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## *Personal Camping Gear*

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### *Tent*

- Personal gear; not troop gear. But:
- Scouts don't need to provide a tent in their first year. (Minimum 2 boys per tent.)
- If you do bring a tent, know how to set it up.
- 2-to-3 man tents preferred.

### *Sleeping Bag*

- Shop at an outfitter. E.g. REI, Hudson Trail Outfitters, Casual Adventure.
- Filler material: cotton, down or synthetic. Synthetic:
  - Good insulator
  - Dries out much faster
  - “Cotton kills.”
- Shape: rectangular, mummy, or modified mummy. Mummy bag:
  - Keeps body heat closer.
  - No corners, so less weight and bulk.
  - Narrow top permits hood.
  - “Wear the bag.”
- Degree rating.
  - Not an industry standard
  - Optimistic. (A 30° bag won't keep you comfortable at 30°.)
  - Get 20° or better.
  - Subzero bags not necessary, and are impractical in moderate temps.
- Features:
  - Neck and zipper baffles
  - Zipper guard. (Zip carefully.)
  - Inner and outer zipper pulls
  - Velcro zipper lock
  - Drawstring hood
- Weight.
- Length. (Not overly long or short.)

- Bulk. (Check it in the stuff-it sack.)
- Get and use a large, breathable storage bag.
- Bag liner or fleece blanket.
- Waterproof sack (even if just a garbage bag).

### *Sleeping pad/mat*

- Purpose:
  - Comfort
  - Insulation
  - Bulk, to keep sleeping bag out of water on tent floor
- Types:
  - *Open cell foam*:
    - \* Minimum in comfort/insulation/thickness.
    - \* Can tear.
    - \* Affordable.
    - \* Lightweight.
  - *Closed cell foam*:
    - \* Much better comfort, insulation, thickness.
    - \* Much better tear-resistance
    - \* Quilted surface
    - \* Can't be punctured (like inflatable pads)
    - \* Weighs more than open-cell
    - \* Costs more (\$20 to \$40)
    - \* Z-rest "cube"
  - *Self-inflating* (e.g. Therm-A-Rest<sup>®</sup>):
    - \* Ultimate in comfort
    - \* Large variety of lengths, widths, thicknesses
      - o Don't get it too short or too wide.
    - \* Weighs slightly more than closed-cell foam, but packs more compactly.
    - \* \$40 to \$90
    - \* Can be punctured; need patch kit.
    - \* Optional reduced-slip surface

- Roll it and attach to pack with straps. Stuff-it sack optional.
- No air mattresses!

### ***Backpack or duffle***

- Large enough to hold all of his gear (except maybe sleeping bag/mat). ONE bag.
- Carried on back, over a shoulder, or in one hand. No two-handed tubs.
- Backpack: not required (tailgate camping). But very useful:
  - Easier to carry
  - Carries more weight more easily
  - Frees up your hands
  - Easy to attach items to exterior
- Backpack alternatives:
  - Duffle bag (preferably with shoulder strap)
  - Oversize gym bag
  - No wheelie carry-on bags
- Backpack types:
  - *Daypack*
    - \* School pack
    - \* For hikes, day outings
    - \* No frame, usually no waistbelt
    - \* Limited capacity
    - \* Limited padding
    - \* Generally no external attachment points
    - \* Not designed for weather
  - *External frame backpack*
    - \* Frame on outside
    - \* Sleeping bag attaches to frame (separate straps)
    - \* Lots of external pockets
  - *Internal frame backpack*
    - \* Limited frame on inside
    - \* Sleeping bag usually in pouch
    - \* More vertical; closer to back

- \* Fewer pockets
- \* Exterior is less “busy”
- Both internal frame and external frame packs should have:
  - Waistbelt
  - Adjustable suspension
  - Shoulder straps adjustable “on the fly”
  - At least 3,500 cu. in. capacity
  - Easy access to bottom half of pack
  - Drawstring top under top flap (if toploading pack)
- Troop recommends external frame.
- Fit:
  - Get your “torso length” measured in order to select correct size pack.
  - Learn how to adjust the suspension!
  - Bottom of waist belt resting on top of hips
  - Top of shoulder straps at or above shoulder level.
- Straps on pack are usually not for sleeping bag. *Buy* straps.
- Check for quality:
  - Durable, waterproof, ripstop fabric
  - Double stitching or zigzag stitching at key points
  - Rustproof zippers with zipper flaps
  - Strong attachment for top of shoulder straps
  - Wide straps, with thick, durable padding
  - Strong waistbelt buckle, easy to operate and adjust
  - Check thickness of frame tubes
- Nice features:
  - Mesh pocket for water bottle
  - Sternum strap
  - Top rail
- When comparing packs:
  - compare capacity (cubic inches)
  - compare weight of pack

- put weight in pack before trying it on
- “Topload” vs. “panel load.”
  - \* (Topload flap can secure tent, etc.)
- Compare number, size and location of external pockets
- Don’t overbuy (e.g., expensive backpacking pack for tailgate camping).

### ***Outdoor clothing***

- Preferred **fabrics**, in order:
  - High-tech synthetics (e.g. polar fleece, polypropylene, Coolmax)
  - Wool
  - Low-tech synthetics (e.g. inexpensive synthetic sweater)
 Avoid cotton, e.g. cotton sweatshirts or cotton flannel shirts.
- Advantages of layering:
  - Additional insulation (including air layers)
  - Flexibility:
    - \* changing temps
    - \* changing activity levels
    - \* wet clothes
- Layers:
  - (1) Inner layer "wicks" perspiration away from your skin and into the outer layers. (Polypropylene.)
  - (2) Intermediate layers:
    - \* insulation (e.g. polar fleece, wool, cheap thick synthetics)
    - \* water-resistant material
  - (3) Outer layer:
    - \* insulation for warmth
    - \* tight weave to protect against wind and rain
- Cool weather: hat, gloves. (Separate knit hat for sleeping.)
- Ball cap: visor helps *re* sun, light rain.
- Socks:
  - High wool content. Maybe some synthetic content for stretch.
  - Polypropylene sock liners

- Cold weather:
  - \* **2** pairs of socks, plus sock liners
  - \* separate sleeping socks
- Spare (emergency) socks
- **Lots** of socks!
- No cotton athletic socks
- Sleepwear:
  - Polypro thermal underwear, and/or:
  - Polycotton sweatsuit
  - Knit cap

### ***Boots***

- See separate handout.
- Strongly recommended.
- Advantages:
  - Prevent ankle injury and blisters
  - Reduce fatigue
  - Keep feet dry
  - Keep feet warm
  - Protect feet from shock of rocks, roots
  - Safer in axe yard
  - (I could keep going.)
- Shop at an outfitter.
- Avoid work boots.
- Light duty vs. heavy duty. Don't overbuy.
- Uppers: leather vs. synthetic.
- Ideal: fewer seams, fewer synthetic panels.
- Gore-Tex "bootie"
- Insist on "speed lacing" system.
- Check out women's sizes!
- Weight? ("One pound on your feet is five pounds on your back.")
- Waterproof the seams.

- **Break them in!!**
- *Hiking boots*; not rubber winter boots.

### ***Water bottle***

- Poly vs. Lexan
- 1 qt./liter
- Wide mouth
- Tight lid Attached lid.
- Avoid shoulder straps
- Avoid metal
- Bring it *full*.
- Might need two.
- Alternatives (acceptable but have drawbacks):
  - Canteen
  - Sports bottle (leaky top?)
  - Spring-water bottle (thin wall)

### ***Flashlight***

Small. (Size, weight, size of spare batteries.)

Headlamp keeps hands free. (Avoid cheap ones.)

Spare batteries, bulb

Spare flashlight?

### ***Eating utensils:***

- You need:
  - Knife/fork/spoon
  - Bowl (essential)
  - Mug
- Cool Whip bowl works well.
- Option: spork + pocketknife.
- *Large* mug for food, or *small* mug to save size and weight.
  - Handle essential.
- Material: metal, Lexan, or polycarbonate

- No disposables, no breakables.

### ***Raingear***

- Either *poncho* or *2-piece rain suit*. No exceptions (except in summer).
- Should have hood with brim.
- Hooded fleece jacket is not raingear.
- *Lined* raingear is more durable; cheap ponchos tear easily.
- Check for:
  - Fit
  - Rain protection on the sides
  - Ventilation
- You might want to buy a small stuff-it sack for it.
- If \$1 disposable ponchos: you need **3** of them.

### ***Pillow***

- Compressible camp pillow, or:
- Existing clothing

### ***Boy Scout Handbook***

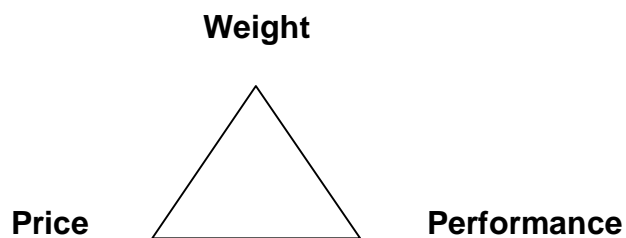
- Keep it in a plastic bag, e.g.:
  - Ziploc
  - Newspaper delivery sack
- Forget the black vinyl BSA handbook covers.
- Put *name* in handbook.

### ***Hand sanitizer***

### ***Stool (no huge camp chairs)***

## **Key Concepts**

***“Iron Triangle”:***



- If it's high-performance and affordable, it's probably heavy.
- If it's lightweight and inexpensive, it probably doesn't perform real well.
- If it performs well and is lightweight, it's probably expensive.

### ***Packing***

- Parents should not pack for their son, but should supervise/check the first few times.
- Packing list:
  - Use a list every time.
  - Lists: in green folder, on web site, here tonight.
  - Electronic lists can be customized, and printed on demand.
- Certain things should be easily accessible (in pack pocket or near top of pack):
  - Things you are likely to need as soon as we get to camp (flashlight).
  - Things that you will need often (water).
  - Things that you will need quickly if you need them at all (raingear, pack cover, first aid kit).
- Lay everything out before packing anything. Keep pack pocket items separate.
- Weight:
  - Heavy things near the top and near your back.
  - Balance weight left/right and front/back.
- Soft things against your back; hard, light things near outside.
- If you have a top-loading pack that does not provide separate access to the bottom of the pack, things you won't need until later in the weekend should be packed beneath things that you will need earlier in the weekend.
- Use STRAPS to attach sleeping bag, sleeping mat, etc, to pack or duffle. TWO straps per article.
  - 1-inch width.
  - Longer rather than shorter. Can be cut and fused.
  - Buckles: threaded vs. seatbelt-style.

- Avoid bungee cords
- Might be able to attach tent, stool, pack cover, poncho. (Waterproof items).
- Don't attach things below the bottom of pack frame.
- Ziploc bags:
  - For things that might leak (shampoo, sunscreen).
  - Large bag for things that get wet on campout (swimsuit, wet clothing).
- 'Nest' where possible:
  - pair of socks inside a mug
  - T-shirt inside a bowl.
- Stuff drawstrings back inside (e.g. sleeping bag, tent, top of backpack).

***Be familiar with your gear*** before first campout:

- Sleeping bag: zipper, Velcro, hood, drawstrings, etc.
- Backpack/duffle: Adjust straps to your size.
- Tent:
  - Set it up in backyard.
  - Check for rainfly, all pole segments, all pegs, guylines.
  - New tents must usually be seam-sealed.
  - Still waterproof?
  - Practice re-packing the tent.

***Name*** in outerwear (esp. poncho, cap, neckerchief).

### ***Shopping***

- Shop at an outdoor outfitter.
  - More experienced staff, better selection, better quality.
  - REI, Hudson Trail Outfitters, Appalachian Outfitters, Galyan's, Casual Adventure.
  - Look for their data sheets.
- Look for *numbers*: size, weight.
- Know the material.
- Consider catalogs and web sites.

- Watch for sales.
- Avoid the Scout Shop.

***Keep your stuff orderly*** during the weekend:

- Easier to find things
- Tentmates won't pack something of yours accidentally.

***Campout procedures:***

- Class A uniform to and from campouts.
- Eat dinner before coming to church.
- Turn in all meds (prescription and OTC) to trip leader.
- See *Troop 1853 Camping Rules*.

Additional information on camping gear: <http://www.troop111.org/buyer2.html>