



# What to bring to a Cold Weather Campout

Boy Scout Troop 456, Catonsville, MD

## “To Stay Warm Think COLD”

- Think **C**lean
- Avoid **O**verheating
- Dress in **L**ayers
- Stay **D**ry

Be prepared for extreme cold and wetness. Early Spring or Late Fall and Winter can be unpredictable. The easiest way to stay warm is to dress in layers and stay dry. Dressing in layers allows the scout to regulate heat by taking off and putting on various layers. Wetness, including sweating will lead to a cooling down of the body. This is desirable in the heat, but more troublesome in the cooler temperatures.

## Wear:

- **full uniform when appropriate (e.g., traveling)**
- socks - wool best, acrylics next best, cotton bad.
- Heavy jacket or Coat (remember the layering idea)
- Hat (wool or acrylic stocking cap best)
- gloves (if not cold have these in pack. Can these gloves pick up a hot pot without melting?)
- Poncho or raincoat (if not raining - pack it on top of gear in backpack or duffel bag).
- many scouts like waterproof pants (thin shells that go over regular pants, not the heavy snow pant)
- **Hiking boots.** This is a must. They must be waterproofed using a waterproofing compound
- Watch (optional, but recommended)

## Sleeping bag in water resistant bag (trash bags tear easily)

- **insulating closed cell foam pad** (good - earth pad WalMart \$9, better- Ridgerest REI \$17?, best- Thermarest, REI \$60)
- extra blanket for cool temp (optional, wool or polar fleese best, cotton worst.)
- sleeping bag must be rated to 20 degrees or better, other bags are acceptable, but you need to bring blankets for winter camping. The outside of the bag must be a tightly woven water resistant nylon (not cotton) and stitching should never go all the way through the bag.
- The Scout should have sleeping clothes that are not used for anything else.

## Backpack or duffel bag for camping gear.

- Jogging suit or other sleeping clothes (some boys find sleeping in a hooded sweatshirt adds warmth and keeps the cold air off the neck).
- change of shoes
- 2 long sleeved shirts
- Sweater or sweatshirt (again cotton is not user friendly in winter camping)
- 2 pairs of pants (avoid heavy jeans. The cotton gets wet and wicks heat away from the Scout.)
- 2 spare T-shirts
- change of underwear
- 3 extra pairs of socks - wool best, acrylics next best, cotton least preferred.
  
- Eating kit consisting of "unbreakable boilable" plate, bowl, mug, spoon, knife, fork.
- Canteen or water bottle (be prepared to sleep with your water bottle to prevent the water from freezing) The canteen or water bottle should not be metal and must not leak)
- Toilet articles: Soap in plastic box or zip lock bag
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, comb
- Towel, washcloth in plastic bag
- small roll of toilet paper in zip lock bag
  
- Flashlight with extra batteries (batteries wear out faster in the cold. New scouts always like large flashlights, but the older more experienced will use none or have a two cell AA krypton size in their pocket.)

- Scout knife (Only allowed if the Scout has Whittlin' Chip or Totin' Chip rights)
- Scout handbook in a zip lock bag (moisture is everywhere on a winter campout)
- paper, pencil or pen
- Emergency/First Aid kit:
  - 2 quarters for phone calls
  - 3-5 bandaids, other misc. first aid, parent's discretion
  - All drugs (prescription and non-prescription) must be brought to the leaders' attention and permission must be granted the leader to allow the scout to either (1) self-medicate or (2) have the leader give the medicine. This must be in writing.**
- Camera (waterproof and disposable for the winter)

### **Food**

- Don't underestimate the value of food on a winter campout. Foods high in fat are just the thing you need.
- Avoid an unnecessary use of sugar and caffeine.
- Eat lots of high calorie foods, just avoid the so called empty calories.
- Each meal should be cooked or heated. Try to use one pot meal plans and use the dutch ovens. Minimize the cleanup and you will be thankful.

### **Shelter**

- You can stay warm in a tent, but the smaller the tent in proportion to the number of scouts sleeping in it, the warmer you will stay. All of the heat in a tent comes from your body heat. The more bodies, the more heat, the larger the space to heat, the colder the tent will be.
- Stand behind wind breaks as much as possible. Even if you "can take it," eventually heat that you lose will be very hard to replace.

### **Fire**

- An old saying is "White man builds big fire, stays cold. Red man builds little fire, stays warm."
- Fire can only heat one side of you. Do not depend on the fire to get you warm. Fire is for cooking, drying clothes you aren't wearing and to provide good cheer.
- You are supposed to be well insulated. If you can feel the fire that means that the heat can get in. That's bad. If the heat of the fire can warm you through your layers, your body heat can easily escape.
- True winter campers avoid fire because it overheats them and that can be very dangerous.

**NO ELECTRONIC GAMES OR RADIOS, NO ELECTRONICS OF ANY KIND.**

**Scouts are responsible for their own gear.**