

BACKPACK CAMPING STARTER LIST:

last edited 1 December 2012

Wise advice from Scoutmaster Bernie Kim and ASMs Lyle Fong, Gary Shinde, Stan Fujimoto and others.

Don't go crazy and buy a lot of expensive gear. Go slow and see what the more seasoned campers do. Things like tents, stove and knives come later. In fact younger scouts will not be allowed to bring some of these camping items.

Water: Usually 1 liter per hot meal + at least 1 liter for each leg of hike. (5 liters for older scouts, 4 for youngest scouts) just pack out the empties.

Matt Tom endorsed Camelbacks (Hydration packs) pretty strongly, but even after buying one Bernie Kim still preferred the good ol' Nalgene bottles because when he takes four bottles, he knows exactly how much water is left at any given time. Not so with the Camelbaks because you're constantly sipping. It's also easier at mealtime to pour from the bottles rather than the plastic bags. But it's all a matter of personal preference.

Food: Freeze dried meals (Mountainhouse brand or similar from Sports Authority) or Brown Bag.

Dinner could also be Cup Noodles or instant mashed potatoes; breakfast can be the same or Instant Hot Oatmeal (in a Freezer Quart Ziplock bag) or PB & Jam Sandwich with Hot Chocolate... Per Lyle Fong: other than Cup O Noodles, go to Don Quijote and find the more 'gourmet' cup o noodle type bowl meals. The veteran Assistant Scoutmasters/dads and older Scouts will bring stoves to boil hot water for your instant meals like Cup O Noodles or freeze-dried foods in a bag.

Snacks: Trail Mix, Granola Bars.

Eating Utensils: MacDonalds is good enough. Mess Kit if needed. Good to bring Wet Ones and a couple paper towel sheets for cleaning up. Just throw a few in a sandwich ziplock bag...

Hiking

Backpack Make sure it's properly sized and not too heavy. Consider an external pack which are cheaper.

Hiking Poles – A must if you are carrying a pack. Best deal is probably Walmart for about \$25. We've used the Walmart specials / Swiss Gear for even High Adventure hikes... Get 2. It really takes off stress from your back.

Hiking Boots & Hiking Socks or nylon sock inside cotton sock outside OK. For cheap, I like Hi-Tec. Make sure you break them in a week or two well before a long hike.

Hat or Cap

Clothing: Everything in Ziplock Bags. No good if it's wet.

Extra Socks - one pair

Underwear - 1 extra okay

Rain Poncho (cheap kine) - gotta have

Windbreaker / Light Jacket. Layer clothes

Sleeping

Tent with Ground Tarp. Plastic Mallet. Only for parents and 1st class scouts and above. You might not want to spend a lot of money for your first tent until you understand the trade-off between weight, cost and durability. Some swear by the tiny Wenger, some want a two-man tent so your backpack and shoes can stay inside the tent.

Ground Sleeping Pad (the blow up kind is good but find a light one at Campmor, or go for the ribbed foam one (Thermarest) at sports authority) - Gotta Have! or the ground will rob all your body heat; get the lightest one at Sports Authority if it's too late to mail order from Campmor or REI. Roll up end to use as pillow.

Sleeping Bag - gotta be compact and not the huge, thick ones. I've gotten away with just the flannel sleeping bags too. You don't have to spend much.

Pillowcase: Put extra clothes in for a pillow.

Accessories

Headlight get an LED type .the eveready one is ok at Sports Authority - There's a cheap one at Long's that will do the job for beginners...less than \$10.

Flashlight.

Toothbrush and toothpaste. Microfiber Towel.

Toilet Paper AND a Plastic Shovel (Fiskars garden spade, black and/or orange color - about \$4 at City Mill garden section.) This is for quick fabrication of a No. 2 "water closet" in the woods...basically a 8" diameter x 8" deep mini cesspool.

Plastic Bags one or two for trash. Large garbage bag to cover your backpack during rain, pack a wet tent or to keep wet shoes inside the tent.

1st Aid Kit; Li Hing Mui for cramps; Sunscreen, Insect Repellent. Hand Sanitizer along with band-aids, moleskin and antiseptic wipes. The adults will carry larger kits too.

Cell Phone; Walkie Talkies if you have them.

Optional: stool or chair, Hard to beat the sub \$12 stool at Don Quijote.

Medications with instructions for the younger scouts.

Sunglasses with neck cord. Pocket knife / multi-tool.

Camera. Writing pad and pen or pencil, Bic lighter.

Did we forget anything?