

## Space Blankets for Warmth!



Space blankets are made from aluminized plastic. The plastic was used for the first U. S. communications satellite, Echo I, in 1963. Once in orbit, the plastic was inflated to a spherical shape that reflected radio waves from the ground. On the ground, the aluminized plastic was found to reflect heat and became a part of emergency camping gear: the "Space" Blanket, as in "The Blanket from Outer Space." Sounds like a great science-fiction horror movie title!

### About the only thing a Space Blanket is not good for is a blanket!

In Alaska, I cut up space blankets and made a tight-fitting shirt and pants. Within minutes I was sweating. They were too warm to be practical. Space blanket ponchos may sometimes be too much of a good thing. There are other uses:

- Put under a sleeping bag to reflect body heat upward.
- Put inside the top of a tent to reflect body heat downward. Condensation from your breath and perspiration may make drips.
- Set up behind a campfire to reflect heat into your tent.
- Wrap up a cold person in an emergency to get him warm.
- Cover a window to prevent heat from escaping.
- Put a piece in your boot bottoms to keep your feet warm. If your feet sweat, reduce the size of the piece of space blanket.
- Put a piece in the top of your hat to keep your bald spot warm.
- Wrap warm food in it to keep it warm.
- Wrap cold food in it to keep it cool.

Space blankets tear easily. They can be repaired easily with tape. Generally small holes don't affect their usefulness. They shed water. They come in small plastic bags that you'll never be able to put them back into. They should be part of every emergency kit or Bug-Out Bag.

If you're using a space blanket for someone cold, be sure to stick it under his butt and over his head. He'll probably be sitting on the cold ground, and the space blanket will insulate him from that cold. Putting the space blanket over his head, with his face sticking out of it, will keep his head warmer. Use two space blankets on him, until he is warm enough to want to remove them himself.