

THE BUDDY SYSTEM

The buddy system is when two Cub Scouts work together, share, and keep each other safe. Your den leader decides how buddies are paired. If there is an odd number of Cub Scouts, you can have a buddy group of no more than three.

Having a buddy is especially important when you are doing an activity outdoors, particularly near or on the water.

When you have a buddy, you are not to let your buddy out of your sight. As buddies you are friends, so remember the points of the Scout Law to be friendly, courteous, and kind to each other. You keep each other safe by following any rules or instructions for the activity.



THE CUB SCOUT SIX ESSENTIALS

Cub Scouts love being outdoors. When you go outdoors for an Adventure, there are six things you should bring with you. These are called the Cub Scout Six Essentials. If something is essential, it is extremely important.

1. FILLED WATER BOTTLE

You always carry water with you when you are going outside. Your body loses water all the time, and you have to replace it. When it is hot outside, your body loses water by sweating, and when it is cold outside, your body loses water with every breath you take; when you can see your breath when it is cold outside, that is water your body has lost.



When your body has lost too much water, your body will tell you in different ways. The first is that you will feel thirsty. If you don't drink water, you may get a headache. If you continue to not listen to your body, you may end up getting a stomachache.

When outside, it is best to get in the habit of drinking water before you start, continuously drinking small amounts throughout your activity, and drinking when you are finished. Do not drink a lot of water at a time. It is best to drink small amounts a lot of times than to drink a large amount all at once.

How do you know if you're drinking enough water? One way is by checking your urine (pee). Your urine should be clear and light. If it's yellow, your body could use more water. If it's dark yellow, your body needs more water.



Plastic water bottles are the most popular way to carry water. These come in all shapes and sizes. When looking at plastic water bottles, you want to think about how you will carry the bottle and how much water it will hold. Another important part of a plastic water bottle is how you drink from it. Some have straws, some have a valve, and others have just an opening with a screw cap.

Water bladders are carried in backpacks. These are useful as they make drinking water easy and include a place to carry your other Cub Scout essentials.

It is best to keep only water in your water bottle or water bladder and make sure to wash it after each use.

2. FIRST-AID KIT

There are different kinds of first-aid kits. The one you carry should be small and simple. Your first-aid kit should include things you know how to use and may need, based on the activity. Always check your first-aid kit before going out to make sure it has what you need.



Your first-aid kit should have the following items:

- Personal medical items (for example, if you are allergic to bee stings, you may need to carry an EpiPen)
- Pads (to clean cuts before applying an adhesive bandage)
- First-aid cream (applied to a cut before putting on an adhesive bandage)
- Adhesive bandages (only a few in two or three different sizes)

As you learn more about first aid, you will begin to carry more items in your kit.

3. WHISTLE

A whistle is for emergencies if you get separated from your group. Since most whistles are small, you may want to tie a string to it and attach it to your belt or your backpack. If you get separated from your group, use the SAW method of Stay, Answer, and Whistle. You will learn more about SAW later in this handbook.



4. FLASHLIGHT

A flashlight is one of the six essentials because like a first-aid kit and whistle, it is better to have it and not need it than to need it and not have it.

There are a lot of options for a flashlight. When looking at different flashlights, remember that you have to carry it. There are some you carry in your hands, some that you wear on your head, and even some that you wear around your neck.



The next thing to consider about your flashlight is how it is powered. What type of batteries does it use? Do the batteries come with the flashlight? Is it easy to replace the batteries?

When using your flashlight, remember to keep it pointed down and not at someone's face.

5. SUN PROTECTION

Just like you need water when it is hot or cold outside, you need sun protection in all types of weather. You can protect yourself from the sun by wearing the appropriate clothing and using sunblock.



Sunblock and some clothes will indicate what sun protection factor, or SPF, it will provide. The higher the SPF number, the more protection it will provide. The SPF number is not related to how long you can stay out in the sun. The effect the sun has on your skin can be different based on the time of year, time of day, and type of skin you have.

A hat to provide good sun protection should cover not only your head, but also your ears and neck. If your hat doesn't cover your ears or neck, make sure to apply sunblock to those areas.

When using sunblock, always follow the directions on the container. Know if your sunblock is waterproof or sweatproof. If not, you will need to reapply if you get wet or sweat a lot. Most sunblock will wear off, and you will need to apply more if you are outside for a longer period of time. Check the expiration date on your sunblock bottle.

6. TRAIL FOOD

When you are outside and active, your body will need energy. Pack a snack that is easy to carry, is easy to eat when you are moving, and will stay fresh. Here are some ideas for trail food.

GORP – Good Old Raisins and Peanuts was the first trail mix and was simply raisins and peanuts. Raisins provided sugar and peanuts provided protein, two important nutrients for energy. Trail mix is now much more than just raisins and peanuts. Dried fruits, chocolate candies, and other nuts are just some items you can find in trail mix.



Dried meats like beef jerky and turkey jerky are another source of high-protein foods that make a good snack when outdoors. You can even find vegetarian jerky made from plant-based proteins.

Granola can be simply rolled oats, nuts, and honey baked together. Like trail mix, granola can be made from different ingredients. You can find a variety of granola bars at your grocery store.

When deciding on trail food, **remember what the temperature** will be like. If it is going to be warm outside, anything that has chocolate will melt, making it difficult to eat. If it is going to be 35 degrees or colder outside, you can consider packing cheese as your trail food.

When planning what to bring for trail food, make sure to **check with your den leader to see if anyone has a food allergy**, so you can plan to avoid those foods.