

Camping Equipment

Troop 467

REI maintains an "Expert Advice" section on their website that addresses outdoor equipment selection. Here is a link to the [learning section](#) of the REI website where you can find a link to the expert advice section.

You can find good product information sheets in REI stores that cover a range of topics from sleeping pads to climbing harnesses. These information sheets compare key attributes of products from capacity to price.

Troop 467 camps out monthly from September through May. In the summer, the troop attends summer camp and goes on at least one high adventure trip. During a car campout, the troop stays close to civilization and camps either near the vehicles used for transportation or a very short walk from them. For car camping (sometimes called "trunk camping"), the weight and bulk of camping equipment is not important since nothing has to be carried very far.

Backpacking trips involve excursions to remote areas. Since a Scout has to carry everything in a backpack to a backcountry campsite, weight and size of equipment are very important. Backpacking trips call for equipment that is selected for weight, need and size. **KEEP YOUR BACKPACK LIGHT!** Your backpack should weigh no more than 20% to 25% of your body weight.

The Boy Scout Handbook contains a lot of useful information about hiking, camping and cooking. See the chapters in the section entitled "Scouting's Skills – Ready for the Great Outdoors" for this information.

There is a lot of personal preference that goes into selecting camping gear. Over time, a Scout will arrive at a set of gear that is just right for him. If you are a new Scout, or your Scout is not at that point, Jerry Goldwasser, an assistant Scoutmaster with the troop, will consult with you about camping gear and can put you on the right track.

Some local places for camping gear are:

- REI
- Dick's Sporting Goods
- Sports Authority
- High Country Outfitters

Some online places to shop for camping gear are:

- campmor.com
- backcountry.com
- reioutlet.com

The following discussion assumes cold weather camping in the Georgia climate. Adjustments should be made for camping in other seasons although nights in the mountains of Georgia in the spring and fall can be cold.

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The "Outdoor Essentials" should be taken on all campouts. These tools may help get you out of a difficult situation.

The Outdoor Essentials

- Pocketknife
- First aid kit
- Extra clothing
- Rain gear
- Water bottle
- Flashlight
- Trail food
- Matches and fire starters
- Sun protection
- Map and compass
- Clothing

Clothing

When dressing for a camping trip, dress in layers. This is especially important in cold weather. The layer closest to your skin should wick moisture away from your skin. The next layer should provide warmth in cold weather. The outer layer will be exposed directly to the elements, so this final layer should be able to repel water. Because temperature and weather can vary throughout the day, and levels of exertion can also vary greatly, the layered approach to clothing allows the hiker to adjust his clothing to a comfortable and safe level by either adding or stripping off layers of clothing as needed.

PROTECT YOUR FEET! Wool socks or an equivalent are very important. Dress socks and cotton socks simply will not provide adequate warmth in cold weather. Bring along several spares. Other than a broken-in, good pair of hiking boots, liner socks worn inside your hiking socks are the best protection against blisters on the trail.

Waterproof or water-resistant boots are another must. Wet shoes are a prescription for problems. Tennis shoes are only good for wearing around the campsite in winter and will provide little protection against cold temperatures.

Insulated underwear or "long johns" are another cold weather necessity. Long johns should be made of Therm-A-Guard, polypropylene, or other synthetic material--avoid cotton.

An insulated, water resistant or waterproof coat is another must. Avoid athletic gear such as Starter, Umbro, etc. as these items are not designed for camping. All clothing used in camping will get dirty and will smell like smoke, so do not wear clothing used for school or athletic events. Hunting coats are great for camping.

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WEAR A HAT. Most of our body heat is lost through the head. Mesh caps are worthless in cold weather. Toboggan caps are great because they provide protection for your ears. Finally, gloves round out the winter camper's outfit. Avoid gloves that are so bulky that you can't use your hands effectively.

AVOID COTTON. Wear synthetic materials or wool. Choose clothing for the season. Pack everything in Ziploc bags to keep it dry on backpacking trips. Wool is a good fiber for winter camping. Woolen flannel shirts are recommended. As much as we like to wear our Scout uniforms, they should only be worn for ceremonial purposes on a cold weather campout. A sweatshirt can be worn over the flannel shirt. Sweaters are also acceptable as long as the sweater is designed for camping.

Bedding Down

A mummy-style sleeping bag is a must. Mummy-style bags have less wasted space around the legs and feet. Less space = less air that must be heated to maintain warmth. Rectangular bags lose significant amounts of heat. It is important that your sleeping bag can be stuffed into a small package and that it be lightweight.

A sleeping bag rated at 20° is generally adequate for our part of the country. Finally, consider a synthetic fill vs. down. Although down filled bags offer the most warmth for the weight, they are more expensive and lose their insulation if they get wet. Also, please note that manufacturer's ratings are just guidelines. For example, if you tend to sleep cold then you might want a lower temp rating. You can also effectively lower the temperature rating by 10 degrees of a sleeping bag by adding a sleeping bag liner.

Have more underneath than above. Most of us use a pad of some type. An extra blanket, an old sleeping bag, ground pad etc. underneath will provide a layer between you and the ground. This will provide insulation from the cold, which will seep through otherwise.

If the ground is wet or damp, a plastic ground cloth or poncho can prevent your sleeping gear from getting wet. Dampness and moisture must be avoided as much as possible.

A sweatshirt with a hood and sweat pants make a great sleeping outfit. The hood (or a wool toboggan cap) will prevent the loss of body heat through your head. Wear a fresh pair of wool socks (or equivalent). If it's really cold, say below 20 degrees, insulated underwear should be worn underneath the sweat pants and sweatshirt.

Change into dry underwear, top and bottom, before getting into your bag. Your body cannot maintain enough body heat if you have sweaty clothes on. You will wake up around 3am shivering.

Fluff your sleeping bag before you get in. Remember, it's the air inside the bag that will keep you warm - not the stuffing.

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Checklists

Clothing

- Waterproof shell jacket/parka/heavy windbreaker
- Waterproof shell pants.
- Rain suit or poncho
- Pile or fleece jacket/vest/sweater
- 1 pair long pants. NO JEANS. Quick drying convertible pants are best.
- Wool or fleece knit hat (great for sleeping in cold weather)
- Long johns or fleece pants and shirt (not cotton)
- Sweat suit or extra long underwear and warm socks for sleeping (dry)
- 1 pair shorts (quick drying fabric)
- 2 pair moisture wicking briefs or boxers.
- Moisture wicking T-shirts
- Wool or Synthetic Hiking socks – 2-3 pair
- Polypropylene liner socks – 2-3 pair
- Hiking boots (Be sure to wear your boots for a few weeks to break them in before going on a hike!)
- Camp shoes (lightweight athletic shoes / sandals / Crocs).
- Ball cap or wide brim hat (water repellent).
- Gloves
- 1 -2 bandannas

Personal Gear

(Some items here may duplicate those listed under “The Outdoor Essentials”)

- Frame pack with padded hip strap. There are 2 basic types – external frame and internal frame. Beginners start with external backpack. Several manufacturers offer an adjustable external frame which is great for growing bodies. Also some in the south prefer external frame packs because they are cooler in our hot southern climate. Although both must be sized, internal frames must be fitted to be comfortable.
- Rain cover for pack (a large plastic garbage bag will do in a pinch and will make great night time pack cover)
- Sleeping bag. It is important that it can be stuffed into a small package and that it be lightweight. A sleeping bag rated at 20° is generally adequate for our part of the country. Finally, consider a synthetic fill vs. down. Although down-filled bags offer the most warmth for the weight, they are more expensive and lose their insulation if they get wet. Also, please note that manufacturer’s ratings are just guidelines. For example, if you tend to sleep cold then you might want a lower temp rating.
- Waterproof stuff bag (or compression sack) and/or garbage bag for sleeping bag
- Sleeping bag liner (can effectively lower a sleeping bag’s rating by 10 degrees)
- Ground pad. This can be as simple as a foam pad, or can be one of the more expensive self-inflating pads (such as Therm-a-Rest). Although many believe that the pad is for

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comfort, its primary purpose is insulation from the cold ground. Consider purchasing a Therm-a-Rest pad because it is more packable and provides some comfort as well. To save weight consider getting a 3/4 length pad.

- Personal first aid kit (Band-Aids, moleskin and other blister treatment supplies, etc.) This is a small kit which you can assemble from your household supplies and place in quart size Ziploc bag. See Scout book for suggestions – 2nd Class Requirement 6b. Don't forget personal medications.
- Small eating/cooking utensils
- Plate/cup/bowl - you can use a large cup for all three! Frisbees also make great plates. Place the Frisbee in a Ziploc bag to minimize cleanup.
- Matches in waterproof container
- SMALL flashlight or a headlamp with NEW batteries (or carry extra batteries)
- Pocket knife – lock back w/ blade no longer than 3 inches (NEW SCOUTS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO USE KNIVES UNTIL EACH HAS EARNED his Tote N' Chip which indicates he has demonstrated his understanding of knife safety rules.)
- Compass (liquid filled) and whistle to wear around your neck. (If you are lost, you can blow a whistle a lot longer than you can yell.)
- Metal mirror (to be used for signaling if you are lost)
- 2 quart-size water bottles FILLED. You can buy Nalgene or use empty one-liter Gatorade, PowerAde or water bottles which are much cheaper.
- Small garbage bags
- 50 ' of 3 mm rope
- Small pad of paper and pencil in Ziploc
- Boy Scout Handbook

Personal Care Items

- Toothbrush and toothpaste (small travel size)
- Comb or brush
- Biodegradable soap (small travel size). Popular brands are Campsuds and Dr. Bronner's.
- Small pack towel.
- TOILET PAPER!!!!!!!!!!!!

Optional Gear

- Sunglasses with retainer.
- Lip balm w/sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen
- Watch
- Camera
- Binoculars
- Hand Lotion
- Snacks for trail (i.e., trail mix or GORP, dried fruit, NO CANDY)
- Hiking staff or trekking poles

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- Swim trunks
- Sewing kit

Crew Gear (load is shared by members of the crew)

- 2-man tents. (Tent with a partner so you only have to carry one tent)
- Plastic ground cloth or “footprint” (to go under your tent)
- Backpacking stove with fuel. (One stove for every 2 or 3 Scouts)
- Water filter – one filter for every 2 or 3 Scouts.
- Cook pot appropriate for menu and number in each cooking group.
- Extra plastic bags
- Garbage bags
- Water purification tablets
- Collapsible Water bladder
- Map and Map Case
- 50 – 75 ft of strong cord.
- Repair kit – duct tape, needle and thread, wire, spare parts for equipment
- Food
- Clean-up gear
- Trowel

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