

BASIC OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT LIST

This list should be considered a minimum for most overnight trips:

1. Good pair of hiking shoes or boots & several pairs of socks

* be sure to 'break them in' before your first hike!

2. Canteen or water bottle (1qt min)

* Nalgene bottles (wide mouth) work great and are recommended

3. 'Silverware' (knife, fork and spoon), Plate, Bowl, and 'Mug' (stainless or 'Lexan')

* the 'Mug' must be able to handle both hot and cold beverages

4. Sleeping bag (rated to 25deg F)

* a 0-degree rated bag is recommended for snow camping

5. Closed cell pad

*a closed cell, or self-inflating type recommended

6. Flashlight (small)

* 2 - AA batteries is a good size

7. Rain suit or poncho

* a low cost 'emergency' style poncho is light & small but very useful

8. Pocketknife (after Totin' Chip is earned)

* folding type, 3" blade max, lock blade preferred

9. Toilet Kit

*you can make this kit yourself using the lists in your Scout Handbook!

10. Backpack

* a good backpack can be expensive, it's best to borrow one for a while to checkout the different styles and sizes available

AFTER SUMMER CAMP

11. Cook kit & Pot Grabber/Lifter

* stainless kits are preferred

12. Compass

* you'll be doing map reading so get a compass that lies flat with clear see through scales

13. First aid kit - personal

* you can make this yourself using the lists in your Scout Handbook!

14. Waterproof matches (after Firem'n Chit is earned)

* 'Strike anywhere' matches in a waterproof holder are also OK

If you have any questions regarding the type or style of the above equipment, please contact the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, or any of the older Scouts.

The Boy Scout Handbook is also a great resource and has extended lists. Please check out Chapter 9 "Camping" of your Scout Handbook for additional lists.

We know this seems like a lot of equipment, but it will all be used. You do not need to run out and buy all this equipment now. It will be needed before you can go on some of the outings (especially late fall, winter and early spring campouts). Again, if you have questions about equipment or uniforms contact the Scoutmaster or one of the Adult Leaders. They also have an extended list for backpacking and winter outings.

THE BARE ESSENTIALS

As you start shopping for equipment this is the order of importance in which you should buy it:

EQUIPMENT DESCRIPTION/DEFINITION

BOOTS - are the single most important piece of backpacking equipment there is and are essential to any safe, comfortable camping trip. Once again, they range in price from cheap to outrageous. Watch for sales. Also, please, please don't buy the boots too big thinking he will grow into them. It's okay to buy them a little large, but have him wear two pairs of socks. The last thing that you want is to have your son's boots sliding around when he walks. This will cause serious blisters and various other aches and pains for your boy.

CANTEEN/WATER BOTTLE - This should be a good quality water bottle that will fit easily into a backpack and will not leak. Wide mouth Nalgene bottles works the best. (Page 209 of the *Boy Scout Handbook* shows a good water bottle. The opening is the right size for a water purifier to snap onto it.)

MESS KIT & EATING/COOKING UTENSILS – For all campouts a good Stainless Steel or Lexan mess kit (plate, bowl and cup) is required. A good idea is to purchase Lexan, because they will not rust, melt, or get too hot to hold. Silverware can be either Metal or Lexan. A cook kit should consist of at least 1 pan and 1 bowl. Select a size that is easy to pack away. A Cook kit made from stainless steel is recommended. It will last longer and is easier to keep clean. It is recommended that you “DO NOT BUY ALLUMINUM”! Aluminum reacts to certain foods and can taste BAD. Another must-have is a pot grabber. This is a device that looks like a pair of bent pliers that hold onto the side of a pan and keeps the pan from rocking and spilling. They cost about \$2.



Here is a picture of a good mess kit.

THE BASIC PIECE CAMPING EQUIPMENT IS . . .

A GOOD SLEEPING BAG

SLEEPING BAG - a good bag is a must. But you don't have to spend a great deal of money to get a decent one. We recommend a bag that is rated for at least 10-degree weather.

What should the bag be filled with? A synthetic filled bag is recommended. Dryloft, Polarguard, and Qualofill are the leaders of the synthetic bags. A down filled bag is not recommended for scouts due to the amount of moisture they hold.

Why? If a synthetic bag gets wet, you can hang it up and it will dry in a couple of hours; but with a down filled bag you must wait a **LONG** time for it to dry and without proper drying, never get the loft back.

How warm should the bag be? A sleeping bag that is rated to 0 degrees is best. Although a 10-degree bag will do with a liner, it is best to go with the 0 degree.

Should I buy a MUMMY or a RECTANGLE BAG? A mummy bag is best due to the lesser amount of space to heat up. Most new mummy bags are really comfortable and allow room for rolling. Do not buy a sleeping bag that is too long for the user. The longer the bag the more air space that has to be heated in order to stay warm.

Are there any other features that I should look for? Yes. Look for a bag with an adjustable hood to prevent heat loss. Also look for a bag with a good zipper, you don't want to wake up at 3 in the morning with an un-zipped, or broken zipper.

What type of material should the Sleeping Bag be made from? Nylon type materials for both the outside and inside seem to work best. Nylon is a lighter and durable fabric. Cotton Canvas is heavy and bulky. Nylon inside the bag will wick the moisture away and it will also allow the youth to roll around without the bag sticking to him.

If the bag does not come with a stuff sack, then buy one. This will keep the bag clean and dry as you son comes and goes from a camping trip.

Remember that if your son is going to backpack with the troop the lighter and smaller the bag is the better.

(Be prepared to spend anywhere from \$40 - \$200 on a sleeping bag. Stay away from the bulky \$20 bags; they are the WORST thing for backpacking and provide no warmth whatsoever.

A good place to find a sleeping bag is by using Backpacker magazine's GEARFINDER @ <http://www.gearfinder.com>

**In a nutshell you probably want:
A synthetic filled, 0 degree, mummy bag.**

SLEEPING PAD - for placement underneath your son's sleeping bag. This is necessary not only for cushioning, but for warmth. Without a pad your son is sleeping on very cold ground. However, DO NOT send him with a mattress; a pad does not have to be thick to work. Suitable pads can be found for under \$10. More high tech pads can be found at any sporting goods store. Pads should be small and very light weight (most are only a few ounces) and take up very little space.

FLASHLIGHT (and extra batteries/bulb) The troop provides lanterns to light the camp at night, but those after-dark trips to the outhouse make the use of a flashlight necessary. Also, it is against BSA policy (and safety rules in general) to have lanterns (flames) inside tents. His flashlight will be the only way your boy will have light in his tent and/or be able to find his way to the outhouse (or the nearest bush) in the dark. Maglites are the best brand and they come in all sizes. My favorite is a mini-Mag. Extra batteries and an extra bulb should also be sent to camp.

BACKPACKS COME IN 2 DIFFERENT STYLES INTERNAL FRAME, AND EXTERNAL FRAME

(Page 228 of the *Boy Scout Handbook* shows a picture of an external frame pack. These are the least expensive and easiest for the boys to use. Page 229 shows an internal frame pack. This type is best for mountaineering as it hugs the body but is difficult to pack because most brands have only one large compartment. Also, internal frame packs can get a little pricey.

Which one is better to buy?

If you want a pack for the beginner buy an External Frame backpack. The external frame is easier to load and manage and often weighs and costs less than an Internal Frame.

If you want a pack for someone who plans going on long distance or snowshoe/ski involved treks, buy an Internal Frame. It is easier to ski in because you can move your arms and the pack stays close to your body for a secure feeling.

Go to the stores and try several styles and types. Walk around in it. Jump with it. If the pack feels unstable, it is probably too large for you, or is not loaded correctly. Also, make sure you can tilt your head back to look at the sky.

The best size for a backpack is anywhere from 3,500 to 5,000 cubic inches.

BACKPACK - a good pack can make the difference for your son between a miserable experience and a great adventure in the wilderness. When selecting a pack:

DO -

Have your son try on the pack at the store and make the store personnel load it up to verify the fit.

Make sure the pack fits snugly around your son's hips. (This is where he will carry the total weight of the pack and it is essential that the waist strap fit well.)

Make sure the shoulder straps are not draped around his shoulders. They should actually extend straight back. Otherwise this means he is carrying the weight of the pack on his shoulders instead of his hips.

Keep in mind he is growing and look for a pack that will shrink then grow.

Make sure the pack is not too big and roomy. This leads to the temptation to overload it.

Remember that the total weight of the fully loaded pack should not exceed 30-35 pounds (or 1/3 your son's body weight). 25-30 pounds would be best for some of our smaller kids.

Watch for sales. Decent packs range from \$50 to \$200. Stay in the cheaper range since your boy will outgrow this pack in a few years.

DO NOT -

- Get confused between a backpacking pack and a daypack. Ask for help from the store people. And I am sorry to report that you CANNOT get a backpacking pack at Target.

- **Borrow a pack from an adult and expect it to be usable by your boy unless he is a teenager (AKA a boy in an adult body). If you must borrow one, adjust it to fit. Be alert to the fact the waist strap MUST fit snugly.**

- Let your son overload his pack and don't YOU overload his pack. He really won't need that Army blanket. (The blanket is too heavy)

- Let you son wear the waist strap under his belly. Some of our guys have tummies already and are used to wearing their pants underneath their gut. They absolutely cannot wear their backpack like this as it will put the weight of the pack on their shoulders. Make sure they know to put their packs on with the buckle over their belly buttons.

Good places to purchase packs include Appalachian Outfitters, Kames, Dicks, Gander Mountain, and L.L. Bean. There are consignment sporting good stores around that handle camping equipment that are in good condition but no longer needed. It's a good idea to get your boy in the habit of using a backpack for every campout because he will be able to keep all his gear together instead of having it tossed around loose – a sleeping bag here, a duffel bag there, a sleeping pad who knows where.

CLOTHING SUGGESTIONS AND HINTS

Rule No. 1 in hiking and camping clothing is **“AVOID COTTON.”** This is because cotton holds moisture and dries very, very slowly. In cold weather, cotton gets damp (from sweat or moisture in the air) and since it will stay wet for a very long time, it can cause hypothermia. Here is a quick list of clothing made of cotton:

1. Jeans;
2. T-shirts;
3. Sweats;
4. Underwear;

In the summer time, the above-listed clothing is okay. But for cold weather camping and especially backpacking, try to avoid cotton.

In general, unless they are very well worn and comfy, jeans are not good for hiking due to chafing.

Like all other camping gear, it is possible to spend a fortune on high-tech camp clothing. However, if you are like me, you will have to make do with what you have available. Check your closet or your boy's closet (or his floor or under his bed) for the following:

1. Nylon mesh – these were popular up until very recently so chances are good your son will have these already. The nylon dries very quickly and is very warm. The open mesh will allow sweat to evaporate.
2. Nylon warm-up suits - these are great since they are very warm, lightweight, comfortable, and will also dry very quickly.
3. Poly-blend sweats - check the label for fabric content. Much of the sweatwear available is 50-60% poly with the rest being cotton.
4. Wool Pendleton-type shirts and pants – wool is nature's “high tech” fabric. It will stay warm even when it is very wet and it dries quickly.
5. Athletic socks – those Nike (or other name brand) socks your kid insisted on having to be cool are great. Unbeknownst to your son, not only are they hip, but they are made to keep sweat from being a problem. Wet, sweaty socks are the leading cause of blisters.
6. Fleece wear - again, this stuff is warm, lightweight, NOT cotton and very likely to already be in your son's wardrobe.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

Here is a list of Personal Equipment for an enjoyable experience at Camp. Add any items you feel are important. Stress the importance of a good "Scout Pack." We recommend that your NAME AND TROOP NUMBER be marked on all clothing and equipment.

CLOTHING & BEDDING

- Class "B" Scout Uniform
 - Troop "T" shirt or Scouting related shirt
- Class "A" Scout Uniform (complete):
 - Scout Shirt
 - Scout Shorts/Pants and belt
 - Troop or Scout hat
 - Troop Neckerchief
- Extra shorts/pants
- Extra shirts
- Daily change of underwear
- Daily change of socks
- Bathing trunks
- Raincoat or poncho
- Pajamas or something to sleep in
- Sweater or jacket
- Hat
- Gloves / Mittens
- Ground cloth
- Sleeping bag
- Sleeping Pad
- Pillow (optional)
- Shoes / Boots
- Long sleeve shirt & long pants
- Knapsack / Backpack
- Towel(s)
- Wash cloth

TOILETRY ARTICLES

- Toothbrush & paste
- Comb, brush, mirror
- Soap in container
- Deodorant
- Chap Stick
- Shampoo

Other Things

- Handbook or Merit Badge books
- Pen, pencil, pad
- Compass
- Spending money
- Flashlight
- Mess Kit
- Silverware
- Cook Kit
- Canteen
- Mug

OPTIONAL

- Sun Block
- Sun Glasses
- Insect repellent
- Sewing kit
- Individual First Aid Kit
- Scout pocket knife
- Camp Bucket (Summer Camp)
- Name Plate (Summer Camp)
- Musical instrument (Summer Camp)

Here are a few tips to help you select the proper equipment for your son to use on campouts and backpack trips with the troop. You can equip your son for a very reasonable price, and you don't have to buy all the equipment at once. Garage sales are good places to pick up some great deals but take care not to waste your money on outdated or worn out gear.

Since there are literally millions of Scouts and since they ALL camp, the major camping gear makers (especially Coleman) carry special lines of good, boy-sized equipment at affordable prices. Much of it even has the word "scouts" or "scout sized" on it.

To get started and since you may not know what brands of equipment are good for your son to use, you may want to consider renting equipment. Appalachian Outfitters will rent equipment. Then use the rental fee towards the purchase of their equipment.

QUESTIONS?

As you shop, do not hesitate to ask store personnel for suggestions or tips. Or feel free to ask any of the Troop Leaders about suggested gear for boys.

Also your best reference guide on clothing needs and camping gear needs is – ta-da – the Boy Scout Handbook. Not only does it show the equipment but also it describes its use and proper care. At our weekly meetings we sometimes will discuss equipment and gear so you may want to consider sitting in on those nights to see what other members of the troop use.

Since your son is getting older, it is probably getting a little difficult to know what to get him for Christmas or birthdays - he is too old for toys and too young to want clothing. Camping equipment is the best gift, especially because of the range in price from a dollar or two to, well, up there. Next time Aunt Martha or grandma asks for a gift suggestion, mention padded hiking socks or a pot grabber or a thermal-sleeping pad.

WINTER OUTINGS EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

(INCLUDING SNOW CAMPING)

CLOTHING – NO COTTON

Waterproof bags for clothing
Long Johns; Synthetic, top & bottom
Underwear; Synthetic recommended
Inner socks; Polypropylene
Outer socks; Heavy wool or Polypropylene
Stocking cap; wool or synthetic
Inner gloves/mittens; 2 pr, wool or polypropylene
Outer mittens; waterproof
Extra gloves; warm & waterproof
Boots; with felt liners, winter mountaineering boots
(waterproofed)
Wool shirt or Sweater
Polar fleece or wool jacket
Pants; polar fleece/wool/powder pants
Hooded parka; waterproof
Rain pants; waterproof
Gaiters
Handkerchiefs

SLEEPING GEAR – NO COTTON

Sleeping bag; Synthetic (best)
Sleeping bag liner, if bag is not rated to zero
degrees F
Stuff sack for sleeping bag; waterproof nylon
Sleeping pad (full length)

PERSONAL GEAR – NO COTTON

Matches; waterproof or strike anywhere in
waterproof container
Flashlight with extra bulb & batteries (headlamp
style leaves hands free!)
Sunglasses or goggles

Sunscreen
Lip screen
First-aid kit, personal
Repair kit
Compass
Pencil and paper
Backpack & waterproof cover
Emergency food; not candy (24hrs)
Water bottle; 1QT, wide mouth
Mess kit, cup, & spoon (no metal)
Emergency blanket
Tooth brush & paste
Towel
Hand cream
Toilet paper in dbl zip-lok; ½ roll
Pocket knife
Whistle; plastic
Money; quarters & bills
Garbage bags; 4 min
Mirror; small signal
Candle
Snacks; 2 largish candy bars/day

PERSONAL GEAR – Optional

Drink mixes
Camera & film
Extra glasses with keeper
Large zip-lok baggies
Large plastic bags (not zip-lok)