

Hiking has always been one of Scouting's great adventures. On trails, across open country, and along city streets, traveling by foot is a terrific way to get out with your friends and see the world. If you use a wheelchair or otherwise have trouble getting around, you can still enjoy hiking. Many parks and natural areas have paved paths that allow everyone to experience the outdoors.

Hiking is one of the easiest things you can do in Scouting, but you still need to be prepared. You might encounter rain or snow. Your route might be rocky and steep, and someone could get hurt. There will be times when you are weary, but overcoming hardships can be part of hiking, too.



*White-tailed deer fawn*





## ADVANCEMENT: HIKING

Setting off on a hike sounds like great fun—and it is! But being prepared for certain situations along the way will go a long way to making your hike even more enjoyable and beneficial. This chapter will show you how to make your path along the trail to Eagle a smooth one.



**TENDERFOOT** Explain the importance of using the buddy system on outings and in your neighborhood, and practice the system while out with your troop or patrol. Describe what to do if you become lost on a hike. Explain the rules of safe hiking, both on the highway and cross-country, during the day and at night.



**SECOND CLASS** Describe some hazards or injuries you might encounter during a hike and what you might do to prevent them.



**EAGLE** The Hiking merit badge is one of 21 required for the Eagle Scout rank.



Hiking

## THE SCOUT BASIC ESSENTIALS

The Scout Basic Essentials can make every outdoor adventure better. In an emergency, they can help you get out of a jam.

### Pocketknife. A

pocketknife or multitool could be the most useful tool you can own. Keep yours clean, sharp, and secure. And don't pick one so heavy that it pulls your pants down.

### Rain Gear. A

poncho or a rain parka can protect you from light showers and heavy storms. It can also block the wind and help keep you warm.



**Trail Food.** A small bag of granola, some raisins and nuts, or a couple of energy bars can give you a boost when you get hungry on the trail. High-energy foods are especially important if you are out longer than you had expected.

**Flashlight.** An LED flashlight will cast a strong beam with just one or two AA batteries. LED headlamps are a good option, too, because they leave your hands free. Carry spare batteries, and reverse the batteries in your flashlight during the day to prevent the light from accidentally turning on in your pack and draining the power.



**Extra Clothing.** Layers of clothing allow you to adjust what you wear to match the weather. During an afternoon hike, a jacket might provide all the extra warmth you need. On camping trips, bring along additional clothing to deal with changes in temperature.

**First-Aid Kit.** Your patrol leader or a troop leader will bring a group first-aid kit on most Scout trips, but you should also carry a few personal supplies to treat blisters, small cuts, and other minor injuries.

**Sun Protection.** Guard your skin by applying a good sunscreen (SPF 30 or greater) and wearing a broad-brimmed hat, sunglasses, and lip balm that contains sunscreen ingredients. Apply sunscreen 15 minutes before you hit the trail and every two hours after that—more often if you sweat a lot.

**Map and Compass.** A map and a compass can show you the way in unfamiliar areas. Learn the basics and then enjoy practicing with a compass and a map when you are in the field.

**Matches and Fire Starters.** With strike-anywhere matches or a butane lighter, you can light a stove or kindle a fire in any weather. Protect matches and other fire starters from moisture by storing them in a self-sealing plastic bag or canister.



**Water Bottle.** Always take along at least a 1-quart bottle filled with water. On long hikes, on hot days, in arid regions, and at high elevations, carry two bottles or more.

Depending on your destination, the length of your trip, and the season, other essential items may include insect repellent, a whistle, and other items, such as water treatment tablets. Remember the Scout motto, and be prepared.



## FOOD FOR A HIKE

The most important meal for hiking might be the breakfast you eat before you hit the trail. In camp and at home, a hearty breakfast helps start the day right. If you'll be out much of the day, carry a lunch in your pack. Make a couple of sandwiches and take along some fruit, nuts, and raisins. You might also carry some crackers, peanut butter and jelly, jerky, or cheese.



## SAFE DRINKING WATER

Drink at least 2 quarts of fluid each day. That's about 8 cups. When you're drinking enough water, your urine will remain clear and copious (meaning there's a lot of it). Fill your water bottle with fresh tap water before you set out on a hike, and drink from it often—not just when you feel thirsty. In hot weather, you may need to carry several containers of water.

Water you bring from home or take from faucets and drinking fountains in campgrounds and Scout camps is almost always safe to use. Water from streams, lakes, and springs may contain bacteria, viruses, and parasites too small for you to see. Treat any water that does not come from a tested source, no matter how clean it looks.

### HOW TO TREAT DRINKING WATER



Three ways to make water safer for drinking are boiling, filtering, and treating it with tablets.

**Boiling.** Bringing water to a rolling boil for a full minute will kill most organisms. If the water looks especially dirty, try filtering it through a bandanna before boiling.

**Filtering.** Water treatment filters made for hikers and campers are effective and easy to use. Some pump water through pores small enough to strain out bacteria and parasites. Others contain chemicals or carbon that help make the water safer to drink. Follow the instructions that come with the filter you plan to use, and be sure to clean it frequently so it doesn't become clogged.

**Treating.** Water treatment tablets are sold in small bottles and in packets. To treat water, follow the instructions on the packaging. Most treatment tablets call for you to drop one or two tablets into a quart of water and then wait 30 minutes before drinking it. If you're treating water in your water bottle, loosen the lid and slosh a little water into the threads at the top; that will treat the water that's trapped there. Water treatment tablets can lose their strength over time, so check the expiration date on the package. Use only fresh tablets.



## CLOTHING FOR OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

The clothing you wear when you're hiking protects your skin from brambles along the trail, the sun's rays, and other hazards. It also helps you regulate your body's temperature. When you dress in layers, you can adjust your clothing to match changing weather conditions.

Most of the clothing you use for hiking is the same as what you'll wear when you go camping. If you are carrying all your gear in a backpack, make good clothing choices so you will have everything you need but won't be carrying unnecessary clothing that weighs down your pack.



A stocking hat is a great heat regulator. If your feet are cold, put on your hat. If you're starting to sweat, stuff your hat in a jacket pocket.

### CHOOSING APPROPRIATE FABRICS

Outdoor clothing may be made of wool, cotton, or synthetics. Each type of fabric has its advantages.

**Wool.** Wool can keep you warm even when it is damp with rain. Some people find that wool feels scratchy against their skin. Wearing long underwear or a T-shirt beneath wool garments can help lower the itch factor.



Cotton

**Cotton.** Cotton is fine for warm, dry weather. Once wet, though, cotton will not keep you warm. This can make it dangerous to wear on trips when conditions turn chilly, rainy, or snowy.

**Synthetics.** Many synthetic fabrics offer the comfort of cotton and the warmth of wool.

Clothing made of human-made fibers such as polypropylene or polar fleece can insulate you even if it gets wet. Long underwear, sweaters, vests, parkas, gloves, hats, and activity shirts are often made of synthetic fabrics.



Wool



Synthetic fleece

## WARM-WEATHER CLOTHING CHECKLIST FOR OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

- ☐ Long-sleeved shirt
- ☐ T-shirt
- ☐ Hiking shorts
- ☐ Long pants (or convertible pants with zip-off legs)
- ☐ Sweater or warm jacket\*
- ☐ Hiking boots or sturdy shoes
- ☐ Extra socks
- ☐ Hat with a brim for shade
- ☐ Bandanna
- ☐ Rain gear
- ☐ Extra underwear (for longer trips)



*\*These items should be made of wool or a warm synthetic fabric. Avoid cotton clothing when the weather might be cool, cold, or wet.*



## COLD-WEATHER CLOTHING CHECKLIST FOR OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

- ☐ Long-sleeved shirt
- ☐ Warm shirt\*
- ☐ Long pants\*
- ☐ Sweater\*
- ☐ Long underwear\*
- ☐ Hiking boots or sturdy shoes
- ☐ Extra socks
- ☐ Insulated parka or coat with hood
- ☐ Warm hat\*
- ☐ Gloves\*
- ☐ Rain gear
- ☐ Extra underwear (for longer trips)



*\*These items should be made of wool or a warm synthetic fabric. Avoid cotton clothing when the weather might be cool, cold, or wet.*

## RAIN GEAR

Staying dry in the outdoors is an important part of staying comfortable and having a good time. Wearing or carrying rain gear such as a poncho or rain parka, rain pants, gaiters, and a hat can also add to your safety, because dry clothing will keep you much warmer than shirts, pants, and jackets that have become wet.



**Poncho.** A poncho is a waterproof cape that can protect you from summer rains. Because a poncho is loose-fitting and can flap in the wind, it may not be the best choice for severe weather or for winter travel. On the plus side, many ponchos are big enough to also cover your backpack.

**Rain Parka.** A rain parka is a long jacket that repels rain, sleet, and snow. It should have a hood that you can pull over your head.



Gaiters

**Rain Pants.** Rain pants extend the protection of a poncho or parka down to your ankles.

**Gaiters.** Gaiters can shield your feet and lower legs from rain. During winter hikes, they'll help keep snow out of your boots.

**Hat.** A broad-brimmed hat protects your face and neck from sun and from storms. If you wear eyeglasses, the brim of a hat can keep them clear when it's raining.

## FABRICS THAT BREATHE

Rain gear may be made of breathable fabric or nonbreathable fabric. There are pros and cons to both.

**Breathable.** Breathable fabrics repel rain and also let body moisture escape—the ideal combination for rain gear. The drawback is that these garments can be expensive.

**Nonbreathable.** Many ponchos, parkas, rain pants, and gaiters are made of coated nylon and plastic. This nonbreathable gear is waterproof and often inexpensive. The disadvantage of nonbreathable rain gear is that moisture given off by your body may be trapped inside, causing you to feel damp and chilled.



## FOOTGEAR

If your feet feel good, chances are you'll have a great time hiking. Taking care of your feet begins with choosing your footwear. Almost any shoes are fine for short walks over easy ground. For longer hikes in good weather, lightweight boots usually work well.

Leather shoes and boots were once the only choices for hiking. These types of footgear are still popular today and can give your feet and ankles plenty of protection and support. They will also keep snow and rain from soaking your socks. They are a good choice if you will be hiking and backpacking on rugged trails. Choose carefully when selecting leather boots, though. Stiff boots for mountaineering or serious winter travel can be quite heavy and are better suited for more experienced hikers.

The footwear you choose must fit well. When you shop for new boots or hiking shoes, try them on while wearing the same socks you will use on the trail. Your heels should not slip much when you walk, and your toes should have a little wiggle room. Before using your new hiking shoes or boots on a hike, wear them around home for a few days—longer for leather—until they adjust to the shape of your feet.



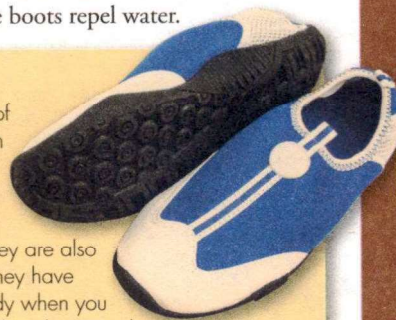
Many styles of modern outdoor footwear are made of nylon mesh and other manufactured materials.

## CARING FOR HIKING BOOTS

Hiking boots will last a long time if you take care of them. When you get home from a trip, remove mud or soil from your boots with a stiff brush or by hosing them off. Allow them to dry at room temperature. (High heat can melt nylon and harm leather, so don't put your boots too close to a fire.) Treat leather with a boot dressing meant for outdoor footwear. Oils and waxes in the dressing will keep leather flexible and help the boots repel water.

### Camp Shoes

Many campers and backpackers carry a pair of lightweight shoes in their packs so that they can shed their boots at the end of the day. Choose closed-toe shoes that will help protect you from injury. A pair of running shoes might be just right. Water shoes can work well, too, if they are also comfortable for walking about on dry land. If they have good tread, your extra shoes will come in handy when you need to wade across a stream. Take off your hiking boots and socks and change into your extra shoes to cross the water.



Water shoes

## SOCKS

Hiking socks made of various kinds of wool, including antimicrobial merino wool, or a wool-nylon blend will help cushion your feet as you walk. Try wearing a pair of thin, synthetic-blend socks underneath your hiking socks. The inner socks will slide against the heavier outer socks and wick moisture from the skin. This will reduce friction and your chances of getting blisters. Carry spare socks on your hikes. If your feet get tired or sweaty, change into fresh socks and hang the damp ones on your pack to dry.

## HIKING STICKS AND TREKKING POLES

Use a hiking stick to push back branches and to poke behind rocks. When you wade a stream, a hiking stick will give you extra stability.

Trekking poles are a lot like ski poles. They can improve your balance and lessen the strain on your knees. Adjustable trekking poles can be made shorter or longer to match your height. Those with rubber tips might have less impact on the edges of trails. Trekking poles also tend to be lighter than hiking sticks.



## MAKING A TRIP PLAN

Writing a trip plan encourages you to think through your preparations for a hike, or any other outdoor activity. Give copies of your plan to your Scoutmaster, parents, and other responsible adults. Your plan will fill them in on what you hope to do and when you expect to return.

Organizing your ideas well enough to put them down on paper is good writing practice, too. Keeping a journal of the adventure while it is happening then writing a record of the trip when you get home is another excellent idea.

Develop a trip plan by writing answers to the five W's—where, when, who, why, and what.

**WHERE are we going, and how will we get there?** Decide on your destination and the route you will use to reach it and to return. For backcountry trips, include a copy of a map with your route highlighted or marked in pencil.

**WHEN will we go and return?** If you are not back close to the time you listed on your trip plan, Scout leaders and your family can take steps to locate you and, if necessary, provide assistance.

**WHO is going with us?** List the names of your hiking partners and adult leaders. If you need a ride to or from a trail, write down who will be driving.

**WHY are we going?** To fish in a lake? Climb a peak? Photograph wildlife? Explore an island? Write a sentence or two about the purpose of your journey.



**WHAT are we taking?** Start with the Scout Basic Essentials, then add any special gear you'll need based on the activity you're planning or the weather you expect.

Add one more item to the list:

**HOW will we respect the environment by following the principles of outdoor ethics?**

### HIKING TRIP PLAN

Name of this trip: \_\_\_\_\_



**WHERE** are we going, and how will we get there?

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**WHEN** will we leave and return?

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**WHO** is going with us?

Adult leaders: \_\_\_\_\_

Patrol members: \_\_\_\_\_

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**WHY** are we going? (Write a sentence or two about the purpose of the hiking trip.)

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**WHAT** do we need to take with us? \_\_\_\_\_

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**HOW** will we respect the environment by following the principles of outdoor ethics?

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## WHAT TO DO WHEN LOST

One day you might accidentally wander off a trail and be unsure how to find it again. Perhaps you will take a wrong turn and not know which way to go. If you think you are lost, stop where you are and follow the four steps that spell STOP.

**S**tay calm.

**T**hink.

**O**bserve.

**P**lan.

**Stay calm.** Sit down and have some water and something to eat. If you are cold, put on a jacket or sweater. Breathe slowly and relax.

**Think.** Try to remember how you got where you are. If you have a map, open it and see what you can learn from the symbols and contour lines.

**Observe.** Look for your footprints in soft ground or snow. Notice any landmarks that can be clues to your location. Listen for sounds of other Scouts.

**Plan.** If you are convinced that you know which way to go to get back on track, move carefully. Use a compass to set a bearing in the direction of your destination. Then clearly mark the way you are going with broken branches, piles of stones, or whatever else is handy in case you need to find your way back to the spot where you've been sitting. However, if you don't have a clear idea where you are, stay where you are. People will start looking for you as soon as someone realizes you are missing.



Be careful with fire even in emergencies. Take the time to build the fire correctly so that it does not spread. Never leave a fire unattended.



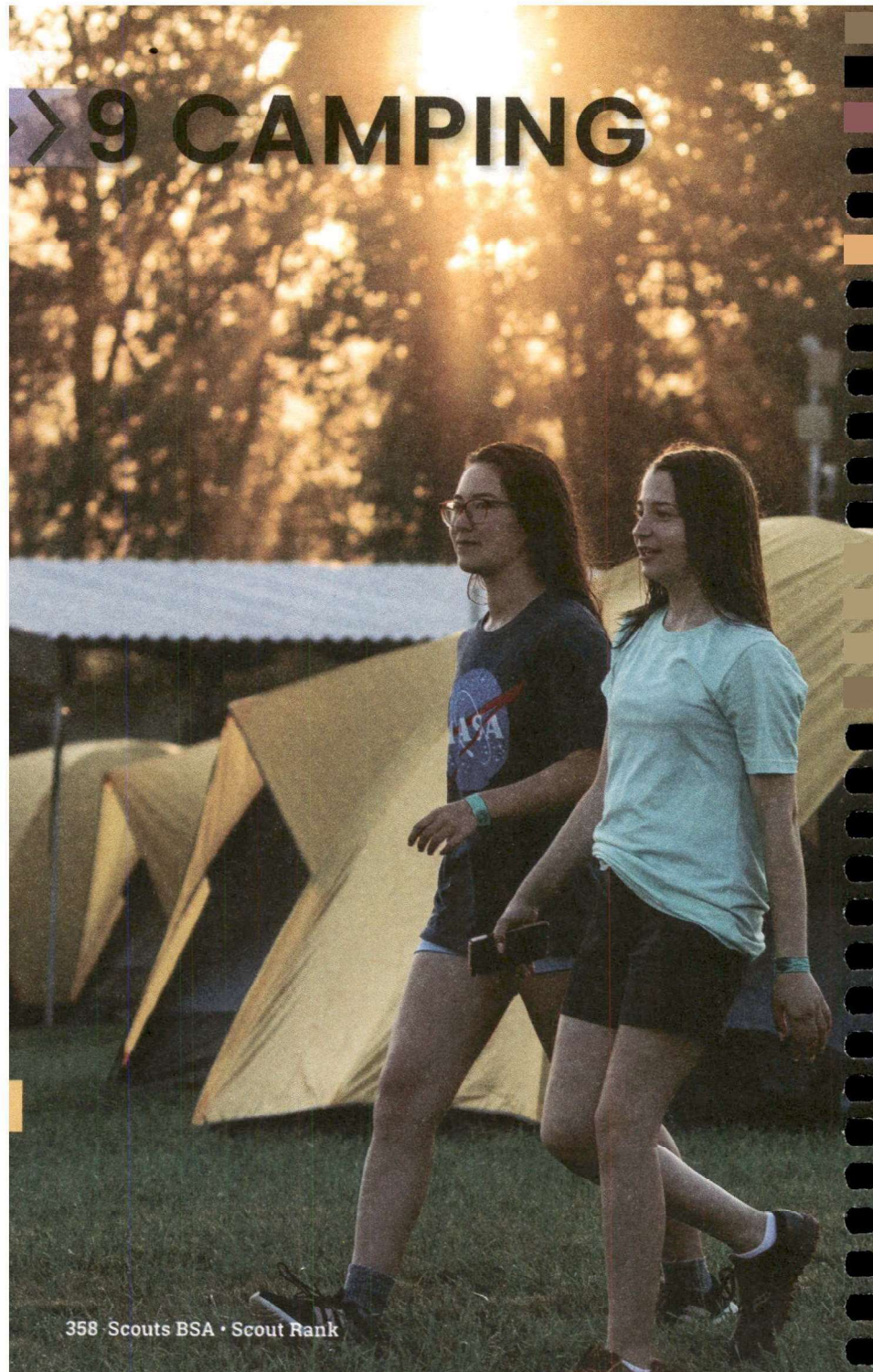
Help searchers find you with any signal repeated three times. For instance, you might give three shouts or three blasts on a whistle. A smoky fire in the daytime and a bright fire at night might also attract attention. Toss grass or green leaves on the flames to create additional smoke. Spread your rain gear, sleeping bag, and bright-colored equipment in the open to catch the eye of a rescue pilot, or flash a mirror in the direction of aircraft.



Pitch a tent if you have one, or find shelter against a rock or under a tree. Hang a T-shirt or something else on a branch above you to get the attention of searchers even if you have fallen asleep.

Use your Scout Basic Essentials and whatever else you have with you to stay warm and dry. In addition to serving as a signal to rescuers, a campfire can offer warmth and lift your spirits. Collect enough wood before dark to last through the night.

Lastly, try not to worry. You can survive for several days without water and for several weeks without food. Stay where you are. You will be found.



# > 9 CAMPING

358 Scouts BSA • Scout Rank



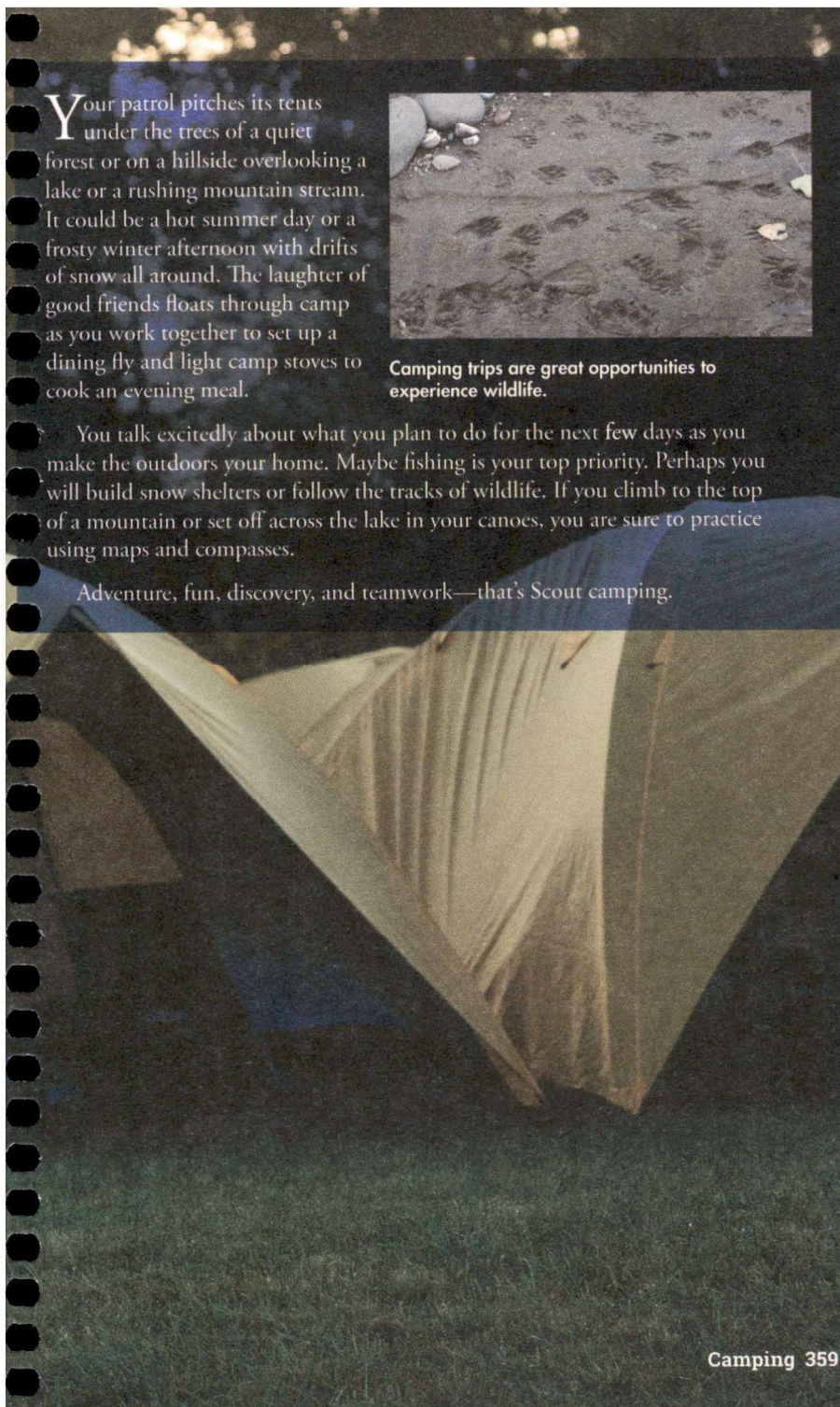
**Y**our patrol pitches its tents under the trees of a quiet forest or on a hillside overlooking a lake or a rushing mountain stream. It could be a hot summer day or a frosty winter afternoon with drifts of snow all around. The laughter of good friends floats through camp as you work together to set up a dining fly and light camp stoves to cook an evening meal.



Camping trips are great opportunities to experience wildlife.

You talk excitedly about what you plan to do for the next few days as you make the outdoors your home. Maybe fishing is your top priority. Perhaps you will build snow shelters or follow the tracks of wildlife. If you climb to the top of a mountain or set off across the lake in your canoes, you are sure to practice using maps and compasses.

Adventure, fun, discovery, and teamwork—that's Scout camping.





## ADVANCEMENT: CAMPING

Each time you go camping, you will be building your ability to live well in the outdoors. By mastering the skills of planning and by learning what gear to carry, you will go farther, stay out longer, and find more ways to make "outing" a big part of "Scouting." And you'll be fulfilling some of the requirements to achieve your next Scout rank.



**TENDERFOOT** Present yourself to your leader ready for an overnight camping trip. Show the gear you will use and how to pack and carry it. Spend a night on a patrol or troop campout in a tent you helped pitch.



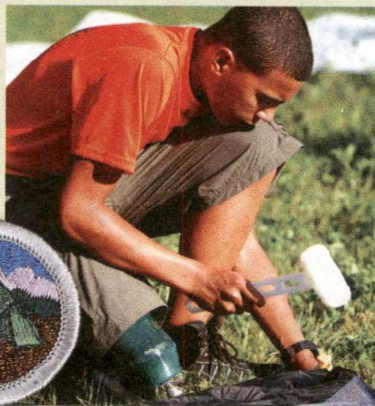
**SECOND CLASS** Participate in at least three overnight campouts with your troop or patrol, and on at least two of those trips, spend the night in a shelter that you helped erect, such as a tent or a snow cave. Explain to your leader the factors to be considered when choosing a campsite.



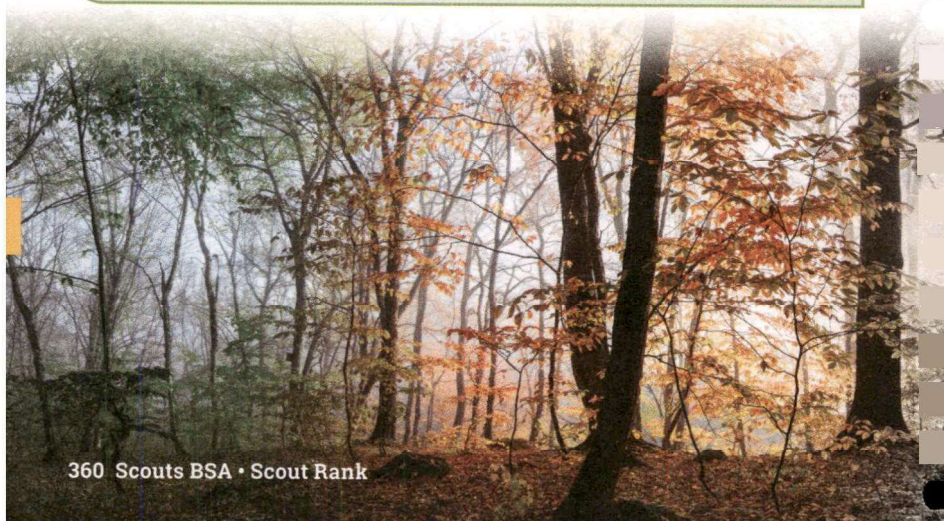
**FIRST CLASS** Participate in at least six overnight camping trips with your troop or patrol, and for five of them, spend the night in a tent that you pitched or other structure that you helped erect.



**EAGLE** The Camping merit badge is one of 21 required for the Eagle Scout rank.



Camping





## PATROL AND TROOP CAMPOUTS

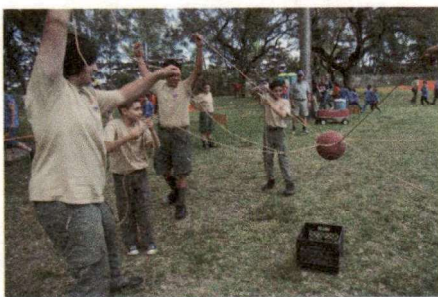
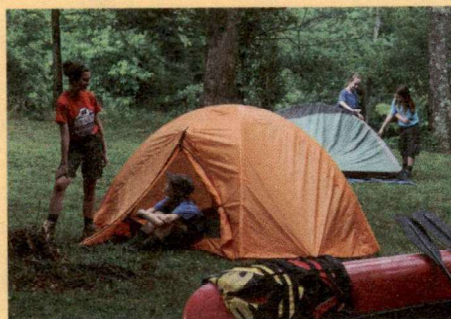
Most of your campouts will be with your patrol or with your whole troop, as well as at least two adult leaders. Your patrol leaders' council might plan an outing where you focus on specific skills or work together on an outdoor merit badge. Your campsite could be a home base for day hikes or fishing expeditions.

### Camp Activities

Camp can be your home base for all sorts of adventures. A campout can get you close to an area where you can enjoy an exciting activity—swimming, for example, or kayaking, photography, or environmental studies.

As you plan a trip, think about the opportunities for adventure within easy reach of your campsite. Other possibilities include:

- Take a day hike to a lake, the top of a mountain, a scenic vista, or another point of interest.
- On winter trips, try cross-country skiing or snowshoeing. Build an igloo or a snow cave. Look in the snow for the footprints of wildlife, and follow them to discover the habits of different animals.
- Bike along trails open to cyclists.
- Go swimming, canoeing, rafting, or fishing. (Be sure to follow Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat guidelines.)
- With proper supervision, take part with your group in organized climbing and rappelling activities. Learn the correct skills and safety procedures from qualified instructors.



## CAMPOREES AND SCOUTING SHOWS

At camporees, your patrol can compete against patrols from other troops in tests of Scout camping skills. At Scouting shows, you can demonstrate your expertise to other troops and visitors from the community.

### A Scout Is Reverent

Evenings in camp are a great time to reflect on what happened during the day and to think about what went well and what didn't. Evenings are also a great time for simple chapel services that allow Scouts to reflect and show reverence toward God, according to their beliefs.

#### Scout Vespers

*Tune: "O Christmas Tree"*

Softly falls the light of day,  
While our campfire fades away.  
Silently each Scout should ask:  
"Have I done my daily task?  
Have I kept my honor bright?  
Can I guiltless sleep tonight?  
Have I done and have I dared  
Everything to be prepared?"

#### Taps

Day is done, gone the sun,  
From the lake, from the hills,  
from the sky;  
All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.



### SUMMER CAMP

For many troops, a week at a BSA summer camp is a highlight of the Scouting year. Many summer camps offer activities for all ages. New Scouts can work on the basic skills that lead to the Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks. Experienced Scouts can earn merit badges. Older Scouts can participate in ropes courses, backpacking trips, and other high-adventure activities.

Remember, two-deep adult leadership is required on all troop and patrol outings.



## PERSONAL CAMPING GEAR CHECKLIST

Use this checklist every time you go on a Scout outdoor trip. Use a pencil to check off each item as you pack it.

### ☐ The Scout Basic Essentials

- |   |                                       |  |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pocketknife    | <input type="checkbox"/> Water bottle | <input type="checkbox"/> Matches and fire starters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First-aid kit  | <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sun protection            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extra clothing | <input type="checkbox"/> Trail food   | <input type="checkbox"/> Map and compass           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rain gear      |                                       |  |



Water bottle

### ☐ Clothing appropriate for the season and the weather

### ☐ Backpack with rain cover

### ☐ Sleeping gear

- |                                       |                                       |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping bag | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping pad | <input type="checkbox"/> Ground cloth |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|

### ☐ Eating kit

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eating utensils | <input type="checkbox"/> Plate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowl            | <input type="checkbox"/> Cup   |

### ☐ Cleanup kit

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soap       | <input type="checkbox"/> Dental floss     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush | <input type="checkbox"/> Comb             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toothpaste | <input type="checkbox"/> Small camp towel |



Eating kit

### ☐ Optional personal items

- ☐ Personal medications
- ☐ Watch
- ☐ Fishing pole and gear
- ☐ Camera
- ☐ Pencil or pen
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Small notebook
- ☐ Swimsuit
- ☐ Bible, testament, or prayer book, according to your faith
- ☐ Other gear for specific activities

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## GROUP CAMPING GEAR CHECKLIST

The equipment you'll share with other Scouts can be divided up so each of you carries about the same amount of weight.

- ☐ Patrol first-aid kit
- ☐ Tents, ground cloths, and stakes
- ☐ Dining fly and stakes
- ☐ 50-foot nylon cord
- ☐ Cook kit containing
  - ☐ Stove(s) and fuel
  - ☐ Matches and/or butane lighters (in resealable plastic bags or containers)
  - ☐ Pots and pans (matched to menu and dishwashing needs)
  - ☐ Spatula, large spoon, and/or ladle (matched to menu needs)
- ☐ Cleanup kit containing
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Biodegradable soap	<input type="checkbox"/> Sanitizing rinse agent
<input type="checkbox"/> Scouring pads (no-soap type)	<input type="checkbox"/> Trash can liners
<input type="checkbox"/> Toilet paper	<input type="checkbox"/> Food strainer
- ☐ Repair kit containing
 

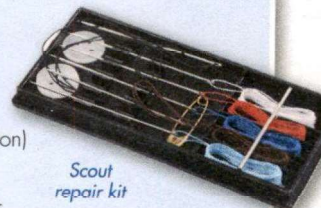
<input type="checkbox"/> Thread	<input type="checkbox"/> Needles	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety pins
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- ☐ Group extras you may want to take
  - ☐ Hot-pot tongs
  - ☐ Plastic, collapsible water container (1 or 2½ gallon)
  - ☐ Water-treatment filter or tablets
  - ☐ Cutting board or two 4-by-4-foot plastic sheets for food preparation surfaces
  - ☐ Spade
  - ☐ Grill
  - ☐ Patrol flag
  - ☐ Small American flag
  - ☐ Two 50-foot ropes and bear bags
- ☐ Other gear for specific activities



Biodegradable soap



Scouring pad



Scout repair kit



Spade



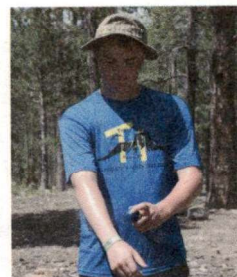
## SAFE CAMPING

Over time, you will learn countless techniques for safe and enjoyable camping. Here are a few that you should learn right away.

### STAYING SAFE

Staying safe in camp is easy if you are prepared and use common sense. Here are some tips:

- Stay in good physical shape so you are ready for the demands of camping.
- Don't bother wildlife, and stay well clear of beehives and hornet nests.
- Stay away from hazardous areas such as cliffs.
- Choose a safe campsite.
- Always use the buddy system.
- Dress appropriately for weather conditions.
- Pay attention to the weather and act promptly in case of hazardous weather.
- Don't run in camp, and be extra careful when walking around in the dark.
- Stay away from the cooking area when you're not cooking. (See the Cooking chapter for more information.)
- Be careful with knives, saws, and axes. (See the Tools chapter in the *Scouts BSA Handbook* for more information.)



Protect yourself from exposure to the sun, to biting insects, and to poisonous plants.

### Pack It In, Pack It Out

Whatever you take to camp must be carried home. Don't leave anything behind—litter, cans, leftover food, or camp projects. Do not throw trash into lakes and streams or bury it in the woods. Making sure that a campsite is in better shape than you found it will help you reach the goal of camping that follows the principles of outdoor ethics.

### KEEPING CLEAN

Staying healthy is a key to successful camping trips. The most important way to prevent sickness while you are outdoors is to use a hand cleanser or wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling food and after trips to an outhouse, cathole, or latrine.

On overnight campouts, you'll also want to brush your teeth before bed and in the morning. Take a shower or a bath when you get home. During longer adventures, you and those around you will be happier if you can bathe once in a while. Doing it the right way will prevent any harm to the environment. Fill two cook pots or buckets with water and carry them to a private spot at least 200 feet (75 steps) from any stream, lake, or spring. Use one container of water for washing yourself and use water from the other for rinsing away the soap. Scatter the remaining water when you are done.

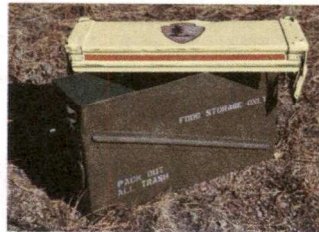
A little soap goes a long way outdoors. The less soap you use, the less rinsing you will have to do. A small plastic bottle of biodegradable soap is ideal. Store the bottle in a plastic bag in case it leaks.

### USING BIODEGRADABLE SOAP

A substance is considered biodegradable if bacteria and other microorganisms in the soil can break it down into natural components. Note the words "in the soil." Just because a soap is biodegradable doesn't mean you can use it in or near the water; the 200-foot distance still applies. Biodegradable soap can contain unnecessary ingredients such as scents, so it's best to choose a soap designed specifically for camping.

### PROTECTING CAMP FOOD

Proper storage of food at campsites will prevent mice, squirrels, raccoons, and other small creatures from getting into your meal ingredients and spoiling them. It's also essential that you store food out of the reach of larger animals. For example, if bears discover that they can get into your food supplies, they could be tempted to visit your campsite later in search of more. This can be dangerous for you and future campers—and for the bears, which might have to be moved or even destroyed to protect humans.



Animal-proof storage box



Golden-mantled ground squirrels (called "minibears" at the BSA's Philmont Scout Ranch) are small mammals with a big nuisance factor. Minibears have been known to chew through anything and everything to get to camp food, so be sure to store your food well!



As your troop plans a trip, find out from those who manage the areas where you will camp how you should store your food. Your storage method can be as simple as locking your food in your vehicle during campouts near roads or using animal-proof storage boxes located close to campsites. For travels in areas where there may be bears, be prepared so that if bears do come by, they will find nothing of interest in your campsite and will move on.

### Smellables

Smellables include all meal ingredients and leftover food, garbage, soap, shampoo, deodorant, lotions, toothbrushes and toothpaste, sunscreen, lip balm, insect repellent, first-aid kits, water bottles that have contained anything but water, and anything else with an odor that might attract animals.

To help protect your food and other smellables, follow these tips.



- Bring nylon cord and stuff sacks for hanging food from tree branches.
- Pitch tents away from the camp cooking area (200 feet or more is ideal) and leave nothing in tents except clean sleeping clothes, sleeping bags and pads, flashlights, and perhaps a book or two.
- Clean up crumbs and bits of spilled food, and put it all in with the trash. Wash and rinse cook pots, plates, and utensils after every meal.
- At night and whenever you will be gone from your camp, protect food and other smellables by hanging them in bear bags or stowing them in bear boxes away from tents.

### BEARS AND SMELLABLES

A black bear can smell seven times better than a bloodhound, even picking up the trail of another bear just by sniffing its tracks. The smell receptors in its nose are 100 times bigger than in a human, and it uses the Jacobson's organ in the roof of its mouth to detect minute quantities of pheromones. That's why things like lip balm and food-splattered shirts should be considered smellables even when you can't smell a thing.