50 USES FOR SOLAR EMERGENCY BLANKETS

With the advancements and advocacy in disaster and survival preparation, most people these days are familiar with the solar or mylar blanket. While most commonly known to be used as the blanket it is, this inexpensive, small survival tool has big potential and a wide range of uses that may surprise you!

1. **Tourniquet**
   
   In addition to its flexibility, these blankets are also durable. As such, they can easily be used as a tourniquet should a more severe injury with heavy bleeding occur. Cut or tear the blanket into a long, narrow strip and do as you would with any standard rubber tourniquet!

2. **Pillow**
   
   Don’t let your arm go numb by resting on it all night! Instead, grab your solar blanket and use it as a pillow! Simply fold it into an appropriate shape and stuff it with clothing, leaves, or other available soft material, then secure the ends to one another. As your head emits your body heat, the pillow will retain the warmth – making for the best night’s sleep on the ground that you’ll ever have!

3. **Fishing Lure**
   
   We already know these blankets can be used for catching water, but they are also helpful in capturing food. By simply cutting the blanket into small pieces, you can attach them to your fishing line to use as lures. Fish will go crazy over the shiny material!

4. **Poncho**
   
   Fold your blanket in half two times (once vertically, once horizontally), then cut a hole on the corner in which there are no ends to the blanket. Unfold the blanket and you’ll find yourself with cut-out in the middle. Put your head through the hole and lay the rest around your shoulders – you have a waterproof poncho!
5. Canopy
It may be hot and sunny or cold and rainy – in either case, a cover atop you and/or your supplies is a must! A solar blanket is tear resistant and, thus, the perfect solution to a quick canopy. If the resources are available, make columns to hold up the blanket – or just attach each end to trees.

6. Fire Starter
The idea here isn’t to burn the blanket itself, as it has such a high melting point. Rather, the blanket can be used as a fire starter by angling it appropriately to use the reflective material against the sun’s rays to catch a flame to tinder.

7. Flotation Device
This one is a bit trickier and may require a set of experienced hands – but it is helpful nonetheless. By folding the Mylar blanket into a desired shape and tying off and/or adhering the ends, you can create an air filled device which will then float.

8. Clothing
Certainly this is not conventional, but it may be necessary if the time/need comes. By sizing and cutting a solar blanket, you can use it as articles of clothing, such as a narrow strip for a belt, or a wider piece for a scarf.

9. Shade
If you’ve ever spent a period of time outdoors, you’ll know that it isn’t always easy to find a shaded area, especially where you can too set up camp. With a solar blanket, you can make your own shade for easy livin’. Hoist the blanket at an angle with whatever means you have necessary, leaving a shaded ground below whilst reflecting away the heat from the sun above.

10. Food Cover
This is an excellent tool for two reasons – flies and warmth. By placing a solar blanket atop, your prepared feast will be protected against those dreaded flies, and can easily be secured to the table to keep it from taking off in the wind. Alternatively, because these blankets are designed to retain heat, covering your food with one will keep it warm!

11. Signage
Signs may come in handy when in the outdoors, whether for a camping trip or in survival mode. Surely though, you cannot carry around various signs with you to post when needed. As such, your emergency blanket makes for an excellent poster – just write on it what you will with marker, should you be “lucky” enough to have one. This would make excellent décor for a party as well!
12. Melt Snow
Should you have “access” to snow and the sun simultaneously, you can utilize your solar blanket to melt the snow into fresh water. Simply make a bowl-like shape out of your blanket, fill it with a small amount of snow, and let it melt in the sun. Once liquefied, place it in a container and enjoy!

13. Sling:
The material of these blankets allows them twist and turn. Should you endure an injury or broken bone to your arm, use your blanket as a sling bandage. Simply cut it to the appropriate size, place it around the wounded arm, and tie the two ends together around the neck.

14. Bird Repellent
While these creatures are beautiful and often welcomed, you may find yourself needing to fight them off if/when it comes to them picking at your food and plants. Birds loathe Mylar due to its reflectiveness and movement changes, so will stay away should you place pieces of a Mylar blanket around the area you’re trying to keep endothermic vertebrate free. You can create a “scare crow” by attaching pieces of the blanket to a pole and sticking it in the ground near your garden.

15. Rain Catcher:
Without a doubt, water is priority – in everyday life, but especially when camping or when in survival mode. If not prepared, finding water can be tricky and time consuming – which consumes your energy, making your need for water that much greater. A simple tool for you to construct is a rain catcher, should you be lucky enough for rainfall. Prep your blanket in an area that allows it to billow into a bowl-shape, or make it into a funnel and angle it downward leading to a bucket - as the rain comes down, it will be collected for your enjoyment!

16. Trail Markers:
This one’s easy – Tear your emergency blanket into several small pieces. As you walk, place them on the ground as trail markers for you to easily find your way back later. Of course, be sure to “lock them down” with the resources around you – dirt, sticks, rocks, etc. You could also cut them into long, thin strips and tie them around trees and branches.

17. Tent Divider / Privacy Curtain:
Multi-room tents are expensive, but single room tents can get crowded with multiple persons. By vertically attaching a solar blanket within a tent, you can create your own sectioned shelter, giving everyone the privacy they’ve always wanted in the outdoors!
**18 Seat Cover**
While this could be done at any time, it is best when temperatures are low. Just as you would with a standard cover, place a solar blanket over your car’s seats to make a barrier between you and the cushion. This makes for an inexpensive way to keep your seats clean after a day at the beach, but even better, to keep you warm when it’s cold as it captures and retains your body heat.

**19 Ground Cover**
When out of doors, bugs and critters are inevitable and, often, unavoidable. But, a solar blanket can help evade them in your territory – although it really is theirs. By lying one of these blankets under your tent, shelter, or sleeping bag, you create a barrier between you and the ground, making it harder for those pests to creep in. This will also prevent your area from becoming damp.

**20 AC-Free Home Cooler**
Hot days can easily make the inside of your home uncomfortable with heat, and running the AC all afternoon will just bring your utility bill through the roof! Some solar blankets can help keep your house cool – just cover the inside of the sun-facing windows and tape them into place.

**21 Water Heater**
No, we don’t mean one of those oversized heavier-than-life cylinders in your house that make your showers warm. Rather, you can use your Mylar blanket to heat a pot or cup of water. Just like you would to start a fire, use the shiny material to reflect the sun onto the water to heat it up.

**22 Hood**
If you unexpectedly find yourself in a downpour, you may very well not be sporting the most appropriate attire. Should you be in need of a head cover but have an emergency blanket on hand, use it! Hang the blanket over your head, tuck the ends into whatever you’re wearing – you’ve got a hood!

**23 Fire Wood Cover**
Whether you’re camping or just enjoy a cozy night next to your fireplace, storing firewood can be tricky as you surely want to keep it dry. By placing it atop a solar blanket, you can prevent dampness from seeping into the wood from the ground. Similarly, placing a second blanket over the pile of wood will keep it dry from falling rain and/or the night’s dew.
24. Sleeping Bag Liner

When sleeping outdoors is expected, such as during a camping trip, one item on top of the must-bring list is often a sleeping bag. Add to that list a solar blanket! The temperature may drop unexpectedly, your sleeping bag may tear, or that fussy zipper might break – a solar blanket is thin enough but greatly effective to give you added warmth by adding it inside your sleeping bag as a liner.

25. Tablecloth

One often doesn't think of tablecloths when outside, but why not? If we take those sanitary and decorative measures at home, we can in the outdoors too….or maybe you’re one of the “glampers” that desire a fancier campground. A Mylar blanket makes for an inexpensive, reusable, and durable tablecloth. How about a space / astronaut themed birthday party? These would be a great touch without breaking the bank.

26. Hammock

This one is a little trickier and should only be attempted with the use of high quality, thicker solar blankets. Like conventional hammocks, hoist your blanket between two trees that are an appropriate distance apart and secure them tightly. This is a great addition to your outdoor living, whether as a means to avoid the critters below whilst sleeping or just to relax under the open sky.
Leg Warmers
As within gloves on hands and socks/shoes on feet, emergency blankets can also be fixed to be worn as leg warmers. By simply cutting the blanket then wrapping them around the lower of your legs and adhering them tape, you have leg warmers that look just as good as they did in the 80's!

Snack Trough
Even though you may be in survival mode, having on-the-go snacks is never a bad thing! Take what's around you; whether you have some goodies packed from home or (cautiously) find berries and nuts in the wild. Cut a square from your emergency blanket about 10 inches around, fold it, and place your snacks inside. Tie the ends together and off you go, treats and all!

Fishing Weight
Similar to the snack trough, cutting 3 inch squares out of your blanket can make for a weight to attach to your fishing line. Once you have your cut-out, fold it, and place inside stones or rocks. Then tie the ends together, creating your makeshift weight, and attach it to your fishing line.

Pack Liner
We may like to think that anything tucked away in our backpack / bag is protected from the elements – but this isn't always the case. In the blink of an eye, the content of your pack may become subject to contamination and/or water damage. By simply lining the inside of your pack with a solar blanket, which takes next-to-no room, you add an added barrier around your supplies.

Cleaning Material
You may not have a rag to clean up after yourself, and you surely may not want to use your clothing to get the job done. Solution – use your solar blanket. As they're waterproof, they won't be best to clean up liquids, but are excellent for other substances, such as scrubbing a used pan.

Knife Sheath
Packing away knives always seems to give people trouble. A simple solution to protecting everyone from slicing their fingers when reaching into the packed-up supplies is wrapping the knife's end with a solar blanket. These are tear resistant so shouldn't get cut by the knife's edge when being packed and transported.
33. Animal Rescue

Being stranded or mistreated can leave an animal in shock, as too can the act of the rescue in of itself. Just as one would with a human, wrapping the animal in an emergency blanket will aid in stopping the shock as it heats their body.

34. Bed Cover

Wetting the bed seems almost inevitable with children – and surely you don’t want that passing through blankets onto your mattress. Place a solar blanket under your sheets for a waterproof barrier between your child and the bed. This may also help keep them warm at night.

35. Costume

Get creative – use a solar blanket for Halloween or those sometimes-dreaded themed/costume parties! Wrap yourself or use bits and pieces to become an astronaut, alien, robot, and more!
36. Dew Catcher
Like the rain catcher listed above, a solar blanket can be used to catch dew accumulated overnight – giving you the much-needed survival essential of water!

37. Light
Inevitably, when living outdoors and without electricity, light is limited. You can maximize your ability to see with the use of a solar blanket. Simply position your blanket behind whatever light source you have – candles, lanterns, etc. – and the light will bounce off the reflective material, brightening up your area!

38. Pool Tarp
While this may be more effective on smaller/kiddie pools, it is certainly worth a try for full-size ones. Place your emergency blanket( )s reflective side up on top of the pool’s water. The sun will reflect off the blanket, keeping it cool underneath, and the water will be bug and leaf free.

39. Animal Shelter
Solar blankets can help keep the dog house and chicken coop outside dry and cool. Place a blanket atop the roof of the shelter and adhere it at the ends/sides. In warm months, the sun will reflect off the Mylar and keep the inside cool. In wet months, the waterproof material will keep the inside dry.

40. Book Cover
With technology nowadays, do students still take home textbooks? If so, Mylar blankets make for great book covers! Cut them to size, wrap around the book’s front and back covers, and adhere them appropriately. This is inexpensive, and the kids can customize it with permanent markers!

41. Clothing Dryer
With its reflective material, Mylar blankets can help aid the drying of wet clothes – this is excellent when you’re out camping! By placing damp/wet clothing atop the blanket, under the sun, they will dry faster than when hanging on a tree branch or lying over the back of a chair.

42. Weight Loss
We’ve all seen boxers sporting a trash bag whilst running the track to cut down in weight before the big fight. Emergency blankets can be used to the same effect, so long as you do it with caution. Wear the blanket like the poncho described above, or wrap it around your body under your exercise gear. These are designed to retain body heat, so you’re sure to get sweaty!

43. Gardening
An emergency blanket can help keep your plants from shriveling during the hottest times of the day. Lightly place a blanket over your veggie beds during these times, so that the sun reflects away and the plants don’t shrivel. Surely, you do not want to have them covered all the time, or for too long, as sun is needed for plants’ growth – this is just during extreme hot weather.
44. Reflective or Signaling Device

Being prepared for an emergency is a necessity, and solar blankets are cheap tools that take up next-to-no-room which should always be packed in survival kits! We all know they can be used for warmth during survival mode, but what about helping you get back to safety? By breaking apart the blanket and displaying the pieces above ground, search and rescue may see them as an SOS allowing them to determine your location and bring your unfortunate journey to an end.

45. Foot and Hand Warmers:

Simple and effective – cut your Mylar blanket into smaller squares (the size dependent upon whom you’re dressing) and wrap them around the hands and feet. Apply gloves and socks and/or shoes over your Mylar extremities and there you have it – warm fingers and tootsies! This will also help to keep your hands and feet dry. Remember that the fingers and toes are more sensitive to frost bite, so should be kept dry and warm if possible!

47. Wrapping Paper

Gift wrap is often far overpriced – for something that is simply going to be torn apart and tossed in the trash; unless you’re one that meticulously unwraps a gift to save the paper and use on another gift later….in which case, kudos to you! Whether you rip through the wrapping or not, solar blankets make for great gift wrap. They’re flexible yet durable, and are especially fun if you have children that can add their own decorative touch to the gift!
47. Windshield Cover
Solar blankets can keep help protect your car from the elements. After driving, while the car is still warm, placing a blanket on the outside of the windshield (tucking the ends into the doors) can help prevent ice buildup on the glass overnight. Contrary, placing a blanket on the inside of the windshield (again, tucking the ends into the doors), with the reflective side outward faced, can help evade the sun’s rays and keep the inside of the car cool.

48. Furniture Cover
When painting a room, one of the biggest hassles always seems to be the moving of furniture – space may not be available to just relocate it to another room. Reposition the furniture into the center of the room and cover it with Mylar blankets to protect it from paint splatter or spillage. These too can be used to line the floor so that your carpet or tile doesn’t get stained, or to cover furniture whilst in storage to prevent dust and other element exposure.

49. Rope
With its durability, Mylar blankets can be used to manufacture a makeshift rope. Simply twist the blanket tightly, cutting it in length as needed. If thinner rope is desired, cut the blanket into strips before twisting. If time and material allow, cut multiple strips but leave the ends connected, and braid them together for an even more durable rope. Surely, we would not suggest using this for repelling.

50. Heat Reflector
There is more than one way to use a solar blanket to keep you warm. While you can just wrap yourself in it, you can also use it to reflect and focus the heat of your campfire! By setting up the blanket vertically near your fire, you will cause the heat to redirect off the blanket – to “bounce back”, thus channelling the warmth just like the heater does in your car. For additional recycling of the warm air, hoist other blankets around the fire. These blankets have a high melting point (about 245 degrees Celsius) so that will not be a concern, so long as there is a safe distance between the two. This is also effective in heating an area/room should you place the blanket behind a wood stove or similar appliance.

BONUS: Gifts
Simple – give these away as a gift on birthdays and holidays, or even as party favors! These are inexpensive, can be bought in bulk and stored away until needed as they don’t expire, and have many invaluable uses. Take it one step further and include a list of all the uses (this one, plus many more!) with the solar emergency blanket to just how versatile they are!