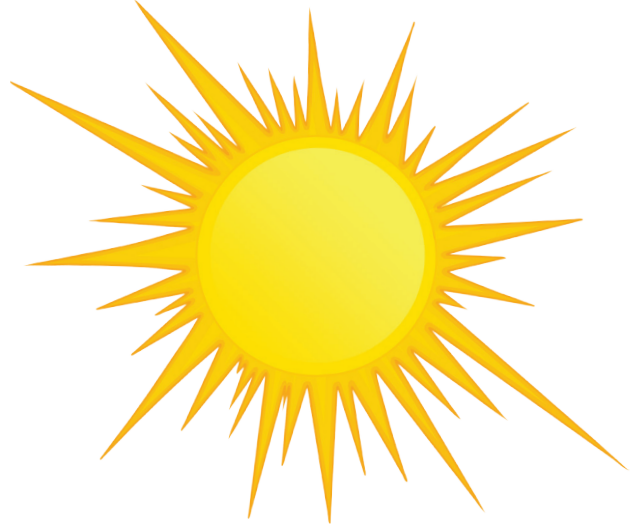


How Do People Survive in the Desert?

There are approximately four million Bedouin people living in North Africa and Asia, including in the Sahara Desert. Life in the Sahara is incredibly difficult because of the lack of water, limited food supply, extreme heat during the day and cold during the night (regularly below freezing because of lack of cloud cover) and exposure to the elements. The word “Bedouin” means desert people and they have lived in these harsh conditions for thousands of years, adapting to their environment to ensure their survival.

Water

- They plan all journeys carefully so that they are always near an oasis: a place where water comes to the surface.
- They collect dew water overnight from plants and stones by putting cloths over them and then squeezing out the water in the morning.
- They look for lines of plants in the desert; this shows a river may flow underneath the surface.
- They look out for flies, birds and mosquitoes; these only live near water.



Food

- They herd camels, sheep, goats and cattle, primarily for food.
- They are nomadic: they move around to find the best places for their animals to graze.
- In winter, when there's some rain, they travel deeper into the desert to find places for their animals to graze.
- In summer, when there is very low rainfall, they have to stay near to a reliable source of water.
- They use camels to help them carry their belongings. Camels are strong and able to walk long distances on minimal food and water.

Extreme Temperatures

- They wear woollen clothing made from the wool of their animals to keep them warm at night.
- They wear loose-fitting clothes to allow air to circulate.
- They wear head coverings to keep out heat, cold, wind and sand.

Protection from the Elements

They make long low tents from goats' hair. These are waterproof, provide shade in the daytime, keep them warm at night and shelter them from the strong desert winds and sandstorms.

