General Backpacking Information for Scouts, Adults, and Parents

ON A BACKPACKING TRIP

IF YOU DON'T PACK IT, YOU WON'T HAVE IT!

ADULTS TAKE JUST WHAT THEY NEED SO THEY WON'T HAVE ITEMS YOU FORGET! PLAN AHEAD, CARRY WHAT YOU NEED, BUT NO MORE.

This document contains general information applicable to most backpacking trips with Troop 497. There should be another document available with items important to each trip.

Cleaning cooking pots and personal eating utensils:

- Choose finger-foods, eat-in-package items, etc. for breakfasts and lunches to avoid using personal eating utensils. If you don't use it, you don't have to clean it!
- Bring some nylon scouring pads, a very small container of dish soap, and paper towels in a Ziploc bag as part of crew gear.
- Consider less gooey one-pot meals to make cleaning your cooking pot easier. You can also line your pot with a plastic oven bag to eliminate pot clean up.
- Try to cook only what you'll eat and eat all you cook to avoid having to remove excess food from your pot.
- As soon as you finish your meal, squeegee out your personal bowl and spoon and rinse with a small amount of water. If you do this right away, the food won't have a chance to stick. Rinse again with hot water to sanitize. Store your bowl and spoon in a resealable bag. An alternative with less cleaning up is to bring a resealable plastic bag for each meal. Turn the bag inside out and put it over your plate or bowl. Eat off the bag and when done turn it back the correct way, seal it, and pack it out.
- As soon as you are done, empty out your pot of food into a resealable bag you brought from home and add water before food starts to dry out.
- NEVER dump leftovers in the woods, lakes, streams, etc. We practice Leave No Trace. **You must carry out any leftover food** – plan accordingly.
- Immediately scrub with the scouring pad and paper towels to clean out your pot. Rinse and rinse again with hot water. No soap in lakes, streams.
- Adults will provide small quantities of hot water for cleaning pots.

Trash disposal:

- We practice ***Leave No Trace*** while on backpacking trips and we ***Carry In/Carry Out***. Eliminate items that will become trash by repackaging your food items before you leave home. Leave all the unnecessary packaging at home (bring your food preparation instructions) - you will have less to dispose of and a lighter pack. Unlike most trips, **your patrol is responsible for your own trash** during a backpacking trip as there are no trash cans or dumpsters around.
- **Be sure to have several plastic resealable bags to put trash in to carry out.**

- Crush and consolidate your trash so it takes up less space in your pack.
- Never bury trash in the woods! It should always be carried out with you to be disposed of at home or other approved places.
- Keep your site clean as you create trash. Policing will be much easier later.

Patrol Gear

- All crew gear is to be divided fairly among all crew members. (younger, smaller members will not be overloaded; larger, stronger Scouts should take more of the load)
- All packs will be checked by seniors and adults before we hike to make sure crew gear is fairly distributed and so no unnecessary items are carried.
- You will need tents for your patrol, 3 scouts per tent. The tent should be split among the Scouts sleeping in it. Standard Troop's stakes are very heavy; we have some lighter ones. **Bring your own plastic or other lightweight stakes** if you have them just in case there are not enough lightweight troop stakes. You need 8 stakes to pitch a Troop tent
- Ideally, each tent is split between Scouts on the same hike. Otherwise, it can't be set up until both hikes reach the Saturday camp spot.
- If patrols are making a combined meal, then bring one 6-8 qt pot (smaller if fewer Patrol members) with a tight-fitting lid for cooking your meal and cleaning your dishes. DO NOT take a larger pot – it is heavier and the water may not boil in it.
- Large serving spoon (and ladle if your one pot meal will be watery).
- Nylon scrubbing pad, a VERY SMALL bottle of soap – you don't need much, some paper towels, trash bags.
- One empty gallon jug for every 4 scouts for carrying water from the source to camp.

Adult Group Gear

- All adult crew gear is to be divided fairly among all adults. Adult crew gear will consist mostly of stoves, fuel, pots, extra empty water containers, tarp & stakes, and toilet trowels.
- Bring a Troop tent or your own backpacking tent – if you want to carry less, arrange for a tent mate before you leave and take a tent for the two of you. The Troop's stakes are very heavy. Bring your own plastic or other lightweight stakes if you have them instead. You need 8 stakes to pitch a Troop tent.
- Adults will be identified who will bring at least five high output backpacking stoves with fuel bottles and necessary accessories. We need at least 6, 6-8 qt pots with tight fitting lids. Some of the adults supplying personal stoves will also be supplying pots.
- One or two lighter weight dining flys with ropes depending on the number of participants.

- At least two metal trowels for digging cat holes.

- Compasses, maps, first aid kits, radios, and cell phones for the long and short hikers.

Personal Gear – Scouts and Adults

Pack light and you will enjoy backpacking more. Bring just what you must have and no more. Choose the lightest of items you are considering. Avoid cotton items; instead take polyester, fleece, nylon, or wool. It is important that you and your son have a good pair of hiking socks – preferably 2 good pairs. Plan your clothing in layers for different temperatures – you should be wearing just about everything you brought when it is the coldest. Shed items of clothing as you get warmer and put back on as you get colder to avoid moisture build up in your clothing.

In car with you

- lightweight flashlight or head lamp with fresh batteries
- lightweight rain suit (jacket & pants) with hood or waterproof hat if thee is significant chance of rain

In Pack

- pack cover (heavy duty plastic trash bag works also)
- sleeping bag in plastic bag in nylon stuff sack; sleeping clothes inside bag
- sleeping pad – ¾ or full length, lightweight
- in cold temperatures, one or two 8-hour hand warmers to put in sleeping for each night to keep feet warm
- 2 – 1 liter water bottles – full, 1 platypus bladder bag with drinking hose (optional). If using a bladder, bring at least a ½ L bottle to have if your bladder runs dry.
- your share of a tent with ground cloth and stakes
- In Ziploc bags:
    - 1 pr. Underwear
    - Fleece or other warm jacket
    - pants (if not wearing them)
    - an extra pair of wool hiking socks
    - extra T-shirt (polypropylene preferred)
    - knit or fleece hat and gloves
    - fleece or flannel PJ bottoms or long underwear (for extra warmth if needed)
- lightweight rain suit (jacket & pants) with hood or waterproof hat (doubles as wind protection)
- extra ziploc bags
- compass, trail map, 25’ small cord, small towel
- eating kit (in a Ziploc): small plastic bowl, spoon, cup, plastic Ziploc bag to line your bowl for each meal
- toiletry kit (in a Ziploc): powder, toothpaste/brush, small bottle of sunscreen, camp soap, plastic washbasin (made from the bottom of a 1 gal. milk jug – optional), **toilet paper** – **NOT optional** (in a Ziploc)
- personal 1st aid kit, small (in a Ziploc), including moleskin and Band-Aids
- several plastic grocery bags (trash, protect feet from wet shoes, etc.)
- enough room for crew gear including share of tent, food, cooking gear etc. (see separate list)

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Wearing

- hiking boots (broken-in) if you have them or sturdy shoes
- **wool hiking socks** with sock liners or smart wool socks
- pants, zip pants or hiking shorts depending on the weather
- t-shirt – wool, polyester or thermal undershirt (pack what you don't wear
- warm shirt or lightweight fleece
- waterproof windbreaker
- hat/cap
- bandana
- pocketknife
- Wear some bright colored outerwear, orange preferred, and something colorful on the back of your pack. (Think O's clothing or safety clothing)
- **AVOID COTTON CLOTHING**. Cotton absorbs moisture and retains it making you COLD.

Going to the bathroom in the woods:

- Always carry a small roll of **toilet paper** in a Ziploc bag in your pack. **You are responsible for carrying what you need.**

- Bring a small metal or durable plastic shovel as part of your Patrol crew gear.

- **On this trip:**

    - Use the restroom on Friday evening and Saturday morning.

    - **At our Saturday Campsite - go in the <u>designated area</u> away from the campsite.**

#1

- easy – enough said – at least 200 feet from lakes, streams, tents, and camping areas, etc.

#2:

- Go #1 first.

- Find an out-of-the way, level, soft spot at least 200 feet from lakes, streams, tents, and camping areas, etc. Never pick trails or traveled areas or spots within sight of them. Use a small shovel, a stick, a rock, or your heel to dig a small hole (called a 'cat hole') between 6 and 8 inches deep. (any deeper and waste will not decompose easily).

- Squat over the hole (it is easier if you find a small tree to hold onto with one hand and lean back), wipe and bury everything including toilet paper. Use a stick to move items if needed. **YOUR SHOVEL IS ONLY FOR MOVING DIRT – IT SHOULD NEVER CONTACT YOUR WASTE.** Cover your waste with the dirt from the hole then cover the dirt with leaves and other nearby debris so it is not noticeable. Put a stick or other object over the spot so no one steps in it.