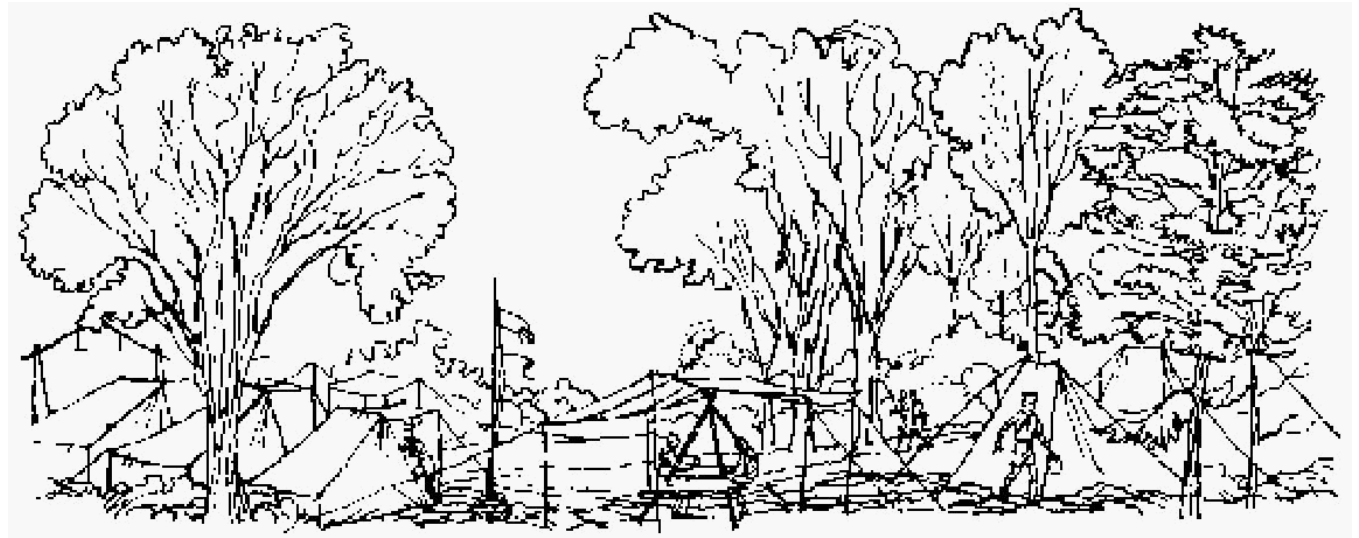


Keeping the Outing in Scouting – Getting Outdoors



Equipment can become very expensive, so it is highly recommended that you borrow or rent until the needs of your Scout are clear. Camping equipment can be very good Christmas and Birthday presents, but make sure you talk to people in the Troop who can provide you with solid information.

There are certain items that each Scout needs to have on every camping/hiking/canoeing trip. These are referred to as the “**12-Essentials,**” and include the following items:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ✓ Pocketknife | ✓ Trail Food |
| ✓ First Aid Kit | ✓ Matches / Fire Starters |
| ✓ Extra Set of Clothing | ✓ Sun & Insect Protection |
| ✓ Rain Gear (Poncho/Jacket & Pants) | ✓ Map & Compass |
| ✓ Water Bottle / Canteen | ✓ Disposable “space” blanket |
| ✓ Flashlight (Extra Batteries) | ✓ 50-feet of utility / parachute cord |

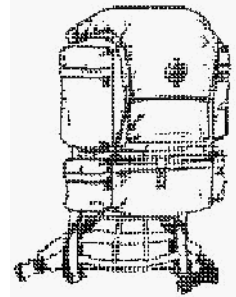
With the exception of the extra set of clothing, these items should be packed into one waterproof pouch. This allows the Scout to bring just these items on short forays during the trip. The extra set of clothing should be packed into a separate waterproof pouch and separate from the clothing the Scout plans to use during the outing.

Basic Equipment

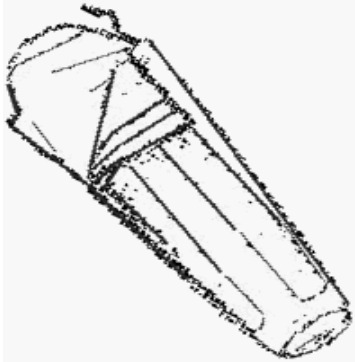
Boots – If you must buy something, buy a good pair of hiking boots. Welt construction boots are the best for longer hiking trips; however, for most of what Troop 150 does, the lightweight boots based on athletic shoe technology are your best bet. Steel toes add extra weight, but protects the toes against crushing injuries or axe injuries. Consider the purchase of waterproof boots, as these serve to keep the feet warmer in the colder months.

Tent – Troop 150 provides the tents for our outings. If you want to bring your own tent, keep in mind that you must carry it on the trail, along with your share of the Troop equipment. Personal tents should allow room for at least two Scouts and their personal gear. Consider a tent with a separate or built-in rain fly.

Backpack – Book bags are *not* backpacks! Scouts need an external frame type backpack, as they are the best for trail hiking since the center of gravity is at or slightly above the shoulders. The backpack needs padded shoulder straps and a padded waist belt. The waist belt allows the weight to distribute across the hips, relieving some of the strain on the shoulders. Troop 150 strongly discourages the use of suitcases on our outings. Keep in mind that Scouts must carry their own equipment plus a portion of the Troop equipment.



Sleeping Bag – For the camping that Troop 150 does, a sleeping bag rated for 5 to 10 degrees Fahrenheit should suffice. Most of these bags are in the 2.5 to 3 pound range. Down filled bags are the warmest, but cost a lot more and if they get wet, they are useless. Synthetic fibers still offer some warmth when wet. Weigh the good and bad when choosing your sleeping bag. Sleeping bags must be able to roll up tight, or be stuffed into a bag to reduce their size. Depending on the type of outing, Scouts may desire to bring a small pillow. Bear in mind that if the Troop is hiking long distances, a bed pillow is probably not the best choice. For those week-long summer camps or weekend campouts, a bed pillow might be an OK choice.



Sleeping Pad – For colder weather, an air mattress is not the best choice. Look for a pad that offers some comfort but also has some thermal insulating qualities. In a lot of cases, placing a small tarp or waterproof ground cloth between the pad and the ground will increase the thermal qualities.

Tent – Troop 150 provides the tents for our outings. If you want to bring your own tent, keep in mind that you must carry it on the trail, along with your share of the Troop equipment. Personal tents should allow room for at least two Scouts and their personal gear. Consider a tent with a separate or built-in rain fly.

Water Bottle / Canteen – Keep in mind that water weighs about 7 pounds per gallon. Anything larger than a 2-quart container is too much. Each Scout has different hydration needs, and should keep that in mind when purchasing water containers for hiking.

Rain Gear – This is an item that is ***required*** for every outing no matter what season. Choose coated nylon or Gortex whether you purchase a poncho or a rain suit. Other factors to consider are the weight of the material, allowing extra size in case you wear this over your cold weather gear.

Clothing – Use a little common sense and you will always pack the type of clothing you need on outings. Bear in mind the temperatures that may occur during the outing and pack accordingly. Bringing shorts and swim suits on trips where the temperatures are forecast in the single digits does not make sense: packing your parka for summer camping makes no sense either. Even in the summer months, a light weight wind breaker may be needed in the evening hours. Pack enough of every clothing item to last the length of the outing plus a few extras. If you get wet during the day, you will want to have an extra set of dry clothing to wear. For outings that last longer than a week, the Troop will factor laundry methods into the plan.

Layered Clothing – On cold weather outings, Scouts should wear layers of clothing to protect against the cold. The layers allow the Scout to remove outer layers as the day gets warmer, or as the physical exertion creates more body heat.

Underwear – Packing extra underwear is a must, especially in the hotter months. Keep in mind that while in the outdoors you may get wet and changing into dry underwear may become necessary.

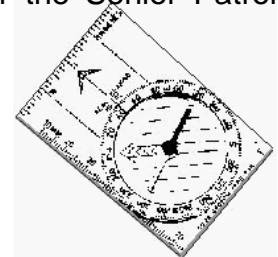
Socks – Pack socks according to the activities planned, as well as for the weather conditions anticipated. Wool socks are a must in the winter months as well as on long hikes. Cotton socks should always be packed. Bring enough of each type of sock to last the length of the outing plus a few extra pairs. You never know when your feet will get wet and you will need a dry pair of socks.

Electronic Games – We do not allow anyone to bring electronic games on Troop or Patrol outings. Scouts may bring cards or other compact type non-electronic games for use during their free time. Patrol Leaders may appoint **one** member of their Patrol to bring a small, hand held radio for the sole purpose of keeping abreast of weather forecasts. The Senior Patrol Leader may also appoint a member of the Troop Leadership for the same purpose.

Knives – Scouts who have a Totin' Chip may carry a pocket knife or a sheath knife. If a Scout plans to qualify for the Totin' Chip on the planned outing, he may bring his knife with him, but he may not carry it until he earns the Totin' Chip. Make arrangements with your Patrol Leader or the Senior Patrol Leader *before* the Troop leaves for the outing. This same rule applies to axes, hatchets, or saws.

Matches, Lighters, Fire Starters – Scouts who have a Firem'n Chit may carry matches, lighters, or fire starters. If a Scout plans to qualify for the Firem'n Chit on the planned outing, he may bring his matches, lighters, or fire starters with him, but he may not carry them until he earns the Firem'n Chit. Make arrangements with your Patrol Leader or the Senior Patrol Leader *before* the Troop leaves for the outing.

Compass – Be aware of what type of compass you buy, as you do not want to put your faith in something intended as a toy when you are using your compass on a hike. The better compasses are liquid filled and have several orienteering guides etched onto the plastic base.



Flashlight – Pick your flashlight carefully, as these become essential pieces of equipment on nearly every type of outing. You need a light that produces enough illumination for safely walking through the forest, while at the same time keeping the flashlight small in size. Flashlights need to be waterproof since we will be outdoors and sometimes on the water. In extreme cold weather plastics may become brittle when you need your light the most. The small aluminum tube type flashlights (Maglites) that require two AA-batteries work well in nearly all conditions. There are some very good LED-style lights designed to be worn on the head that work well when you need your hands-free. LED technology allows for longer battery life, but be careful when buying LED lights, as these may not produce enough illumination for hiking through the forest. Always pack extra batteries for your flashlight in a waterproof bag. Never carry spare batteries in your pocket, severe chemical burns may result.

Sun Protection – Even in the winter months, sun protection is a necessity depending on the type of outing. “When in doubt, don’t leave it out.” Choose the highest SPF rating, and one that is made specifically for use around the water or for athletics. Only purchase non-aerosol sun protection. Sunglasses are suggested for trips that involve traveling on the water. Choose sunglasses that offer UV protection. Polarized lenses offer more glare protection than lenses

without it. If possible, choose sunglasses designed to float, or add a device to provide flotation.

Insect Protection – Choose non-aerosol insect protection with DEET, unless the Scout's physician advises against using DEET products.

Trail Food – Trail food is advisable for hiking trips and does not violate the Troop's Bylaws regarding bringing a "personal stash" of food. Trail food is small and compact and requires no preparation. It should be packed where it is easily accessible during a hike. You should be able to consume trail food while walking. In warmer weather, packing chocolates is not a good idea. Foods containing nuts, dried fruits, raisins, etc., offer high protein and carbohydrate counts, which help replenish your energy.

Steel Wool – Pack several steel wool cleaning pads in a waterproof bag. These come in handy when cleaning cooking gear, and when trying to start a fire in wet weather.

Packing Your Backpack

