada.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.